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**MAKING
DEALS
ONE
SWING
AT A
TIME**

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EDITOR'S NOTES

United Airlines at 100: A Century of Flight, A Future Driven by Cargo



Digital Transformation and Operational Precision

United's development also parallels the aviation sector's transition from manual processes to data-driven operations. Advanced digital systems now underpin cargo handling, offering enhanced shipment visibility, real-time tracking and improved operational efficiency. These capabilities are not merely incremental improvements—they are foundational to meeting modern logistics expectations.

The integration of digital tools has enabled more precise capacity management and better coordination across global networks, reinforcing the airline's competitiveness in an increasingly technology-driven marketplace.

Sustainability and the Next Phase of Growth

Looking ahead, sustainability and innovation define United's strategic priorities. The airline has committed to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with a growing emphasis on sustainable aviation fuel and operational efficiencies. These efforts reflect mounting industry and regulatory pressure to decarbonise aviation without compromising growth.

Cargo is expected to play a central role in this next phase. As demand intensifies for specialised logistics solutions—

As United Airlines commemorates its centenary, the milestone offers more than a retrospective—it underscores a strategic evolution that positions cargo and logistics at the heart of its future. From its modest beginnings in 1926 as a regional airmail operator to its current status as one of the world's largest global carriers, United's trajectory mirrors the transformation of the aviation industry itself.

The airline's origins trace back to a single airmail route linking Pasco, Washington, and Elko, Nevada, flown on April 6, 1926. Over the ensuing decades, United has expanded dramatically, now operating a fleet approaching 1,100 aircraft and serving more than 350 destinations across six continents. This scale reflects not only geographic growth but also a steady diversification of services—most notably within cargo.

From Mailbags to Modern Logistics

What began as basic mail transportation has evolved into a sophisticated cargo operation. Today, United Cargo handles a wide spectrum of shipments, including pharmaceuticals, perishables, high-value goods and time-critical consignments. This progression aligns with the broader evolution of global trade, where speed, reliability and specialised handling have become essential.

Air cargo has increasingly shifted from a supplementary revenue stream to a strategic pillar, particularly in an era defined by e-commerce growth and complex, time-sensitive supply chains. United's investment in specialised cargo capabilities reflects this reality, positioning it to meet rising demand across multiple verticals.



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particularly in sectors such as healthcare and high-tech manufacturing—United's focus on efficiency, digitalisation and sustainability will be critical.

A Century in Perspective

United's centenary is not merely a

historical marker; it is a lens through which to view the broader evolution of aviation and air cargo. From a single airmail flight to a global logistics enabler, the airline's journey encapsulates a century of technological progress, market expansion and shifting commercial priorities.

As the industry navigates an increasingly complex landscape, United's continued investment in cargo capabilities signals a clear direction: the future of aviation will be as much about moving goods as it is about transporting passengers.

From Fryer to Flight: How United Cargo Is Scaling the Future of Sustainable Aviation Fuel

A century ago, the notion that aircraft could one day be powered by waste oils would have seemed improbable. Today, that concept sits at the forefront of aviation's decarbonisation strategy.

At United Airlines, sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) has emerged as a central pillar in the push toward lower-emission flight. Produced from feedstocks such as used cooking oil, agricultural residues, and other renewable materials, SAF offers a practical pathway to reducing lifecycle carbon emissions while maintaining the operational integrity of modern aircraft.

Yet the challenge is not technological viability—it is scale.

Demand Before Supply

Despite its promise, SAF remains constrained by limited production and high cost, often priced at two to four times that of conventional jet fuel. For the industry, accelerating adoption hinges less on innovation alone and more on building a viable market.

This is where United Cargo has assumed a strategic role. With vast volumes moving across its global network, cargo operations represent a significant share of fuel consumption—making them a natural lever for driving early SAF demand.

By integrating customers into its sustainability framework, United has effectively turned freight into a catalyst for change. Early participation from key shippers has helped create the demand signals necessary to justify investment in SAF production and infrastructure.

Turning Waste Into Fuel

The concept underpinning SAF is deceptively simple: transform waste into energy. In practice, however, the process requires significant capital investment and



ecosystem-wide coordination. Converting production facilities, securing feedstock supply chains, and scaling distribution networks all present formidable barriers.

United's approach has been to tackle these challenges collaboratively. Its corporate SAF programme—launched in 2021—allows businesses to support fuel purchases linked directly to their cargo shipments or corporate travel. This model not only offsets emissions but also stimulates market growth by anchoring demand.

Complementing this effort is the airline's Sustainable Flight Fund, which has raised over \$150 million to support emerging technologies and producers focused on decarbonising aviation fuel supply chains.

Cargo as a Catalyst

Cargo's role in this transition is both practical and symbolic. Every shipment contributes to aircraft weight and, by extension, fuel burn. Leveraging this dynamic, United Cargo has positioned freight customers as active participants in the energy transition rather than passive stakeholders.

This shift reflects a broader trend within logistics: sustainability is no longer a parallel initiative but an integrated component of commercial strategy. For

shippers, participation in SAF programmes offers both environmental and reputational value, aligning supply chain operations with corporate climate goals.

Building a Market, Not Just a Fuel

The development of SAF is as much about market creation as it is about fuel production. Investors and producers require long-term demand certainty before committing capital at scale. By aggregating customer participation and embedding sustainability into cargo operations, United is helping to reduce that uncertainty.

This collaborative model underscores a critical reality: no single player can scale SAF alone. Progress depends on alignment across airlines, shippers, fuel producers, and technology developers.

A New Flight Path

What began as an unlikely idea—turning used cooking oil into jet fuel—is now a tangible component of aviation's future. For United and its cargo customers, the transition represents more than an environmental initiative; it is a structural shift in how the industry sources and consumes energy.

As aviation looks toward its next century, the success of SAF will depend on sustained investment, policy support, and continued collaboration. If momentum holds, yesterday's waste may well become tomorrow's standard fuel—powering not just aircraft, but a more sustainable global logistics system.

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Avianca Cargo Launches Dedicated Bogotá–Caracas Freighter Service to Strengthen Bilateral Trade

Avianca Cargo has commenced a dedicated cargo operation between **Bogotá (BOG)** and **Caracas (CCS)**, marking a strategic enhancement of freight connectivity between Colombia and Venezuela. The service, which launched on **March 7, 2026**, is designed to support growing bilateral trade and respond to shippers' demand for direct, reliable airlift capacity on this key South American corridor.

The new weekly freighter service is operated with an **Airbus A330 Freighter**, capable of transporting up to **60 tonnes of cargo per flight**. This dedicated capacity significantly expands beyond traditional belly freight carried on passenger aircraft, ensuring shippers access to dependable direct uplift for timesensitive and highvalue goods.

In addition to the A330 freighter, Avianca's resumed passenger service

on the Bogotá–Caracas route continues to contribute roughly **7 tonnes of additional cargo capacity per week** in the belly holds of narrowbody aircraft, further bolstering overall freight throughput between the two capitals.

Avianca Cargo's decision to introduce dedicated freighter flights underscores the airline's commitment to expanding its regional network and enhancing logistics options for importers and exporters. Diogo Elías, CEO of Avianca Cargo, said the new service "strengthens logistics flows between the two countries and expands air freight transport alternatives in the region," with an eye toward increasing frequency as market demand evolves.

Strategic and Commercial Implications

The Bogotá–Caracas freight

corridor has long been essential for trade and economic exchange across northern South America. Although passenger flights between the capitals were restored earlier in 2026 following a period of reduced service, dedicated cargo capacity has been limited in recent years. The launch of a weekly A330 freighter service creates a more robust logistics pathway, reducing reliance on passenger belly holds for larger shipments and offering improved transit times and handling reliability.

Industry analysts note that focused cargo operations such as this can help simplify customs processes and strengthen supply chain predictability for sectors including automotive components, perishables, pharmaceuticals and general merchandise, all of which benefit from direct airfreight connectivity.

Network Expansion and Future Outlook

The strategic move complements Avianca's broader network expansion plans. The airline has been actively growing its freighter fleet and global cargo footprint, supported by an expanding order book under the **Abra Group**, including additional Airbus A330neo and A320neo aircraft that will enhance overall fleet flexibility and reach.

As Avianca Cargo continues to invest in capacity and connectivity, the new Bogotá–Caracas freighter link represents a tangible step in restoring and modernizing air cargo infrastructure throughout the Americas, reinforcing the airline's role as a key logistics partner for shippers navigating complex regional markets.



Cathay Cargo Eyes Fleet Modernisation and Perishables Growth as It Prepares for Airbus A350 Freighters

Cathay Cargo is positioning itself for the next phase of air cargo growth with plans to modernise its freighter fleet through the introduction of the new-generation Airbus A350F while expanding its specialised perishables logistics business across Asia.

The cargo division of Cathay Pacific is leveraging its strong passenger network and cargo hub at Hong Kong International Airport to drive capacity and capture growing export demand from southern China and Southeast Asia.

Preparing for next-generation freighter capacity

Cathay Pacific currently operates a fleet of 179 aircraft under its control, including 20 dedicated freighters — all Boeing 747 Freighter variants. While the airline benefits from extensive belly cargo capacity on its passenger fleet, the freighter segment remains comparatively limited.

To address future demand and modernise its cargo fleet, the airline placed an order with Airbus in

December 2023 for six A350 freighters, alongside purchase rights for up to 20 additional aircraft.

According to James Evans, General Manager Cargo Commercial at Cathay Cargo, the additional freighter capacity will play a crucial role in supporting cargo flows from Hong Kong and strengthening the airline's long-term growth strategy.

"We've got huge capacity in our bellies, but we've only got 20 freighters," Evans said, highlighting the importance of expanding the dedicated cargo fleet.

The A350F was a logical selection for Cathay Pacific, which already operates 47 passenger variants of the A350 aircraft family. The freighter version will introduce significant efficiency gains, including a payload capacity of up to 111 tonnes, a range of approximately 4,700 nautical miles, and up to 40% lower fuel burn and carbon emissions compared with older freighter models.

However, Cathay's first A350F delivery is not expected until at least 2028, with additional aircraft scheduled

to enter service through 2029. Until then, the airline expects its freighter capacity to remain relatively stable.

Evans noted that while the global air cargo industry has been discussing potential widebody freighter shortages—caused by supply chain disruptions, limited aircraft conversion feedstock and delays to new aircraft programmes—Cathay currently has no immediate plans to lease additional freighters.

"We are always monitoring opportunities," Evans said. "But our focus right now is preparing for the arrival of the A350 freighters and optimising the capacity and network we already operate."

Leveraging Hong Kong's role as a regional cargo gateway

Cathay Cargo continues to benefit from the strategic position of Hong Kong as a major global logistics hub. The airport functions as a critical transshipment centre linking global air cargo flows with the rapidly expanding Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA).



The GBA is one of the world's most dynamic manufacturing and export regions, generating significant air cargo volumes across electronics, high-tech goods and consumer products.

Evans said Hong Kong's location at the centre of this economic zone provides Cathay Cargo with access to substantial production and export demand.

"There are huge volumes and business out of the Greater Bay Area, and Hong Kong sits at the heart of that," he said.

The airline currently holds an estimated 25–30% share of total cargo capacity operating from Hong Kong when both passenger belly and freighter capacity are combined.

Additionally, growing manufacturing output in Southeast Asia has contributed to increased cargo flows into Hong Kong for onward international distribution.

"There has been double-digit growth out of Southeast Asia, and we have been beneficiaries of that as well," Evans explained.

Maintaining strong long-haul cargo networks

Cathay Cargo continues to deploy a significant proportion of its freighter operations on routes to the Americas, where demand for long-haul cargo capacity remains strong.

The airline typically operates between 33 and 38 freighter flights per week to destinations across North and Latin America, with additional services introduced during peak seasons.

Evans noted that cargo demand can shift rapidly between markets, requiring airlines to remain agile in allocating capacity.

"With aircraft, you have the flexibility to redeploy capacity to where it is needed. Being able to pivot and adjust quickly is critical in air cargo," he said.

This flexibility allowed Cathay to redirect capacity to other regions when e-commerce volumes from Asia to the United States temporarily declined following regulatory changes affecting cross-border shipments.

According to Evans, e-commerce demand has since recovered and continues to represent only one component within a diversified cargo portfolio that includes industrial goods, consumer products and specialised cargo shipments.

Expanding perishables logistics through intermodal connectivity

A key growth segment for Cathay Cargo is the transportation of perishable goods, particularly fresh seafood, fruit and other temperature-sensitive products.

The airline has been developing its **Fresh solution** logistics service alongside the launch of an innovative **Air-Land Fresh Lane** initiative connecting Hong Kong with mainland China.

The corridor uses temperature-controlled trucks equipped with GPS tracking and secure electronic locks to transport perishable cargo across the Hong Kong–Zhuhai–Macao Bridge directly into the Greater Bay Area. Shipments move under a single air waybill, streamlining cross-border documentation and reducing transit time.

Cathay was the first airline to utilise the new logistics corridor, which was developed in cooperation with authorities in Hong Kong and Guangdong.

The airline has already conducted trial shipments of high-value seafood products including live lobsters and geoducks, while continuing to refine cross-border documentation processes, terminal handling procedures and intermodal trucking integration.

"We see the Air-Land Fresh Lane as a major opportunity," Evans said. "The Greater Bay Area is a large and growing consumption market."

Digitalisation supporting cargo operations

Alongside fleet and network development, Cathay Cargo is investing heavily in digitalisation to improve cargo visibility and operational efficiency.

The airline has been an early adopter of the International Air Transport Association's ONE Record data protocol, a digital standard designed to create a single, shared shipment data record accessible to all stakeholders across the air cargo supply chain.

In December 2024, Cathay became the first airline to implement ONE Record within certain forwarder integrations, enabling the exchange of electronic air waybill data and shipment status updates via application programming interfaces (APIs).

The following month, Sinotrans Hong Kong Air Transportation Development became the first Hong Kong-based freight forwarder to submit shipment documentation through the system.

Cathay Cargo has also integrated the platform with customs systems in multiple markets, allowing customers to receive real-time clearance updates from authorities including the European Union's ICS2 Import Control System, as well as customs agencies in the United States, Canada and the United Arab Emirates.

Initially available through Cathay's EzyCargo platform and ONE Record API connections, the service is expected to be rolled out more broadly across the airline's cargo customer base.

Positive outlook for cargo demand

Despite ongoing market volatility, Cathay Cargo remains optimistic about growth prospects.

The airline reported a 9.4% year-on-year increase in cargo volumes in 2025, driven by strong demand for specialised cargo solutions and a robust peak season.

Looking ahead, Evans expects overall cargo carrying capacity to increase by around 5–7% as additional passenger aircraft enter the fleet, boosting belly capacity and creating new network opportunities.

"I remain positive about the outlook," he said. "Our scale, our location and our ability to adjust capacity quickly give us strong advantages as the market continues to evolve."

Accelya renews partnership with Finnair Cargo to strengthen digital cargo operations

Global airline technology provider Accelya has announced the extension of its long-standing partnership with Finnair Cargo, reaffirming its role as the core technology partner supporting the carrier's cargo commercial, operational and financial systems.

Under the renewed agreement, Finnair Cargo will continue using Accelya's Cargo platform as its **central technology backbone**, supporting a wide range of business functions including commercial activities, operational processes, ground handling coordination and revenue accounting. The partnership underscores the growing importance of reliable digital platforms in managing increasingly complex air cargo ecosystems.

Supporting end-to-end cargo operations

Accelya's Cargo platform forms the foundation of Finnair Cargo's **end-to-end cargo management environment**, enabling accurate rating, warehouse operations, billing and financial settlement across its global network. Acting as both a commercial and financial control



system, the platform aligns booking, pricing and revenue governance, reducing manual intervention while ensuring operational accuracy and financial consistency as cargo volumes scale.

The technology also supports the ongoing digitalisation of cargo workflows, enabling airlines to streamline processes across the commercial, operational and financial domains while maintaining operational continuity.

As the air cargo sector becomes increasingly data-driven and interconnected, the platform provides a **stable digital infrastructure capable of handling fluctuating cargo volumes, multi-partner logistics networks and real-time operational requirements**. By integrating commercial decision-making with financial oversight, the system helps carriers maintain operational control in live cargo



environments while adapting to evolving industry demands.

Digital resilience at the core of cargo operations

For Finnair Cargo, the partnership extension reflects the strategic importance of technology reliability in sustaining global cargo operations and supporting future modernisation initiatives.

Gabriela Hiitola, Senior Vice President at Finnair Cargo, emphasised

the role of dependable digital systems in enabling efficient cargo operations.

“This extension reflects the importance of stability and trust in the systems that underpin our cargo business,” Hiitola said. “Accelya enables us to operate reliably today, while continuing to modernise how we manage our cargo operations and strengthen the digital resilience required for the long term.”

Andrew Wilcock, Chief Commercial Officer at Accelya, highlighted the

complexity of cargo environments and the need for resilient digital platforms capable of supporting large-scale airline operations.

“Cargo environments are complex and unforgiving of disruption,” Wilcock said. “Our role is to provide the continuity, expertise and digital foundation airlines need to operate at scale today, while supporting the ongoing evolution of their cargo businesses.”

Enabling digital transformation in air cargo

The extended partnership reinforces Accelya’s position as a key technology provider in the aviation sector, supporting airlines as they transition toward **more digital, integrated and data-driven cargo operations**. Its cargo technology solutions help carriers modernise legacy infrastructure, optimise revenue management and maintain financial governance while adapting to shifting market demands.

Accelya’s broader technology ecosystem processes **over \$23 billion in cargo revenue and supports approximately 30% of global air cargo capacity**, demonstrating the scale at which its platforms operate across the airline industry.

Meanwhile, Finnair Cargo continues to strengthen its digital cargo capabilities from its Helsinki hub, connecting Asia, Europe and North America through its cargo network. The carrier specialises in high-value and time-sensitive shipments such as pharmaceuticals, seafood and other perishables, handled through its advanced **COOL Nordic Cargo Hub at Helsinki Airport**, a facility designed to enhance transparency and operational efficiency through technology-driven cargo handling systems.

By extending the partnership, both companies aim to ensure that Finnair Cargo maintains a **robust digital foundation capable of supporting growth, operational efficiency and increasingly complex cargo supply chains**.

Lufthansa Cargo: A strong partner for the global automotive industry



- *Automotive is a strategic focus industry for Lufthansa Cargo, offering tailored solutions for manufacturers, suppliers and logistics partners worldwide.*
- *Recent charter operations across Europe, North Africa and in the high-value segment demonstrate the company's operational strength and network flexibility.*
- *Air freight remains the fastest and most reliable transport mode for time-critical automotive logistics – from safeguarding production to transporting prototypes and high-value vehicles.*

Modern automotive manufacturing is characterized by globally interconnected production networks, modular platform architectures and increasingly shorter development cycles. At the same time, supply chains face growing demands for speed, flexibility and resilience. In this environment, air freight plays a critical role by securing production continuity, accelerating market launches and enabling the reliable transport of sensitive and high-value goods.

Since 2024, Automotive has been established as a strategic focus industry at Lufthansa Cargo, with dedicated efforts to further develop

industry-specific solutions. The air freight carrier provides tailored transport solutions for manufacturers, suppliers and logistics partners – ranging from time-critical production shipments to complete vehicles and high-value cargo. “Our automotive customers expect maximum speed and reliability. With our global network and specialized teams, we ensure supply chains remain stable even under significant time pressure,” says Frank Bauer, Chief Operations Officer at Lufthansa Cargo.

Safeguarding production within less than 24 hours

A recent charter operation in

Europe illustrates how this expertise translates into practice. After missing components threatened production in Belgrade, an A321 freighter departed Frankfurt less than 24 hours after the request was received at the end of January. The shipment was loaded in Vienna using 13 main deck and 10 lower deck positions before being transported onward without delay. Two additional charter flights followed in the subsequent days. The operation highlights Lufthansa Cargo's ability to quickly stabilize production risks and provide capacity at short notice, including the successful commercialization of return flights.

Scalable solutions for complex production requirements

Lufthansa Cargo's operational strength is equally evident in large-scale production support: In February, the company operated eleven A321F charter flights from Casablanca for Mercedes-Benz within just eleven days. Despite exceptionally high airport utilization, local teams collaboratively ensured smooth operations and organized additional cargo and loading units at short notice to accommodate the required shipment volumes. Rapid operational adjustments and close coordination across multiple teams enabled the successful execution of the flights, demonstrating Lufthansa Cargo's scalability and responsiveness in time-critical production environments while proving the close cooperation with Mercedes-Benz.

Precision handling for high-value transport

Automotive logistics also includes the transport of highly valuable one-of-a-kind assets. In early February 2026, an exclusive, custom-built vehicle based on a Lamborghini Aventador

was transported from Cairo to Europe. Following short-notice adjustments related to customs and documentation requirements, Lufthansa Cargo teams ensured safe and on-time delivery. The operation underscores the company's expertise in handling high-value shipments and managing complex international coordination processes.

The strategic development of

Lufthansa Cargo's automotive segment is led by Rachid Massaoudi, Senior Manager Industry Development – Automotive. He analyzes global market requirements, advances industry-specific solutions and strengthens collaboration between customers, product development and operational teams. "In close coordination with our operational units, we translate

individual customer requirements into feasible and tailor-made transport solutions," says Massaoudi.

With this broad range of capabilities, Lufthansa Cargo positions itself as a strong partner for manufacturers, suppliers and logistics partners across the global automotive industry, consistently pursuing its mission of "Enabling Global Business."

Kale Logistics and Tech Mahindra Forge Strategic Alliance to Accelerate Digital Transformation in Global Cargo Ecosystems

In a significant move to modernize global supply chains, Kale Logistics Solutions has entered into a strategic partnership with Tech Mahindra, aiming to drive large-scale digital transformation across the logistics sector, with a particular emphasis on ports and airports.

The collaboration brings together Kale's established expertise in cargo community systems with Tech Mahindra's extensive capabilities in engineering, consulting, and digital transformation. The joint initiative is designed to deliver integrated, technology-led solutions that streamline cargo operations, enhance visibility, and enable more efficient, data-driven logistics networks worldwide.

At the core of the partnership is a shared vision to digitize end-to-end cargo processes. By leveraging SaaS-based platforms, artificial intelligence, and advanced analytics, the companies plan to replace traditional paper-based workflows with seamless, paperless systems. These innovations are expected to significantly improve operational transparency, regulatory compliance, and sustainability outcomes across the logistics value chain.

Industry stakeholders—including shippers, freight forwarders, ground handlers, and terminal operators—stand to benefit from enhanced coordination and real-time data exchange. The deployment of AI-powered platforms will enable predictive decision-making, helping logistics hubs better manage capacity, reduce bottlenecks, and improve overall cargo flow efficiency.

Leadership from both organizations emphasized the transformative potential of the alliance. Vineet Malhotra, Co-Founder and Director at Kale Logistics Solutions, described the partnership as a pivotal step in advancing the digitization of global trade. By combining domain-specific cargo expertise with scalable digital infrastructure, the collaboration aims to



standardize and simplify complex logistics processes across international markets.

From Tech Mahindra's perspective, the agreement aligns with the growing demand for intelligent and resilient supply chain solutions. With nearly two decades of experience in serving global logistics players and Fortune 500 companies, the company brings a robust ecosystem of technologies and partnerships to the table. Its leadership highlighted the importance of AI-driven automation and collaborative data ecosystems in shaping the future of logistics.

The joint initiative is expected to deliver measurable gains in operational predictability, cost efficiency, and service quality. By enabling faster cargo movement and reducing administrative overhead, the partnership aims to unlock latent capacity within existing infrastructure while improving the overall customer experience.

As global supply chains continue to evolve under increasing pressure for speed, transparency, and sustainability, the Kale–Tech Mahindra alliance represents a strategic effort to build connected, intelligent logistics ecosystems capable of meeting the demands of modern trade.

International Air Cargo in Latin America and the Caribbean Closes 2025 with Moderate Growth



International air cargo traffic across Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) reached **4.1 million tonnes in 2025**, marking a **3.2 percent year-on-year increase**, according to industry data. The regional growth was moderate overall, reflecting a split between stable large markets and robust expansions in mid-sized economies.

Mid-Sized Markets Drive Regional Expansion

The year's growth was largely powered by **mid-sized markets**, which recorded double-digit increases:

- **Peru:** +15.4%
- **Panama:** +14.7%
- **Argentina:** +11.1%
- **Costa Rica:** +10.9%
- **El Salvador:** +10.7%

These countries contributed significantly to the overall increase, highlighting a diversification of growth beyond the region's traditional air cargo powerhouses.

Large Markets Showed Mixed Performance

The **largest markets**—Brazil,

Colombia, and Mexico—accounted for **approximately 60 percent of total regional volume**, but registered only marginal changes:

- **Brazil:** 880,930 tonnes (–1.2%)
- **Colombia:** 818,415 tonnes (+1.6%)
- **Mexico:** 661,429 tonnes (–0.3%)

While their performance remained largely stable, these markets continue to dominate the LAC air cargo landscape in absolute volume terms.

United States Remains Key External Market

The United States maintained its role as the **primary external trading partner**, with over half of the region's international air cargo either originating in or destined for the U.S. The **Colombia–United States corridor** remained the largest in the region, transporting **500,333 tonnes** during the year.

Mexico Expands Trade with Asia, Especially China

Mexico strengthened its international cargo ties with Asia in

2025. While the **Mexico–United States corridor** continues to be the country's main route, **cargo volumes between Mexico and China surged 14.6 percent**, largely driven by higher imports from China.

Cargo Operations Concentrated in Major Hubs

Air cargo activity remained highly concentrated in key regional hubs. Airports including **São Paulo–Guarulhos (GRU)**, **Bogotá (BOG)**, **Lima (LIM)**, **Panama City–Tocumen (PTY)**, and **Santiago (SCL)** handled the bulk of their countries' international cargo volumes. These hubs continue to serve as the dominant logistics nodes in Latin America's air cargo network, reinforcing the region's reliance on a limited number of high-capacity airports.

The 2025 performance highlights a **region balancing steady volumes in its largest markets with dynamic growth in mid-sized economies**, underscoring the evolving nature of LAC's international air cargo landscape.

Lufthansa Cargo integrates Add-on Services into the digital booking process

Add-on Services are now even easier and more transparent to access within the digital booking process



Five Add-on Services – from “Sustainable Choice” to “smartULD” – address specific requirements along the transport chain

Customers can add them to their booking individually with just a few clicks

With its Add-on Services, Lufthansa Cargo enables customers to enhance airfreight transports with targeted additional services – from supporting the use of more sustainable aviation fuel to personally accompanying valuable works of art during ground handling or receiving real-time information on the status of temperature-sensitive shipments.

The offering builds on Lufthansa Cargo’s modular product portfolio. Customers first select a “Product” and define the required “Speed” before

adding suitable Add-on Services to their booking.

The additional services are now even more closely integrated into the digital booking journey. At the end of the booking flow, all available Add-on Services for the selected Product, Speed and route are displayed including transparent pricing and can be added with just a few clicks. The integration of the services “toDoor” and “Insurance” into the digital booking process is still in progress.

Five Add-on Services are currently available:

Sustainable Choice: the Add-on Service that offers more sustainable transport options for shipments. Customers can support the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)

and contribute to certified climate protection projects corresponding to the CO₂ emissions of their shipment.

Personal Supervision: the additional service for irreplaceable artworks. Representatives of art logistics companies or curators can personally accompany valuable art shipments during ground handling. The service is currently available in Frankfurt and Munich.

smartULD: the Add-on Service for real-time data transmission. It enables continuous temperature- and data monitoring of temperature-sensitive goods and is available with the “Active Temp Control” product.

toDoor: the Add-on Service for direct delivery to the consignee’s bonded warehouse. Delivery is carried out via Lufthansa Cargo’s Road Feeder Service.

Insurance: a door-to-door air freight insurance solution beyond standard liability limits. It protects air freight shipments against damage throughout the entire transport chain and is offered in cooperation with partner Delvag for all products.

With this portfolio, Lufthansa Cargo serves frequently requested customer needs along the transport chain and provides additional flexibility for designing individual logistics solutions. The modular offering allows customers to expand their bookings with targeted additional services and tailor transport solutions even more flexibly to their individual requirements.

Integrating these services into the digital booking process also marks another step in the continuous development of Lufthansa Cargo’s digital customer journey. Further Add-on Services are already in development.

Atlas Air Places Record Order for Airbus A350F, Becoming Largest Customer for Next-Generation Freighter



Atlas Air Worldwide Holdings has placed a landmark order for 20 Airbus A350F aircraft, becoming the largest customer for the next-generation freighter platform and marking a significant shift in widebody cargo fleet strategy.

The agreement represents the largest single order to date for the A350F and positions Atlas Air at the forefront of adopting new-generation, fuel-efficient freighter technology. The aircraft are expected to support long-term fleet growth and will be deployed across the company's global customer base, which spans multiple business models including ACMI, charter, and scheduled cargo operations.

Strategic Fleet Expansion and Supplier Diversification

The order reflects Atlas Air's commitment to maintaining a modern, high-performance fleet capable of meeting evolving industry demands. By introducing the A350F into its

operations, the company is also expanding its supplier base to include Airbus and engine manufacturer Rolls-Royce, adding strategic flexibility to its procurement and operational framework.

Atlas Air's leadership highlighted that securing early delivery positions for the aircraft was a key consideration, enabling the company to align fleet renewal with anticipated market demand and regulatory developments.

Next-Generation Performance and Efficiency

The A350F is designed to deliver significant operational advantages over previous-generation freighters. Built with more than 70% advanced materials, the aircraft benefits from a substantially lighter airframe—resulting in an estimated 46-tonne lower take-off weight compared to competing derivative models.

Among its standout features is the industry's largest main deck cargo door, optimised for standard pallets

and containers, which enhances loading efficiency and maximises cargo capacity. The aircraft also offers improved payload and range capabilities, supporting long-haul operations with greater efficiency.

Sustainability and Regulatory Compliance

A central factor in the aircraft's appeal is its environmental performance. The A350F is designed to fully comply with upcoming International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) CO₂ emissions standards set to take effect in 2027, making it the only freighter currently positioned to meet these enhanced requirements.

This compliance, combined with improved fuel efficiency, aligns with broader industry efforts to reduce carbon emissions and transition toward more sustainable air cargo operations.

Industry Impact and Market Positioning

The order marks a significant milestone for both Atlas Air and Airbus, reinforcing the A350F's position as a leading next-generation freighter solution. For Airbus, the deal represents a major endorsement from one of the world's largest outsourced aviation logistics providers and signals growing market confidence in new-build freighter platforms.

For Atlas Air, the investment underscores a forward-looking strategy focused on scalability, efficiency, and environmental responsibility. As global air cargo demand continues to evolve, the introduction of the A350F is expected to enhance the company's ability to serve a diverse customer base with greater flexibility and performance.

Unilode and SATCO strengthen partnership with new LAX MRO Facility and Long-Term Net Supply Agreement

Unilode and SATCO have announced a significant milestone in their strategic partnership, marked by the opening of a new Maintenance and Repair (MRO) facility at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and a long-term cargo net supply agreement supporting Unilode's global network.

The newly opened LAX MRO facility represents a joint investment by SATCO and Unilode in the Americas region. At this location, Unilode will provide on-site

ULD maintenance and repair services in support of SATCO's growing installed base of equipment, strengthening operational capabilities and customer support.

The opening of the LAX facility marks an important step in further expanding Unilode's presence across the Americas while delivering the highest standards in MRO services to meet the growing needs of the aviation industry. On behalf of SATCO, the facility will play a key role in delivering the same proven services already provided by Unilode across its global maintenance and repair network.

As part of this strengthened collaboration, Unilode has made the strategic decision that it will also begin sourcing ULD-related products



from SATCO. This agreement reflects Unilode's continued focus on supply chain resilience, product performance, and long-term strategic partnerships.

"The opening of the new LAX facility and our decision to integrate SATCO nets into the Unilode network mark an important step forward in our partnership," said **Janis Balkens, Chief Operations Officer of Unilode**. "This collaboration mirrors the successful operating model we have established globally, strengthens our supply chain, and reinforces the strong relationship we have built with SATCO. We value this partnership and look forward to growing together in support of our customers worldwide."

"We place great importance on

long-term relationships built on trust, quality, and shared values," said **Michael Howell, SVP Operations at SATCO**. "The opening of the LAX facility and our expanded partnership with Unilode reflect our shared commitment to supporting the global air cargo industry with reliable safety-first products, including SATCO's industry-leading Fire Resistant ULDs and Fire Containment Covers. We are excited about the future of our relationship with Unilode and the opportunities ahead."

Unilode extends its appreciation to SATCO for its continued collaboration, investment, and commitment to quality, and looks forward to a successful long-term partnership, delivering tangible benefits to airlines and cargo operators worldwide.

Air Cargo Perishables Remain Resilient While Pharma Delivers Strong Value



Global air cargo volumes continue to show a marked divergence between the perishables and pharmaceutical sectors, according to newly released insights from strategy consulting firm Aevean. Collectively, food, perishables, and healthcare products account for more than 21% of worldwide airfreight volumes, yet their value and yield dynamics differ sharply.

Maarten Wormer, head of consulting at Aevean, presented the findings on day two of the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) World Cargo Symposium (WCS), highlighting contrasting trends across these high-profile cargo verticals.

Food and Perishables: Stable Volumes, Limited Value

Food and perishables constitute 17% of global air cargo by weight but account for only 1% of total cargo value, resulting in a negative yield premium of 38%. Despite the

absence of overall growth in 2025, Wormer described the sector as “highly resilient,” with its share of global airfreight consistently ranging from 17% to 19% since 2019. Monthly volumes remain subject to seasonality.

Regionally, the Asia-to-Europe trade lane posted a 14% increase, underscoring strong demand in that corridor. Latin America continues to dominate perishables exports, moving 1.3 million tonnes in 2025—equivalent to 26% of the global total—primarily consisting of flowers, fruits, and vegetables. Trade between Latin America and Europe expanded 10% year-on-year, supported by the Mercosur trade agreement, while the Latin America–North America corridor saw a modest 1% decline. Intra-Asia volumes have now matched Latin America's largest trade lanes.

Cut flowers remain a critical driver for air cargo, with six out of every ten flowers shipped globally originating from

Latin America. In addition, global salmon demand contributed approximately 250,000 tonnes to air cargo volumes between 2016 and 2025.

Pharmaceuticals: High Value, Selective Growth

In contrast, healthcare and pharmaceutical products represent just 4% of global airfreight by weight but account for 11% of cargo value, achieving a yield premium of 39%. The sector experienced modest 2% growth in 2025, largely driven by Latin American exports, which grew 23% year-on-year. Other regions remained flat.

Wormer noted a distinct trend toward higher-value pharmaceutical products, including biologics, reagents, and specialized medications. While volumes of biologics and reagents fell by 3%, their value rose by 4% and 8% respectively, reflecting a shift toward premium, high-yield cargo. Switzerland is expanding its market share in biologics, and India is increasing its vaccine exports.

Tariff-induced supply chain adjustments also influenced trade flows. For example, pharmaceutical exports from the Dominican Republic to the United States rose 267% year-on-year, whereas exports from China to the U.S. declined by 12%, highlighting the impact of cost-avoidance strategies on route planning.

Outlook

The data emphasizes the stability of the perishables sector alongside the lucrative potential of pharmaceuticals. While food and perishables maintain steady volumes with regional variability, the pharma sector offers high-value cargo opportunities for carriers, reinforcing its strategic importance in global airfreight.

US Air Forwarders Warn of Rising Operational Risks Amid Prolonged DHS and TSA Shutdown



The US Airforwarders Association has raised mounting concerns over the operational stability of the United States aviation system, as an extended shutdown affecting the Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration continues to disrupt critical infrastructure and workforce capacity.

The shutdown, in effect since 13 February, has left thousands of federal aviation security personnel working without pay, creating increasing strain across airport operations. According to the association, more than 300 TSA officers have already resigned, intensifying pressure on an already stretched workforce and raising alarms over staffing resilience within the aviation security framework.

In its latest statement, the AfA warned that while the most visible disruptions are currently concentrated at passenger security checkpoints, the broader implications for cargo operations are becoming increasingly evident. Reduced staffing levels and operational inefficiencies are expected to cascade across airport systems, affecting cargo screening, airside access, and overall throughput.

The association подчеркнул that freight forwarders rely heavily on predictable and stable airport environments to manage time-sensitive shipments. Any prolonged degradation in security operations complicates capacity planning, disrupts service reliability, and increases the risk of delays across supply chains. As the shutdown extends beyond a

month, concerns are growing that recovery timelines could lengthen and disruptions could become more deeply embedded within logistics networks.

Compounding the situation, multiple funding proposals aimed at resolving the shutdown have failed to secure approval in Congress, prolonging uncertainty for the aviation and logistics sectors. Industry stakeholders warn that continued inaction could further erode operational efficiency and confidence in the US air cargo system.

The AfA also highlighted that the industry is already navigating a complex landscape shaped by evolving tariff policies and geopolitical instability, including ongoing tensions in the Middle East. Against this backdrop, the additional strain from the shutdown is amplifying risks for freight forwarders tasked with maintaining consistent and reliable cargo flows.

Echoing these concerns, airline leaders—including executives from Delta Air Lines and American Airlines—have called on US lawmakers to take urgent action. In a joint appeal, they emphasized the need to restore funding, ensure timely payment for federal workers, and safeguard the operational integrity of the nation's aviation system.

The AfA concluded by urging policymakers to act swiftly to resolve the impasse, warning that the longer the shutdown persists, the greater the risk of widespread disruption to cargo operations and global supply chains. Restoring stability, the association stressed, is essential not only for the aviation sector but for the broader network of businesses dependent on efficient and secure movement of goods.



Wamos Air Renews Long-Term ULD Partnership with Jettainer

Madrid-headquartered charter carrier Wamos Air has extended its long-standing partnership with ULD management specialist Jettainer, reinforcing a collaboration

that has supported the airline's cargo and passenger operations for several years.

Under the renewed agreement, Jettainer—a wholly owned subsidiary

of Lufthansa Cargo—will continue supplying and managing a dedicated fleet of modern unit load devices (ULDs) for Wamos Air. The arrangement ensures the airline maintains reliable

access to cargo containers tailored to its operational requirements while benefiting from scalable capacity as demand fluctuates.

According to Jettainer, the partnership includes the provision of a customised ULD fleet that can be dynamically adjusted to match Wamos Air's operational needs. The equipment is managed through Jettainer's digital platform, JettwareNG, which enables real-time monitoring, tracking, and optimisation of ULD utilisation across the airline's network.

Founded in 2003 and based at Madrid's Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport, Wamos Air has built a reputation as one of Spain's leading charter airlines. Since October 2024, the carrier has been part of the Latin American aviation holding company Abra Group, the region's second-largest airline group.

Today, Wamos Air specialises in short- and long-term charter operations alongside ACMI (aircraft, crew, maintenance and insurance) services. These services support both passenger and cargo flights on behalf of other airlines, enabling carriers to supplement capacity during peak periods or operational disruptions. The airline operates an all-widebody fleet centred on the Airbus A330, an aircraft type widely used for long-haul passenger and cargo missions.

The relationship between Wamos Air and Jettainer dates back to 2018. Since then, the ULD provider has played a key role in supporting the airline's flexible operating model, particularly in the ACMI segment where rapid capacity adjustments are often required.

Salvador Martínez, vice president of operations at Wamos Air, emphasised the importance of the continued partnership.

"Jettainer has been a strong partner from day one, a company we can consistently rely on," Martínez said. "Their operational excellence aligns perfectly with our high-quality standards. Thanks to Jettainer, we

benefit from a comprehensive ULD supply and the flexibility to support our wet lease operations with additional ULD capacity whenever required."

For its part, Jettainer also highlighted the strategic value of the relationship. **Chief executive Jan-Wilhelm Breithaupt** described Wamos Air as a key partner in the charter and ACMI market.

"Wamos Air is Spain's leading

charter airline, consistently tailoring its services to the needs of its customers and placing the highest value on service quality," Breithaupt said.

The renewed contract underscores the growing importance of specialised ULD management services as airlines seek greater efficiency and flexibility in cargo logistics—particularly in sectors such as charter and wet-lease operations where operational requirements can change rapidly.





In a landmark shift in the global express air cargo market, **UPS** has overtaken **FedEx** to operate the world's busiest express cargo hub. The carrier's **Worldport facility at Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport (SDF)** now surpasses FedEx's Memphis hub (MEM) in both daily flight operations and tonnage capacity, according to the latest *Global Cargo Hub Review* from the **Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development at DePaul University**.

"In every scenario for flight activity and available tonnage capacity we considered, Louisville is now larger than Memphis," noted Joseph Schwieterman, lead author of the report. "People often immediately think of FedEx's Memphis hub when discussing express air cargo, but UPS's Louisville hub has firmly elbowed its way to the top."

UPS Surpasses FedEx to Claim Title of World's Largest Express Air Cargo Hub

Strategic Investment and Operational Flexibility Drive Growth

Louisville's rise reflects UPS's strategic investment in infrastructure, capacity expansion, and adaptive operations to meet changing freight demand. The Worldport facility now handles an average of **202.3 peak-day flights**, outpacing Memphis's **164.7 departures** by nearly 40 flights, even after accounting for weather-related disruptions.

FedEx's Memphis hub has reduced daytime departures by **66 flights (60.3%)** since September 2022 as part of its "**FedEx 2.0**" initiative, which aims to integrate ground and air operations for improved payload utilisation and operational efficiency. By contrast, UPS has maintained peak-day schedules and slightly reduced afternoon flights, ensuring consistent throughput.

Beyond peak periods, Louisville also surpasses Memphis in off-peak and cumulative weekly flight activity, consolidating its position as the busiest hub globally by total operations.

Tonnage and Volume Leadership

In addition to flight activity, Louisville leads in tonnage and volume. On peak days, UPS SDF processes **33.4% more tonnage and 33% more volume** than FedEx MEM. Other major hubs ranking behind include **FedEx Liege (Belgium), DHL Leipzig (Germany), and SF Airlines' Ezhou hub (China)**, each operating more than 45 flights per day, while FedEx's Paris Charles de Gaulle hub follows closely.

Despite Louisville's dominance, Memphis retains unmatched network reach, serving **116 nonstop destinations** on a typical peak day versus 98 for Louisville. Memphis also maintains the highest number of early-morning departures (pre-6 a.m.), underscoring its continued strategic influence in express logistics.

Global Hub Expansion

While U.S. hubs continue to dominate the sector, the report notes rapid growth in China and Europe. **SF Airlines** and **China Postal Service** are expanding hub operations at **Ezhou Huahu International Airport** and other facilities in Beijing, Shenzhen, Hangzhou, and Nanjing, mirroring Western hub models. Japan's Kansai

International Airport hosts key operations from SF Airlines and Shandong Airlines.

Nonetheless, the world's largest express hubs remain heavily concentrated in the northern hemisphere, operated by **UPS, FedEx, DHL, SF Airlines**, and their strategic partners. Comparable-scale hubs have yet to emerge in Africa, India, South America, or other regions.

Evolving Market Dynamics

Louisville's ascendance illustrates the evolving dynamics of the express air cargo market: strategic infrastructure, responsiveness to shifting freight patterns, and operational agility are reshaping hub hierarchies. As global e-commerce and air freight demand continue to grow, **UPS Worldport at Louisville sets a new benchmark for efficiency, capacity, and peak-day throughput.**

Key Insights:

- UPS SDF handles **33% more peak-day volume** than FedEx MEM.
- FedEx MEM maintains the **highest**



pre-6 a.m. departures (82 vs. 69 at Louisville).

- Top 12 global hubs remain **northern hemisphere-centric**, led by UPS, FedEx, DHL, and SF Airlines.
- Rapid growth in Europe and China reflects adoption of Western hub models.
- Louisville's operational efficiency and flexibility now set the global benchmark.

Louisville's Worldport now represents the **epicenter of express air cargo operations**, signaling a pivotal shift in hub dominance and highlighting the importance of investment, operational strategy, and market responsiveness in today's competitive logistics landscape.

Peak Day Express Hub Snapshot

Rank	Hub	Carrier	Avg. Daily Flights	Key Notes
1	Louisville Muhammad Ali Intl (SDF)	UPS	202.3	Largest hub globally; strong peak & off-peak operations
2	Memphis Intl (MEM)	FedEx	164.7	Retains largest network reach: 116 nonstop destinations
3	Liege Airport (LGG)	FedEx	45+	Major European hub
4	Leipzig/Halle Airport (LEJ)	DHL	45+	Leading European express hub
5	Ezhou Huahu Intl (EHU)	SF Airlines	45+	Growing Chinese hub; 50 peak-day flights
6	Paris Charles de Gaulle (CDG)	FedEx	40+	European feeder hub

Liege Airport Records Strong Start to 2026 as Airfreight Volumes Surge



Belgium's leading cargo hub, Liege Airport (LGG), has begun 2026 on a strong footing, reporting significant growth in airfreight volumes during the first two months of the year following a highly successful performance in 2025.

According to the airport operator, cumulative freight volumes for January and February reached **219,807 tonnes**, representing an **18.6% year-on-year increase** compared with the same period in 2025. The growth was driven largely by strong seasonal demand linked to the pre-Valentine's Day flower trade, alongside continued expansion in cross-border e-commerce shipments.

Flower season and e-commerce boost volumes

The robust start to the year highlights the continued importance

of specialised cargo segments at the Belgian gateway. The airport reported particularly strong activity during the weeks leading up to Valentine's Day, when large volumes of fresh flowers move rapidly across international markets by air.

Export shipments during the January–February period increased by **25%**, while imports grew by **14.6%**, reflecting the airport's growing role as a distribution hub for European and intercontinental cargo flows.

Aircraft activity also rose in line with the surge in freight demand. LGG recorded **4,653 cargo aircraft movements**, representing a **6% increase year on year**.

Emirates SkyCargo expands freighter presence

Part of the growth has been supported by an expansion in

operations by **Emirates SkyCargo**, the freight division of Emirates. The Dubai-based carrier has increased its freighter services to Liege, now operating **up to six weekly cargo flights** through the airport.

Three weekly services operated with Boeing 777F freighter aircraft connect LGG with O'Hare International Airport in Chicago and Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai. These flights primarily transport pharmaceutical shipments, a sector experiencing rapid growth at the airport.

An additional three weekly Emirates freighter services link Liege with Hong Kong, focusing mainly on high-volume **e-commerce parcels** destined for European markets.

Airport officials noted that the introduction of these regular flights marks a shift in Emirates' operations at LGG—from occasional **ad hoc**

charters to scheduled services—adding approximately **600 tonnes of cargo capacity per week** through the Belgian hub.

New veterinary facilities support live animal logistics

Beyond cargo volumes, LGG has continued to expand its specialised logistics infrastructure. In early February, the airport officially inaugurated newly renovated veterinary facilities designed for **health inspection and quarantine of live animals** transiting through the airport.

The upgraded border control station, now known as the **LGG Vet Center**, works alongside the airport's established **Horse Inn** infrastructure to support the transport of high-value horses and other live animals.

This niche capability was recently highlighted when Cathay Cargo transported show jumping horses from Liege to Hong Kong for the prestigious Longines International Horse Show earlier this year.

Leadership transition in sales and marketing

Meanwhile, organisational changes are underway within the airport's commercial leadership. **Frédéric Brun** will assume the role of **Vice President Sales and Marketing ad interim**, succeeding **Torsten Wefers**, who is set to leave the airport later this month.

Wefers has served as Vice President Sales and Marketing since April 2022 and is also a member of the airport's executive committee.

Commenting on the airport's performance, Brun highlighted the continued strength of specialised cargo segments.

"The business is running at full capacity, with major successes such as the flower community created around logistics for flowers, which has grown by **15% since its foundation two years ago**," he said. "Valentine's Day obviously contributed to this increase in flower sales."

Pharma sector emerging as key growth driver

Brun also emphasised the rapid expansion of pharmaceutical shipments at LGG, which are becoming an increasingly important pillar of the airport's cargo strategy.

"We are intensifying our diversification and the second vertical growing nicely is the pharma business, with strong growth in pharmaceutical products," he explained.

The airport has adopted a **vertical-market strategy**, focusing on specialised cargo communities—including flowers, pharmaceuticals, live animals and e-commerce—to strengthen its role in high-value logistics segments.

"This specific approach by vertical market is proving its relevance with participatory communities. This is a great success for Cargoland," Brun added.

Cargoland vision for Europe's cargo future

The **Cargoland** initiative represents the airport's long-term development strategy, positioning Liege as a **next-generation cargo hub in Europe**. The project aims to deliver advanced cargo infrastructure integrating

digitalisation, specialised equipment, expanded handling capacity and multimodal connectivity.

Once fully completed by **2040**, the airport operator expects Cargoland to place LGG among **Europe's top three cargo airports**, offering a comprehensive logistics ecosystem designed to support future airfreight growth.

Optimism tempered by geopolitical uncertainty

Despite the strong start to the year, Brun cautioned that geopolitical tensions could affect the global air cargo market in the months ahead.

"Exports are growing strongly, particularly to China and the US," he said. "The airport is becoming increasingly mature in terms of digitalisation, and the level of quality demanded by our customers is driving the entire ecosystem forward."

However, he also pointed to growing instability in global trade routes.

"The geopolitical situation is highly unstable with the recent events in the Middle East region. This year will again be hectic and rock and roll for air cargo, but we remain cautiously optimistic for 2026."



Glasgow Prestwick Airport Surpasses 25 Million Parcels Through Terminal E



Glasgow Prestwick Airport (Prestwick) has reached a major e-commerce milestone, processing over 25 million parcels through its dedicated Terminal E facility since May 2025. The achievement underscores the Scottish airport's rapid emergence as a key hub for UK cross-border e-commerce.

The milestone comes after a year of sustained growth, during which Prestwick handled more than 600 e-commerce cargo flights, over 10,000 pallets, and 23,000 tonnes of imports. The airport's expansion reflects both strategic investment in infrastructure and the broader surge in international online trade.

"The volume of parcels handled at Prestwick demonstrates the strength of demand for a reliable, uncongested gateway to the UK, and the expertise of our team in delivering at scale," said **Ian Forgie, Chief Executive Officer of Glasgow Prestwick Airport**. "By growing our route network, investing in our processing capability, and continuing to recruit locally, Prestwick is strengthening the reach of Scottish exporters and creating skilled jobs and

real economic value for Ayrshire and the whole United Kingdom."

Prestwick's growth has been driven by the introduction of new long-haul cargo services in 2025. **Air China Cargo** and **China Southern Airlines** established UK operating bases at the airport, enabling 12 scheduled weekly cargo flights directly to China. These routes are expected to facilitate £250 million of cross-border trade in 2026, further cementing the airport's role in connecting UK exporters to Asian markets.

The airport also expanded its e-commerce infrastructure last year, with **Royal Mail** and **EVRi** establishing hubs within Prestwick's 5,302 square metre dedicated e-commerce facility. The investments have enhanced the airport's capacity to handle rapid parcel throughput while maintaining efficiency for international logistics partners.

Speaking to *Air Cargo News*, **Nico Le Roux, Prestwick's Business Development Director**, highlighted that regulatory changes in the US, specifically adjustments to de minimis rules for e-commerce shipments, had helped catalyse the airport's growth.

"The strategy that we implemented took about a year to come to fruition," Le Roux said. "Carriers wanted to fly to Prestwick but faced capacity constraints. Once capacity freed up from US routes, we saw a notable increase in flights into Prestwick."

The airport's achievements were recognised in December 2025 when Prestwick was named **Freight Business of the Year at the Logistics UK Awards**, a testament to its contribution to the UK's logistics and trade sectors.

With continued investment in route expansion and processing capability, Prestwick is positioning itself as a vital gateway for e-commerce, supporting both domestic and international supply chains while creating economic impact for Ayrshire and beyond.

ode's shared ethos means this partnership has exceptional potential for continued growth."

XPO's services extend beyond global forwarding. As your end-to-end logistics provider, we offer a wide range of services. These include multimodal solutions, 4PL, Control Towers, logistics services, and more.

Newcastle Airport advances multi-million-pound AirLink project to boost regional cargo and jobs



Newcastle Airport is moving forward with its ambitious **AirLink development**, a £multi-million project designed to strengthen the North East's logistics infrastructure, create thousands of jobs, and generate up to **£165 million in annual economic impact**. The proposed facility, covering **620,000 sq ft of land south of the runway**, will serve as a state-of-the-art cargo hub, expanding the Airport's growing air freight operations. Currently, Newcastle handles approximately **4,000 tonnes of cargo annually**, and AirLink is expected to significantly scale this capacity.

The development aims to provide dedicated space for **cargo operators, freight forwarders, and ground handling agents**, positioning AirLink as the only facility of its kind in the North East. Newcastle Airport anticipates that the project could generate **up to 1,000 direct jobs on-site**, with a further **900 roles supported indirectly** through associated supply chains and business partners.

Showcasing regional growth at MIPIM

AirLink was highlighted this week at **MIPIM**, the global property and investment conference in Cannes, France, alongside other flagship regional developments. Representatives from Newcastle Airport, the **North East Combined Authority, Newcastle City Council**, and **Invest Newcastle** presented the scheme to international investors, showcasing the North East as a prime location for strategic logistics and industrial investment.

Public consultation events are ongoing to engage **residents and local businesses**, while Newcastle Airport continues discussions with potential occupiers for the facility.

The Airport has selected **Buccleuch Property**, in partnership with **Argon Properties**, as its preferred developer for AirLink. Planning application submissions are expected shortly, marking a key milestone in bringing the project to fruition.

Economic and operational benefits

Alice Andreasen, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Newcastle Airport, highlighted the strategic importance of AirLink for regional economic growth.

"AirLink is an exciting development that would deliver major benefits for the North East – creating thousands of jobs, generating millions for the economy, and unlocking more investment opportunities," Andreasen said.

She noted that Newcastle Airport already contributes more than **£1 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) annually**, employing around **3,500 people on-site** and supporting **17,000 additional roles through its supply chain**. "AirLink has the potential to transform our cargo operations further, strengthening the region's position as a leading cargo gateway," Andreasen added.

Strategic regional significance

Phil Witcherley, Director of Economic Growth and Innovation at the North East Combined Authority, emphasised the broader impact of AirLink on the regional economy.

"Newcastle Airport is a major regional asset, and AirLink is exactly the type of development that would drive further growth and investment in the region," Witcherley said. "With the potential to create thousands of new jobs, the facility would significantly strengthen the region's logistics and supply chain capabilities and sends a clear message that the North East is growing, ambitious, and fit to compete on a global stage."

Facility features and cargo capabilities

AirLink is expected to include **modern, purpose-built cargo units with direct apron access**, allowing for swift loading and unloading of aircraft. The facility is designed to accommodate multiple cargo operators and logistics providers, supporting both existing operations and future growth in air freight demand.

With the project progressing toward planning submission, Newcastle Airport is set to reinforce its role as a **central logistics hub** for the North East, combining significant economic impact with enhanced operational capabilities in cargo and freight services.

Singapore Changi and Frankfurt Airports Join Cargo iQ to Strengthen Global Airfreight Standards



Singapore Changi Airport and Frankfurt Airport have joined Cargo iQ as strategic members, marking a significant expansion of the quality standards group's reach across the global air cargo network. The announcement was made during the International Air Transport Association (IATA) World Cargo Symposium (WCS) 2026 in Lima, Peru.

Marie Seco-Köppen, executive director of Cargo iQ, confirmed that both airports will collaborate with the organisation to develop tailored implementation pathways, defining the value propositions and operational requirements of their membership.

"Airports play a key role in the air cargo supply chain, and their inclusion in the Cargo iQ framework will

strengthen collaboration across all member types," Seco-Köppen said. "The leadership and operational perspective provided by these airports will be instrumental in advancing industry quality standards and improving the efficiency of cargo handling."

Cargo iQ's Expanding Role

Founded by airlines and freight forwarders to improve supply chain reliability, Cargo iQ is a not-for-profit organisation that develops and implements standards aimed at enhancing customer service within the air cargo sector. The group now has more than 60 members, spanning airlines, forwarders, ground handlers, IT solution providers, and road feeder services.

Rutger-Jan Pegels, vice chair of Cargo iQ and director of performance

management at KLM, noted that integrating airports into the framework will provide insights across both airside and landside operations, including congestion management. "Integrating airports into Cargo iQ will support standardisation and quality development for all stakeholders while fostering a local cargo community approach," he said.

Once the airports' formal value propositions are defined in the coming months, they will become implementable members within Cargo iQ's framework. This will allow them to contribute to the Master Operating Plan (MOP) and align with Cargo iQ performance definitions.

Freight Hubs Continue Growth

Singapore Changi Airport, a key transshipment hub in

Asia, recorded air cargo volumes of 2.1 million tonnes in 2025, representing a 4.5% year-on-year increase. The airport cited frontloading and the return of dedicated freighter services as key drivers of what it described as one of its "best cargo performances" in history.

Meanwhile, Frankfurt Airport handled 1.99 million tonnes of cargo in 2025, up 2% from the previous year. Fraport, the airport operator, reported a steady upward trend in cargo volumes throughout the year, highlighting the airport's ongoing role as a central European freight hub.

The addition of these major airports to Cargo iQ underscores the growing emphasis on collaboration, standardisation, and operational excellence across the global air cargo industry.

Teesside Airport Expands Global Reach with New China Cargo Corridor

Teesside International Airport has taken a decisive step toward establishing itself as a leading logistics gateway in the United Kingdom, following the launch of a new long-haul cargo partnership with European Cargo. The agreement introduces five weekly freighter services connecting the North of England directly with China, significantly strengthening the airport's international freight capabilities and regional economic impact.

The new operation will be conducted using Airbus A340-600 freighters, each configured for high-volume cargo transport. Together, the flights will provide a combined weekly capacity of up to 375 tonnes, marking a substantial increase in throughput potential for the airport. The initiative is also expected to generate approximately 50 new jobs, reinforcing local employment in aviation and logistics.

Announced at a high-profile event attended by regional leaders, industry stakeholders, and business representatives, the partnership underscores growing confidence in Teesside's long-term aviation strategy. The launch event featured remarks from Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen, alongside a panel discussion with senior figures from across the logistics and trade sectors, highlighting the broader economic implications of the development.

Central to the agreement is the establishment of a dedicated operational base by European Cargo at Teesside Airport Business Park. This move not only enhances operational efficiency for the carrier but also signals a long-term commitment to the region as a strategic logistics node.

Industry leaders involved in the project emphasized the collaborative approach that enabled the deal.



European Cargo's leadership pointed to the airport's responsiveness and ability to facilitate rapid decision-making as key factors in selecting Teesside as a base for expansion into Asian freight markets.

From a regional development perspective, the new China route aligns closely with Teesside Airport's ambition to become a major logistics hub for northern England. Its geographic advantage—supported by strong multimodal connectivity including access to the A1(M), A66, the East Coast Mainline, and nearby River Tees ports—positions the airport as a critical link in national and international supply chains.

Airport leadership described the agreement as a transformative milestone. The addition of direct cargo connectivity with China is expected to unlock new trade opportunities for UK

businesses, particularly manufacturers and exporters seeking efficient routes into Asian markets.

The development forms part of a broader wave of private sector investment at Teesside International Airport. Recent projects include a £13.5 million aircraft maintenance facility by Willis Aviation Services Limited, dual aircraft painting operations established by Airbourne Colours, and the construction of a £7 million hangar by aerospace firm Draken. Collectively, these initiatives are reshaping the airport into a multifaceted aviation and industrial hub.

As global supply chains continue to evolve, Teesside's latest expansion reflects a strategic pivot toward cargo-led growth, reinforcing its role not only as a regional asset but as an emerging player in international freight logistics.

Aircargo Services Hannover Engages aeroconcept to Strengthen Safety Management



Hannover, Germany – Aircargo Services Hannover (ASH), the cargo handling division of Hannover Airport (HAJ), has partnered with aviation consultancy **aeroconcept** to review and enhance its Safety Management System (SMS) as part of a strategic push to grow its airfreight market share in Europe. The agreement was formalised at the **IATA World Cargo Symposium (WCS)** in Lima, Peru, signalling the company's commitment to elevating operational safety standards alongside its business expansion.

Under the consultancy contract, **aeroconcept** will conduct a comprehensive review of ASH's existing safety framework, ensuring it meets and exceeds regulatory requirements while remaining aligned with future operational needs. The project is designed to strengthen safety, risk management, and operational resilience across all cargo handling activities at Hannover Airport.

processes, documentation, and internal communication structures.

James Wyatt, General Manager at **aeroconcept**, commented: "Our first step is to understand what Aircargo Services Hannover currently has in place — their procedures, documentation, and how employee safety is embedded in day-to-day operations. We will also assess their interaction with other ground handlers at Hannover to ensure a cohesive, customised solution that integrates all operational partners."

Wyatt stressed that robust safety management systems are increasingly vital for European airports and cargo operators as regulatory requirements evolve. "This project demonstrates our ongoing commitment to improving safety performance in the air cargo sector," he said. "We are proud to support ASH in raising their safety and quality standards, ensuring consistent, high-quality service for customers and airport stakeholders alike."

Project Leadership and Scope

The review will be led by **Moritz Hampel**, **aeroconcept** consultant, who brings extensive expertise in safety management systems, regulatory compliance, and air cargo operations. Hampel will oversee the assessment, implementation, and execution of safety enhancements, focusing on

Strategic Timing and Market Growth

Florian Schulte, Vice President of Operations at ASH, highlighted the timing of the project: "We are at a crucial stage in our operational development. Now is the right moment to ensure we are fit for purpose for the coming years of cargo operations at Hannover Airport."

Schulte noted one of the primary challenges is navigating the varied requirements of multiple stakeholders, including **IATA, civil aviation authorities, and airlines**. "As a ground handler, our customers are mostly airlines. Each airline has its own cargo handling manual, and we need to align fully to operate safely throughout the process of receiving and handling cargo," he said. "Additionally, we must adhere to European regulations, IATA standards, and local Civil Aviation Authority rules."

Aircargo Services Hannover serves more than **20 airlines** and several logistics partners at HAJ. In 2025, it handled **103,000 tonnes of air cargo**, positioning it as a secondary European airport handler with key advantages such as **24/7 operations, scalable warehouse capacity, and flexibility to expand customer operations**.

Schulte concluded: "We want **aeroconcept** to help us grow and become more efficient, enabling the next step in expanding our presence in the German air cargo market."

The partnership with **aeroconcept** underscores ASH's dual focus on operational growth and safety excellence, reinforcing its commitment to secure, compliant, and efficient airfreight operations.

European Cargo to Launch China–Teesside Freighter Operations with New UK Base



European Cargo has announced a major expansion of its freighter network with the establishment of a new operational base at **Teesside International Airport** in northeast England. The airline will launch regular services connecting China and Teesside, marking a significant development for **UK–China air cargo trade**.

The airline plans to operate **five flights per week** using its **converted Airbus A340-600 freighters**, each capable of carrying **up to 76 tonnes of payload** or **440 cubic metres of cargo**. The new route is designed primarily to support **e-commerce shipments from China**, offering UK exporters faster and more direct access to global markets. While exact Chinese destinations have not been confirmed, European Cargo currently serves **Chengdu** and **Chongqing**, suggesting these may form part of the new network.

Strategic Investment and Regional Impact

The launch coincides with a multi-million-pound investment at the **Teesside Airport Business Park**, including facilities to support up to **375 tonnes of freight per week**. According to **Phil Forster, Managing Director of Teesside International Airport**, the move is a “pivotal moment” for the airport.

“Securing a new freight base and direct links to China significantly strengthens our commercial offering and demonstrates the confidence global operators have in what we are building here,” Forster said. “The impact of this deal will be substantial – enhancing cargo operations, revenue, and positioning the airport as a strategic hub for aviation and logistics while driving the region’s economic growth.”

Iain Edwards, Chief Operating Officer of European Cargo, added:

“We are incredibly pleased to establish this operational hub at

Teesside International Airport. This investment reflects our confidence in the region’s infrastructure and its potential as a premier logistics gateway. It allows us to better connect UK businesses with global markets.”

Long-Term Development Plans

European Cargo has historically operated from **Bournemouth Airport**, with an expansion to **Cardiff Airport in 2024**. The Teesside base aligns with the airport’s long-term plans, including the development of a **750,000 sq ft Airlink cargo facility**. The facility will feature direct apron access for efficient aircraft loading and unloading, reinforcing Teesside’s role as a **key logistics centre in the UK**.

With the new operations, **Teesside International Airport** is emerging as a strategic gateway for international air freight, supporting UK manufacturers and exporters with accelerated access to the **growing Chinese e-commerce market**.

IATA launches DG Digital

IATA Launches DG Digital to Streamline Dangerous Goods Declarations



IATA, Peru – The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has unveiled **DG Digital**, a fully electronic Dangerous Goods Declaration (DGD) solution, during its annual World Cargo Symposium (WCS) in Lima. The tool, integrated into IATA's **DG AutoCheck** automated compliance platform, is designed to optimize the acceptance process for dangerous goods shipments, improving efficiency, safety, and accuracy.

DG Digital enables shippers to create and submit declarations for more than 3,800 items — including lithium batteries, explosives, and hazardous chemicals — entirely digitally. By doing so, airlines and logistics providers can share documents instantly, reduce errors, and minimize the risk of shipment rejections.

Eliminating Paper-Based Processes

Currently, IATA reports that 95% of Dangerous Goods Declarations are still received on paper. These must be scanned, converted into PDFs, and manually uploaded to DG AutoCheck for validation — a process that can delay shipments and increase the risk of non-compliance.

With DG Digital, the declaration process is fully digital, from creation by the shipper to validation by the airline. The platform captures all required data and allows electronic exchange with all relevant stakeholders, cross-referencing IATA's **Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR)** to identify potential issues before a shipment is physically dispatched.

This pre-validation reduces costly fines and enhances safety throughout the logistics chain.

Proven Results in Japan

DG Digital was piloted in Japan last year with carriers **All Nippon Airways (ANA)** and **Japan Airlines (JAL)**, alongside six freight forwarders, including International Cargo Service, JAS Forwarding Japan, MOL Logistics, Nippon Express, Nissin, and Yusen Logistics. The trial achieved a rejection rate of just 0.5% for dangerous goods shipments, a marked improvement over the global average of 4.5% for shipments rejected due to incomplete or inaccurate declarations.

Building on DG AutoCheck Success

Since its 2019 launch, DG AutoCheck has completed over one million dangerous goods checks, with more than a third conducted in the past year alone. The surge reflects growing demand for air transport of hazardous goods, particularly lithium batteries, which contributed to a 17.5% year-on-year increase in 2025, according to **IATA Cargois** data.

Frederic Leger, IATA's Senior Vice President, Product & Services, emphasized the strategic role of DG Digital: "IATA's Dangerous Goods Regulations aim to reduce complexity and improve safety. DG Digital supports this by digitalizing the shipper's declaration process, giving all stakeholders — from freight forwarders and ground handlers to airlines — access to the same document. This enables rapid resolution of any documentation issues before physical shipment."

Digital Innovation Takes Center Stage at WCS

The WCS program in Lima highlighted the growing importance of IT in air cargo, showcasing technologies that enhance operational efficiency. Discussions explored how artificial intelligence (AI) could transform the sector and how IATA might leverage AI within its digital platforms.

In a panel on digitalization, Andress Lam, Head of Cargo Digital at **Cathay Cargo**, questioned how AI would impact the air cargo market over the next five years. Panelists agreed that while AI will evolve rapidly, human oversight will remain essential in decision-making processes.

DG Digital marks a significant step forward in the digital transformation of air cargo, promising safer, faster, and more reliable handling of dangerous goods shipments worldwide.

MSC Air Cargo Strengthens Fleet with Seventh Boeing 777-200F Delivery



MSC Air Cargo, the airfreight division of global shipping and logistics leader **MSC Group**, has taken delivery of its seventh Boeing 777-200 freighter, marking the third

aircraft registered in Italy under the airline's European Air Operator's Certificate (AOC). The new freighter was handed over at **Boeing's Everett Delivery Center** in Seattle and will strengthen

MSC Air Cargo's long-haul operations across key trade lanes.

With this latest addition, MSC Air Cargo's fleet now totals seven Boeing 777 freighters, enhancing its capacity and reliability on Europe-Asia corridors at a time of sustained demand. The airline said the expanded fleet enables stable, dedicated cargo services across intercontinental routes while supporting the transportation of specialised and time-critical goods, including pharmaceuticals, perishables, high-tech components, automotive and aerospace cargo.

Expanded Italian Gateway Coverage

The seventh 777F will allow MSC Air Cargo to extend its Italian gateway operations beyond Milan Malpensa (MXP) to include Rome Fiumicino (FCO). Both gateways will now connect directly to major Asian hubs including **Hong Kong (HKG)**, **Shanghai Pudong (PVG)**, and the newly introduced **Ezhou Huahu (EHU)**.

Jannie Davel, MSC Air Cargo's Chief Executive, highlighted the strategic significance of the fleet expansion: "Each addition to our fleet is a commitment to our customers, to the trade lanes we serve, and to the long-term foundation we are building. With the delivery of this aircraft, we reach

seven Boeing 777 Freighters, reinforcing our ability to serve customers where and when it matters most. Reliability and long-term partnerships are what drive every decision we make."

Ricardo Cavero, Boeing Vice President of Commercial Sales & Marketing for Europe and Israel, noted: "The 777 freighter's class-leading fuel efficiency, payload, and range will enable MSC to reliably and efficiently expand their operations to meet rising cargo demand."

Fleet Growth and Strategic Partnerships

Since its inception, MSC Air Cargo has steadily expanded its fleet and global footprint, now offering intercontinental services across Europe, the Americas, and Asia. In addition to the two 777-200Fs operated under MSC's European AOC, four further 777Fs are operated by **Atlas Air** on behalf of MSC Air Cargo under a long-term ACMI (aircraft, crew, maintenance, insurance) agreement, providing flexible capacity for high-priority shipments.

The airline's growing fleet underlines its commitment to transporting specialised and urgent cargo with stability, reliability, and expanded coverage, reinforcing MSC Air Cargo's position among leading freighter operators on critical Europe-Asia trade lanes.

Kenya Airways Delivers First Rally Cars for WRC Safari Rally Kenya 2026



Kenya Airways has successfully transported the first consignment of high-performance rally vehicles for the upcoming World Rally Championship Safari Rally Kenya 2026, reinforcing the airline’s growing role as a logistics partner for major international sporting events.

The shipment, consisting of two state-of-the-art Rally1 competition cars, arrived earlier today (9 March) at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi aboard a dedicated Boeing 777 Freighter. The delivery marks the start of a complex cargo operation supporting the globally recognised rally, which will take place from 12–15 March in Naivasha.

This year marks the fourth consecutive edition of the Safari Rally for which Kenya Airways Cargo has been entrusted with transporting rally vehicles, underlining the airline’s capability in handling high-value,

time-critical shipments linked to international motorsport.

Strategic logistics for a global motorsport event

Beyond the transportation of rally cars, Kenya Airways is playing a wider logistics role in the event. The carrier is supporting the rally by moving specialised spare parts, technical equipment, rally officials, international racing teams, and thousands of motorsport fans travelling from around the world.

According to George Kamal, Acting Group Managing Director and Chief Executive of Kenya Airways, the operation highlights the airline’s strategic importance in linking global sporting events with destinations across Africa.

“The arrival of the rally cars aboard our freighters is a proud moment for Kenya Airways and for Kenya,” Kamal said. “This partnership reaffirms our

commitment to serving as the bridge that connects global sporting excellence with Kenya’s world-class destinations.”

Specialised cargo handling for Rally1 hybrid vehicles

Transporting Rally1 hybrid vehicles presents unique logistical challenges. Each car features sophisticated engineering and sensitive hybrid battery systems, requiring meticulous preparation, secure loading procedures, and specialised handling throughout the airfreight process.

Fitsum Abadi, Director of Cargo at Kenya Airways, emphasised the technical expertise involved in moving such high-performance machines.

“Successfully delivering these high-performance rally cars to Kenyan soil is what fuels our passion at Kenya Airways Cargo,” Abadi said. “Each vehicle embodies power, speed and precision—qualities that mirror the standards we uphold in our cargo operations. Our team’s expertise ensures they arrive in perfect condition, ready to take on the demanding Rift Valley stages of this global sporting spectacle.”

Strengthening Nairobi’s role as a cargo hub

The operation also highlights the strategic importance of Nairobi as a regional logistics gateway. Kenya Airways currently serves 42 destinations worldwide, including 33 across Africa, and handles more than 70,000 tonnes of cargo annually through its hub at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

With the Safari Rally continuing to attract international teams, manufacturers and spectators, specialised cargo operations such as these demonstrate how airfreight logistics play a critical role in enabling global sporting events to take place.

Ethiopian Cargo Joins Freightos to Enable Digital Booking Across Global Network

routes, and costs constantly shift — reducing friction, offering more optionality, and eliminating reliance on spreadsheets.”

Digital Transformation Strategy

Dereje Derero, Managing Director of **Ethiopian Cargo & Logistics Services**, said: “Digital transformation is central to our growth strategy. By integrating booking and payment solutions into our services, we provide customers and freight forwarders worldwide with greater efficiency. Partnering with Freightos enhances our cargo offering, providing digital rates, quoting, and e-booking solutions with faster access and more reliable service. This further strengthens our position as the continent’s leading cargo carrier.”

The move reflects a broader industry shift toward digitalisation. On March 11, **WebCargo by Freightos** released an analysis of five years of digital air cargo bookings, covering more than **1.5 million transactions from 2021–26**. The study showed that carriers have rapidly expanded their digital capacity footprint, optimised offerings on key trade lanes, and improved operational performance and service delivery to forwarders.

Ethiopian Cargo’s integration into the platform marks a significant step in the ongoing digital transformation of African airfreight, enhancing transparency, speed, and reliability for global supply chains.



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – Ethiopian Cargo, Africa’s largest air cargo network, will join **WebCargo by Freightos** at the end of March, allowing freight forwarders worldwide to digitally search, quote, and book its capacity across more than **145 destinations**. The integration will provide real-time availability of digital rates, quoting, e-booking, and interlining capabilities,

transforming how forwarders access Ethiopian Cargo’s dedicated freighters and passenger belly capacity.

The **WebCargo by Freightos** platform significantly accelerates the booking process, enabling freight agents to secure airline capacity in seconds rather than hours, with real-time e-booking and digital payment options. With Ethiopian Cargo now onboard, forwarders can efficiently book capacity

from Addis Ababa to key markets including **Europe, the US, China, India, Kenya, and South Africa**.

Pablo Pinillos, CFO and interim CEO of Freightos, commented: “Global trade hasn’t only become more connected; it has also grown far more volatile. Access to speed and reliability matters more than big promises. With Ethiopian Cargo on our platform, forwarders gain practical tools to move freight as capacity,



EFW to Convert Airbus A330-300 to Freighter for APAL



Dresden, Germany – **Elbe Flugzeugwerke (EFW)**, the Dresden-based passenger-to-freighter (P2F) conversion specialist, has signed its first conversion agreement with **Asia Pacific Aviation Leasing Group (APAL)** of Hong Kong for the transformation of an **Airbus A330-300** into freighter

configuration.

The conversion will take place at one of EFW’s partner facilities beginning in the **second quarter of 2026**, while technical planning, certification, and project oversight will be managed from EFW’s headquarters in Dresden. This marks the first P2F collaboration between EFW and APAL, underscoring

the lessor’s commitment to expanding its cargo operations in Asia.

EFW, a joint venture between **ST Engineering** and **Airbus**, positions the Airbus A330P2F as a strategic solution in the medium-sized freighter segment. EFW CEO **Jordi Boto** said: “The Airbus A330P2F represents the future of the medium-sized freighter segment. We are providing APAL with a high-performing solution as they build up their fleet in the cargo market.”

APAL CEO **Hong Wei Zhao** added: “EFW’s proven expertise in freighter conversion is key to modernising our fleet and meeting the dynamic needs of the Chinese cargo market — a market we are prioritising and to which we intend to commit additional resources. Our first freighter conversion programme with EFW underscores our commitment to providing innovative and efficient solutions to our valued customers.”

Strengthening the China Connection

EFW has been actively engaged in the Chinese cargo market in recent months. In February, the company signed an **A330 P2F conversion contract with Hengqin Winglet Aircraft Technology**, with work to be carried out at a partner facility in China and technical planning handled from Dresden.

In January, EFW completed delivery of its **eighth A330-200 P2F conversion for Air China Cargo**, marking its first major contract in China. The project was planned in Dresden and executed by **Ameco (Aircraft Maintenance and Engineering Corporation Limited)** at its Chengdu facility, one of eight international conversion sites in EFW’s global network.

The APAL project reinforces EFW’s position as a leading P2F conversion provider and highlights the growing demand for medium-sized freighters in Asia, particularly in markets requiring modern, efficient cargo aircraft to support expanding e-commerce and logistics operations.

Chapman Freeborn appoints R-BAG Group as General Sales Agent across Eastern Europe



Global air charter specialist Chapman Freeborn has strengthened its commercial footprint in Europe with the appointment of R-BAG Group as its **General Sales Agent (GSA) across Eastern Europe**, effective **1 March 2026**.

The agreement will focus primarily on expanding **cargo charter services throughout the region**, reinforcing the company's sales capabilities and enhancing customer support in what is widely regarded as one of the most dynamic growth markets in the aviation sector.

Under the terms of the partnership, R-BAG Group will assume responsibility for representing Chapman Freeborn across Eastern Europe, **excluding Poland**, where the charter specialist maintains its own dedicated in-house team. The arrangement ensures the company retains consistent regional coverage while leveraging local market expertise to develop new business opportunities.

Expanding regional sales reach

The collaboration reflects Chapman Freeborn's broader strategy to strengthen its presence in Europe by building partnerships with established

local specialists capable of driving sales growth and delivering tailored charter solutions to regional customers.

Commenting on the partnership, **Markus Schmidt, Vice President Cargo Commercial Operations at Chapman Freeborn**, said the company required a trusted regional partner to fully capitalise on the opportunities emerging across Eastern Europe.

"We needed a reliable partner on the ground to maximise Eastern Europe's potential for charter services, and we are confident that R-BAG will fulfil that role better than anyone," Schmidt said.

He added that R-BAG's extensive regional network and commercial expertise will complement Chapman Freeborn's global charter capabilities.

"The Group is known not only for its deep-rooted network of regional connections, but also for its track record of sales expertise that will complement our own capabilities perfectly," Schmidt explained.

"This partnership reflects Chapman Freeborn's commitment to expanding our presence in Europe and ensuring our clients receive the highest standard of service, regardless of where they operate."

Growing demand in Eastern Europe

Eastern Europe has increasingly emerged as an important market for ad-hoc and specialised air cargo charter services, driven by growth in sectors such as manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, and time-critical logistics.

For R-BAG Group, the partnership provides an opportunity to deliver stronger charter solutions to customers

across the region while connecting them with Chapman Freeborn's global aircraft network and operational expertise.

Éva Van Baaren-Horváth, Group Managing Director of R-BAG Group, said the company has observed steady growth in demand for charter services across Eastern Europe in recent years.

"We've watched demand for air charter services grow steadily across Eastern Europe, and we've long believed the region deserves a stronger, more locally grounded offer," she said.

"Representing Chapman Freeborn finally gives us a platform to deliver just that. It's a partnership that makes perfect sense – and so does the timing."

Part of a broader European growth strategy

The appointment of R-BAG Group marks the latest step in Chapman Freeborn's continuing expansion across the European market. The company, founded in 1973 and part of the global aviation services group Avia Solutions Group, has more than **50 years of experience in arranging passenger and cargo charters worldwide**.

Operating through a global network of offices and partners, Chapman Freeborn provides a wide range of services including **cargo charters, passenger charters, on-board courier solutions, aircraft leasing, and time-critical logistics support** for industries ranging from humanitarian relief and oil and gas to automotive and e-commerce.

Recent strategic initiatives across Europe—including partnerships with regional logistics providers and expansion of local operational teams—underscore the company's focus on strengthening its market reach and responding to growing demand for specialised charter solutions.

With R-BAG Group now representing the brand across much of Eastern Europe, Chapman Freeborn aims to further consolidate its presence in the region while ensuring customers benefit from **local expertise backed by a global charter network**.



Pika Aero and DGM France Win 2026 IATA CBTA Center Innovation Award

Two specialist aviation training providers, Pika Aero and DGM France, have been recognised for their technological advances in dangerous goods training after receiving the **IATA Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) Center Best Innovation Award**.

The award was presented by the International Air Transport Association

(IATA) during the 4th IATA CBTA Center Conference, held alongside the 2026 IATA World Cargo Symposium 2026 in Lima, Peru.

The accolade recognises innovative training solutions that enhance industry safety and compliance, with both companies acknowledged for pioneering the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to create more immersive and personalised learning

environments for dangerous goods training.

Transforming dangerous goods training through AI

Headquartered in Paris, Pika Aero develops certified digital learning programmes for air transport professionals across critical operational areas including aviation safety, security and dangerous goods handling.

The company received recognition for its **AI-driven CBTA-based dangerous goods training platform**, which combines short, targeted learning modules with realistic operational scenarios that evolve dynamically based on the trainee's performance. The technology allows learners to progress through simulated real-world situations, helping to reinforce practical decision-making skills in high-risk operational environments.

Dangerous goods specialist DGM France was also honoured for its AI-powered training solution designed to tailor course content to each learner's existing knowledge, experience and competency level. The system incorporates post-training validation tools that measure learning progress and identify any remaining competency gaps through structured feedback and assessment.

Supporting competency-based training in aviation

IATA's CBTA framework is designed to ensure that aviation personnel handling dangerous goods are trained according to the specific functions they perform rather than generic job titles. The approach focuses on developing measurable competencies—knowledge, skills and behavioural attributes—required to safely manage hazardous cargo within the aviation supply chain.

The CBTA Center programme supports airlines, civil aviation authorities and training organisations in implementing competency-based training programmes aligned with the standards set out in the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR). Accredited centres are evaluated on training governance, course design, instructional delivery and assessment methods to ensure the highest levels of safety and compliance in dangerous goods handling.

Industry recognition for innovation

Frederic Leger, Senior Vice President for Products and Services at the International Air Transport Association,

The award was presented by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) during the 4th IATA CBTA Center Conference, held alongside the 2026 IATA World Cargo Symposium 2026 in Lima, Peru.

said the award highlights the growing role of emerging technologies in aviation training.

"As Pika Aero and DGM France have demonstrated, artificial intelligence has become a vital enabler in creating realistic training environments that strengthen safety and enhance regulatory compliance," Leger said. "We are proud to count both companies among IATA's CBTA Center network and encourage others to follow their example in raising training standards across the industry."

Driving immersive learning experiences

Baptiste Sesmat, Director General of Pika Aero, noted that the recognition reflects the company's commitment to continuously improving aviation training.

"We owe it to our customers, who place their trust in us, not only to provide the highest standards of training but also to push the boundaries of immersive learning," he said. "Our goal is to create training experiences that closely replicate real operational conditions."

Meanwhile, Vytautas Volskis, President of DGM France, described the company's approach as a fundamental rethinking of dangerous goods training methodology.

"We approached dangerous goods training as a system-engineering challenge," Volskis said. "When CBTA requirements were introduced, we chose not to replicate traditional course models but to develop an entirely new framework. Competence must be designed, measured and continuously refined."

According to Volskis, the company's AI-supported CBTA model enables structured personalisation while maintaining strict regulatory governance, ensuring that safety performance is not assumed but demonstrably achieved.

Spotlight on innovation at IATA World Cargo Symposium

The **CBTA Center Best Innovation Awards**, established by IATA in 2023, aim to highlight technological and methodological advancements that improve training effectiveness within the aviation and air cargo sectors.

Winners are selected through an evaluation process conducted by an independent panel comprising industry experts, IATA representatives and independent validators. Submissions are assessed on criteria including innovation, industry impact, implementation feasibility, user accessibility and evidence-based effectiveness.

The awards were presented during the 2026 IATA World Cargo Symposium, one of the air cargo industry's most prominent annual gatherings. The event, held from 10–12 March in Lima, is themed "**Advancing Air Cargo in a Dynamic World**", reflecting the sector's response to rapid digitalisation, shifting geopolitical dynamics and evolving regulatory frameworks.

The symposium opened with keynote remarks from Willie Walsh, Director General of the International Air Transport Association, while Brendan Sullivan, IATA's Global Head of Cargo, is among the senior industry leaders scheduled to review the past year's developments and discuss the future direction of the air cargo industry.

PACTL Becomes First Mainland Chinese Cargo Terminal to Achieve IATA IEnvA Certification



Shanghai Pudong International Airport Cargo Terminal Co Ltd (PACTL) and its subsidiary PACTL West have achieved certification under the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Integrated Sustainability Program Environmental Assessment (IEnvA), becoming the first air cargo terminal operator in mainland China to secure the environmental accreditation.

The certification, awarded through IATA's Integrated Sustainability Program (ISP), recognises organisations that demonstrate a comprehensive and structured approach to sustainability management across their operations. For cargo terminal operators, the programme provides a formal framework to measure, implement and continuously improve environmental performance in line with global aviation

sustainability standards.

Sustainability framework for aviation stakeholders

Established by IATA specifically for aviation industry participants, the ISP provides a structured pathway for organisations seeking to integrate sustainability into corporate governance and operational practices. In addition to certification,

the programme offers training, workshops, technical guidance and assessment tools across four key pillars: environmental management, sustainable procurement, social responsibility and sustainability performance monitoring.

At the core of the programme is the IEnvA framework, which evaluates how environmental considerations are embedded within an organisation's governance structures, operational controls and management systems. The framework places particular emphasis on systematic environmental management and the continuous improvement of sustainability performance.

Commitment to greener cargo operations

Founded in 1999 as a German-Chinese joint venture, PACTL specialises in air cargo handling services at Shanghai Pudong International Airport, one of Asia's busiest international cargo gateways. Over the past decade, the terminal operator has progressively integrated sustainability measures across its cargo handling operations and facility management.

Among the initiatives implemented are the expansion of on-site photovoltaic power generation, the adoption of electric forklifts for ground handling operations, upgrades to energy-efficient lighting systems and the promotion of paperless processes

across operational workflows.

According to the company, these initiatives reflect a long-term strategy aimed at reducing environmental impact while aligning operational practices with internationally recognised sustainability benchmarks.

Industry recognition

Xie Xingquan, Regional Vice President for North Asia at the International Air Transport Association, praised the achievement and its potential impact across the aviation sector.

"IATA commends Pudong International Airport Cargo Terminal for achieving the ISP:IEnvA certification," he said. "The first move by PACTL can help advance sustainability both effectively and efficiently. It represents a remarkable and impactful step that can lead the way among airports and aviation stakeholders across the region."

Building on operational excellence

For PACTL, the certification represents another milestone in strengthening environmental governance within its cargo operations.

Carsten Hernig, Deputy General Manager of PACTL, noted that aligning with internationally recognised sustainability frameworks reinforces the company's broader operational goals.

"Aligning with internationally recognised frameworks such as IEnvA

supports our ongoing efforts to meet the expectations of customers and partners throughout the aviation supply chain," Hernig said. "It reflects our long-term commitment to building robust and transparent environmental management practices."

Expanding portfolio of IATA certifications

The environmental certification follows another significant milestone for PACTL earlier this year. In February, the company confirmed that it had achieved full certification under the IATA Center of Excellence for Independent Validators (CEIV) programme across four specialised cargo categories: pharmaceuticals, lithium batteries, fresh produce and live animals.

The CEIV programme establishes globally recognised standards for the safe and compliant handling of sensitive or high-value cargo. By holding multiple CEIV certifications, PACTL is able to provide airlines, freight forwarders and shippers with additional assurance that specialised cargo shipments are managed according to internationally recognised best practices.

Together, the latest certifications strengthen PACTL's position as a leading cargo handling partner at Shanghai Pudong International Airport and reinforce its commitment to operational excellence, sustainability and global compliance standards within the rapidly evolving air cargo sector.

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Jettainer Extends Strategic ULD Partnership with CMA CGM Air Cargo Amid Fleet Expansion Plans



Jettainer has strengthened its long-term collaboration with CMA CGM Air Cargo, extending its role as the airline's dedicated ULD (unit load device) management partner to support a planned expansion of its freighter fleet. The renewed agreement encompasses customized ULD supply, maintenance, and repair services, complemented by advanced digital tracking solutions, ensuring CMA CGM Air Cargo is fully equipped for its growth trajectory.

Originally formalized

in 2022, the contract has been renewed ahead of schedule to meet additional requirements arising from the airline's ambitious fleet expansion. Under the extended partnership, Jettainer will continue to provide end-to-end ULD management, guaranteeing that CMA CGM Air Cargo has access to the required equipment at all times, while maintaining the highest operational efficiency.

To meet the airline's evolving demands, Jettainer supplies a tailor-made ULD fleet optimized for performance and

sustainability. Utilizing cutting-edge steering technologies, the company ensures that each unit is transported efficiently, tracked seamlessly, and monitored in real time. Through its proprietary IT platform, JettwareNG, Jettainer offers CMA CGM Air Cargo comprehensive visibility and transparent data on all ULDs within the network.

Since its launch in March 2021, CMA CGM Air Cargo has been a key pillar in the CMA CGM Group's strategy to deliver integrated maritime, land,

air, and logistics solutions. This multimodal approach allows the Group to provide tailored transport solutions, including last-mile delivery, across global markets. Currently, CMA CGM Air Cargo operates a fleet of eight aircraft, including five Boeing 777Fs, one Airbus A330F, and two Boeing 747Fs. The airline plans to expand its fleet from 2027 with the addition of eight Airbus A350Fs, operating from strategic hubs in France, the United States, and Belgium to ensure seamless connectivity on major international cargo routes.

Dr Jan-Wilhelm Breithaupt, CEO of Jettainer, commented on the renewed partnership: *"We sincerely thank CMA CGM Air Cargo for their continued trust in our services. Our commitment is to deliver the best possible ULD management solutions every day. We are continuously innovating, particularly in digitalisation, to leverage standards such as ONE Record for more efficient and transparent ULD operations."*

The extension solidifies Jettainer's role as a critical enabler of CMA CGM Air Cargo's expansion, ensuring that the airline's growing fleet is supported with reliable, technologically advanced ULD solutions.

Air Cargo Needs Stronger Voice in Aviation Policy and Infrastructure Planning



Lima, Peru – Air cargo is often overlooked in the development of aviation policy frameworks, infrastructure planning, and airport operational strategies, according to experts speaking at the **IATA World Cargo Symposium (WCS)**.

Leonardo Boszczowski, ICAO Regional Officer for Aviation Security and Facilitation, highlighted the tendency for air cargo governance to evolve separately from broader aviation

governance. “It is not uncommon for aeronautical policy frameworks to overlook air cargo development,” he said, noting that airport master planning, infrastructure investment, and operational planning frequently lack meaningful input from cargo stakeholders.

Boszczowski gave practical examples from airport operations, where aviation security managers often focus exclusively on passenger

processes such as access control and baggage screening. When regulators seek to audit cargo operations, these managers frequently defer to cargo specialists, reflecting the perception that air cargo is peripheral to airport operations.

Service-level targets were another area of concern. Passenger terminals routinely track performance metrics such as immigration queue times, check-in efficiency, and baggage handling. In contrast, air cargo terminals rarely adopt equivalent service-level measurements, limiting visibility into operational efficiency and overall system performance. “Cargo is often treated as a niche rather than a core component of the aviation sector, and this could constrain the performance of the air cargo system,” Boszczowski said.

He urged air cargo stakeholders to take a more active role in **national air transport and airport facilitation committees**, which serve as platforms for interagency coordination and operational problem-solving. “It is important to position cargo within operational governance, ensuring it aligns with overall airport performance,” Boszczowski explained. “Stakeholders working together can deliver coordinated, integrated solutions — for example, setting measurable outcomes to improve a state’s competitiveness.”

Boszczowski’s observations underscore the need for air cargo to be recognised as a fundamental part of aviation infrastructure and planning. Greater engagement in policy-making, performance metrics, and interagency committees will help integrate cargo operations into the broader aviation ecosystem, ultimately improving efficiency, security, and competitiveness for airports and states alike.

ECommerce Remains a Cornerstone of Air Cargo Growth Amid Regulatory Headwinds, Says IATA



As the global air cargo community convenes for the **2026 IATA World Cargo Symposium (WCS)**, the ecommerce segment is emerging as a resilient driver of industry growth despite regulatory turbulence. Following a challenging 2025—marked by shifting trade policies and heightened customs

scrutiny—the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** reaffirmed that ecommerce will remain a strategic growth engine for air cargo through 2026 and beyond.

IATA's latest data show **global air cargo demand reached record volumes in 2025**, with **cargo tonnekilometres (CTKs) up 3.4%**

year-on-year over 2024. This growth underscores the sector's capacity to adapt to market shocks while satisfying sustained consumer demand for rapid delivery.

"Ecommerce will remain one of the strongest drivers of air cargo demand in 2026," said **Andre Majeres, IATA Head of Ecommerce and Cargo**

Operations. “We expect global air cargo volumes to grow by 2.4%, surpassing 71.6 million tonnes, with a significant proportion driven by ecommerce flows. Asia Pacific is projected to lead regional growth at around 6%, reflecting robust intra- and inter-regional demand.”

Regulatory Headwinds and Trade Lane Shifts

Ecommerce growth is navigating a complex regulatory landscape. Notably, the **removal of the U.S. de minimis tax exemption** on low-value imports disrupted the traditional Asia–North America trade lane, reducing shipment volumes as supply chains recalibrated to new tax obligations.

Majes explains: “While the de minimis removal led to an initial drop in low-value shipments, overall ecommerce demand has not diminished. Other corridors, including intra-Asia and Asia–Europe, have posted double-digit growth, showing a redistribution rather than a loss of traffic.”

Global supply chain diversification—often referred to as the **China+1 strategy**—is also reshaping trade flows. Southeast Asia is gaining prominence as a manufacturing and distribution hub, driven by geopolitical tensions and evolving tariff landscapes.

Operational and Infrastructure Challenges

Despite strong demand, structural constraints remain. Smaller, fragmented ecommerce parcels place additional pressure on **cargo handling, sorting, and capacity planning**. Potential shortages in widebody freighter capacity and evolving customs regulations could further complicate operations.

Sustainability remains a strategic priority. IATA is urging accelerated adoption of **sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)** and improved emissions transparency to meet rising regulatory and consumer expectations.

Adequate infrastructure is critical. IATA’s **‘2025 Vision for the Future**

of Air Cargo Facilities’ highlights the need for scalable sorting automation, express-handling facilities, and technology-driven operations to support the unique demands of ecommerce logistics.

Strategic Recommendations for Industry Players

To capitalise on ecommerce growth, IATA recommends:

- Prioritising **ecommerce-specific products and services** to capture market share.
- Accelerating **digitalisation** and adopting standards such as **ONE Record** to enhance visibility and speed.
- Harmonising systems to **simplify customs clearance**.
- Investing in **capacity-resilient air cargo solutions**.
- Enhancing **value-added services** and responsiveness to improve customer experience.

Advanced solutions such as **track-and-trace, prioritised handling, and integrated last-mile logistics** are increasingly essential for competitive differentiation.

Outlook: ECommerce’s Expanding Role

IATA estimates that **20% of current air cargo volumes are linked to online trade**, with projections suggesting this could rise to **30% by 2027**, as global ecommerce sales approach **\$8 trillion**. Even as overall cargo growth normalises from pandemic-era peaks, ecommerce remains a structural

IATA’s latest data show global air cargo demand reached record volumes in 2025, with cargo tonnekilometres (CTKs) up 3.4% year-on-year over 2024.

driver—shaping trade patterns, prompting investment in next-generation logistics infrastructure, and driving continued innovation across the air cargo value chain.

Sidebar Summary – ECommerce & Air Cargo 2026 Outlook

Global Trends:

- Air cargo volumes projected at **71.6 million tonnes**, +2.4%, ecommerce driving major share
- **Asia Pacific** leads with 6% growth

Trade Lane Shifts:

- **Asia–North America:** Softening due to U.S. de minimis removal
- **China–Europe:** Gains despite EU ecommerce tariffs (€3 per parcel < €150 from July 2026)
- **Intra-Asia & Middle East–Europe:** Double-digit growth; demand redistributed

Operational Challenges:

- Fragmented parcels strain handling and capacity planning
- Widebody freighter shortages may limit flexibility
- Regulatory complexity increases compliance friction
- Sustainability demands accelerate SAF adoption

IATA Recommendations:

- Prioritise ecommerce-focused products
- Drive digitalisation with **ONE Record**
- Harmonise systems for customs efficiency
- Invest in capacity-resilient solutions
- Enhance responsiveness and value-added services

Market Outlook:

- 1 in 5 packages bought online today; 1 in 3 by 2027
- Cross-border e-commerce could account for **30% of total air cargo volumes** by 2027
- Global online retail sales projected to reach **\$8 trillion**

Infrastructure & Efficiency:

- Automation, advanced sorting, and express handling critical
- Adopting IATA standards ensures operational resilience and efficiency

SpeedX Partners with ProShip to Expand US Last- Mile Delivery Capabilities



Tech-enabled last-mile delivery provider **SpeedX** has formed a strategic partnership with shipping software specialist **ProShip** to provide enterprise shippers with instant access to delivery services covering more than 12,000 zip codes and reaching 175 million people across the US through a single, centralized platform.

The collaboration targets high-volume businesses managing complex, multi-carrier shipping networks. By integrating SpeedX's delivery infrastructure with the ProShip platform, shippers gain a seamless connection to next-day and two-day delivery services, designed to handle large volumes and time-sensitive shipments for major e-commerce marketplaces, including **TikTok Shop** and **Amazon**.

Anthony Pizza, VP of Growth & Innovation at SpeedX, said: "This partnership empowers shippers with a strong combination of SpeedX's innovative, cost-efficient delivery

network and ProShip's well-established parcel shipping platform. Together, we are providing agile, transparent, and compliant last-mile services that allow businesses to expand their delivery footprint and thrive in today's fast-paced e-commerce environment."

Heath Galbraith, Director of Strategic Accounts at ProShip, added: "SpeedX's technology-driven approach and flexible carrier network closely align with ProShip's mission to help businesses optimize complex parcel operations. This partnership expands service options, enhances cost efficiency, and supports reliable delivery performance."

Supporting E-Commerce Growth

SpeedX has experienced nearly double the shipment volume over the past 18 months, now handling over one million deliveries daily. Its growth has been fueled by rising domestic and international e-commerce demand. To expand its reach, the company opened 60 new facilities across the US in the past year, covering more than 80% of the nation's population.

Earlier in March, SpeedX appointed **Tim Lock** as Chief Product Officer. Lock joins from **AP Moller-Maersk**, where he led last-mile product transformation, and previously served as Hong Kong Branch General Manager at **DHL eCommerce**.

In December, SpeedX inaugurated a 200,000 sq ft e-commerce and freight 'superhub' near **Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD)**. The facility features a next-generation auto-sorter capable of processing 30,000 parcels per hour and up to 500,000 shipments daily during peak season. Additional dock doors and expanded floor space accommodate both parcel and freight shipments, providing scalable capacity for enterprise shippers.

By combining SpeedX's flexible, tech-enabled delivery network with ProShip's centralized software platform, enterprise shippers gain the ability to manage high-volume, last-mile deliveries with greater efficiency, transparency, and cost control — essential for meeting the demands of today's e-commerce-driven logistics landscape.

BlueBox Systems chief executive Martin Schulze and chief technology officer Martin BernemannImage.

BlueBox Systems, a leading provider of airfreight visibility solutions, has unveiled **Tradelane Intelligence**, a data analytics platform designed to support strategic and operational decision-making in freight management. The platform aims to enhance transparency across the supply chain, offering shippers and logistics service providers actionable insights into carrier performance, trade lanes, and environmental impact.

Tradelane Intelligence leverages high-quality airfreight data validated through a proprietary AI-based algorithm that consolidates multiple sources to deliver reliable, real-time insights. The platform enables users to compare air and ocean freight carriers on metrics such as transit times, punctuality, data compliance, timeliness of status updates, and CO₂ emissions, both by carrier and specific trade lane.

Martin Schulze, CEO of BlueBox Systems, said: “With Tradelane Intelligence, we are creating a new level of transparency. Our customers gain access to a tool that goes beyond pure tracking, enabling informed decisions based on real-time, reliable data for the trade lanes that matter most to their business.”

The platform also features a **Document Transfer reporting function**, which

BlueBox Systems Launches Tradelane Intelligence for Data-Driven Freight Management



flags missing or delayed documents required for cargo release even before shipments arrive, helping avoid operational delays and compliance issues.

Martin Bernemann, CTO at BlueBox Systems, emphasized the platform’s potential for optimizing logistics operations: “Tradelane Intelligence

represents the next step toward a fully data-driven supply chain. Our partners gain a comprehensive, real-time view of their transport processes, allowing them to identify performance gaps and strengthen their competitive advantage.”

Focused primarily on airfreight visibility, BlueBox Systems continues to

refine its tracking data quality through AI-driven validation across multiple data sources. Tradelane Intelligence reinforces the company’s commitment to delivering reliable, actionable intelligence that empowers shippers and logistics providers to make smarter, more sustainable decisions.



Frankfurt Airport Reports Healthy Cargo Growth in February

Germany's largest airfreight hub, **Frankfurt Airport**, recorded **strong cargo throughput in February 2026**, underscoring robust demand for air transport amid a challenging operational backdrop that included winter weather and industrial action. According to the latest traffic figures released by operator **Fraport AG**, the gateway handled **159,362**

tonnes of cargo — encompassing both airfreight and airmail — during the month, a **4.8% increase yearonyear**.

The February performance builds on an already resilient start to 2026, following January's processing of approximately 150,044 tonnes of cargo, a **modest 1.2% yearonyear rise**, as reported in Fraport's January traffic update.

The February results reflect a broader trend of sustained cargo demand at Frankfurt, which continues to benefit from its strategic role in global supply chains as a major European hub for highvalue and timesensitive goods. The airport's infrastructure, cargo handling

capabilities and connectivity to key markets underpin its ability to attract freight volumes even as passenger traffic stabilises.

Fraport noted that **passenger volumes in February 2026 remained stable at around 3.9 million**, with travel demand influenced by winter weather disruptions and industrial action affecting operations.

Over the full 2025 reporting period, Frankfurt Airport delivered healthy cargo performance, with total throughput (airfreight and airmail) increasing to roughly 2.07 million tonnes — **up 1.1% on the previous year** — according to the operator's comprehensive annual traffic statistics.

Cargo performance at Frankfurt has been supported by its extensive integration with global airfreight networks and efficient logistics infrastructure, helping shippers and carriers navigate supply chain volatility. The airport's continued growth in freight volumes contrasts with broader operational pressures in the aviation sector — including evolving weather patterns and workforce disruptions — and positions Frankfurt as a resilient hub within the European cargo landscape.

Looking ahead, airports and logistics stakeholders will be watching whether this upward trajectory in cargo throughput continues into the spring and peak summer season, as global trade patterns evolve and demand for rapid air transport persists.



At the ongoing International Air Transport Association (IATA) World Cargo Symposium (WCS) in Lima, Peru, IATA announced a bold new strategy leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to drive significant improvements across the global air cargo industry. The global aviation trade body outlined three targeted AI initiatives designed to enhance operational efficiency, strengthen safety and compliance, and accelerate innovation throughout the airfreight value chain.

The first initiative, AI Subject Matter Expert (AI SME), is a mobile and web application enabling air cargo operational teams to quickly and accurately retrieve critical information from IATA's cargo and safety publications by asking questions in everyday language. Initially launching with access to the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR) and the IATA Cargo Handling Manual (ICHM), AI SME aims to support faster decision-making, improve regulatory compliance, and boost efficiency in time-sensitive environments. This tool will progressively expand to cover IATA's full suite of reference materials.

IATA's second initiative focuses on fostering collaboration through the Air Cargo AI Excellence Hub. This platform will unite airlines, ground handlers, freight forwarders, technology providers, and regulators to facilitate the orderly integration of AI in air cargo. The Hub is set to establish best practices for governance, compliance, knowledge sharing, and standardisation, ensuring that AI adoption across the sector is coherent and effective.

The third initiative targets interline air cargo operations, where IATA and strategic partners are exploring AI-powered solutions to streamline coordination between airlines using disparate IT systems. By deploying AI agents, the initiative aims to enable real-time collaboration on bookings, disruption management, and cancellations, enhancing system interoperability and operational



IATA Advances Airfreight's Role in AI Boom with Strategic Artificial Intelligence Initiatives

responsiveness. This project is part of IATA's Data & Technology Proof of Concept (PoC) within its Strategic Partnerships Program.

Brendan Sullivan, IATA's global head of cargo, emphasised the transformative potential of AI for the air cargo sector: "The scope for AI to accelerate air cargo's digital

transformation is enormous. Together, these initiatives will help maximise AI's potential with an industry adoption that is consistent, interoperable, and aligned with global aviation standards." He added, "We will also identify further opportunities where standards, innovation, and collaboration can drive safer, smarter, and more efficient operations."

AI Supporting High-Value Technology Transport

Beyond operational improvements, AI also shapes the cargo itself. IATA's recently published report on airfreight's role in the 2025 global economy highlights air cargo's critical function in transporting high-value, time-sensitive technology goods fueling the AI boom, including servers, data storage units, and memory chips.

Julia Seiermann, IATA's head of industry analysis, noted, "The rapid increase in demand for AI-related goods in 2025 was met thanks to air cargo, allowing investment to translate into economic activity rather than being constrained by logistics." She emphasised that as economies increasingly depend on high-value technology, air cargo will remain essential for timely delivery and economic growth.

Lufthansa Cargo becomes launch customer for Jettainer's next-generation IoT tracking for digital ULD management



Driving digital transparency in air cargo

Lufthansa Cargo has become the launch customer for a new IoT-based ULD tracking solution developed by Jettainer, marking a new milestone in the partners' long-standing cooperation. The technology will be rolled out across all ULD fleets for Lufthansa Cargo and fits perfectly in the broader efforts to strengthen digital transparency and operational efficiency. Implementation has already started. The announcement, made at the IATA World

Cargo Symposium 2026 in Lima, Peru, highlights the companies' joint commitment to innovation and digital leadership in global air cargo.

Jettainer is responsible for the comprehensive ULD management for Lufthansa Cargo. The partnership encompasses the global steering, positioning, maintenance and repair of an extensive ULD fleet – making it one of the largest dedicated ULD fleets in worldwide cargo and passenger operations and ensuring high availability across Lufthansa Cargo's

international route structure.

The new IoT tracking solution provides real time visibility of ULD movements across the global network. Instead of relying solely on fixed airport infrastructure, the system combines stationary and mobile readers, ensuring continuous tracking, even at locations with limited technical setup. The system significantly reduces blind spots and creates reliable transparency throughout the entire ULD supply chain. Airlines gain precise information on the location and dwell time of

each unit, enabling faster reactions to irregularities, and more data-driven steering. The enhanced insights reduce search efforts, support quicker recovery of misplaced equipment and strengthen positioning and operational control, ultimately improving overall fleet performance and efficiency.

“Digital transparency is a key success factor in today's air cargo industry,” said Oliver von Götz, VP Global Fulfillment Management at Lufthansa Cargo. “By partnering with Jettainer on the rollout of next generation IoT tracking, we are enhancing visibility across our ULD fleet and further improving reliability, efficiency and quality for our customers worldwide.”

“Lufthansa Cargo acting as the launch customer for our next generation IoT tracking solution marks a significant milestone for Jettainer,” said Dr Jan Wilhelm Breithaupt, CEO of Jettainer. “Managing a ULD fleet of this scale requires maximum transparency, reliable data, and intelligent steering. Together, we are setting a new standard for digital ULD management and strengthening operational control across the global network.”

Awery Integrates IATA's CO2 Connect to Deliver Shipment-Level Emissions Data



Awery Aviation Software has become the first digital platform to integrate the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) CO2 Connect for Cargo emissions calculation tool, a move designed to enhance transparency and sustainability in air cargo operations. The announcement was made on March 11 during the IATA World Cargo Symposium (WCS) 2026, held from March 10 to 12 in Lima, Peru.

CO2 Connect for Cargo provides the air cargo industry with standardised, operationally accurate emissions data. Awery has embedded the tool into its enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform, enabling users to access precise, flight-specific carbon dioxide emissions data directly within their existing workflows.

Launched earlier this year, CO2 Connect for Cargo utilises operational data supplied by airlines—including aircraft type-specific fuel burn, cargo load factors, and passenger load factors—to calculate per-shipment emissions. By February 2026, more than 100 airlines, including dedicated



cargo carriers, were contributing primary operational data to the platform.

Industry First: Real-Time Operational Emissions

Vitaly Smilianets, Awery's founder and chief executive, said, "Integrating CO2 Connect for Cargo into the Awery ERP platform equips our customers with trusted, standardised emissions data directly within the systems they use every day. Providing emissions data that reflects real operational performance is something the industry has needed for a long time, and we are proud to be the first platform to deliver this capability."

Frederic Leger, IATA's senior vice president of product and services, added, "With the introduction of IATA CO2 Connect for Cargo, we can now provide per-shipment emissions data and support the expectations for greater transparency as airlines progress towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050." He noted that CO2 Connect remains the only carbon calculator for air travel based on operational data from more than 100 airlines and aligned with global standards such as ISO14083.

Development and Collaboration

Awery was among the technology providers, forwarders, and shippers that participated in the pilot phase of CO2 Connect for Cargo, offering feedback to refine the platform. The company has also been a long-term advocate of IATA's ONE Record data standard, promoting interoperability, improved data quality, and transparency across air cargo.

Phaedra den Hertog, Awery's chief experience officer, is contributing to WCS panels, including 'From Data Silos to Insights: Leveraging Environmental Data for Smarter Decisions,' highlighting how integrated emissions data can inform operational and sustainability decisions.

Technology and Industry Transformation

Technology continues to dominate discussions at WCS 2026, themed 'Advancing Air Cargo in a Dynamic World,' reflecting the impact of digitalisation, shifting geopolitics, and new regulations. Industry stakeholders are exploring how digital solutions—including artificial intelligence—can streamline operations, improve cargo visibility, and advance sustainability objectives across the air cargo supply chain.

Lödige Industries Launches Cargo Direct for Intelligent Terminal Orchestration

Lödige Industries has unveiled **Cargo Direct**, an innovative software module designed to optimize air cargo terminal operations by linking **Air Waybill (AWB) data** with terminal resources in real time. The platform enables terminals to improve **capacity utilization, operational throughput, and resource allocation** through intelligent workflow orchestration.

Modern air cargo terminals face mounting pressure from **rising volumes, labor constraints, and increasing process complexity**, as airlines consolidate traffic through fewer, high-intensity hubs. Terminals are evolving from simple handling points into **digitally connected performance nodes** within airline and forwarder networks. Cargo Direct addresses this shift by providing **real-time, data-driven orchestration**, transforming static automation into a fully synchronized operational system.

Intelligent Orchestration Improves Terminal Performance

Cargo Direct consolidates shipment data, terminal layouts, equipment availability, and personnel resources into a continuously updated **activity plan**. Each cargo unit—whether a ULD, pallet, or individual package—is tracked via **hand-held scanners** connected through WLAN or 5G. The system actively directs cargo to its next optimal step, such as storage, inspection, X-ray screening, or build-up workstations, reducing human intervention to a **structured scan-and-confirm workflow**.

By minimizing unnecessary movements, synchronizing resources with shipment priorities, and dynamically optimizing put-away and retrieval strategies, Cargo Direct helps terminals **increase throughput per**



square metre and per man-day, while stabilizing operations during peak periods. Integration with **smart gates, 3D volume and weight scanners**, and other data sources further enhances ULD build-up density and terminal efficiency.

Bridging the Gap Between Automation and Process Control

While mechanical automation boosts individual equipment performance, Cargo Direct provides **true process automation**, enabling large-scale hubs to match the transparency and responsiveness traditionally seen in smaller facilities. The system manages exceptions—such as damaged cargo or partial shipments—within its logic, ensuring operational consistency and **predictable hub-level performance**.

“Digitalization in air cargo must go beyond data visibility,” says **Philippe De Backer, CEO of Lödige Industries**. “The real opportunity lies in intelligent, real-time operational orchestration—where shipment data, equipment, and resources are managed as one coordinated

system. Cargo Direct closes the gap between equipment automation and true process automation, delivering consistent, repeatable throughput while supporting hub connectivity and schedule resilience.”

Seamless Integration and Future-Ready Design

Cargo Direct is compatible with existing **Cargo Management Systems (CMS)** and communicates using standard **IATA messaging**, feeding operational status and cargo location data back to the CMS in real time. Offered as a **subscription-based solution per AWB**, the platform is continuously updated, providing a robust data foundation for **AI-assisted optimization and predictive logistics**.

By combining real-time orchestration with intelligent automation, Cargo Direct positions terminals to **maximize throughput, reduce operational variability, and transform complexity into a competitive advantage** in an increasingly digitalized air cargo landscape.

Crane Worldwide Logistics deploys cargo.one to power its quoting and procurement globally with speed and accuracy



- Crane selects cargo.one as its data and automation foundation, consolidating buy and sell rates in one platform to support global gateway operations
- Purpose-built quoting interface integrates with Crane's TMS, enabling teams to benefit from specialized tooling while maintaining operational continuity
- cargo.one's AI-native infrastructure supports Crane's long-term AI strategy

Crane Worldwide Logistics, a leader in supply chain solutions with operations in 33 countries, and cargo.one, the AI technology provider for logistics, have partnered to roll out cargo.one across the freight forwarder's global footprint. The collaboration modernizes Crane's procurement infrastructure around one central database, automates and streamlines its quoting and booking workflows, and lowers operational complexity and costs.

Amid increasingly complex supply chain conditions, Crane has further advanced its digital transformation by adopting a landscape of integrated solutions from cargo.one – including cargo.one pro, Live Rates, Static Rates, Live Estimates, Rate Engine, Quotes API, AI-powered Quoting, and Tender Feeder. cargo.one equips Crane's teams with one unified source of content across the organization, and an innovative toolset with which to make stronger data-driven decisions.

cargo.one delivers Crane both a wider choice of market rates and better utilization of its own data, such as contract

and consol rates, within quoting flows in all branches. Crane's gateway teams can now instantly access every relevant rate with ease. This scalable digital infrastructure enables large scale forwarders like Crane to achieve accuracy and consistency in every sell rate, without the overhead and cost of hiring more quoting teams. cargo.one solutions are fully integrated with Crane's WiseTech-powered TMS platform.

cargo.one's Rate Engine replaces the need for multiple data sources by centralizing the management of Crane's buy rates, internal product rates, and sell rates from a single interface, and serving as the foundation for all its sales teams. With cargo.one's Quotes API, Crane can deliver shippers faster, more accurate quotes and RFIs, and ensure seamless quoting experiences.

Brannon Kuykendall, CIO, Crane Worldwide Logistics, commented, "Strong partnerships create real leverage. cargo.one unlocks quoting advantages by providing access to a broad portfolio of live, static, contract, and promotional airline rates in a single platform. As we continue to build AI-driven capabilities, solution providers that act as true partners, offer modern integration methods, and give us the ability to stream data and events in real time, enable our teams to focus on real, tangible innovation for our clients instead of data plumbing."

In addition to cargo.one's AI-powered quoting and AI agents now being available to its teams, cargo.one supports Crane's wider AI strategy as a highly flexible and integrated AI-native digital backend to power its proprietary AI developments moving forward.

Moritz Claussen, Founder & Co-CEO of cargo.one, added, "We are proud to deliver Crane the optimal data foundation and infrastructure that its global operations can fully rely upon. Our collaboration with Crane reflects what we're seeing across the industry: forwarders need comprehensive data, intelligent automation, and a partner who understands the nuances of their specific business needs."

By collaborating with cargo.one, Crane remains continually aligned with the highest industry standards for rate reliability, data quality, and availability – aspects that directly steer quoting and booking performance. As partners, Crane and cargo.one teams are working closely with a shared mission to continually grow the value Crane's shippers receive from its digital forwarding processes.

Saudia Cargo, Mawani and ZATCA Launch SeatoAir Logistics Corridor to Safeguard Supply Chains



Saudia Cargo has unveiled an expanded strategic collaboration with the Saudi Ports Authority (Mawani) and the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority (ZATCA) to establish a pioneering seatoair logistics corridor that enhances cargo mobility through Saudi Arabia's western seaboard and into global markets. The initiative was announced as part of broader logistics innovation discussions at the International Air Transport Association (IATA) World Cargo Symposium (WCS) currently underway in Lima, Peru.

The new corridor links major maritime gateways, starting with Jeddah Islamic Port, with key airfreight hubs, enabling inbound ocean freight to seamlessly transition into expedited air transport. The initiative responds to shifting shipping patterns, regional transport dynamics and ongoing uncertainties affecting maritime routes, providing businesses with reliable

alternatives to maintain supply chain continuity.

Integrated Multimodal Framework

At the heart of the initiative is a commitment to integrate seaports and airports as complementary logistics gateways within Saudi Arabia's rapidly growing transport ecosystem. By facilitating efficient modal transfers, the corridor aims to reduce overall transit times, balance costefficiency with speed of delivery and strengthen the Kingdom's position as a central logistics bridge between continents. Mawani's ports—responsible for handling more than **8 million TEUs of containerised cargo in 2025**—are pivotal to this vision as they expand throughput and multimodal connectivity under the National Transport and Logistics Strategy.

Under the new framework, ZATCA plays a critical enabling role by

harmonising customs procedures across maritime and aviation entry points. A single customs declaration system, supported by advanced preclearance and smart inspection controls, allows containers to move swiftly from port berths to airport runways with reduced dwell times. This bonded transit regime not only accelerates cargo movement but also reinforces the Kingdom's regulatory efficiency in a global logistics context.

Strategic Imperatives and Operational Benefits

For Saudia Cargo, the seatoair corridor adds a strategic layer to its network offering, providing shippers with new pathways to route goods when maritime shipping patterns fluctuate or routes are disrupted. By pivoting seamlessly between sea and air, the initiative enhances resilience in supply chains, particularly for timesensitive and valueadded cargo sectors.

The corridor's activation at Jeddah Islamic Port underscores the importance of the Red Sea gateway within regional supply chain realignment, especially as wider logistics networks in the Gulf adapt to alternative trade lanes and multimodal freight solutions.

Officials from Saudia Cargo, Mawani and ZATCA reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring that essential and commercial goods continue to move reliably, irrespective of external pressures on marine or air routes. By strengthening seatoair connectivity, activating alternative logistics paths, and enabling dependable links across the Kingdom's key entry points, the collaboration aims to protect trade flows and maintain continuity across critical supply chains.

Asiana Airlines Cargo Appoints Global GSA Group as GSSA in France and Germany



Asiana Airlines Cargo has appointed Global GSA Group as its General Sales and Services Agent (GSSA) in France and Germany, reinforcing its commercial footprint across two of Europe's most strategically export markets.

The agreement is aimed at strengthening sales continuity and operational stability as Asiana Airlines continues its broader integration within the framework of Korean Air, while enhancing access to Asia-bound cargo capacity from key European gateways.

Strengthening European Market Presence

Under the new mandate, Global GSA Group will deliver full-scale commercial and operational support for Asiana Airlines Cargo in both markets. This includes sales and business development, reservations, billing, marketing, operational coordination, and day-to-day customer service.

The partnership is designed to streamline cargo flows from Europe to Asia, particularly to Northeast Asian destinations such as South Korea and Japan, while also enabling onward connectivity through the airline's global network via Incheon International Airport.

Supporting Asia-Bound Trade Flows

France and Germany remain pivotal to Europe-Asia air cargo dynamics. Germany, as Europe's largest industrial economy, generates significant volumes of high-value exports, including automotive components, machinery, and pharmaceuticals. Meanwhile, France plays a critical role in consolidated shipments and diversified export flows, supported by strong freight forwarding networks.

Through disciplined capacity management and close collaboration with freight forwarders, Global GSA Group will optimise utilisation across Asiana's passenger and cargo network. This approach is intended to ensure consistent performance, efficient load factors, and reliable access to key Asian markets.

Integrated Commercial and Operational Services

A key focus of the partnership is the delivery of end-to-end services that align commercial strategy with operational execution. By combining local market expertise with structured capacity planning, the GSSA aims to enhance responsiveness to shipper demand while maintaining service reliability across core cargo segments.

The model also supports the development of specialised verticals, including time-sensitive and high-value shipments, while leveraging passenger network capacity to maximise efficiency.

Industry Perspective

Leadership at Global GSA Group emphasised the importance of France and Germany as cornerstone markets for Asia-bound trade, highlighting the role of local expertise and data-driven capacity management in delivering measurable commercial results.

The collaboration reflects a broader trend within the air cargo sector, where airlines increasingly rely on specialised GSSA partners to strengthen regional market access, optimise sales performance, and maintain service continuity during periods of structural transition.

Enhancing Connectivity and Reliability

Together, Asiana Airlines Cargo and Global GSA Group aim to provide freight forwarders with structured, reliable access to Asia, supported by consistent service quality and operational efficiency. The partnership is expected to enhance connectivity between Europe and Northeast Asia while reinforcing the airline's position in key export corridors.

Human Accountability and Infrastructure Investment Key to Perishables Cold Chain Integrity



Human accountability remains a cornerstone of successful perishables handling, alongside robust operational investment, industry stakeholders agreed during the International Air Transport Association (IATA) World Cargo Symposium (WCS) 2026.

On day two of WCS, a panel discussion on perishable cold chain requirements highlighted the critical role of trained personnel, resilient infrastructure, and precise temperature control in minimizing product loss and maintaining cold chain integrity.

People First: Accountability Drives Cold Chain Success

Anna-Maria Kirchner, head of global sales at Finnair Cargo; Sergio Sinova, general manager at Garcia Mateo; and Guillermo Vega, regional manager of safety, security, and QA at SAASA, underscored that a multifaceted approach to perishables handling is essential.

Moderator Desiree Arambura, senior regional cargo commercial manager at LATAM, emphasized that achieving cold chain integrity “requires a collaborative approach,” with all panelists agreeing that the discipline, culture, and accountability of individuals underpin operational success.

Sinova highlighted the critical importance of people in perishables operations, noting that improper handling not only risks economic loss but also damages stakeholder reputations. He stressed that “transparency of stakeholder responsibility” is essential for accountability across the supply chain.

Vega reinforced that staff approach and consistency in monitoring are crucial to achieving zero product loss, while Kirchner added that ongoing, up-to-date training is a foundational element of effective perishables handling.

Investing in Resilient Infrastructure

As the perishables sector grows, infrastructure investment is equally important. Kirchner described the need for “resilient infrastructure” to handle temperature-sensitive cargo efficiently. The panel acknowledged that gaps remain, particularly in transit hubs and end-destination facilities.

Finnair Cargo’s new cold chain facility at Helsinki Airport exemplifies best practice. Designed with dedicated areas for perishables, pharmaceuticals, and general cargo, the facility is strategically located next to the runway to minimize in-transit handling

times. Trucks can directly access the perishables section, reducing delays for loading and collection.

Vega noted that infrastructure investment is often limited by cost concerns but advocated for inventive solutions, such as prefabricated structures capable of maintaining required temperatures. These can standardize operations across multiple locations and ensure consistent cold chain integrity.

Temperature Control and Visibility

Temperature remains one of the most significant risk factors for perishables. Vega emphasized that cargo visibility is critical to preventing mishandling, particularly during loading and unloading at airport aprons, where improper exposure can reduce shelf life by three to five days.

Sinova noted that connecting flights present higher risk, with an estimated 10% of cargo lost compared to 2% on direct flights, underscoring the importance of efficient ground operations.

Kirchner highlighted technology as a key enabler, with digitalization and real-time data providing transparency and monitoring capabilities that strengthen cold chain reliability.

Conclusion

The discussion reinforced that effective perishables handling depends on a combination of human accountability, infrastructure investment, and temperature control. Integrating skilled personnel with resilient facilities and technology-driven oversight ensures operational consistency, reduces waste, and safeguards product integrity across global air cargo networks.

dnata Advances New Cargo Centre at Zurich Airport to Meet Growing Demand



installation of specialised infrastructure, followed by progressive handover of warehouse and office spaces and a staged relocation of teams before fully transferring cargo operations from the Fracht West facility.

The new centre is being developed in collaboration with **Zurich Airport**, which is investing over **CHF 40 million** in the building infrastructure. dnata is committing approximately **CHF 6 million** to equip the site, including installation of the modern ULD handling system.

Zurich, Switzerland – dnata, the Emirates Group’s air services provider, has confirmed that construction of its new **dnata Cargo Centre at Zurich Airport** is progressing on schedule, with an official opening planned for early 2027. The development represents a major long-term investment in dnata’s Swiss operations, designed to enhance operational efficiency, increase handling capacity, and strengthen service reliability for customers and partners.

The new facility will expand dnata’s freight handling capability at Zurich by **50%**, increasing annual throughput from 60,000 to 90,000 tonnes. In 2025, dnata processed **56,000 tonnes of cargo** at the airport, up nearly 4% year-on-year, reflecting continued

demand for high-quality cargo handling services and the need for enhanced infrastructure.

State-of-the-Art Infrastructure

The Cargo Centre will feature **8,330 m² of warehouse space**, including 7,580 m² for indoor cargo handling and 4,600 m² of covered outdoor areas. Two truck docks for ULD handling and **18 dock levellers** will improve landside access and turnaround times, while increased storage capacity will allow dnata to manage higher cargo volumes more effectively.

A **dedicated 1,000 m² pharmaceutical handling area** will support GDP-compliant operations with temperature-controlled zones for 2–8°C and 15–25°C cargo. An advanced

ULD material handling system will streamline cargo flows, enhance throughput, and improve operational control, while modern office spaces will foster closer collaboration between operational and administrative teams.

The facility is expected to support a range of cargo types, from general freight to specialised shipments such as pharmaceuticals, helping dnata meet growing demand at Zurich Airport.

Phased Transition

dnata will relocate from its current Fracht West warehouse, originally built in the 1960s, which has reached the limits of its operational capacity. The move to the new Cargo Centre will be phased to ensure uninterrupted service. Early access will allow

Long-Term Strategic Investment

Willy Ruf, Managing Director of dnata Switzerland, commented: “The new dnata Cargo Centre represents a significant long-term investment in our Zurich operations. Cargo handling at Zurich has evolved considerably over the past decade, with higher volumes, tighter turnaround expectations, and a growing share of specialised shipments. This facility allows us to redesign cargo flows from landside access to warehouse handling to reflect today’s operational realities.”

The Zurich development forms part of dnata’s broader global expansion of cargo infrastructure, following the opening of a new cargo centre in Amsterdam and ongoing projects in **Milan, Dubai, and Erbil**.

Hactl Appoints Frosti Lau as Chief Executive to Lead Next Phase of Digital and Operational Growth



Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminals Limited (Hactl) has announced the appointment of **Frosti Lau Yi-sau as its new Chief Executive**, effective 8 June 2026. The leadership transition comes as the company continues to position itself at the forefront of global air cargo handling through

innovation, digitalisation, and operational excellence.

Lau brings more than 25 years of senior leadership experience across the aviation and air cargo sectors, with a career spanning key international markets including Hong Kong, Mainland China, Australasia, Southeast Asia, and Southern Africa. He joins

Hactl from Cathay Pacific Airways, where he most recently served as Regional General Manager for Southeast Asia and Oceania.

During his tenure at Cathay Pacific, Lau held several senior positions across both commercial and operational functions. These included Regional General Manager for the Southwest Pacific and General Manager for Cargo Service Delivery. In the latter role, he also served as a director of the airline's cargo terminal subsidiary, gaining direct experience in terminal operations and air cargo logistics management.

His professional background reflects a blend of strategic and operational expertise, with a strong emphasis on digital transformation initiatives, partnership development, and organisational capability building. These competencies are expected to play a critical role as Hactl continues to evolve its service offerings and adapt to shifting global supply chain dynamics.

Hactl, one of the world's leading independent air cargo terminal operators, manages cargo handling operations at Hong Kong International Airport, a major global freight hub. The company has built a reputation for advanced automation, high-throughput

handling capabilities, and the integration of digital technologies to enhance efficiency and transparency across cargo operations.

Michelle Choi, Acting Chief Executive of Hactl, noted that the appointment reflects the company's focus on leadership with strong technological and industry credentials. She highlighted the importance of experience in both innovation and large-scale operations in steering the organisation through its next phase of development.

Lau's academic background includes a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Master of Science in Financial Analysis from the HKUST Business School, a Bachelor of Laws from the University of London, and a Master of Arts from the University of Hong Kong.

The appointment comes at a time when air cargo terminals worldwide are increasingly investing in automation, data analytics, and digital platforms to improve efficiency and resilience amid evolving trade patterns and growing demand for e-commerce and high-value freight.

With Lau set to assume leadership in June, industry observers will be watching closely how Hactl continues to strengthen its position within the competitive global cargo handling landscape.

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Amazon-Linked A330 Freighter Fleet Transferred to IAT Leasing in Strategic Portfolio Expansion

A portfolio of ten converted Airbus A330-300 freighters, currently supporting the logistics network of Amazon Air, is being transferred to IAT Leasing in a move that signals a significant shift in the global freighter leasing landscape.

The widebody aircraft are operated by Alaska Air Group—following their integration through Hawaiian Airlines—and deployed on behalf of Amazon’s air cargo operations. The transaction sees IAT Leasing acquire the freighter portfolio from funds managed by Altavair, with the deal backed by capital from Blue Owl Capital and financing support from MUFG.

The acquisition represents a major milestone for IAT Leasing, marking its formal entry into the widebody freighter segment. By incorporating dedicated

cargo aircraft into its portfolio, the lessor is positioning itself as a more diversified and competitive player in the global aircraft leasing market.

The Airbus A330-300 freighters included in the deal are powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 700 engines, a widely used and reliable propulsion system for long-haul widebody aircraft. The transaction also reinforces a prior agreement between IAT Leasing and Blue Owl Capital established earlier this year, which includes participation in Rolls-Royce’s LessorCare+ maintenance programme. This arrangement is expected to enhance asset lifecycle management and maintenance predictability for the newly acquired fleet.

From a strategic standpoint, the deal enables IAT Leasing to expand

into a high-demand asset class at a time when air cargo capacity remains a critical component of global supply chains. The addition of widebody freighters not only increases the scale of its portfolio but also strengthens its ability to serve operators requiring long-haul cargo solutions.

For Amazon Air, the continued operation of these aircraft ensures stability within its air logistics network, which relies heavily on third-party operators and leased assets to maintain flexibility and scalability. The involvement of Alaska Air Group further underscores the collaborative model that defines much of the e-commerce giant’s aviation strategy.

Industry stakeholders view the transaction as part of a broader trend in which leasing companies are increasing their exposure to freighter assets, driven by sustained demand for air cargo capacity and the growth of e-commerce-driven logistics.

With this acquisition, IAT Leasing signals its intent to play a larger role in the evolving air cargo ecosystem, leveraging institutional investment, strategic partnerships, and modern aircraft platforms to support the next phase of global freight expansion.



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Turkish Airlines Announces Leadership Reshuffle to Drive Next Phase of Global Growth



Murat Şeker



Ahmet Olmuştur

Turkish Airlines has unveiled a significant restructuring of its executive leadership, signalling a strategic shift as the airline strengthens its position in global aviation and aligns with its long-term growth objectives.

As part of the changes, Murat Şeker, a long-serving senior executive within the airline, has been appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Şeker succeeds to the role after an extensive tenure overseeing the carrier's financial strategy as Chief Financial Officer (CFO), a position he has held since 2016.

With a strong academic and professional background, Şeker holds a degree in Industrial Engineering from Marmara University, a master's degree in Economics from Sabancı University, and a PhD in Economics from the University of Minnesota. His international experience includes a tenure as an economist at the World Bank between 2008 and 2013, where he contributed to policy research on global trade, innovation and

economic development.

Prior to joining Turkish Airlines' executive leadership, Şeker held senior roles at Ziraat Bank, where he managed international funding and investor relations, and served on the boards of several financial subsidiaries. Within Turkish Airlines, he has also been a member of the Board and Executive Committee since 2021, while contributing to affiliated entities such as Turkish Technic and SunExpress.

Şeker's influence extends to the global aviation ecosystem through his role with the International Air Transport Association (IATA), where he has been a member of the Financial Advisory Council since 2024 and currently serves as its Chair. His appointment is widely seen as reinforcing financial discipline and strategic oversight at a time of continued industry transformation.

In a parallel move, Ahmet Olmuştur has been appointed Chief Executive Officer, marking a notable internal elevation that underscores the airline's emphasis on continuity and institutional knowledge.

Olmuştur brings over two decades of experience within Turkish Airlines, having begun his career with the company in 2000 as a part-time employee at its call centre. Over the years, he has held a series of key roles across revenue management, pricing, and global distribution, eventually rising to lead critical commercial functions.

Since 2014, he has played a central role in shaping the airline's commercial strategy, initially as Chief Marketing and Sales Officer and more recently, from 2024, as Chief Commercial Officer. His contributions span network planning, revenue optimisation, customer experience and the development of the airline's loyalty programme, Miles&Smiles.

Beyond his executive responsibilities, Olmuştur also serves on the boards of Turkish Technic and SunExpress, and is a member of IATA's Distribution Advisory Council. His broader engagement with industry and cultural institutions reflects a multidimensional leadership profile aligned with the airline's global ambitions.

The leadership transition comes at a time when Turkish Airlines continues to expand its footprint as the carrier flying to the highest number of countries worldwide. The airline has emphasised that the new management structure is designed to support sustainable growth, enhance operational efficiency and maintain a strong focus on passenger experience.

With a combination of financial expertise at the board level and deep commercial insight at the executive helm, Turkish Airlines is positioning itself to navigate evolving market dynamics while reinforcing its status as a leading global aviation brand.



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