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Redefining Air Cargo

Adrien Thominet on AERION's Vision for a more Integrated Industry

A Decade of Pharma Excellence

Emirates SkyCargo Surpasses One Million Pharmaceutical Shipments

The Future of GSSA

How Digital Intelligence and Strategic Partnerships Are Transforming Airline Cargo Management

Beyond Belly Cargo

Globe Air Cargo expands EGYPTAIR's reach in Türkiye and France

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Sarah Scheibe on the future of cargo operations





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EDITOR'S NOTES

Miami and the Moment for Air Cargo to Move Forward

The Intelligence Advantage: How China Is Redefining Global Air Cargo Through Smart Logistics

From Conversation to Action

AI, digitalisation, e-commerce, geopolitical uncertainty and shifting trade patterns are forcing the air cargo industry to rethink how it prepares for disruption—and how quickly it turns ideas into action.

Air cargo has never been an industry that stands still. Trade patterns change, regulations evolve, technology advances and customer expectations continue to rise. But the pace of change today is different. Several forces are moving at once, and the industry must respond with greater speed and greater purpose.

Artificial intelligence is moving from experimentation into practical use. Digitalisation is changing how information is exchanged and decisions are made. E-commerce



continues to reshape cargo flows, while sustainability, security, geopolitical uncertainty and workforce development are becoming central business issues.

The question for industry leaders is no longer simply what is changing. It is whether we are responding quickly enough.

That is one of the strongest messages emerging from TIACA Chair **Roos Bakker's recent leadership commentary**. Her argument is straightforward: leadership is not about having every answer. It is about asking the right questions—and then being prepared to act on the answers.

The first question is whether the industry is solving tomorrow's problems with yesterday's thinking.

AI and automation offer enormous possibilities, but technology should not become an objective in itself. The real test is whether it helps cargo businesses make better decisions, reduce complexity, improve visibility, strengthen safety and efficiency, or deliver a better customer experience.

The same applies to digitalisation. Air cargo has made considerable progress, but information still does not always move as efficiently as the cargo itself. The next step is not simply more digital systems. It is better-connected systems and greater cooperation across the supply chain.

The customer must remain at the centre of that transformation.

A shipper does not see an airline, airport, handler, forwarder or technology provider as separate parts of the journey. The customer sees one shipment. Reliability, visibility, speed, security and predictability are measured across the entire experience.

That makes collaboration more than an industry ambition. It is an operational necessity.

TIACA's own work on e-commerce illustrates the scale of the change. By the end of 2024, e-commerce accounted for approximately 20% of global air cargo volumes, with TIACA's research indicating that volumes could double over the following decade. The growth is creating new demands around



customs, data, safety, infrastructure and process standards.

No single company can address these challenges alone.

The same is true of resilience. Disruption has become part of the operating environment, whether driven by geopolitical developments, changing trade routes, regulation or unexpected capacity constraints. Resilience therefore has to be built before disruption occurs—not after it.

And behind all the technology and infrastructure is the most important part of the industry: its people.

The cargo workforce must be equipped for a business that will look different in five or ten years. That means developing new skills, attracting new talent and giving the next generation the opportunity to challenge established ways of working. As Bakker points out, the industry should not simply prepare people for the future; it should give them a role in creating it.

This is what makes the timing of Air Cargo Forum 2026 significant.

As the global industry meets in Miami, the value of the event will not be measured only by the number of sessions, exhibitors or meetings. Its real value will be measured by what happens afterwards.

Which ideas become investments? Which conversations become partnerships? Which technologies move from pilots into everyday operations? Which long-standing processes are finally reconsidered?

TIACA expects more than 4,000 professionals from over 80 countries and more than 150 exhibitors at this year's forum. The gathering brings together virtually every part of the air cargo ecosystem, creating an opportunity for different parts of the industry to see familiar challenges from a different perspective.

That is the opportunity before the industry in Miami.

Air cargo does not need more reasons to recognise that change is coming. It needs the confidence to act on what it already knows.

The future will not wait. The industry must be ready to move with it.

We are on

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Etihad Airways and Swissport Expand Global Ground Handling and Cargo Partnership

- *Memorandum of understanding signed at Arabian Travel Market expands Swissport's support for Etihad from 30 to 40 airports*
- *Agreement spans ground handling and cargo services, with scope to extend into airport hospitality*



Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, and Swissport, the world's largest provider of aviation services by revenue, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding at Arabian Travel Market to expand their global partnership, increasing the number of airports at which Swissport serves the airline from 30 to 40.

The expanded partnership covers airports across Africa, Europe, North America, the Middle East and Asia, adding 10 new locations to the work Swissport already carries out for the airline.

Under the MoU, the two companies will work together across ground handling and cargo services, with scope to extend the relationship into airport hospitality through Swissport's Aspire brand, which operates 110 airport lounges worldwide. Both sides intend it as a long-term partnership, giving them a framework to add airports and services as Etihad's network grows.

Captain Majed Al Marzouqi, Chief Operations and Guest Officer, Etihad Airways, said: "Etihad is expanding at pace, and each new destination we add depends on the right standard of service being in place on the ground before the first flight arrives. Working with one partner across 40 airports gives our guests the same experience whether they are departing from Europe, Asia or North America, and gives our operation the consistency it needs to match that expansion. By combining Swissport's global expertise with Etihad's ambitious plans, we can enhance efficiency, service quality and the guest experience across our operations, while creating a strong platform for what comes next."

Warwick Brady, President and Chief Executive Officer, Swissport, said: "Etihad and Swissport are a natural fit. We share the same ambition for operational excellence and an uncompromising focus on the customer experience. Etihad is embarking on an exciting phase of growth, and Swissport is proud to support that journey with our global network, our teams' operational expertise and our technology capabilities. Our track record in managing complex, large aviation hubs will enable us to support Etihad effectively wherever its growth takes it."

Technology and innovation will be important drivers of the expanded partnership as Etihad and Swissport explore opportunities to enhance operational efficiency, strengthen service delivery and improve the guest experience. By applying automation, artificial intelligence and data-driven insights, including Swissport's work on autonomous ground vehicles, the two organisations aim to support safer, smarter and more seamless airport operations, while investing in the people and capabilities that will support it.

EGYPTAIR and Globe Air Cargo:

From Belly Cargo to Freighters: How Globe Air Cargo Is Driving EGYPTAIR's Growth in Türkiye and France



Ersun Guven

Building a Decade of Sustainable Growth Across Türkiye, Europe and Beyond

A decade into its partnership with EGYPTAIR, Globe Air Cargo is demonstrating how a GSSA relationship can evolve from traditional cargo representation into a broader commercial and strategic partnership. What began in Türkiye in 2016 with the marketing of belly capacity on scheduled passenger services has developed into a significantly expanded operation, with EGYPTAIR now offering substantial scheduled cargo capacity alongside two weekly Airbus A330 freighter services. According to **Ersun Guven, Managing Director of Globe Air Cargo Türkiye**, the strength of the partnership is rooted in the close economic and industrial ties between Türkiye and Egypt, as well as the ability to respond flexibly to changing market demand. High load factors in both directions reflect the depth of the trade corridor, while growing demand is creating opportunities to further expand EGYPTAIR's freighter operation and develop project and part-charter business.

The growth reflects more than increasing capacity. Globe Air Cargo Türkiye provides tender management, operational support, import sales, charter development and complete commercial operations for EGYPTAIR, combining local market expertise with an in-depth understanding of the airline's network and capabilities. The same approach is delivering results in France, where Globe Air Cargo has represented EGYPTAIR since 2010. Record cargo volumes, the development of Cairo as a regional gateway and the growing use of digital booking and commercial tools illustrate how the GSSA model is becoming increasingly focused on customer knowledge, network optimisation and measurable commercial performance.

In this exclusive interview with **Cargo Newswire, Ersun Guven, Managing Director, Globe Air Cargo Türkiye** explores the key drivers behind the partnership's longevity, the industries shaping demand, the strategic importance of Cairo as a global cargo gateway, and how digitalisation and data are changing the way capacity is managed and sold. It also shares the expansion of cargo operations across Türkiye and France, and the opportunities shaping the airline's next phase of international cargo growth.

Q EGYPTAIR's relationship with Globe Air Cargo in Türkiye has now entered its second decade. What have been the key factors behind the partnership's longevity and its evolution from a belly-cargo operation into a broader freighter proposition?

Ten years on, this is not a static representation agreement; it is a partnership that has continuously evolved with the market. Since 2016, EGYPTAIR has benefited from a dedicated Globe Air Cargo Türkiye team, combining fast communication, responsive execution and close alignment with the airline. That continuity has allowed us to build deep market knowledge and turn it into concrete commercial development.

The evolution from scheduled passenger belly capacity to a broader freighter proposition is a clear example. As opportunities emerged in Türkiye, Globe Air Cargo worked alongside EGYPTAIR to develop the proposition and capture that potential.

That is exactly where ECS Group creates value: we do not simply manage an existing mandate; we actively look for the next opportunity to grow the airline's business.

Q EGYPTAIR has become one of the top ten carriers serving the Turkish market, with around 105 tonnes of weekly scheduled freight capacity between Istanbul and Cairo, alongside two weekly A330 freighter services. What does this growth tell you about cargo demand between Türkiye and Egypt?

The message from the market is clear: this is a strong two-way cargo corridor with real depth.

Globe Air Cargo Türkiye is achieving high load factors in both directions, which is commercially important because the business is not dependent on a single dominant export flow.

Behind that performance are strong industrial links between Türkiye and Egypt. Many Turkish manufacturers have operations in Egypt, creating regular cargo requirements and sustained demand between the two markets.

For Globe Air Cargo together with EGYPTAIR, this gives us exactly the kind of foundation we want: established demand, balanced traffic and further room to grow the corridor.

Q Which industries and cargo flows are currently driving the strongest demand between Türkiye and Egypt, and where do you see the greatest opportunities for further growth?

Today, textiles and automotive parts are driving some of the strongest outbound volumes from Türkiye, supported by important pharmaceutical accounts and shipments of hatching eggs to African destinations. The wider cargo base is already highly diversified, with aerospace, grains, pulses, seeds and general cargo also contributing to the business.

But we are not limiting the proposition to scheduled cargo. Globe Air Cargo and EGYPTAIR are also developing project and part-charter business, giving customers additional options when their requirements go beyond regular capacity.

Textiles are one of the clearest opportunities ahead. Increasing investment in textile production in Cairo and the movement of manufacturing activity into Egypt are expected to generate greater flows of fabrics from Türkiye into Egypt, while finished products create additional traffic in the opposite direction.

This is exactly the kind of market evolution we want to capture: more two-way traffic, more specialised cargo and a broader commercial proposition.

Q The current two weekly freighter services could potentially increase to four. What conditions would need to be in place for that expansion, and how do you assess the sustainability of additional freighter capacity in the market?

The demand is there, but volume alone is not enough to justify additional freighter capacity.

For Globe Air Cargo and EGYPTAIR, sustainable expansion means getting the full commercial equation right: network structure, pricing and capacity optimisation all have to work together.

That is why any potential increase from two to four weekly freighters is assessed as part of EGYPTAIR's wider network rather than as an isolated Türkiye opportunity. Globe Air Cargo Türkiye works closely with EGYPTAIR's broader sales organisation to make sure the commercial, operational and network fundamentals are aligned.

The objective is not simply more capacity. It is the right capacity, introduced at the right moment, with the conditions in place to make it sustainable.

Q How important is Cairo as a cargo gateway for Turkish and European exporters seeking onward connectivity into Africa, the Middle East and other international markets?

Cairo allows us to sell EGYPTAIR as a network, not simply as a destination. That significantly expands the commercial proposition available to Turkish and European exporters.

From Europe, Globe Air Cargo France already positions Cairo as a gateway for cargo moving onwards to Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Johannesburg, Chad and North America, opening access across the Middle East, Africa and the Americas.

EGYPTAIR's new Chicago service adds another important dimension. It has generated strong interest in the market and gives customers an additional option for cargo moving beyond traditional regional flows.

For Globe Air Cargo, the opportunity is clear: use Cairo's connectivity to open more markets, create more routing options and generate more business for EGYPTAIR, while keeping risk management and long-term network sustainability firmly in view.

Q Globe Air Cargo has also represented EGYPTAIR in France since 2010, where cargo tonnage increased from more than 2,500 tonnes in 2024 to 2,670 tonnes in 2025. What have been the principal drivers of this growth, and what are the prospects for 2026 and beyond?

The French performance comes down to two fundamentals: know the

customer and sell the right EGYPTAIR product against the right demand.

Globe Air Cargo France has built long-term customer relationships around reliability and a strong understanding of individual requirements. That commercial approach is backed by an attractive capacity proposition, combining EGYPTAIR's daily Boeing 787 operation from Paris-CDG to Cairo with freighter capacity serving Cairo.

The results speak for themselves: more than 2,500 tonnes in 2024, rising to 2,670 tonnes in 2025.

And we are not looking at that as a peak. 2026 is expected to become a third consecutive record year, with a similar growth prognosis to 2025.

Q What lessons from the French market have helped shape Globe Air Cargo's approach to developing EGYPTAIR's business in other European markets, including Türkiye?

France has reinforced one very important principle: you cannot sell an airline effectively unless you know it inside out.

That means understanding its capacity, operational flexibility, commercial needs and the way its network works. Through its long-standing relationship with EGYPTAIR in France, Globe Air Cargo has built substantial knowledge of the airline and of the commercial strengths of its network.

We can then transfer that know-how into other markets and combine it with strong local expertise.

In Türkiye, that gives the team a major advantage: we understand what EGYPTAIR can offer, we understand the local market, and we can bring the two together to identify and convert the right opportunities.

Q Digitalisation is changing air-cargo distribution, with Globe Air Cargo encouraging online bookings, particularly for smaller shipments. How are digital tools and market data changing customer behaviour, capacity management and commercial decision-making for EGYPTAIR?

For us, digitalisation is first and foremost a commercial tool.

Globe Air Cargo France has been actively driving online bookings, particularly for shipments below 300 kg, increasing the share of smaller shipments handled through digital channels.

The commercial benefit is immediate: the more cargo booked online, the faster and more efficiently our teams can use that information to optimise flights.

Across ECS Group, **Apollo and Quantum** support predictive pricing, capacity management, data analysis and quotation workflows. The objective is simple: turn better data into faster decisions and stronger commercial performance.

Q Looking ahead, how do you see the role of Globe Air Cargo evolving beyond traditional GSSA sales representation, and what are the three priorities for turning a successful EGYPTAIR–Globe Air Cargo partnership into sustainable long-term cargo growth?

Türkiye already shows how far the role has evolved. Globe Air Cargo is not simply selling EGYPTAIR capacity; the team is involved in tender management, operational support, import sales and complete commercial operations.

The next step is to push that commercial responsibility even further.

First, performance has to go beyond tonnes. We look at yield, customer mix, market coverage and revenue quality because those are all part of building stronger business for the airline.

Second, we want to work even more closely as an extension of EGYPTAIR's cargo organisation, broadening our support wherever it can create additional value.

And third, we believe strongly in accountability. Clear responsibilities, measurable objectives and demonstrable commercial value are becoming fundamental to the GSSA relationship.

This is where ECS Group is taking the model: beyond representation and towards a genuinely integrated, performance-driven commercial partnership.

Conclusion

The EGYPTAIR–Globe Air Cargo partnership illustrates how long-term GSSA relationships can evolve alongside an airline's network, customer base and commercial ambitions. Across Türkiye and France, the focus has moved beyond simply selling available capacity to developing markets, strengthening customer relationships, supporting operational and commercial requirements, and identifying new opportunities for network growth. The experience in Türkiye demonstrates the potential of combining strong local market knowledge with EGYPTAIR's expanding freighter and passenger capacity, while the French operation highlights the value of consistent customer engagement, targeted product positioning and digital distribution. Together, these elements are helping Globe Air Cargo build a more diversified and commercially responsive proposition for the airline. Looking ahead, the potential expansion of freighter services in Türkiye, the continued development of Cairo as a connecting gateway and further adoption of digital tools point to additional opportunities. Yet, as the interview makes clear, sustainable growth is not simply a question of adding capacity. It depends on aligning capacity with demand, maintaining revenue quality, understanding customer needs and ensuring that commercial decisions support the airline's wider network strategy.

For Globe Air Cargo and ECS Group, this marks the continuing evolution of the GSSA role—from sales representation towards a more integrated, accountable and performance-driven extension of the airline's cargo organisation.

Redefining Air Cargo Through Integration, Innovation & Sustainability

Adrien Thominet on AERION's Vision to Redefine the Future of Air Cargo

In an exclusive interview with *Cargo Newswire*, **Adrien Thominet, Chairman of AERION**, discusses the company's vision for a more integrated, technology-driven and performance-focused air cargo industry.

Thominet explains why AERION was created to move beyond the traditional GSSA model, bringing commercial expertise, digital intelligence, operational capabilities and specialised cargo solutions together through a single platform. He also examines the role of artificial intelligence, sustainability, data-driven decision-making and industry specialisation in helping airlines navigate an increasingly complex and competitive global market.

By Devender Groover

Q AERION has been introduced as the commercial powerhouse of the group's cargo ecosystem rather than just another GSA or consulting company. What industry challenge convinced you that the market was ready for an entirely new business model?

The traditional GSSA model is evolving. Airlines have greater direct access to markets, technology is reducing the need for purely transactional support, and outsourcing expectations are becoming increasingly sophisticated. Remaining relevant therefore requires delivering measurable value beyond conventional sales representation.

At the same time, airlines are facing growing complexity across commercial execution, operations, technology, compliance and specialised cargo activities. Managing these requirements through multiple disconnected providers can limit visibility, slow decision making and make cargo strategy more difficult to coordinate.

AERION was created to close this gap by turning the group's established capabilities into one clear, airline centric commercial platform. It enables airlines to access commercial expertise, digital intelligence, operational excellence and specialised cargo know how through a single corporate relationship.

AERION is not another layer of complexity. It is a new level of coordination, from representation to integrated cargo performance.

Q Air cargo has traditionally relied on fragmented partnerships across sales, operations, technology, and compliance. How does AERION's integrated ecosystem simplify this complexity, and what tangible advantages does it offer airline partners?

AERION provides one clear commercial entry point into an ecosystem combining ECS Group, Global GSA Group, CargoTech, TCE and specialised entities such as Healthc'Air, Mail & More and Squair. Airlines no longer need to coordinate each capability through a separate relationship.

The model is modular and scalable. Airlines can activate the commercial, digital, operational or specialised capabilities relevant to their requirements while retaining the option to expand the partnership as their strategy and network evolve.

By connecting commercial execution with digital visibility, advanced analytics, revenue management and operational coordination, AERION helps airlines improve capacity utilisation, strengthen yields, streamline performance management and make faster, better informed decisions.

One entry point. Multiple proven capabilities. One coordinated performance agenda.

Q The industry is under constant pressure to improve profitability while meeting increasingly ambitious sustainability goals. How can commercial optimization and digital transformation become key enablers of environmental responsibility rather than competing priorities?

Commercial optimisation and responsible resource utilisation are closely connected. Better forecasting, capacity planning and revenue management allow airlines to make more effective use of the cargo capacity already available across their networks.

AERION's data intelligence and Control Tower approach support more accurate demand forecasting, stronger load factor performance and more agile capacity allocation. These improvements help reduce avoidable operational inefficiencies while strengthening commercial performance.

Digitalisation also increases productivity by automating transactional activities and enabling employees to move towards higher value functions such as revenue management, flight supervision and performance analysis. This



Adrien Thominet

creates a more efficient, skilled and resilient cargo organisation capable of supporting sustainable long term growth.

For AERION, sustainability is not separate from performance. It is built into better planning, better use of capacity, better visibility and better decisions. Every avoidable empty kilogram, preventable operational error or unnecessary manual process carries both an economic and an environmental cost.

This direction is reinforced by Quito, AERION's parent holding company, which has been awarded the EcoVadis Silver Medal. The recognition reflects the robustness of Quito's ESG management system and the progress achieved through its Climate Action Plan, sustainability training, responsible business practices and stronger ESG reporting.

Q Decarbonization is one of aviation's biggest challenges, yet cargo often receives less attention than passenger operations. From AERION's perspective, what practical steps can airlines take today to reduce emissions through smarter cargo management and operational efficiency?

The most immediate opportunity is to make better use of the capacity already flying. Airlines can reduce avoidable inefficiencies through stronger demand forecasting, more accurate capacity planning, improved load optimisation and faster alignment between commercial decisions and operational reality.

This means moving from fragmented and retrospective management towards more connected, real time decision making. Better visibility over bookings, load factors, yields, network performance and market demand allows airlines to allocate capacity more effectively and reduce wasted opportunity across their cargo operations.

Digital tools and Control Tower models can support this shift by connecting commercial intelligence, operational coordination and revenue management in one performance framework. The objective is not simply to generate more data. It is to enable earlier, more informed action.

Sustainable aviation fuel, lightweight materials and next generation aircraft will be driven primarily by airlines, manufacturers and fuel providers. AERION's role is to help establish the commercial, operational and digital discipline that allows airlines to adopt those technologies effectively as they become more widely available.

Technology becomes valuable only when it changes a commercial or operational outcome.

Q One of AERION's defining strengths is its ability to combine the expertise of ECS Group, Global GSA Group, CargoTech, TCE, HealthcAir, Mail & More, and Squair into one strategic platform. How does this collaborative model create a competitive advantage that individual service providers cannot easily replicate?

The advantage lies in the ability to combine complementary capabilities around one airline objective rather than offering isolated services. ECS Group and Global GSA Group bring commercial reach and market execution. CargoTech contributes digital intelligence and data capabilities. TCE adds Total Cargo Management and operational depth. Specialist entities bring expertise in areas such as healthcare, mail, e commerce and support services.

An airline may need stronger market penetration in one region, more sophisticated revenue management in another, operational control across a network, or targeted development in a high yield vertical. AERION can assemble the relevant expertise through one coordinated commercial relationship rather than asking the airline to build and manage a fragmented provider ecosystem.

The model is not a fixed service package. It is a scalable performance framework that can evolve with the airline's priorities, network and cargo strategy.

AERION turns group capabilities into an airline specific performance model.

Q Digital technologies, including AI, predictive analytics, automation, and real time data visibility, are reshaping the cargo landscape. Which innovations do you believe will have the greatest impact over the next five years, and how is AERION helping airlines prepare for this transformation?

Real time data intelligence will become increasingly central to cargo management. Airlines need fresher, more actionable information to monitor performance, identify market changes and make faster commercial and operational decisions.

Dynamic pricing, predictive demand forecasting and data driven revenue management will have a particularly strong impact. These capabilities enable airlines to respond more effectively to market volatility, optimise capacity utilisation and improve the quality of cargo revenues.

Automation will also continue to reshape transactional activities, allowing teams to focus on higher value responsibilities such as commercial strategy, customer engagement, flight supervision, performance management and exception handling.

AERION combines CargoTech's digital capabilities with commercial expertise and operational coordination. Through scalable tools and Control Tower models, it helps airlines introduce technology within a broader performance framework rather than treating digitalisation as an isolated project.

The objective is not to replace people or systems overnight. It is to progressively build a more intelligent, responsive and connected cargo operating model.

Today's cargo market is increasingly driven by specialized segments such as pharmaceuticals, e-commerce, perishables, and mail. How important is industry specialization in building resilient cargo networks, and how does AERION address these evolving customer demands?

Specialisation is increasingly important because pharmaceuticals, perishables, electronics, e commerce and mail each require distinct commercial knowledge, operational processes and service standards. Airlines need the right expertise to develop these segments successfully and protect service quality.

AERION can activate the specialised capabilities available across its ecosystem, including Healthc'Air, Mail & More, TCE, ECS Group and Global GSA Group, while maintaining one coordinated commercial framework for the airline.

Our renewed Royal Brunei Airlines partnership illustrates this approach. Its next phase will combine wider market penetration with a focus on high yield verticals including pharmaceuticals, perishables, electronics and e commerce, supported by digitalisation, operational coordination and closer customer engagement.

Specialisation also strengthens resilience. A diversified cargo portfolio can help an airline balance changing market cycles, pursue higher value opportunities and reduce its exposure to any one cargo segment or trade lane.

AERION describes itself as a strategic partner rather than a traditional service provider. Could you explain how your consultative approach differs from conventional outsourcing models, and why airlines are increasingly seeking this kind of long term collaboration?

Conventional outsourcing often requires airlines to manage multiple providers, contracts and operating models. AERION offers a single integrated commercial relationship through which the appropriate expertise can be assembled around the airline's specific strategy and requirements.

The approach is consultative because it is not based on imposing a fixed service package. AERION can combine strategic coordination, commercial execution, digital solutions, operational support and specialist capabilities according to the airline's priorities and existing organisation.

Long term partnerships also create the conditions for deeper collaboration, transparent performance management and continuous optimisation. Aligned objectives, regular business reviews and responsive support can progressively expand a traditional GSSA relationship into a broader strategic partnership.

The objective is to become more relevant over time, helping the airline address today's priorities while building the capabilities required for its next phase of growth.

The cargo industry continues to navigate geopolitical uncertainty, supply chain disruptions, and shifting trade patterns. How can integrated commercial intelligence and operational agility help airlines remain competitive in such an unpredictable environment?

Market visibility has shortened considerably as geopolitical disruption, changing trade routes and rapidly shifting demand patterns reshape cargo flows. Airlines therefore need the ability to adjust commercial priorities and capacity strategies much faster than before.

A diversified network provides an important source of resilience. When activity weakens in one market, a broad international presence makes it possible to rebalance resources, capture opportunities elsewhere and maintain a more stable overall performance.

AERION reinforces this agility by combining local commercial intelligence, real time data, demand forecasting, capacity planning and revenue management within one coordinated model. This helps airlines respond to disruption not only defensively, but also by identifying and capturing emerging opportunities.

In volatile conditions, the advantage does not come from having more isolated information. It comes from connecting intelligence with the ability to act.

Beyond technology, leadership and organizational culture often determine the success of transformation initiatives. What advice would you give airline executives seeking to modernize their cargo businesses while ensuring teams embrace change?

Technology should be positioned as a tool that strengthens human expertise rather than replaces it. Digitalisation can automate transactional activities while allowing experienced employees to focus on higher value commercial, analytical and operational responsibilities.

Investing in training and reskilling is therefore essential. Supporting employees as they move from activities such as bookings towards revenue management, flight supervision and performance analysis helps create both stronger adoption and greater organisational value.

Transformation also requires long term commitment. A modular implementation approach, supported by transparent communication, aligned objectives and regular performance reviews, allows organisations to introduce new capabilities progressively while keeping teams connected to the commercial and operational purpose of the change.

The most successful transformations are those in which teams understand not only what is changing, but why it will make their work, their decisions and the airline's performance stronger.

Q Sustainability today extends beyond carbon reduction to include operational resilience, digital efficiency, resource optimization, and responsible business practices. How is AERION embedding these broader sustainability principles into its long term strategy?

AERION sees sustainability as a performance discipline that extends across the entire cargo ecosystem. It includes more efficient use of capacity, better planning, stronger data visibility, reduced avoidable resource use, resilient operating models and responsible business practices.

The commercial and digital choices made today have an operational and environmental impact. Better forecasting, capacity allocation, workflow automation and revenue management can help reduce inefficiencies while creating a more responsive and economically sustainable cargo organisation.

AERION also operates within the sustainability framework of Quito, its parent holding company. Quito's EcoVadis Silver Medal recognises the strength of its ESG management system and its progress in areas such as climate action, employee engagement, diversity and inclusion, ESG reporting and responsible value chain practices.

For AERION, the priority is to translate these principles into the way cargo partnerships are designed and developed: use data intelligently, reduce avoidable inefficiency, build resilient capabilities, support people through change and create long term value that is commercially credible as well as environmentally responsible.

Sustainability is not a separate workstream. It is part of how AERION defines better cargo performance.

Q Looking ahead, how do you envision AERION shaping the future of global air cargo over the next decade? What legacy would you like the company to leave in terms of innovation, sustainability, and value creation for the industry?

Better forecasting, capacity allocation, workflow automation and revenue management can help reduce inefficiencies while creating a more responsive and economically sustainable cargo organisation.

Over the next five to seven years, AERION aims to evolve into a comprehensive aviation and logistics partner, extending well beyond the traditional GSA model through a broader portfolio of integrated commercial, operational, technological and specialised cargo solutions.

Its role will be to make advanced capabilities more accessible to airlines through one clear platform. Data intelligence, digital revenue management, operational coordination and specialised logistics expertise will increasingly be combined into end to end solutions designed around individual airline needs.

AERION's ambition is to establish a more integrated, intelligible and effective model for airline cargo management, one built on long term strategic partnerships, stronger commercial performance, operational agility and sustainable growth across the global air cargo industry.

The legacy we want to create is practical: helping airlines move from fragmented cargo management to connected, measurable performance, with technology serving operations, commercial intelligence serving better decisions, and sustainability embedded in the way value is created.

We are not building a bigger GSSA. We are building the next operating model for airline cargo.

Closing Question

Q Many industry observers describe air cargo as being at a turning point, driven by digitalization, sustainability, and changing customer expectations. If you had one message for airline CEOs about preparing for the next era of cargo, what would it be?

The next era of cargo will not be won by adding more providers, more systems or more complexity. It will be won by connecting the capabilities airlines already need: commercial execution, operational control, data intelligence, revenue management and specialist expertise, around one clear performance agenda.

Airline CEOs should not see digitalisation and sustainability as separate transformation programmes. Both become meaningful when they improve daily decisions: how capacity is used, how demand is anticipated, how teams act, how operations are coordinated and how value is created.

The question is no longer whether cargo should evolve beyond a traditional representation model. The question is how quickly airlines can build a more integrated, intelligent and resilient cargo organisation.

AERION is the commercial powerhouse of an integrated cargo ecosystem: one entry point, multiple proven capabilities and one coordinated performance agenda

For Adrien Thominet, the future of air cargo will depend increasingly on integration rather than fragmentation. AERION's ambition is to connect commercial execution, operational expertise, technology and specialised capabilities around a single performance agenda, giving airlines greater visibility, agility and control.

As the industry faces continued disruption, digital transformation and growing sustainability expectations, Thominet sees an opportunity to move beyond conventional representation models towards long-term strategic partnerships built around measurable performance and sustainable growth.

Beyond the Launch:

Why Operational Excellence Is Critical to Successful Cargo Market Entry

*A stronger **TCE/Total Cargo Management-led** alternative would be: New markets demand more than a sales presence*
By Sarah Scheibe, Managing Director - TCE

*As airlines expand into new markets, establishing a strong sales presence is only one part of the equation. Successful market entry depends equally on reliable operations, effective supplier management, regulatory compliance and responsive customer service from day one. In an exclusive to **Cargo Newswire, Sarah Scheibe, Managing Director of TCE**, examines why these elements must work together to create a dependable cargo operation and how TCE's **Total Cargo Management (TCM)** approach helps airlines build, launch and sustainably develop their presence in new markets.*

Launching an airline cargo service in a new region is often presented as a sales exercise. Appoint a GSSA, publish capacity, contact freight forwarders and begin taking bookings.

The reality is more demanding.

Before the first shipment moves, the airline needs a cargo organisation capable of delivering what the sales team promises. That requires reliable handling, clear procedures, effective customer service, supplier control, regulatory compliance.

At TCE, we approach new-market rollouts through Total Cargo Management. Sales, operations and service delivery are connected parts of one cargo business and must be built together.

An airline does not truly enter a market when it starts selling capacity. It enters when it can deliver a dependable service from booking to final handover. A new region creates



opportunity but also exposure. The airline may have a strong brand and network, yet it is entering a market where freight forwarders already have preferred carriers and demanding expectations. It must earn its position.

Local knowledge is essential. Cargo flows vary sharply. One market may be driven by pharmaceuticals while another depends on automotive parts, perishables, machinery or e-commerce.

A successful rollout begins by identifying demand, the customers controlling it and the service levels they expect. It also requires an honest assessment of capacity, schedules and network connections. This is where TCE's Total Cargo Management model creates immediate value. Our teams combine market intelligence with operational knowledge. We identify opportunities while testing whether handling, documentation and supplier networks are ready to support them.

Commercial ambition must always be matched by operational capability. Choosing handling partners is critical. Airlines must examine quality, staffing, training, warehouse capability, specialist expertise, technology, compliance and peak-period performance.

A handler may perform well normally but struggle when volumes rise. A warehouse may lack processes for temperature-sensitive, valuable or dangerous goods. These weaknesses often emerge after launch, when correction is expensive.

A weak handling setup can destroy in weeks the trust a sales team has spent months building.

Supplier management must begin before launch. At TCE, we define responsibilities, establish standards and monitor delivery through audits, reporting and operational reviews.

The aim is not simply to appoint suppliers. It is to create a controlled environment where every partner understands what is expected, who owns each task and how performance will be measured.

Clear procedures are equally important. Launches often involve the airline, GSSA, ground handler, trucking companies, security providers

and customs specialists. Unclear communication allows small problems to escalate.

Who approves special cargo? Who responds when documentation is incomplete? Who manages disruption? Who communicates with customers outside normal hours?

These questions must be answered before launch. Responsibility cannot be improvised when cargo is waiting in the warehouse.

Freight forwarders judge an airline not only by rates and schedules but by the speed and quality of its response. They expect accurate capacity information, prompt confirmations and clear communication.

Customers may forgive disruption if they receive fast, honest information. They will not forgive silence, confusion or conflicting answers.

That is why TCE integrates customer service into its Total Cargo Management activities. The customer should experience one coherent organisation even when several companies work behind the scenes.

The same principle applies to sales. A GSSA can provide immediate market access but sales activity must remain connected to the airline's strategy. Targets should reflect capacity, network priorities and operational strengths. Selling volume the operation cannot handle is not growth. It is a deferred failure.

Across Continental Europe, consistency is particularly important. Each country may have different customer expectations, labour conditions and regulatory requirements. Yet the airline's brand promise must remain recognisable.

This requires central oversight and local execution. TCE's TCM approach provides that balance. We apply common standards while adapting processes to local realities.

Technology supports this work but cannot replace discipline. Platforms and dashboards improve visibility but do not solve unclear ownership or poor communication. Systems work only when people act on the information.

The best rollouts are phased. They begin with market analysis, supplier selection and process design. Teams are trained, responsibilities tested and escalation procedures confirmed. Performance is monitored from the first shipment.

There must also be a willingness to adjust. Customer behaviour may differ from forecasts, capacity patterns may shift and suppliers may need support. The airline and its partners must respond quickly without losing control.

The strongest market entries are not the fastest launches. They are those built to perform consistently after the excitement has passed. For me, the lesson is simple. Entering a new cargo market is not about planting a flag or announcing a sales office. It is about building an organisation around the airline's capacity.

Sales must be supported by operations. Operations must be protected by compliance. Suppliers must be managed. Customers must receive clear answers. Performance must be measured and weaknesses addressed early. That is what Total Cargo Management delivers.

TCE becomes part of the airline's cargo organisation, bringing commercial insight and operational control together. When that partnership begins early, expansion becomes faster, smoother and more sustainable.

New markets reward preparation. Everything else is recovery.

Top Takeaways

- **Entering a new cargo market is more than a sales exercise.** Airlines need the operational infrastructure, customer service, compliance and supplier network to deliver what sales teams promise.
- **Commercial ambition must match operational capability.** Capacity should only be sold when handling, documentation, trucking, security and other supporting processes are ready to perform reliably.
- **Local market knowledge is critical.** Cargo demand differs significantly by region, making it essential to understand the dominant industries, customer expectations and existing carrier relationships before launch.
- **Supplier management starts before the first shipment.** Ground handlers and other service providers need clearly defined responsibilities, measurable standards, audits and ongoing performance reviews.
- **Customer service can make or break a market entry.** Freight forwarders expect fast, accurate responses and transparent communication, particularly when disruptions occur.
- **Sales and operations must work as one organisation.** Selling volume that the operation cannot reliably handle may create short-term numbers but ultimately damages customer trust and the airline's reputation.
- **Consistency requires central oversight with local execution.** Particularly across diverse European markets, airlines need common standards while adapting to local regulatory, labour and customer requirements.
- **Technology enables performance but does not replace discipline.** Dashboards and digital platforms improve visibility, but clear ownership, communication and accountability remain fundamental.
- **Successful launches should be phased and tested.** Market analysis, supplier selection, process design, training and escalation procedures should be established before launch, with performance monitored from the first shipment.
- **Total Cargo Management brings the pieces together.** TCE's approach connects sales, operations, compliance, suppliers and customer service into one coordinated cargo organisation.

The key message : A new cargo market is not truly established when an airline starts selling capacity—it is established when it can consistently deliver the service behind that capacity.

The Future of GSSA – How Digital Intelligence, Strategic Partnerships & Integrated Cargo Ecosystems are Redefining Airline Cargo Management

The role of the General Sales and Service Agent is undergoing a significant transformation. As airlines navigate increasingly complex markets, fluctuating capacity, evolving customer expectations and rapid digitalisation, the traditional GSSA model is expanding beyond sales representation toward broader commercial, operational and strategic support.

Data, technology and specialised expertise are becoming increasingly important to how airlines manage capacity, revenue, customer relationships and network performance. At the same time, the emergence of integrated cargo ecosystems is creating new opportunities to connect commercial execution with operational capabilities, digital intelligence and specialist services.

In an exclusive conversation with Cargo Newswire, Jean Ceccaldi, CEO, ECS Group shares its perspective on the evolution of the GSSA model, the rise of the "Augmented GSSA" and the growing role of digital intelligence in airline cargo management. The discussion explores how data, AI, revenue optimisation, operational expertise and strategic partnerships are coming together to create a more integrated approach to supporting airline cargo operations.

Q The role of General Sales and Service Agents has evolved dramatically over the past decade—from traditional sales representation to becoming strategic commercial partners for airlines. In your view, what are the biggest forces driving this transformation, and how is ECS Group redefining the modern GSSA model?

Many industry leaders describe data as the "new fuel" of logistics. Yet data alone creates little value unless organizations know how to interpret and act upon it. How is ECS Group transforming operational data into actionable commercial intelligence that delivers measurable results for airline partners?

Airlines increasingly expect GSSAs to contribute beyond local sales representation: through market intelligence, customer development, pricing discipline, capacity activation and reliable feedback from the field. The scope of responsibility nevertheless remains defined jointly with each airline. ECS Group has broadened its offer from representation to modular cargo management support. Depending on the mandate, this can include sales, revenue optimization, operational supervision, quality and compliance support, interline development and digital tools, while the airline retains control of its strategy and operations. Data creates value when it can be translated into a commercial decision. ECS Group combines external market supply data, internal sales and pricing signals, operational visibility and local customer knowledge to support pricing, network and customer development decisions. Its integration of Rotate's Live Capacity data into Apollo is a concrete example: the data is used to inform interline opportunities, network optimization and pricing responses.

Q Airlines today expect much more than market representation—they seek commercial intelligence, operational excellence, digital capabilities, and strategic guidance. How has ECS Group adapted its business model to meet these changing expectations, and what distinguishes a next-generation GSSA from a traditional one?

A traditional GSSA principally represents capacity in a local market. A next generation GSSA combines that core sales role with tools and specialist expertise that help an airline manage performance across the cargo value chain. Through its collaboration with TCE, ECS Group illustrates this evolution. Their TCM offer can cover sales, marketing, revenue optimisation, network operations, safety, security, quality, claims handling, interline management and charter operations, according to the airline's needs. Airlines do not all require the same outsourcing model. Some need a high performing local sales organisation; others require wider support across revenue management, operations, compliance, digitalisation or specialised cargo. The ability to combine these services in a coherent model is what differentiates a next generation GSSA. A recent illustration is ECS Group's US mandate for Vietnam Airlines, which includes cargo sales, customer development, capacity optimisation, operational supervision and the

promotion of general and specialised cargo, alongside strategic interline development to key Asian gateways.

Q The launch of AERION represents a significant evolution in the cargo outsourcing landscape, bringing together ECS Group, Global GSA Group, TCE, CargoTech, and specialized verticals under one integrated commercial platform. What industry gap does AERION address, and how will this ecosystem reshape airline cargo management in the years ahead?

Airlines often need several capabilities at once: commercial execution, digital tools, operational oversight and specialist cargo expertise, but coordinating separate providers can create unnecessary complexity. AERION is designed to provide a more coordinated access point to these complementary capabilities. AERION brings together the commercial capabilities of ECS Group and Global GSA Group, Total Cargo Management and operations expertise from TCE, technology through CargoTech, and specialist expertise including Mail & More, Healthc'Air and Squair. The objective is not to force airlines into a fixed bundle, but to make complementary expertise available within a coordinated framework. The value proposition is a more integrated way to access specialist services, with clearer coordination between commercial, operational and digital workstreams. The success measure should remain practical: better responsiveness, stronger commercial execution and appropriate operational control for the airline's chosen scope.

Q You have often spoken about moving beyond the traditional outsourcing model toward an "Augmented GSSA." Could you explain this philosophy, and how modular services such as revenue management, quality assurance, digital optimisation, compliance,



Jean Ceccaldi

and operational supervision create greater value for airline partners?

The "Augmented GSSA" is a modular model. An airline can begin with sales representation and progressively add revenue optimisation, digital support, operational supervision, compliance, quality control or Total Cargo Management as its requirements develop.

It allows airlines to access specialised capability where it adds value, without automatically building every function internally or outsourcing more than is necessary. The model should remain flexible enough to complement an airline's existing cargo organisation.

The central advantage comes when commercial, operational and digital teams work from aligned information and objectives. Pricing or customer development decisions are stronger when supported by visibility, service quality controls and clear performance measures. This is where ECS Group can differentiate itself: it has an established commercial network, while TCE adds specialist quality, safety, security and operational supervision capability.

Digitalisation is fundamentally changing every aspect of air cargo. Through proprietary platforms such as Apollo, Pathfinder, Quantum, and partnerships within CargoTech, ECS Group has invested heavily in technology. How are artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, and automation transforming commercial decision-making and revenue optimisation for airlines?

Digitalisation becomes a revenue enabler when it improves the quality and speed of commercial decisions. Apollo supports market and business intelligence; Quantum supports pricing and quotation workflows; and Pathfinder provides customers and teams with shipment status visibility. Together, these tools can reduce friction between demand signals, customer service and commercial action.

CargoTech complements ECS Group's own platforms with specialised technology across booking, data, automation and cargo performance. The aim is to detect relevant changes in demand, capacity or customer behaviour early enough for commercial teams to respond. The objective is to move from retrospective reporting towards more timely commercial steering, supporting more informed pricing, capacity allocation and customer prioritisation. Technology supports the decision; experienced cargo teams remain accountable for the decision itself.

The most tangible recent example is CargoAi's CargoCoPilot API integration. It converts unstructured customer emails into structured quotation data that feeds into Quantum. ECS Group reported more than 10,000 quotations processed per month and a 34% quotation automation rate within the first months after deployment. Pathfinder also offers a customer service benefit. In its Corsair deployment, ECS Group reported a reduction of more than 30% in manual tracking enquiries and a 25% improvement in shipment resolution times.

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While technology continues to automate routine processes, air cargo remains a relationship-driven business. How do you strike the right balance between digital innovation and human expertise, ensuring that technology enhances rather than replaces customer engagement and strategic decision-making?

Technology brings speed, consistency and visibility. Human expertise remains decisive when customers need a tailored solution, a cargo flow becomes operationally sensitive or commercial conditions shift quickly. ECS Group's local teams use digital tools to reduce repetitive administrative work and access better information more quickly. This should free teams to focus on customer development, problem solving and commercial judgement rather than manual data handling. The right model gives customers efficient access to pricing, booking and shipment information, while retaining direct contact with specialists who understand the local market and can take ownership when an exception requires action. CargoCoPilot is a useful illustration: automation streamlines the repetitive email to quotation process, but the commercial teams retain the customer relationship and the judgement required for complex requests.

Revenue optimization has become increasingly complex amid fluctuating demand, changing trade lanes, and capacity volatility. How are data-driven pricing, forecasting, and yield management helping airlines maximise profitability, and what role should GSSAs play in commercial performance

management rather than simply selling capacity?

Capacity needs active commercial management. Pricing, allocations and customer priorities should reflect demand patterns, seasonality, commodity requirements, route economics and the value of the customer relationship. A balanced strategy can combine committed base volumes, controlled allocations and flexible sales opportunities. The appropriate mix depends on the airline, route, season and risk appetite; it should not be presented as a universal formula. A modern GSSA should be measured on commercial quality as well as volume. This includes the ability to support yield, load factor, customer mix, market coverage and revenue quality within the commercial framework established by the airline. ECS Group has invested in predictive pricing and capacity management tools, including Apollo and Quantum, to support this work. Its use of Rotate's real-time capacity data also strengthens the external market context available to commercial teams.

Q ECS Group has developed specialised business units such as Total Cargo Expertise (TCE), HealthC'Air, Mail & More, and Squair to address increasingly complex cargo requirements. How important is vertical specialization in today's market, and how does this ecosystem strengthen your value proposition for airline customers?

Cargo is increasingly specialised, regulated and time sensitive. Airlines may require dedicated support for pharmaceuticals, mail and e-commerce, high value or sensitive freight, compliance, quality and complex operational requirements. Within the wider AERION ecosystem, Healthc'Air provides specialist healthcare and pharmaceutical expertise; Mail & More supports postal and e-commerce flows; Squair provides back-office support; and TCE focuses on Total Cargo Management and operations. Combined with ECS Group's commercial reach and CargoTech enabled tools, this specialist expertise can help airlines develop cargo segments more credibly and with better operational control than a generalist sales approach alone. A current operational example is ECS Group's work to make Corsair pharma audit ready, illustrating the increasing importance of documented processes, quality standards and readiness for specialised products.

Q Sustainability has become a strategic priority across the aviation industry. Beyond supporting Sustainable Aviation Fuel initiatives, how can GSSAs contribute to reducing the environmental footprint of air cargo through smarter network planning, digital optimisation, improved load factors, and more efficient cargo flows?

A GSSA's most direct sustainability contribution is commercial and operational efficiency: improving demand forecasting, pricing discipline and capacity utilisation so existing uplift is used more effectively. Digital tools can reduce manual processes and improve visibility over cargo movements. This supports better informed decisions on routing, capacity and service design, although the actual environmental impact depends on the airline's wider operating choices. GSSAs can support airline sustainability priorities by promoting relevant products and initiatives, training commercial teams, improving data quality and discussing efficiency with customers. Pathfinder's planned development includes integrated CO_2 reporting, which could support more transparent customer discussions once deployed and methodology is confirmed.

Q The Asia-Pacific region remains one of the fastest-growing cargo markets, particularly in e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, electronics, and perishables. ECS Group has made significant investments across Asia over the past few years. What opportunities do you see emerging in the region, and how are local expertise and regional synergies becoming increasingly important for airline success?

A balanced strategy can combine committed base volumes, controlled allocations and flexible sales opportunities.

Asia Pacific remains strategically important for e-commerce, electronics, pharmaceuticals, perishables and high value manufacturing. India's growing manufacturing and trade activity creates additional opportunities, while China remains a major but highly competitive and operationally sophisticated cargo market. Commercial execution must be adapted to the customer base. Global forwarders often expect consistency and structured account management, while SMEs and exporters may prioritise responsiveness, simplicity and direct local support.

ECS Group's Asian network comprises 32 offices, serving more than 50 airline partners across 14 countries. Its stated focus includes road feeder services, technology and sustainability, supported by TCM expertise from TCE and specialist support from Mail & More and Healthc'Air. The Group's recent Asia activity includes reinforcing Vietnam Airlines' growth across key corridors and supporting the French market presence of ANA and Nippon Cargo Airlines, useful examples of combining local execution with wider intercontinental connectivity.

The pandemic fundamentally changed airline outsourcing strategies, highlighting the importance of resilience, flexibility, and specialist expertise. What lessons has the GSSA industry learned from recent years, and how have these experiences reshaped the way ECS Group supports its airline partners today?

The principal lesson from recent years is that resilience cannot rely on capacity alone. Airlines need access to timely market information, alternative commercial options, strong local customer communication and operational discipline when conditions change. The pandemic also demonstrated that fixed outsourcing models can be too rigid. Airlines benefit from partners that can scale support up or down, add specialist expertise when required and coordinate commercial and operational work streams more effectively. For ECS Group, this has reinforced the case for a modular approach: core GSSA representation where appropriate, complemented by revenue optimisation, digital support, specialised expertise or Total Cargo Management when needed. The Group's 2026 US partnership with Vietnam Airlines reflects this broader support model, combining sales, customer development, capacity optimisation, operational supervision and interline development rather than limiting the mandate to basic sales representation.

The cargo industry is witnessing rapid adoption of AI, machine learning, real-time visibility platforms, and digital booking ecosystems such as CargoAi. Looking ahead, which technological innovations do you believe will have the greatest impact on the GSSA business over the next five to ten years, and how is ECS Group preparing for this transformation?

The most consequential technologies for GSSAs will be those that make commercial teams faster and better informed: AI assisted quotation handling, predictive pricing, real time market capacity data, digital booking connectivity, shipment visibility and interoperable data platforms. Automation will remove repetitive administrative work, while AI can help process unstructured information and identify trends. The important qualification is that technology must be integrated into practical commercial workflows; it is not valuable simply because it is labelled AI. ECS Group is already applying this direction through CargoCoPilot's email to quotation automation, Apollo's market intelligence, Quantum's pricing and quotation workflow, Pathfinder's visibility tools and its collaboration with CargoTech. The priority for ECS Group is to deploy technology in ways that demonstrably improve response speed, data quality, customer service or commercial performance, not to digitise processes without a clear operational or revenue case.

The priority for ECS Group is to deploy technology in ways that demonstrably improve response speed, data quality, customer service or commercial performance, not to digitise processes without a clear operational or revenue case.

As global supply chains become increasingly volatile due to geopolitical tensions, trade policy changes, and shifting manufacturing bases, airlines require greater commercial agility. How does ECS Group leverage its global network and local market expertise to help carriers quickly adapt to these changing market dynamics while protecting profitability?

ECS Group's international network can provide access to market intelligence, commercial alternatives and local customer feedback across multiple countries. Local teams are central to understanding how demand, pricing and customer behaviour are changing in practice.

The combination of global coordination, local commercial insight and digital visibility can help airlines evaluate alternatives more quickly. The objective is to protect customer confidence and commercial performance while maintaining disciplined pricing and realistic operational commitments. A current example is ECS Group's expansion into Lebanon in July 2026: its teams are set up to provide regional sales and booking management for general cargo and perishables, supported by CargoTech tools to maximise capacity use and respond to changing market requirements.

Looking beyond technology, the success of digital transformation often depends on organisational culture and change management. How has ECS Group encouraged innovation within its own organisation, and what advice would you offer airlines embarking on large-scale digital transformation programmes?

Digital transformation succeeds when it is treated as an operational and commercial change programme, not as a technology purchasing exercise. Teams need clear business objectives, practical workflows, training and confidence that new tools will make their work better rather than simply add reporting requirements. ECS Group's approach has been to pair technology

with deployment in operational environments. CargoCoPilot, for example, was integrated into existing email and quotation workflows rather than asking customers to change their communication habits. For airlines, the practical advice is to start with high friction processes that have measurable consequences, manual quotation handling, pricing delays, fragmented visibility or poor data quality, then define success in terms of speed, accuracy, adoption and commercial impact.



As air cargo continues to evolve toward integrated logistics ecosystems, what is your long-term vision for the future of the GSSA industry? Do you believe companies such as ECS Group, Global GSA Group, and AERION will increasingly become strategic business architects rather than traditional sales representatives, and how will this redefine airline partnerships over the next decade?

The long term future of the GSSA is not to replace the airline's cargo organisation, but to become a more capable and accountable strategic extension of it. The value lies in combining local execution with broader commercial, operational, digital and specialist expertise where it makes sense. ECS Group, Global GSA Group and AERION can contribute to this evolution by offering airlines a coordinated range of services. However, the model must remain airline centric: modular, transparent in accountability and adaptable to the carrier's own strategy, systems and level of internal capability. The most successful airline partnerships will be those that define clear governance, common performance indicators and an appropriate division of responsibility, not simply those that outsource the largest scope.



Air cargo is entering a new era where success will increasingly depend on ecosystem collaboration rather than individual capability. How important are strategic partnerships among organizations such as ECS Group, CargoTech, TCE, Global GSA Group, and technology providers in building a smarter, more resilient, and more customer-centric cargo industry?

Ecosystem collaboration matters because no single organisation can credibly provide every capability at the same depth: local commercial execution, digital technology, quality and compliance, specialised product knowledge and operational support each require dedicated expertise. The value is created when these capabilities are connected around a common airline objective rather than offered as separate products. Commercial teams should have access to relevant data; operational teams should understand the customer promise; and specialised units should be engaged early enough to design a workable solution. For ECS Group, the ecosystem brings together commercial reach, CargoTech enabled digital capabilities, TCE's TCM and operational oversight and specialist expertise such as Mail & More and Healthc'Air. The practical test is whether this coordination improves customer responsiveness, operational reliability and commercial outcomes.



What three priorities would you recommend to ensure long-term competitiveness in an industry increasingly defined by digitalisation, sustainability, operational resilience, and customer experience?

1. Manage commercial performance actively. Use timely market intelligence, disciplined pricing and clear revenue management processes to guide capacity allocation, yield and customer priorities.

2. Build resilience around the customer. Communicate early, make realistic commitments, maintain operational visibility and ensure that credible alternatives can be assessed rapidly when disruption occurs.

3. Combine global consistency with local authority. Central standards, tools and governance need to be matched by local teams that understand their customers, market conditions and operational realities.



Finally, what message would you like to share with airlines, freight forwarders, technology innovators, and the wider logistics community about the future role of GSSAs in shaping global air cargo—and what legacy would you like ECS Group to leave as this transformation continues?

The future GSSA should be judged not only by volume sold, but by the commercial quality, reliability and sustainability of the performance it helps deliver for airline partners. A modern GSSA must be able to provide timely market intelligence, use digital tools effectively and maintain close customer relationships when conditions change. Its role is to help airlines make better, faster and more commercially sound decisions. ECS Group's ambition is to show that outsourcing can be strategic acceleration rather than simple delegation: giving airlines access to global commercial reach, local execution, specialist expertise and technology in a model that remains aligned with the airline's own priorities.

The evolution of the GSSA is ultimately about moving beyond traditional capacity sales toward a more integrated and accountable role within the airline's cargo organisation. Digital tools can improve visibility, speed and decision-making, but their value depends on how effectively they are combined with commercial judgement, operational expertise and customer knowledge. As the industry moves toward increasingly connected cargo ecosystems, the GSSA of the future is positioned as a strategic extension of the airline—bringing together local market execution, specialist capabilities, technology and commercial intelligence while remaining aligned with the carrier's strategy and objectives.

Liège Airport: Powering Europe's Next-Generation Cargo Hub Through Innovation, Sustainability & Supply Chain Resilience

Frédéric Brun on Liège Airport's Vision for Europe's Next-Generation Cargo Hub

In an exclusive interview with *Cargo Newswire*, Frédéric Brun, VP Sales & Marketing at CargoLand by LGG, discusses Liège Airport's strategy to strengthen its position as a leading European cargo hub. Brun outlines the role of the €500 million CargoLand development, the airport's "Freighters First" approach, and its focus on infrastructure, digitalisation, sustainability and specialised cargo as the European logistics landscape continues to evolve.

By Devender Groover

Q Liège Airport has consistently outperformed many European cargo hubs despite economic uncertainty, geopolitical tensions, and changing trade dynamics. From your perspective, what structural advantages have enabled LGG to sustain this impressive growth trajectory, and how do you intend to maintain that momentum over the coming decade?

Our cargo-first model gives airlines unrestricted operations 24/7, rapid turnaround times and the flexibility to accommodate scheduled and charter services without the constraints typically found at passenger-led hubs.

Our central European location places CargoLand by LGG within a one-day truck drive of 75% of European GDP centres, supported by fast customs processes and strong road, rail and port connectivity.

Growth is also driven by the strength of our ecosystem and by the close integration of our commercial strategy with airlines, freight forwarders and our key cargo verticals. This keeps us close to evolving market expectations and operational needs. CargoLand by LGG handled 1.32 million tonnes in 2025, up 14%, followed by a further 16% increase in the first quarter of 2026.

We intend to maintain this momentum by building capacity ahead of demand through our CargoLand by LGG masterplan, while continuing to invest in digitalisation, specialised infrastructure and operational efficiency. Our ambition is not simply to manage infrastructure, but to develop CargoLand as a true cargo marketplace where airlines, forwarders, logistics partners and specialised cargo communities can connect, collaborate and grow.

Q Your "Freighters First" strategy has become synonymous with Liège Airport's identity. As airlines increasingly seek reliability, operational flexibility, and faster turnaround times, how has this philosophy redefined the airport's value proposition, and do you believe it represents the future blueprint for dedicated cargo airports worldwide?

Freighters First means that our infrastructure, operating processes and commercial approach are designed around the specific requirements of cargo aircraft rather than adapted from a passenger model.

Unrestricted operations, dedicated freighter stands, rapid customs procedures and operational flexibility allow airlines to adapt schedules, add charter capacity and respond quickly to changing market conditions.

This approach offers greater predictability and control, particularly for time-sensitive, high-volume or specialised cargo that cannot depend on passenger schedules.

We believe the model demonstrates how dedicated cargo airports can become increasingly valuable as congestion, curfews and slot restrictions intensify at mixed-use European hubs.

Q CargoLand is far more than an infrastructure expansion—it represents a long-term transformation of the cargo ecosystem. Could you elaborate on how this €500 million investment will reshape not only Liège Airport but also Europe's broader logistics landscape over the next 15 years?

CargoLand by LGG is a phased €500 million development programme designed to double cargo capacity and position LGG among Europe's top three cargo airports by 2040.

The programme includes 90 hectares for logistics development, 38,000 m² of new first-line warehousing, additional aircraft and GSE stands, landside logistics facilities and a dedicated MRO capability.

CargoLand will strengthen links



Frédéric Brun

between air, road, rail and maritime transport, improving the speed and efficiency of cargo distribution across Europe.

Its wider impact will come from combining scalable physical infrastructure with digital visibility, commodity-specific logistics solutions and a growing community of airlines, forwarders, handlers and logistics companies.

Today's airlines expect airports to function as integrated logistics partners rather than simply infrastructure providers. How is CargoLand creating an ecosystem where airlines, freight forwarders, handlers, customs authorities, technology providers, and logistics companies collaborate more efficiently to create end-to-end supply chain value?

CargoLand by LGG is built around the principle that no single organisation can optimise the cargo chain alone. LGG Connect brings airlines, handlers, forwarders, logistics providers, public authorities and technology partners together under the shared approach of "Support, Share, Grow."

LGG Tracking provides authorised stakeholders with a shared, real-time view of shipment status and location, supported by an AWB-linked communication channel that reduces fragmented exchanges and manual follow-ups.

Digital customs processes, shared data and closer operational coordination help stakeholders identify issues earlier, take faster decisions and reduce friction across the cargo journey.

This collaboration also extends beyond technology through community initiatives designed to build trust, strengthen relationships and recognise collective performance.

Sustainability has become one of aviation's defining priorities. Beyond reducing emissions, airports are increasingly expected to improve operational efficiency, optimize resource utilization, and support greener supply chains. How is Liège Airport embedding sustainability into every stage of CargoLand's development while preserving the operational flexibility that cargo operators require?

Sustainability is integrated into CargoLand by LGG's infrastructure planning rather than treated as an additional requirement, with the objective of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

LGG already generates 100% of the electricity used in its buildings through its own renewable-energy production and is progressively electrifying its airport fleet alongside its ground-handling partners.

New infrastructure is being developed around energy-efficient warehousing, EV-compatible GSE areas, digital optimisation and stronger multimodal connectivity.

The wider environmental strategy also includes noise reduction, biodiversity protection, responsible resource management and progressively stronger environmental certification.

Liège Airport has deliberately diversified beyond general cargo by developing specialized verticals including pharmaceuticals, perishables, e-commerce, and live-animal logistics. How important is this vertical-market strategy in building long-term resilience, and which specialized cargo segments do you expect will drive the airport's next phase of growth?

Diversification across e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, perishables, express cargo, live animals and industrial freight reduces dependence on any single market and strengthens resilience during periods of volatility.

Each vertical is supported by dedicated expertise and infrastructure, including temperature-controlled pharma facilities, perishables handling, high-volume e-commerce operations, the Horse Inn and the renovated Vet Center.

CargoLand by LGG is built around the principle that no single organisation can optimise the cargo chain alone.

Pharma and perishables remain important growth priorities, while semiconductors, advanced technology, aerospace and industrial cargo are creating additional opportunities for high-value and time-sensitive flows.

The objective is not simply to increase tonnage, but to develop specialised cargo communities capable of delivering consistent quality, operational reliability and long-term commercial value.

Digital transformation is reshaping the global logistics industry. Through initiatives such as LGG Connect, real-time cargo visibility, digital customs integration, automated yard management, and data-driven decision-making, how is Liège Airport creating a smarter, more transparent cargo ecosystem, and what role do artificial intelligence and predictive analytics play in your long-term digital strategy?

LGG Tracking creates a central source of information for cargo movements, giving authorised stakeholders real-time visibility over shipment location, status and operational milestones.

Its AWB-linked communication system reduces duplicated messages and manual requests, while automated digital customs processes help accelerate cargo clearance.

The Digital Twin is being developed progressively by combining operational data, standardised events and predictive modelling to identify congestion, bottlenecks and safety risks.

AI-assisted analysis will also help identify recurring disruption patterns, improve capacity planning and support more proactive decision-making, although the Digital Twin is not yet a fully deployed forecasting system.

The European Union's new e-commerce customs reforms are expected to significantly alter cross-border logistics patterns. Given Liège Airport's position as one of Europe's leading e-commerce gateways, how do you assess the long-term implications of these regulatory changes, and what strategic measures are being implemented to diversify cargo flows while maintaining growth?

The reforms are likely to create an initial period of adjustment as platforms and logistics providers review pricing, routing and import models in response to additional fees and customs requirements.

We expect the industry to become more creative in the way flows are consolidated and distributed, including a possible shift from direct B2C models towards B2B2C structures with stock held closer to European consumers.

The long-term opportunity remains significant, but future growth will depend increasingly on stronger compliance, product traceability, seller controls, transparent pricing and reliable delivery performance.

CargoLand by LGG's role is to combine scalable e-commerce infrastructure with digital customs, data visibility and a diversified cargo portfolio, allowing it to adapt as the regulatory environment evolves

Export cargo from Liège Airport has experienced particularly strong growth, especially toward North America and Asia. To what extent does this reflect changing global manufacturing patterns, supply chain reconfiguration, and Europe's evolving export competitiveness, and how do you see LGG strengthening its role as a strategic gateway for European industry?

Increasing traffic across Asia and the transatlantic corridor reflects stronger network connectivity, growing European export demand and more balanced aircraft utilisation.

China-related e-commerce flows are helping generate improved return or backhaul opportunities, while new and expanded North American services are increasing network density.

Taiwan represents a particularly strategic opportunity in semiconductors, advanced technology and other high-value manufacturing sectors requiring reliability, security and shipment visibility.

CargoLand by LGG can strengthen its role as a gateway for European industry by developing long-term relationships with airlines, forwarders and institutional partners while continuing to invest in scalable infrastructure and digital control.

Global supply chains continue to be influenced by geopolitical instability, airspace restrictions, fluctuating fuel costs, and changing trade policies. As these uncertainties become the new normal, how does Liège Airport build resilience into its operations, and what lessons have recent disruptions taught the industry about supply chain agility?

Resilience begins with operational flexibility. Unrestricted 24/7 operations and a high capacity to accommodate charter and freighter services allow LGG to respond rapidly when routes, schedules or demand patterns change.

CargoLand by LGG is building capacity ahead of demand, ensuring that sudden peaks or changing storage requirements can be absorbed without creating unnecessary congestion.

Diversification across e-commerce, pharma, perishables, live animals, express and industrial cargo reduces exposure to disruption in any single segment or trade corridor.

Real-time visibility, predictive digital tools and close community coordination allow stakeholders to identify issues earlier and solve problems collectively under pressure.

Many industry observers believe the future of cargo hubs will depend on balancing operational excellence with environmental responsibility, digital innovation, and customer-centricity. If you could define the 'airport of the future' in three strategic priorities, what would they be, and how is Liège Airport already bringing that vision to life?

Operational flexibility and scalable capacity: unrestricted operations, cargo-specific infrastructure and phased development that allow the airport to absorb growth and market volatility without congestion.

Digital intelligence and transparency: real-time visibility, connected stakeholders, digital customs and predictive tools that improve planning and decision-making.

Sustainable integration: energy-efficient infrastructure, electrified ground operations and stronger road, rail and port connectivity supporting greener cargo flows.

CargoLand by LGG is already putting these priorities into practice through its €500 million masterplan, LGG Tracking, LGG Connect and the progressive Digital Twin rollout.

As global supply chains become more complex and demand for flexibility, connectivity and resilience increases, Liège Airport is positioning CargoLand by LGG as a platform for the next phase of European air cargo growth. Brun's outlook highlights a strategy built around scalable capacity, operational efficiency, digital innovation and a diversified cargo ecosystem—priorities that will increasingly shape the competitiveness of cargo hubs across Europe.

Sarah Scheibe on the Future of Air Cargo Operations: Why Operational Excellence Starts on the Ground

Devender Groover, Editor in Chief, Cargo Newswire

As global air cargo networks become increasingly complex, operational excellence is emerging as a critical factor in airline performance. Growing regulatory requirements, specialised cargo flows, outsourcing, digitalisation and rising customer expectations are placing greater emphasis on visibility, consistency and resilience across the cargo operation.

In this changing environment, the role of independent operational expertise is gaining importance. Airlines are increasingly looking beyond traditional service models for ways to strengthen oversight, identify operational risks earlier and ensure consistent standards across their networks.

In an exclusive interview with Cargo Newswire, Sarah Scheibe, Managing Director of TCE, shares her perspective on the evolution of cargo operations and the growing importance of independent operational supervision. She discusses TCE's approach to Total Cargo Management, the balance between technology and human expertise, operational resilience, compliance and the future of outsourced cargo management.

TCE has evolved into one of the industry's most specialized providers of independent cargo operational supervision, quality assurance, safety, compliance, audits, customs reporting, and Total Cargo Management (TCM), supporting airlines, GSAs, and logistics companies worldwide. Rather than functioning as a traditional ground handling provider, TCE positions itself as an independent operational partner that ensures airlines maintain consistent standards, regulatory compliance, and operational resilience across their global cargo networks.

Q Air cargo is often judged by commercial performance, yet operational excellence is what ultimately determines whether cargo reaches its destination safely, securely, and on time. From your perspective, how has the role of operational supervision evolved, and why is it becoming a strategic differentiator for airlines?

Operational supervision used to be seen mainly as a control function, checking whether procedures were followed. Today, it is much more about understanding what is actually happening on the ground and identifying problems before they affect the airline or the customer. With more complex networks and more outsourced activities, airlines simply cannot have direct visibility everywhere. That is where independent operational supervision becomes strategic. TCE gives airlines an extra set of eyes on the ground and helps them maintain the same standards across their network. Especially for the transport of sensitive goods like perishables or pharma this becomes key and can be the last point from a customer perspective to decide for one Airline instead of another one.

Q TCE describes itself as the industry's first independent specialist dedicated entirely to operational cargo expertise, quality, safety, and compliance. What market challenges inspired this business model, and how does it differ from conventional ground handling or cargo outsourcing services?

We saw a gap in the market. Airlines were outsourcing more and more of their cargo activities, but there was often nobody sitting between the airline and the service providers, really looking at the operation from the airline's perspective.

TCE was built to fill that gap. We are not ground handlers and we don't want to be one. We are independent and work on behalf of the airline as their interface between their commercial goals and the cargo operational feasibility. We look at the whole cargo operations as well as the quality, safety,



Sarah Scheibe

compliance, customs, performance and where required, the commercial side as well and still the Airline itself can keep their organization lean and focused on their core business. From an Airline perspective it simplifies their involvement as they do not need to monitor their entire station network closely, they just monitor TCE as their one dedicated service provider and all the network stations and GHA´s are our responsibility to monitor.

Airlines today face growing regulatory complexity, tighter security requirements, and increasing customer expectations. How does TCE help carriers maintain consistent operational standards across hundreds of airports while ensuring local flexibility and global compliance?

You need global standards, but you also must understand that every airport is different. You cannot simply take a European process and expect it to work exactly the same way in Asia, Africa or the Americas. Our approach is to set the airline's required standard globally, while giving our local teams enough knowledge and flexibility to deal with local realities. Through audits, operational supervision, reporting and regular follow-up, we can identify where standards are being met and where additional support is needed.

Ground handling has become increasingly complex with the rapid growth of pharmaceuticals, dangerous goods, live animals, perishables, e-commerce, and high-value cargo. How important is specialized operational expertise in managing these sensitive cargo segments, and what capabilities are becoming essential for future ground operations?

It is extremely important. Pharma, dangerous goods, live animals or high-value cargo cannot be handled with a one-size-fits-all approach. A small operational mistake can have a very large financial or safety impact. The industry will need more specialised knowledge, not less. Technology can support the operation, but you still need people who understand the cargo, the regulations and what can go wrong. That's an area where TCE's operational and compliance expertise can make a real difference.

TCE's Total Cargo Management (TCM) model integrates operational supervision, compliance, customs reporting, commercial coordination, and performance management into one framework. How does this holistic approach help airlines move beyond reactive operations toward proactive cargo performance management?

The biggest difference is that we don't just wait for something to go wrong. With TCM, we look at the complete cargo operation, the commercial and operational performance, compliance, customs and service quality combined with lots of experience of our staff . When you bring all that information together, you can see trends and potential problems much earlier. So instead of asking "Why did this shipment fail?" we try to identify "What can we change now to make sure it doesn't fail?" That's really the philosophy behind TCM.

We saw a gap in the market. Airlines were outsourcing more and more of their cargo activities, but there was often nobody sitting between the airline and the service providers, really looking at the operation from the airline's perspective.

Digital transformation is reshaping cargo operations through automation, real-time visibility, predictive analytics, and AI-assisted decision-making. How is TCE leveraging digital tools to improve operational control, reduce risk, and strengthen collaboration between airlines, handlers, and logistics partners?

Technology gives us much better visibility than we had a few years ago. We use operational data, reporting tools and digital communication to see where problems are developing and to share information much faster.

But I don't think technology replaces operational expertise. The real value comes from combining the two. Data can tell you that something is wrong; experienced people need to understand why and decide what to do about it.

Operational resilience has become a defining priority following recent disruptions caused by the pandemic, geopolitical tensions, supply chain volatility, and climate-related events. What lessons has the industry learned, and how can airlines build cargo networks that remain resilient under constant operational pressure?

Probably the biggest lesson is that you cannot build resilience only when there is a crisis. You have to build it into the operation beforehand. COVID, geopolitical conflicts and supply chain disruptions showed how quickly normal processes can be affected. Airlines need alternative solutions, good communication and clear escalation processes. TCE helps here because we sit close to the operation and can identify issues early and coordinate the different parties when something changes.

Independent audits are often viewed as compliance exercises, yet TCE positions audits as tools for operational improvement. How can supplier audits, risk assessments, and continuous monitoring become strategic instruments for enhancing quality, efficiency, and customer confidence rather than simply meeting regulatory requirements?

A good audit should never be about simply finding non compliances. The real question should be: What can we learn from this and how can we make the operation better? At TCE, we look beyond the paperwork. We want to see what actually happens in the warehouse, speak to the people doing the work and understand why findings occur. And importantly, we can stay involved after the audit to help with corrective actions. That's where the real improvement happens.

Sustainability is increasingly linked to operational efficiency. How can better cargo planning, optimized aircraft loading, reduced mishandling, fewer operational disruptions, and smarter resource utilization contribute to lowering the environmental footprint of air cargo operations?

There is a very practical link between the two. Every unnecessary truck movement, re-handling, storage delay, damaged shipment or inefficient use of resources has both a financial and an environmental cost. Better planning and better operational control reduce those inefficiencies. Therefore sustainability doesn't always require a completely new solution, sometimes it starts with simply running the operation better.

The success of ground operations ultimately depends on people. As automation continues to accelerate, what investments should the industry make in training, certification, mentoring, and professional development to ensure that operational excellence keeps pace with technological advancement?

Technology gives us much better visibility than we had a few years ago. We use operational data, reporting tools and digital communication to see where problems are developing and to share information much faster.

People remain the most important part of the operation. Technology can automate many tasks, but it cannot replace experience and judgement, especially when something unexpected happens. The industry needs to invest in proper training, certification and career development. At TCE, our business is built around operational expertise, so developing people who really understand cargo operations will remain one of our biggest priorities.

Through your collaboration with ECS Group, Global GSA Group, CargoTech, and AERION, TCE has become an integral part of a broader integrated cargo ecosystem. How does combining commercial strategy, operational expertise, digital intelligence, and compliance under one framework create greater value for airlines than managing these functions independently?

The strength is that you can bring different areas of expertise together. You have commercial knowledge through the GSA network, operational expertise through TCE, and digital and technology capabilities through the wider ecosystem. For an airline, that means they don't have to manage five different providers and try to connect everything themselves. We can bring those capabilities together around the airline's actual needs. That's particularly valuable when an airline is growing or entering new markets and wants to have a strategic partner supporting them to achieve their targets and to ensure stable and safe operations.

Looking ahead, what is your long-term vision for Total Cargo Management? As cargo operations become increasingly digital, data-driven, and interconnected, how do you see the role of operational specialists evolving over the next decade, and what legacy would you like TCE to leave in shaping safer, smarter, and more resilient global cargo operations?

I think TCM will become much more important because airlines increasingly want to focus on their core business while still having strong control over cargo. Beside that the requirements and regulations become more and more strict and complex and having then a strategic partner supporting the Airlines becomes more and more relevant. Our vision is for TCE to effectively promote the outsourced cargo department for airlines or alternatively manage one part of the operation while connecting commercial, compliance and performance management. Over the next decade, I see the role becoming much more data-driven, but the operational expertise behind the data will remain essential.

TCE recently established its first African office in Morocco, marking an important milestone in the company's international expansion. What strategic factors made Morocco the ideal gateway into Africa, and how does this move

support TCE's long-term vision of building a truly global cargo operations network?

Morocco was a very natural choice for us, mainly because we found the right combination of local talent, operational knowledge and connectivity with Europe. There is a strong pool of experienced cargo professionals who understand both the local market and the needs of international airlines. The location also works very well for our European operations from a time-zone and coordination perspective. It allows us to build a strong operational team that can support our customers efficiently while giving us a good platform for further growth in Africa for TCE and for the Group.

Q "Looking ahead, do you envision TCE evolving from a specialist operational services provider into the global benchmark for Total Cargo Management? What will define operational excellence in the next decade, and how is TCE preparing to lead that transformation?"

I would say TCE is already setting that benchmark. We have built TCM around something that is still quite different in the market: we combine operational expertise, commercial understanding, compliance, customs and performance management under one roof.

The next step is to take that model to more airlines and more markets. As cargo becomes more complex and more data-driven, we want TCE to remain the partner airlines turn to when they need an experienced team that can actually take responsibility for their cargo operation. For us, the goal is not simply to be another service provider. We want to be the reference point for outsourced cargo management.

Q "In aviation, passengers often remember delays, while cargo customers remember reliability. In your view, what single operational principle separates consistently high-performing cargo networks from those that struggle?"

Consistency. The best cargo networks are not necessarily the ones that never have problems. They are the ones that recognize problems quickly, communicate well and fix them before they become bigger problems. You can have the best aircraft and the best IT system in the world, but if the operation on the ground is inconsistent, the customer will notice. That's why operational discipline and visibility are so important.

Q "Many airlines invest heavily in aircraft and technology, yet operational excellence often depends on what happens during the few critical minutes on the ground. What is the most underestimated aspect of ground operations that deserves greater attention from airline leadership?"

I would say the most underestimated aspect is the gap between procedures on paper and the reality of day-to-day operations on the warehouse floor. Airlines invest significantly in aircraft, technology, and performance reporting, but cargo operations ultimately depend on people executing processes under time pressure, often across multiple service providers and operational environments.

Leadership naturally focuses on KPIs and system data, but these only tell part of the story. The real value comes from having visibility into what is actually happening on the ground, identifying deviations early, understanding the root causes behind operational challenges, and taking corrective action before service quality, safety, or compliance are affected.

At TCE, we see this every day. The strongest cargo operations are not necessarily those with the most advanced systems, but those that combine technology with independent operational oversight, local expertise, and continuous engagement with frontline teams. That human and operational visibility is often the difference between meeting expectations and consistently delivering reliable, safe, and high-quality cargo performance.

I would say what actually happens between the systems and the reality on the warehouse floor. Airlines often have very good procedures, systems and KPIs. But ultimately, cargo is still handled by people at an airport, often under time pressure and across several different companies. That's why you need people who are actually looking at the operation, not just the reports. TCE's role is exactly that, to bridge the gap between what the airline expects and what is actually happening on the ground.

The message from Sarah Scheibe is clear: operational excellence starts on the ground. As technology, data and automation continue to reshape air cargo, human expertise, operational visibility and consistency remain essential to delivering reliable performance. For TCE, the next chapter is about strengthening its role as a strategic partner to airlines—connecting operational expertise, compliance, performance management and commercial understanding to build safer, smarter and more resilient cargo operations.

Consistency. The best cargo networks are not necessarily the ones that never have problems. They are the ones that recognize problems quickly, communicate well and fix them before they become bigger problems.

Airbus A350F freighter successfully performs its maiden flight





The A350F freighter (MSN 700), the first of two test aircraft, has completed its first flight. The aircraft, fitted with special flight test instrumentation, flew for 4 hours 10 minutes reaching an altitude of 25,000 feet. The aircraft was flown by a dedicated Airbus Flight Test crew.

"This maiden flight is a major milestone for the A350F and for our customers worldwide. As the latest development of our highly successful A350 platform, the A350F is a true game-changer for the air cargo market, combining unmatched operational flexibility, fuel efficiency, and range," stated **Lars Wagner, CEO Commercial Aircraft at Airbus.** *"I am immensely proud of the extraordinary dedication and hard work of all the teams who have made this achievement possible."*

The second A350F prototype (MSN 701) is now at an advanced stage of final assembly and will enter the paint shop in the next few weeks.

During this inaugural flight, the crew carried out tests focused on verifying the basic airworthiness, fundamental flying qualities, and ensuring basic systems perform as predicted. This marks the start of an over 9 months flight test campaign.

Designed to be the world's most advanced cargo aircraft, the A350F meets the evolving demands of the global air freight market. Thanks to a range capability of up to 8,700 kilometres and a payload of up to 111 tonnes, it will allow operators to deploy it on international long-haul routes. Made of over 70% advanced materials, the A350F is resulting in a 46 tonnes lighter maximum take-off weight (MTOW) compared to competitor aircraft.

Powered by the latest Rolls-Royce Trent XWB-97 engines, the aircraft will bring a reduction in fuel consumption and carbon emissions of up to 40% compared to competitor aircraft with a similar payload-range capability. It is the first new freighter to fully meet the latest ICAO's CO_2 emission standards. At the end of August 2026, the A350F had already recorded 115 orders from 14 disclosed customers and it had captured up to 59% market share in the large freighter category.

The aircraft was flown by Captain & Test Pilot Bernardo Saez-Benito, First Officer and Experimental Test Pilot Sylvain Guiraud, together with Test Flight Engineer Ludovic Girard. In addition, Lead Flight Test Engineers Laurent Bussiere and Jaime Angoloti were onboard.

A decade of delivering health and wellbeing:

Emirates SkyCargo surpasses one million pharma shipments through Dubai

- *Cargo carrier marks 10 years since launch of specialised Pharma product, dedicated GDP certified cool chain infrastructure at its hub in Dubai*
- *Between 1.5 to 2 million kilograms of pharma transported every week on Emirates flights*



Emirates SkyCargo is marking several major milestones in the transportation of time and temperature sensitive pharmaceuticals through Dubai.

The air cargo carrier is celebrating a **decade** of investment in world-class pharma logistics since September 2016 when it launched its specialised product for transportation of pharmaceuticals and unveiled its GDP (Good Distribution Practice) certified dedicated pharma handling hub in Dubai, ensuring the highest standards of quality and temperature-controlled handling. Since launching Pharma, Emirates SkyCargo has transported more than **one million pharma shipments**, equivalent to over 800,000 tonnes of pharma cargo, connecting pharmaceutical manufacturers, healthcare providers and patients across six continents.

The milestone underscores Emirates SkyCargo's leading capabilities and strengths in pharma logistics as well as the emergence

of Dubai as one of the prominent global hubs for rapid and seamless transport of temperature sensitive pharma. Today, Emirates SkyCargo's Dubai hub boasts over 16,500 sq metres of GDP certified handling and storage area across DXB and DWC as well as a dedicated fleet of over 55 cool dollies for pharma cargo. Cool Dollies are mobile temperature-controlled containers that maintain shipment temperature during transfer from aircraft hold to terminal or vice versa or during Quick Ramp Transfers between two aircraft.

On average, Emirates SkyCargo transports between 1.5 and 2 million kilograms of pharmaceutical products every week on its flights.

Badr Abbas, Divisional Senior Vice President, Emirates SkyCargo, said: *"Over the last decade, Emirates SkyCargo's pharma product has become the gold standard for air transportation of pharmaceuticals. This has not happened by chance or by accident. It is the result of years of investing in our processes, our capabilities, our people and our infrastructure. It is also an outcome of working closely with pharma shippers, freight forwarders, airports, ground handlers, multi-modal transport providers and other parties in the cool-chain ecosystem to develop customised solutions that meet industry needs. We're also constantly evolving our offerings to keep pace with the latest developments. We ultimately have only one goal, and that is to make sure that we transport these lifesaving medicines and treatments in the best possible conditions as they directly touch the lives of people around the world."*

Connecting global pharma markets through Dubai

Emirates SkyCargo facilitates the movement of pharmaceutical products across global markets, connecting major life sciences manufacturing hubs with healthcare providers around the world. Some of the largest pharma origin markets for Emirates SkyCargo include India, Germany, Belgium, UK, USA and Switzerland. Leveraging its extensive global network, high-frequency wide body flight capacity and purpose-built pharma infrastructure in Dubai, Emirates SkyCargo provides seamless connectivity to pharmaceutical cargo.

A decade of innovation in pharma logistics

The launch of Emirates Pharma in 2016 marked a major milestone in Emirates SkyCargo's strategy to develop specialised cargo solutions for different verticals. Supporting Emirates SkyCargo's pharma solution, the carrier inaugurated its dedicated GDP-certified pharmaceutical handling facilities in Dubai, creating a purpose-built environment for the storage, handling and transportation of temperature-sensitive medicines.

Over the following decade, Emirates SkyCargo continued to invest in specialised infrastructure, equipment and services to support the evolving needs of pharmaceutical shippers and healthcare providers. Key milestones include:

- **2017:** Initiating key partnerships with specialised container manufacturers for transporting pharmaceuticals onboard with very specific temperature requirements.
- **2018:** Launch of Emirates Pharma Corridors, connecting high volume pharma hubs. Emirates SkyCargo partnered with local airports and local ground handling partners to safeguard product integrity from journey to destination.
- **2020-2022:** During the pandemic, Emirates SkyCargo played a pivotal role in global healthcare logistics including setting up a dedicated GDP certified hub for vaccine transport and flying more than one billion doses of vaccines.
- **2023:** With pharma supply chains becoming increasingly sophisticated, Emirates SkyCargo expanded its offering in 2023 with the launch of Emirates Vital and Emirates Medical Devices, providing specialised solutions for the transportation of critical healthcare shipments including human organs, tissues, cell and gene therapies, clinical trial materials and medical equipment.
- **2025:** Emirates SkyCargo›s pharmaceutical network grew to 43 pharma stations worldwide. In addition, Emirates SkyCargo also established dedicated 2-8°C temperature corridors across select pharma hubs supported by specialised handling processes and agreed standards.

Emirates SkyCargo has also pioneered the development and deployment of thermal protection solutions including thermal blankets for pharma shipments in order to provide end to end protection for pharma cargo. Emirates SkyCargo is the only global air cargo carrier to deploy thermal blankets for all pharma shipments without exception. In 2026, the cargo carrier also expanded its pool of suppliers for thermal blankets improving availability across key markets, reducing transportation costs and enabling faster lead times for customers worldwide.

As Emirates SkyCargo's pharma product enters its second decade, the carrier remains committed to continuously investing in specialised healthcare logistics capabilities, developing new solutions for emerging healthcare segments and working closely with partners around the world to strengthen global pharma supply chains. As the industry evolves beyond traditional pharmaceuticals towards increasingly specialised treatments, including cell and gene therapies, biologics and precision medicines, Emirates SkyCargo continues to innovate its infrastructure, processes and product portfolio to meet changing customer needs. Through ongoing innovation, strategic collaboration and continued investment in infrastructure and technology, Emirates SkyCargo will support the seamless global movement of pharmaceuticals while reinforcing Dubai's position as a leading global hub for the transport of advanced healthcare products.



Qatar Airways Cargo, MASkargo and IAG Cargo complete first customer shipment across Global Cargo Joint Business network

- *Qatar Airways Cargo, MASkargo and IAG Cargo successfully complete the first trilateral customer shipment across their integrated network, marking a key milestone.*
- *The partnership will connect customers to more than 400 destinations worldwide through one of the industry's most extensive air cargo networks.*

Qatar Airways Cargo, MASkargo and IAG Cargo have successfully completed the trial of the first customer shipment transported across all three carriers, marking a major milestone ahead of the full launch of their Global Cargo Joint Business later this year.

The shipment provides an early demonstration of how customers will benefit from the combined strengths of the three airlines, with cargo moving seamlessly across multiple carriers, hubs and regions through a coordinated global network.

The successful first trilateral shipment saw 11 tonnes of copper foil transported from Kuala Lumpur (KUL) to Chicago O'Hare (ORD) via Doha (DOH) and Dublin (DUB).

As a critical component for advanced electronics and electric vehicle battery production, copper foil plays an important role in supporting global digital and energy transition initiatives. Shipped from Malaysia, a leading electronics manufacturing hub, this movement underscores the value of the future Global Cargo Joint Business in connecting production centres with global demand markets through a highly integrated network.

Announced in 2025, the Global Cargo Joint Business brings together three leading cargo carriers to create a network of unprecedented scale and reach. Once fully launched, customers will gain access to over 400 destinations across six continents

through a single, highly connected network, benefiting from greater flexibility, expanded routing options and faster, more seamless access to global markets.

Mark Drusch, Chief Officer Cargo at Qatar Airways Cargo, said: *"The successful transport of this tripartite shipment showcased the operational alignment, connectivity and customer-focused approach that will underpin the Joint Business. For our customers, this is about creating a simpler, more connected experience and demonstrates the strength of our collaboration. By combining our complementary networks and expertise, we are building a truly global cargo offering that delivers greater reach, more routing flexibility and enhanced efficiency."*

Mark Jason Thomas, Chief Executive Officer at MASkargo, said: *"This milestone brings the ambition behind our partnership into focus: connecting businesses to greater opportunities through the collective strengths of three leading cargo carriers. For MASkargo, seeing this first shipment move from Malaysia across our partners' networks demonstrates the potential of this collaboration to strengthen the link between Asia's production centres and global demand. As we progress towards launch, our shared focus is on translating that potential into wider market access, greater flexibility and enduring value for our customers."*

David Shepherd, Chief Executive Officer at IAG Cargo, said: *"Completing our first trilateral customer shipment is a significant milestone as we continue preparations for the launch of the Global Cargo Joint Business, which will redefine international air cargo." "Alongside our partners, we have been aligning our operations, systems and expertise to create a Joint Business that works seamlessly across our combined networks. As we progress towards full launch, our focus remains on delivering a coordinated proposition that provides tangible benefits for customers across the global air freight market."*

Earlier this year, IAG Cargo was appointed as the ground handling agent for Qatar Airways Cargo in Dublin and Madrid, two of the Joint Business' strategic hubs. Alongside the introduction of MASkargo handling operations at London Heathrow last year, these developments have supported the operational integration required to deliver the Joint Business.

The three carriers will continue operational trials and integration activities ahead of the planned launch of the Global Cargo Joint Business later this year. Customers can book shipments on any of the carriers' online booking platforms.





Emirates and Dubai Chambers sign MoU to support Dubai SMEs on the global stage

- *Partnership to boost competitiveness of Dubai-based Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)*
- *Dubai SMEs to gain enhanced access to efficient and reliable international connectivity through Emirates SkyCargo*
- *Dubai Chambers members to also benefit from incentives through Emirates Business Rewards, including bonus points and promotional activities*

Emirates and Dubai Chambers have signed an MoU to accelerate the international growth and competitiveness of Dubai-based Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The partnership aims to support Dubai's growing ecosystem of small businesses and innovative startups by facilitating their entry and integration into international markets and global supply chains.

The MoU was signed by **Adnan Kazim, Emirates Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer and Khalid AlJarwan, Executive Vice President of Commercial and Corporate Services** at Dubai Chambers, at Seamless Middle East 2026.

Under the terms of the MoU, members of Dubai Chamber of Commerce, one of the three chambers operating under the umbrella of Dubai Chambers, will have access to reliable and efficient connectivity along with tailored logistics solutions on a global scale through Emirates SkyCargo, the air freight division of Emirates. Emirates SkyCargo will leverage its expertise in cross-border logistics, its extensive international network spanning six continents, and its large wide-body aircraft fleet to facilitate and empower Dubai-based companies to plan their international expansion. SMEs and startups will also be able to access specialised express delivery solutions through Emirates Courier Express, Emirates SkyCargo's international door-to-door shipping product, providing fast, secure, and cost-effective express transportation and clearance options for businesses.

The partnership will also integrate



incentives through Emirates Business Rewards, Emirates' reward program for small and medium enterprises, supporting SME members of Dubai Chambers maximise the value of their business travel. Dubai Chamber of Commerce members joining Emirates Business Rewards for the first time will also receive a 2,000-point welcome joining bonus.

Emirates Business Rewards and Dubai Chambers will collaborate on member engagement initiatives including joint participation in events and other promotional activities to facilitate opportunities for eligible customers to earn rewards on Dubai Chambers-related services, with additional benefits and enhancements to be developed over time.

Adnan Kazim, Emirates Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer, said: "*Small and Medium Enterprises are important drivers of innovation and growth in Dubai's vibrant economy. Through this partnership with Dubai Chambers, we are committed to helping these businesses compete and thrive on a global stage by making international logistics and travel more accessible. Emirates SkyCargo has democratised access to world class logistics and cargo capacity through Emirates Courier Express, giving SMEs the same global reach and connectivity available to larger organisations. Combined with our extensive network, logistics expertise and tailored solutions, we will help remove many of the barriers that can make cross-border trade challenging. Additional benefits and incentives through Emirates Business Rewards, including welcome bonus points and co-branded card rewards will also go a long way in supporting SMEs in their international outreach. Together we are empowering Dubai's entrepreneurs to scale faster, enter new markets with confidence and contribute to the ambitions of Dubai Economic Agenda D33.*"

Khalid AlJarwan, Executive Vice President of Commercial and Corporate Services at Dubai Chambers, commented: "*This collaboration reflects our commitment to supporting the international growth of Dubai's business community. By enabling member companies to leverage reliable logistics solutions, global connectivity, and specialised expertise, we will enhance the capabilities of SMEs to reach new global markets more efficiently. It also supports the objectives of the Dubai Economic Agenda (D33) by enhancing the competitiveness of the private sector and contributing to the growth of Dubai's foreign trade.*"

In addition to freight and logistics services, Emirates SkyCargo and Dubai Chambers will also jointly develop value-added frameworks to cater to the agile needs of Dubai-based startups. These initiatives will include joint workshops, knowledge-sharing platforms and tailored cargo advisory programmes to optimise supply chain efficiencies for Dubai's SMEs.

Turkish Airlines Finalizes Order for up to 150 Boeing 737 MAX Aircraft



Turkish Airlines has finalized an agreement with Boeing for up to 150 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, marking another significant step in its long-term growth strategy. In the talks since 2025, the agreement will be the flag carrier's largest ever Boeing single-aisle aircraft order and will support its fleet expansion strategy while strengthening its short- and medium-haul network.

The agreement for the 737 MAX order was finalized in the presence of His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye.

The order comprises 100 firm Boeing 737-8 aircraft and options for an additional 50 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft. The agreement also includes substitution rights for the Boeing 737-10, the largest member of the 737 MAX family, providing Turkish Airlines with greater flexibility to align capacity with growing passenger demand across its network.

Commenting on the agreement, **Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee Prof Murat Şeker** stated: *"This agreement marks another significant step in the continued expansion of our fleet. The new Boeing 737 MAX aircraft will bring greater efficiency and flexibility to our operations, supporting the extensive network we serve from our hub in Istanbul. We are pleased to build on our longstanding cooperation with Boeing through an agreement that also supports Türkiye's aviation ecosystem."*

President and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes Stephanie Pope stated: *"This order reflects the trust and shared vision that have defined our long-standing partnership with Turkish Airlines. We're proud to continue our support of Türkiye's aviation ecosystem and Turkish Airlines as it grows its Istanbul-based network, connecting more people and destinations worldwide."*

The new aircraft will strengthen the flag carrier's short- and medium-haul operations, particularly on high-demand domestic and international routes. The Boeing 737-8's range, payload flexibility along with 20% reduced emissions and fuel consumption will support the flag carrier's evolving operational requirements as it continues to expand its fleet and network.

Turkish Airlines (including AJet) currently operates more than 200 Boeing aircraft, consisting of the 737 MAX, 737 Next-Generation, 787 Dreamliner, 777 and 777 Freighter. The latest order further strengthens the longstanding cooperation between the flag carrier and Boeing, building on the 75 787 Dreamliner order from 2025.

In addition to this milestone agreement, this year Turkish Airlines and Boeing also signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Industrial Participation, establishing a framework for long term cooperation structured around three key pillars: Skill Development, Value Creation and Business Awards. Through these pillars, the framework aims to support capability development, technology and know-how transfer, human skill development, enhance sustainability journey and generate new business and industrial cooperation opportunities.

Together with the industrial participation framework, the agreement reflects Boeing's long-term commitment to supporting Türkiye's aviation ecosystem, broadening the scope of the partnership beyond fleet expansion.

Alaska Air Group Targets $750 Million in Cargo Revenue by 2030

Four additional Boeing 737-800 freighters, expanding international services and stronger connectivity with Hawai'i will support the group's plan to more than double its cargo business.



Alaska Air Group is placing cargo at the centre of its next growth phase, targeting $750 million in annual cargo revenue by 2030 as it expands dedicated freighter capacity, integrates the operations of Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines, and builds a larger international network.

The company outlined its plans at its 2026 Investor Day in Seattle, where it said cargo revenue had grown by approximately 60% since 2024. The business is part of Alaska Accelerate, the group's long-term strategy to diversify revenue and reduce its reliance on domestic passenger fares.

Under the plan, cargo is expected to contribute $150 million in additional annual profit. Four areas have been identified for growth: dedicated freighter operations serving Hawai'i, mail transportation, international belly-hold capacity and broader network connectivity.

Freighter expansion strengthens Hawai'i links

A central part of the strategy is the addition of four Boeing 737-800 Converted Freighters (BCFs) through long-term leases. The aircraft will increase Alaska Air Cargo's dedicated 737 freighter fleet from five to nine, with entry into service expected during the first half of 2027.

The additional aircraft will be dedicated to Alaska and Hawai'i, with the Hawai'i-based freighters carrying Hawaiian Air Cargo livery.

Ian Morgan, vice president of cargo at Alaska Airlines, said the expansion would effectively double the capacity of the airline's dedicated freighter fleet. He said the aircraft would improve service reliability for communities served by the airline while providing greater flexibility in allocating capacity across its network.

The additional lift is also expected to create more opportunities for shipping seafood and other commodities to international markets, alongside essential and time-sensitive goods such as medicines, groceries and household supplies.

Hawai'i is particularly important to the plan. Honolulu is Alaska Air Group's second-largest global hub, and additional freighter capacity is expected to support local businesses, e-commerce and logistics providers. The expansion could also give farmers and ranchers more consistent access to markets beyond the islands.

International growth creates more cargo opportunities

The group's expanding long-haul network is expected to provide another source of cargo growth. Alaska Airlines currently serves international destinations including London, Rome, Reykjavik, Tokyo and Seoul from Seattle. Paris and Athens are planned for spring 2027, with the airline targeting at least 15 intercontinental destinations by 2030.

As international flying expands, additional belly-hold capacity will give the cargo business more opportunities to carry freight alongside passenger services. Alaska Air Group offers belly-cargo capacity across more than 400 passenger aircraft, including Boeing 787 and Airbus A330 widebodies.

The company also operates 10 Airbus A330-300 converted freighters for Amazon Air under a contract inherited through Hawaiian Airlines. These aircraft operate separately from the planned expansion of Alaska's own dedicated cargo fleet.

Cargo becomes part of a broader strategy

Alaska Accelerate aims to deliver $1 billion in additional profit, including $500 million in merger synergies from combining Alaska and Hawaiian. The group said it had captured roughly two-thirds of that target and remained on track to achieve the full amount by 2027.

The wider strategy is to increase revenue from premium travel, international services, loyalty and cargo. Alaska expects these diversified sources to account for around 60% of total revenue by 2030, compared with 53% currently.

For cargo, the next phase will depend on how effectively the group combines its freighter fleet, passenger network and Hawaiian operations into a more connected offering. The additional aircraft provide near-term capacity, while international expansion creates further opportunities to reach customers and markets.

Alaska Air Group's $750 million target is ambitious, but its direction is clear: cargo is moving from a supporting airline business to a more significant contributor to the group's long-term growth and earnings.

Emirates SkyCargo accelerates export growth from South America

- *Carrier introduced seven additional freighter frequencies to South America in 2026*
- *Double-digit year-on-year growth in exports from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador in FY 26/27*
- *Over 80,000 tonnes of perishables, including 66,000 tonnes of fresh flowers exported from South America since April 2024*

Emirates SkyCargo has strengthened its commitment to South America. Since March 2026, the carrier has introduced seven additional weekly freighter flights to the region including three freighter flights to Buenos Aires, one flight to Bogota, two additional flights to Sao Paulo and one additional flight to Quito. The additional flights have facilitated a significant increase in year-on-year export volumes with 57% export growth in Argentina, 22% in Brazil, 18% in Colombia and 14% in Ecuador.

Fresh perishables are one of the most important commodities transported by Emirates SkyCargo from South America. Since April 2024, the carrier moved close to 80,000 tonnes of perishables, including 66,000 tonnes of flowers from the four markets underlining the accelerating demand for high-quality temperature-sensitive logistics solutions.

Badr Abbas, Divisional Senior Vice President, Emirates SkyCargo, said: "South America is a dynamic emerging hub for exports across a range of sectors including high-quality food products and fresh



flowers that rely on fast and reliable air cargo connectivity to reach global customers. Since April this year, we have transported more than 22,000 tonnes of export cargo from our South American markets, a growth of 18% over the volumes carried during the same period in the previous year. By adding seven new freighter frequencies across South America in 2026 and supplementing the bellyhold capacity we provide on our passenger flights, we are driving increased exports and creating new opportunities for businesses to reach customers worldwide while ensuring their products maintain the highest standards of freshness and quality throughout transit."

Ecuador: Connecting one of the world's leading flower exporters to global markets

Ecuador remains Emirates SkyCargo's **largest export market in South America** and one of the most important **origins for fresh flowers** worldwide. To support growing demand, the cargo carrier increased its Quito operations by **adding a sixth weekly freighter frequency** in May 2026 offering a total export capacity of 600 tonnes every week. Freighter flights taking off from Quito connect rapidly to Amsterdam, providing rapid access to one of the world's largest flower auction and distribution centres.

The additional capacity has supported continued export growth, with cargo volumes from Ecuador **increasing 14% in the first half of FY26/27** compared to the same period last year, building on 11% growth recorded between FY24/25 and FY25/26. Since April 2024, Emirates SkyCargo has facilitated the movement of approximately **60,000 tonnes of exports from Ecuador.**

Flowers account for more than 90% of all export cargo uplifted from Ecuador by Emirates SkyCargo, highlighting the critical role air freight plays in connecting Ecuadorian floriculture growers to customers across Europe, the Middle East and Asia. During FY25/26 alone, Emirates SkyCargo transported nearly 24,000 tonnes of flowers from Ecuador through its global network. Emirates SkyCargo will be participating at **Expo Flor Ecuador**, a leading commercial exhibition between Oct 6-8, 2026, gathering stakeholders from the global floriculture industry.

Colombia: Supporting flower and perishables exports

In May 2026, Emirates SkyCargo launched a **weekly freighter service to Bogota**, enhancing connectivity for Colombian exporters and providing dedicated main deck capacity for flowers and fresh produce.

The introduction of the service has contributed to sustained export growth, with volumes increasing **18% year-on-year in the first half of FY26/27**, following a strong 34% increase between FY24/25 and FY25/26. Since April 2024, Emirates SkyCargo has transported nearly **14,000 tonnes of export cargo from Colombia**.

Colombia is also an important flower origin markets in South America. In FY25/26, the carrier transported more than **3,500 tonnes of flowers** from the country, supporting producers with reliable access to international markets.

Argentina: Enhanced connectivity unlocks opportunities for exporters

Emirates SkyCargo has scaled up its freighter operations in Argentina. The carrier commenced weekly freighter operations to Buenos Aires in March 2026 and rapidly scaled that up to **three weekly freighter flights from July 2026**, giving exporters access to markets across Emirates' network.

The strengthened connections to Buenos Aires have delivered robust growth in exports from the market. Emirates SkyCargo has facilitated an increase of **57% in exports from Argentina the first half of FY26/27** compared to the previous year. This follows the 8% growth between FY24/25 and FY25/26. Since April 2024, Emirates SkyCargo has facilitated the movement of approximately **5,000 tonnes of exports from Argentina,** including perishables such as fresh fruit, salmon and meat products.

Brazil: Expanded freighter network drives export growth

To meet growing customer demand, Emirates SkyCargo has expanded its operations in Brazil to four freighter services per week from Sao Paulo, **including two additional frequencies introduced in 2026.**

The increased capacity has helped drive a **22% year-on-year increase in exports during the first half of FY26/27**, following 11% growth between FY24/25 and FY25/26. Since April 2024, Emirates SkyCargo has transported close to **20,000 tonnes of exports from Brazil**, supporting the movement of a broad range of commodities to destinations across its international network.

Expanding fleet and network operations

Emirates SkyCargo's expansion of freighter operations in South America is part of its ambitious growth plan for its freighter fleet and network. The cargo carrier has taken delivery of seven Boeing 777 production freighter aircraft since March 2026 as well as the first Boeing 777-300ERSF converted from an Emirates passenger aircraft. By the end of March 2027, the carrier will operate a fleet of 23 dedicated freighter aircraft. Globally, the air cargo carrier has expanded its global network of freighter destinations from just over 40 in March 2026 to over 60 by July 2026. In addition to main deck capacity on freighters, Emirates SkyCargo also offers high-frequency connectivity for cargo in the bellyhold of passenger flights across six continents. Over and above scheduled services, Emirates SkyCargo works closely with customers to offer customised solutions including charter flights to support evolving supply chains.

Cathay Cargo Marks 80 Years with Industry Recognition and a Strong Peak-Season Outlook



Award-winning performance, additional freighter capacity and new AI-assisted compliance tools are shaping Cathay Cargo's next phase of growth.

Cathay Cargo is marking a significant milestone with renewed confidence, combining its 80th anniversary celebrations with fresh industry recognition and expectations of a strong year-end peak season.

The cargo business has been named **Cargo Operator of the Year** at *Air Transport World*'s 2027 Airline Industry Achievement Awards. It is the fourth time Cathay Cargo has received the accolade since 2023, following wins in 2023, 2025 and 2026. The award recognises the contribution of its global cargo teams, supporting departments across Cathay Pacific and supplier partners, alongside the carrier's continuing focus on customer service and operational performance.

The recognition comes as the Cathay Group celebrates 80 years since its founding on 24 September 1946. For Cathay Cargo, the anniversary provides an opportunity to reflect on its development while looking ahead to a market increasingly shaped by changing trade patterns, specialised shipment requirements and digital technology.

The carrier's stated ambition is to become the world's best air cargo operator. Its current priorities include strengthening operational reliability,

developing specialist cargo solutions and introducing digital and AI-supported tools intended to improve service and give customers greater confidence in the movement of their shipments.

Capacity in focus as peak season approaches

Market conditions are providing both opportunities and challenges as the industry enters the final months of the year. Cathay Cargo describes demand across long-haul markets as uneven, with European trade adjusting to the impact of EU tariffs on e-commerce imports, while demand for the Americas remains strong.

In response, the airline has added transpacific capacity ahead of the year-end peak. Demand from key Asian markets, including the Chinese Mainland and Southeast and Northeast Asia, is also holding up, supported in particular by shipments of high-value technology products serving the artificial intelligence and data-centre sectors.

With demand expected to remain strong, securing enough capacity is a central operational concern. An additional Airbus A330 passenger-to-freighter aircraft is expected to help address the pressure from November. The aircraft will be operated by Air Hong Kong, Cathay Group's wholly owned subsidiary, on Cathay Cargo's behalf under a long-term lease arrangement.

The additional freighter is intended to provide more regional capacity and flexibility, supporting cargo flows through Hong Kong and helping the carrier respond to changing demand during the busy season. Air Hong Kong operates an all-A330 freighter fleet, primarily serving DHL Express, while also providing cargo opportunities through its relationship with Cathay Cargo.

Rerouting operations to keep European freight moving

Operational adaptability has also been tested by disruption to services through the Middle East. The suspension of some services affected Cathay Cargo's European freighter operations, which had relied on Dubai as an intermediate stop. Flying directly would have created payload penalties, making alternative routing arrangements important to maintaining capacity.

Cathay Cargo's South Asia, Middle East and Africa team worked to identify alternative stops, including establishing a new seasonal operation through Astana, Kazakhstan. The solution demonstrated the importance of network planning and coordination when established routes are disrupted.

For cargo customers, the priority is continuity: keeping freight moving while managing the constraints imposed by route changes, aircraft performance and available capacity. The episode underlines the role of operational teams in responding quickly when market or geopolitical developments affect established supply chains.

Air Hong Kong operates an all-A330 freighter fleet, primarily serving DHL Express, while also providing cargo opportunities through its relationship with Cathay Cargo.

AI-assisted tools support compliance

Alongside network and capacity management, Cathay Cargo is developing technology to help address increasingly complex international trade requirements. Its new AI-assisted Import and Export Control Check (IECC) is designed to help frontline teams identify shipments that may require additional import or export licences.

The tool analyses shipment descriptions against relevant licensing requirements and flags potential issues for further review. Rather than relying solely on keyword matching, it uses AI-assisted language analysis to help teams recognise when a goods description may need closer examination.

The system is intended to support earlier checks and more consistent decision-making, reducing the risk of shipments being delayed or offloaded because of unresolved compliance requirements. Human review remains essential, and shippers retain responsibility for providing accurate and sufficiently detailed goods declarations.

The development reflects a wider industry challenge: as trade rules change and supply chains become more complex, airlines and their customers need processes that combine regulatory awareness, reliable data and operational expertise.

Building on the anniversary milestone

Cathay Cargo's 80th anniversary arrives at a time when air freight operators must balance fluctuating demand with capacity constraints, route disruption and rising expectations around digital service.

Its latest award provides external recognition of its performance, while the planned A330 freighter addition and AI-assisted compliance capability demonstrate how the carrier is addressing immediate operational demands and longer-term customer needs.

As the year-end peak approaches, the test will be whether capacity and operational flexibility can keep pace with demand across its major markets. For Cathay Cargo, the anniversary is not only a celebration of its history, but also a marker of the work required to maintain reliability and customer confidence in a changing global cargo market.

Cathay Cargo Adds Transpacific Freighter Capacity for Peak Season

Additional services to Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles and Mexico will support growing semiconductor and data-centre equipment shipments, while a leased A330 freighter will strengthen regional operations.



Cathay Cargo is increasing freighter capacity between Hong Kong and key markets in the Americas for the 2026 peak season, responding to sustained demand for semiconductor and data-centre equipment shipments from across Asia.

The additional capacity will operate from September through the first to third week of December, with five flights per week serving Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles and Mexico, according to the airline. The expansion follows an earlier announcement by Cathay cargo hub operations and development head Jonathan Ng that additional transpacific capacity would be introduced to accommodate peak-season demand.

"Cargo demand has remained positive over the summer, particularly due to growth in semiconductor and data-centre equipment shipments from across Asia to our transpacific markets," Ng said.

He added that matching capacity with demand remains the priority as the airline prepares for the busiest period of the year.

The move comes amid strong growth on the Asia–North America trade lane. **International Air Transport Association (IATA) data showed that demand on the corridor rose 13.2% year on year in August 2026, marking its seventh consecutive month of growth.** The increase highlights the continuing importance of the route for technology-related cargo and other time-sensitive shipments.

Data-centre infrastructure and semiconductor supply chains are creating additional demand for air freight, as manufacturers and technology companies move components and equipment across international markets. For carriers, the challenge is to provide sufficient capacity without losing flexibility as demand changes through the peak season.

Cathay is also preparing to strengthen its regional freighter network. A leased Airbus A330 passenger-to-freighter (A330P2F), converted in Shanghai, is due to join Air Hong Kong, a Cathay Group subsidiary, during the fourth quarter. The aircraft will provide additional capacity for general cargo and give the group greater flexibility in responding to regional demand.

"The leased A330P2F operated by Air Hong Kong is planned to provide additional regional capacity in the fourth quarter," Cathay said, adding that the aircraft would create more options for freight-forwarding partners.

The regional addition complements the expanded long-haul capacity by strengthening the network that connects shipments across Asia through Hong Kong. It also reflects Cathay's broader effort to balance capacity across its international and regional operations as market conditions evolve.

E-commerce remains another factor influencing cargo flows between Asia and North America. According to air cargo consultancy Xeneta, China's e-commerce exports to the United States recovered to 23% above year-earlier levels in July 2026, following an initial decline after the US ended its de minimis exemption for low-value shipments in 2025.

For Cathay Cargo, the combination of technology-related demand, recovering e-commerce flows and the seasonal peak makes capacity planning particularly important. The airline's latest move is designed to meet immediate demand while preserving the flexibility needed to respond to further changes in the market.

Air France KLM Martinair Cargo Expands Winter Network with Three New Destinations



New freighter services to Cairo and passenger-aircraft cargo capacity to Punta Cana and Malé will broaden the carrier's reach for the 2026–27 winter season.

Air France KLM Martinair Cargo is expanding its winter network with three new destinations, adding dedicated freighter capacity to Cairo and wide-body belly-hold capacity to Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic and Malé in the Maldives.

The winter schedule will run from October 25, 2026, to March 27, 2027, connecting freight customers through the group's hubs at Paris Charles de Gaulle and Amsterdam Schiphol. The carrier plans to serve 14 freighter destinations, 112 wide-body belly destinations worldwide, including services operated with joint-venture partner Delta, and 54 destinations across Europe.

Cairo will join Air France's freighter network with three weekly Boeing 777F flights between Paris and the Egyptian capital. The service will provide dedicated main-deck capacity independent of passenger flight schedules, creating an additional option for shipments moving between Europe and North Africa.

The expansion also brings changes to the carrier's Indian operations. Air France's freighter service will shift from Mumbai to Navi Mumbai International Airport, with two weekly Boeing 777F flights planned for the winter season.

Meanwhile, Punta Cana will be added to the wide-body belly network from November, with three weekly Boeing 777-300ER services from Paris. Malé will follow in December, with two weekly Airbus A350-900 services. These additions extend cargo access to two markets where passenger services provide the underlying capacity for freight.

Across the freighter network, KLM and Martinair will continue operating Boeing 747 services from Amsterdam to key markets in the Americas, Africa and Asia. Flights serving Seoul will operate three times weekly, including one standalone service and two flights combined with Hong Kong, increasing dedicated freighter capacity on the route.

Seasonal services to Ottawa and Barbados will also return. In Europe, 54 destinations served by narrow-body passenger aircraft will feed cargo through the Paris and Amsterdam hubs, supported by the group's intra-European trucking network. Cooperation with Delta Cargo and other interline partners will extend access beyond the carrier's own scheduled network.

"Winter is a demanding season for our customers, from the year-end peak to the flower season in the run-up to Valentine's Day," said Pierre-Olivier Bandet, executive vice president cargo at Air France-KLM.

The expanded schedule is designed to give freight customers more routing options during a period shaped by year-end demand and seasonal movements, including flower shipments ahead of Valentine's Day.

By combining dedicated freighters with cargo capacity on passenger aircraft, Air France KLM Martinair Cargo is broadening its network while offering freight forwarders different options for moving shipments across intercontinental and regional routes.



Turkish Cargo Strengthens Specialised Air Freight with Advanced Live-Animal Facilities

With a global network spanning more than 350 destinations, Turkish Cargo combines international connectivity with dedicated facilities and specialised handling for live-animal shipments at its Istanbul hub.

Turkish Cargo has developed an extensive international air freight network, connecting more than 130 countries and over 350 destinations through the global reach of Turkish Airlines. Its operations cover a broad range of cargo categories, from general freight and perishables to pharmaceuticals, valuable shipments and live animals, each requiring specific handling procedures and operational controls.

At the centre of this network is SmartIST, Turkish Cargo's cargo hub at Istanbul Airport. Designed to manage complex freight flows, the facility combines modern cargo-handling systems with specialised storage areas and infrastructure for sensitive shipments. Its strategic location also supports connections between Europe, Asia, Africa and other major international markets.

Turkish Cargo's specialist portfolio includes TK Pharma for pharmaceutical shipments, TK Fresh for perishables, TK Valuable for high-value cargo and TK Live for live-animal transportation. These services reflect the carrier's approach to handling cargo that requires more than standard freight processes, with dedicated facilities, trained personnel and procedures tailored to the nature of each shipment.

Dedicated Infrastructure for Live Animals

Live-animal transportation requires careful coordination across the entire journey. Appropriate environmental conditions, suitable transport equipment, trained handlers and access to veterinary support are important to maintaining animal welfare during acceptance, storage, transfers and onward transportation.

Through TK Live, Turkish Cargo provides specialised handling for different animal species, supported by dedicated infrastructure at SmartIST. The facility includes a **1,200-square-metre enclosed live-animal area** with controlled temperature, humidity and ventilation, helping maintain suitable conditions for animals while they are in the airline's care.

The airline also provides veterinary support in Istanbul around the clock. Its live-animal operations follow the International Air Transport Association's Live Animals Regulations (IATA LAR), alongside applicable international requirements, including CITES provisions where relevant.

Handling procedures are adapted to the type of animal and the requirements of each shipment. This includes attention to environmental conditions, transfer arrangements and the coordination of documentation and operational instructions. Such measures are particularly important when animals are connecting between flights or require temporary accommodation at the hub.

Care and Coordination Throughout Transit

Beyond physical facilities, the management of live-animal shipments depends on communication and coordination among customers, airline teams, ground handlers and veterinary professionals. Clear handling instructions and well-managed transfers help reduce unnecessary delays and support the consistent application of animal-welfare procedures.

Turkish Cargo also offers a dedicated supervision service at Istanbul Airport for eligible pet shipments upon request. The published service includes dedicated transfer vehicles, real-time communication, walking assistance and photo sharing, giving customers greater visibility during the handling process. These arrangements form part of the airline's broader live-animal service offering, with specific procedures determined by the species and shipment requirements.

The focus on specialised handling complements Turkish Cargo's wider cargo operations, where different products require different levels of care, security and environmental control. For live animals, the combination of appropriate facilities, veterinary support and trained teams is central to managing the particular demands of air transportation.

As international air cargo networks continue to expand, the ability to handle specialised shipments is an important part of an airline's service proposition. Turkish Cargo's TK Live operation demonstrates how global connectivity can be supported by dedicated infrastructure and procedures designed around the needs of sensitive cargo.

Through SmartIST and its wider international network, the carrier continues to connect markets while providing specialised handling solutions for live-animal transportation across its system.

Silk Way West Airlines expands digital booking access through CargoAi

Silk Way West Airlines is expanding its digital distribution capabilities through its partnership with CargoAi, providing more than 30,000 freight forwarders with seamless access to the airline's capacity, real-time rates, and eBooking services across key markets in the USA, Europe and Asia. Building on the digital partnership announced at Air Cargo China 2026 in Shanghai, the integration now enables bookings for general cargo, lithium batteries, and dangerous goods through CargoMART, and direct connections to leading Transport Management Systems via CargoCONNECT, providing greater visibility, automation, and reach across multiple booking environments throughout the airline's service network.



The development marks the next stage of Silk Way West Airlines' digital transformation and reflects the airline's broader strategy to make its cargo capacity and services increasingly accessible through the digital environments used by freight forwarders worldwide. The original partnership agreement established the framework for enhanced rate visibility and future digital booking capabilities. The expanded integration now translates that framework into a wider digital distribution offering for customers.

Through CargoAi's ecosystem, freight forwarders can access Silk Way West Airlines' capacity across multiple booking environments, providing greater flexibility in how they search for rates, identify available capacity, and manage bookings. The connection through CargoMART and CargoCONNECT is designed to improve visibility, automation, and accessibility while supporting a faster and seamless customer experience.

"Expanding our digital distribution in retail is an important part of how we continue to evolve our customer experience," said **Wolfgang Meier, President of Silk Way West Airlines.** *"Through our partnership with CargoAi, freight forwarders now have another way to access our capacity, rates, and services through the digital channels they use every day. By making our offering more visible and easier to book, we are creating a more efficient customer journey while continuing to strengthen the digital capabilities of our global network."*

"We are proud to continue developing our partnership with Silk Way West Airlines," said **Matthieu Petot, Founder and CEO of CargoAi.** *"By combining Silk Way West Airlines' dedicated widebody freighter capacity and global network with CargoAi's digital ecosystem, we are making capacity and pricing more easily accessible to freight forwarders across multiple booking environments. This expanded integration creates more opportunities for forwarders to connect with Silk Way West Airlines while supporting the airline's continued digital growth."*

The continued development of digital distribution supports the airline's commitment to improving customer experience, expanding access to its cargo capacity and adopting innovative solutions across its global operations.

Etihad Cargo Restores Daily Shanghai Service, Lifting Weekly Capacity to 840 Tonnes



The return of daily Boeing 787-10 passenger flights strengthens Etihad Cargo's Shanghai operations ahead of the year-end peak, complementing seven weekly freighter services and expanding connections through Abu Dhabi.

Etihad Cargo is restoring daily passenger-flight capacity between Abu Dhabi and Shanghai, bringing its combined cargo capability from the Chinese gateway to approximately 840 tonnes a week as international supply chains prepare for the year-end peak.

The daily Boeing 787-10 passenger service resumed on 1 October, adding bellyhold capacity to the seven weekly Boeing 777 freighter operations already serving Shanghai. The combined schedule gives freight forwarders and shippers access to both dedicated freighter space and cargo capacity aboard passenger aircraft, offering additional options for moving goods out of one of China's major commercial centres.

For Etihad Cargo, the move represents the return of planned network capacity rather than a short-term response to seasonal demand. However, its timing is significant, with the final quarter traditionally bringing increased volumes across e-commerce, consumer technology and other major air freight categories.

Stanislas Brun, Chief Cargo Officer at Etihad Cargo, said the additional

capacity would help the carrier support customers during a busy period while maintaining flexibility across its wider cargo network.

The restoration also reinforces Shanghai's role within Etihad Cargo's broader Asian operations, where demand is supported by manufacturing, technology exports and trade connecting China with markets across the Middle East, Europe and beyond.

Balancing peak demand with network reliability

The year-end period places additional pressure on air cargo capacity as retailers, manufacturers and logistics providers work to meet delivery commitments. E-commerce shipments and consumer electronics are important contributors to seasonal demand, while pharmaceuticals, life sciences products and high-value industrial goods require dependable transport and carefully managed handling.

The additional passenger service gives Etihad Cargo another source of capacity on the Shanghai route. Bellyhold cargo can complement freighter operations, allowing the carrier to offer more scheduling options and make use of its passenger network alongside dedicated aircraft.

The distinction matters for freight customers managing shipments with different transit-time, handling and capacity requirements. A combination of passenger and freighter services can provide greater choice, although the space available for individual shipments remains subject to aircraft payload, operating conditions and cargo acceptance requirements.

The restored schedule also supports the movement of goods through Etihad Cargo's hub in Abu Dhabi, where shipments can connect with onward services across the airline's international network. The hub links Asian origins with destinations in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas, giving customers access to a wider range of markets through a single connecting point.

Abu Dhabi strengthens its role as a cargo gateway

The Shanghai capacity increase comes as Etihad Cargo continues to develop its position in key international trade lanes. Its network strategy combines passenger bellyhold capacity, dedicated freighters and partnerships to connect major manufacturing and distribution centres with global destinations.

China remains an important part of that strategy. Etihad Cargo's published network developments have highlighted growing links with Chinese cargo gateways, including Ezhou, alongside its operations in other major Asian markets. These connections support a mix of general cargo and specialised shipments moving between Asia and international markets.

Abu Dhabi's location also provides a platform for cargo requiring more than standard airport-to-airport transportation. Through its PharmaLife service, Etihad Cargo offers temperature-controlled solutions for pharmaceutical and life sciences shipments, including specialised equipment, controlled storage and handling procedures designed to protect product integrity during transit. The carrier's wider portfolio includes solutions for perishables, live animals and other specialist cargo categories.

These services are particularly relevant to shippers whose requirements extend beyond available capacity to include temperature management, shipment visibility and careful coordination between handling points.

Capacity growth built around customer requirements

Etihad Cargo's recent performance provides further context for its network investment. The carrier reported that cargo volumes rose 9 per cent in 2025 to 703,000 tonnes, while revenue increased 8 per cent to AED 4.5 billion. It also recorded growth across several specialist products, including pharmaceutical logistics through PharmaLife.

Alongside its physical network, the company has been investing in digital tools and service development. Its SmartTrack platform, introduced in 2025, uses AI and data analytics to improve shipment visibility and provide more proactive tracking information.

The combined schedule gives freight forwarders and shippers access to both dedicated freighter space and cargo capacity aboard passenger aircraft, offering additional options for moving goods out of one of China's major commercial centres.

The restoration of daily Shanghai passenger flights is a more immediate operational development, but it fits the same broader objective: providing customers with reliable capacity and better-connected services across key trade routes.

For freight forwarders and shippers, the principal benefit is the return of daily passenger-flight options alongside established freighter services. The resulting weekly capacity of approximately 840 tonnes gives the market additional room as demand builds toward the end of the year.

With international trade flows continuing to evolve, Etihad Cargo's challenge will be to balance capacity across its network while maintaining dependable connections and meeting the varied requirements of its customers. Shanghai's strengthened schedule is an important part of that effort.

Amazon Adds Two China-to-US Air Freight Options for Sellers



Air SMP and Economy Air give sellers more control over inventory placement and a choice between faster replenishment and lower-cost air transport ahead of the year-end peak.

Amazon is expanding its logistics offering with two new air freight services connecting China and the United States, giving sellers additional options to replenish stock, position inventory closer to customers and respond to changing demand.

Introduced through Amazon Global Logistics (AGL), the new services—Air Seller Managed Placement (Air SMP) and Economy Air—are designed to meet different shipping priorities. Air SMP focuses on regional inventory distribution and faster transit, while Economy Air offers a lower-cost alternative to Amazon's standard air freight service.

The launch comes as online retailers prepare for the year-end shopping period, when demand can rise sharply and delays in replenishing popular products can lead to missed sales. Amazon says the new options are intended to help sellers prepare for peak season, recover from stockouts and support time-sensitive product launches when ocean freight may take too long.

Air SMP combines speed with inventory control

Air SMP allows sellers to divide inventory at origin and ship it by air directly to a designated Amazon fulfilment centre within one of five US regions. The service operates with daily flights from Shanghai and Hong Kong, with shipments expected to arrive within an estimated seven to 10 calendar days after pickup.

The model gives sellers greater control over where their products enter Amazon's fulfilment network.



Instead of sending inventory to a single destination and arranging distribution later, sellers can split shipments in China and direct stock towards regional fulfilment locations.

This can be particularly useful for businesses managing demand across several parts of the United States. Positioning inventory closer to the market where it is needed can help support replenishment planning and reduce the need for additional distribution movements after arrival.

Amazon says Air SMP carries no Fulfilment by Amazon (FBA) inbound placement service fees. The company also says there are no additional surcharges for apparel, electronics or lithium battery products under the service. Sellers will need to review the programme's terms and shipment requirements when booking.

The service builds on Amazon's existing Seller Managed Placement concept, extending inventory-splitting capabilities to air freight. Its appeal lies in combining air transport speed with greater control over the initial placement of goods within the fulfilment network.

Economy Air targets cost-conscious shipments

The second option, Economy Air, is aimed at sellers who need faster replenishment than ocean freight can typically provide but want to keep transport costs below those of standard air cargo.

The service offers an estimated transit time of 11 to 15 days from Shanghai or Shenzhen to Los Angeles. Amazon says its rates are lower than those of its standard Global Logistics air freight offering, although it has not publicly disclosed specific prices in the announcement.

The longer transit time makes Economy Air a different proposition from Air SMP. Rather than prioritising the fastest available replenishment, it offers sellers a middle ground between cost and speed.

For businesses with inventory that is running low but does not require the quickest possible arrival, this option could provide additional flexibility. It may also help sellers respond to changes in demand without committing every urgent shipment to a premium air freight service.

The two offerings therefore address different needs within the same supply chain. Air SMP combines faster transit with regional inventory placement, while Economy Air places greater emphasis on transport cost.

Expanding Amazon's logistics role

The launch is part of Amazon's broader effort to develop logistics services beyond its own retail operations. Amazon Global Logistics provides cross-border freight services that connect suppliers in China and Vietnam with fulfilment and warehousing facilities in key markets, including the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union and Japan.

The programme offers ocean and air freight, along with related services such as origin pickup, customs clearance and delivery into Amazon's fulfilment network. By bringing more of these activities under a single platform, Amazon aims to simplify the process for sellers moving inventory internationally.

Earlier in 2026, the company introduced Amazon Supply Chain Services, bringing together freight, distribution, fulfilment and parcel shipping capabilities. Amazon has also been expanding the range of transport options available through its logistics platform, including a direct rail service for moving inventory from the US West Coast towards the East Coast.

The additional air freight services strengthen that wider offering by giving sellers more choice over how they balance transit time, cost and inventory positioning.

A practical choice ahead of peak season

For cargo and logistics providers, Amazon's move reflects the continuing demand for flexible transport options as e-commerce businesses seek to manage inventory more precisely. Air freight remains more expensive than ocean shipping, but it can provide a valuable alternative when stock levels, product launches or seasonal demand leave little room for long replenishment cycles.

The new services will not remove the underlying trade-off between speed and cost. Instead, they give sellers another way to match transport choices to the urgency of individual shipments.

The effectiveness of the options will depend on their rates, booking conditions, available capacity and the seller's destination requirements. Amazon has directed customers to its Global Logistics portal for service details and booking information.

As retailers enter the busiest part of the shopping calendar, the ability to move inventory quickly and place it strategically can be as important as the transport mode itself. With Air SMP and Economy Air, Amazon is seeking to make that choice more flexible for sellers shipping goods from China to the United States.



Transport logistic Americas, project cargo and air cargo Americas return to Miami in 2027 with new momentum

CNWNN Miami, USA - The Americas' logistics community is gearing up for the return of t**ransport logistic, project cargo & air cargo Americas,** taking place in Miami from **November 9-11, 2027.** Following the success of its previous editions, the event will once again bring together key players from across the transportation, logistics and air cargo industries – connecting markets, modes and continents in one of the world's most important logistics hubs.

At the heart of the 2027 edition is a topic that has never been more relevant: the importance of multimodal logistics for resilient, efficient and competitive supply chains. By bringing road, rail, ocean, air and project cargo together under one roof, the event offers a unique platform for companies

to connect across modes and borders and to explore new opportunities throughout the Americas.

Miami: Connecting the Americas

The strong participation of international exhibitors and visitors underlines the success of the concept and the growing importance of Miami as a strategic logistics hub. With its unique position as a gateway between North, Central and South America, the city provides the ideal setting for an event connecting the entire logistics ecosystem.

For the **World Trade Center Miami**, founders of air cargo Americas in 1991, the partnership with Messe München remains a key element in strengthening Miami's role as an international business and logistics hub. "Miami is uniquely positioned at the crossroads of the Americas, making it a natural meeting point for global trade, logistics and supply chain leaders," says **Ivan Barrios, President & CEO of the World Trade Center Miami.** "We are delighted to welcome transport logistic, project cargo & air cargo Americas back to Miami in 2027 and look forward to continuing our strong partnership with Messe München."

Tradeshow Logic joins Messe München

The 2027 edition will also mark an important new chapter for the event. **Tradeshow Logic, a leading U.S. trade show organiser with more than 25 years of experience, is now part of Messe München** and will play an active role in the organisation and further development of the Americas events.

The combination of Tradeshow Logic's extensive U.S. market expertise and network with Messe München's international trade fair know-how will create new opportunities for exhibitors and visitors alike. With more than 25 years of experience in the U.S. events market, Tradeshow Logic will contribute additional services, formats and offers designed to further enhance the overall event experience.

For **BJ Enright, President of Tradeshow Logic,** the new partnership represents an opportunity to combine deep knowledge of the U.S. market with the global reach of Messe München. *"We are excited to bring together our experience and network in the Americas with one of the world's leading international trade fair organizations. Together, we can create even more value for exhibitors, visitors and partners and further strengthen the event as a meeting point for the logistics community across the Americas."*

This partnership also opens the door to the next stage of development for the event. *"Tradeshow Logic will help us take transport logistic Americas, project cargo Americas and air cargo Americas to a new level,"* says **Robert Schönberger, Global Industry Lead at Messe München.** *"Their market expertise, experience and strong network are an excellent complement to our international platform. Together with the World Trade Center Miami and our national and international partners, we are building an event that reflects the increasingly interconnected nature of today's global supply chains."*

Preparations are already in full swing

Preparations for the **third edition in Miami** are already well underway, with strong commitment from new national and international partners adding further momentum. At the same time, established partnerships across the Americas continue to provide a strong foundation for the event's further growth.

Exhibitor applications are now open, giving companies the opportunity to secure their place at the international meeting point for multimodal logistics, project cargo and air cargo in the Americas.

Further details on exhibitors, partners, conference highlights and what's new for 2027 will be announced in the coming months.

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TIACA Chair Roos Bakker Urges Air Cargo Industry to Think Beyond Today



With AI, digitalisation and changing customer expectations reshaping air cargo, TIACA Chair Roos Bakker is calling on the industry to collaborate more closely and prepare now for the demands of the next decade.

The air cargo industry has never been short of change. Trade patterns shift, regulations evolve and new technologies continually alter the way freight moves around the world. But according to **Roos Bakker, Chair of The International Air Cargo Association (TIACA)**, the pace of change now demands something more than adaptation.

It requires the industry to ask better questions about the future.

In her September message to TIACA members, Bakker urged industry leaders to look beyond the immediate possibilities of artificial intelligence and digitalisation and consider what customers will expect from air cargo five or ten years from now—and whether today's investments are preparing the industry to meet those expectations.

The message comes as the global air cargo community prepares to meet in Miami for **TIACA's Air Cargo Forum 2026**, taking place from October 26 to 29 at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Putting the Customer at the Centre

For Bakker, the starting point for future planning should not be the technology itself, but the problem it is intended to solve.

Artificial intelligence, automation, data and other emerging technologies are creating opportunities across the cargo supply chain, but she argues that technology should remain a means to an end.

The more important questions are whether new systems can improve decision-making, reduce complexity, increase visibility, make operations safer and more efficient, or deliver a better customer experience.

That customer perspective is particularly important in a supply chain where a shipment passes through multiple organisations.

A shipper does not necessarily experience an airline, airport, ground handler, freight forwarder and technology provider as separate businesses. The customer sees one journey—and increasingly expects that journey to be predictable, visible, secure and reliable.

Bakker argues that understanding those expectations should shape the industry's investment decisions today.

AI Is Moving from Concept to Application

Artificial intelligence is central to that conversation.

AI has moved rapidly from experimentation into practical applications across logistics, with potential uses ranging from forecasting and data analysis to operational planning and customer service.

TIACA has itself identified AI and digital transformation as major themes for the Air Cargo Forum 2026, where industry leaders are expected to examine how emerging technologies can create practical value across the supply chain.

But Bakker's message is deliberately

measured. The question, she argues, should not simply be where AI can be introduced, but whether it addresses a genuine business problem.

That distinction may become increasingly important as companies assess a growing number of digital tools and AI applications. The challenge for air cargo will be to separate useful innovation from technology adopted simply because it is available.

Collaboration Is Becoming an Operational Requirement

Bakker also places collaboration at the heart of the industry's response to change.

Air cargo operates as an interconnected network. Airlines depend on airports, ground handlers connect multiple parties, freight forwarders link customers with capacity, technology providers connect information and regulators establish the operating framework.

When one part of that network encounters a problem, the effects can quickly spread elsewhere.

That makes collaboration more than an industry ideal, particularly when addressing challenges such as digitalisation, sustainability, security and resilience.

Information cannot deliver its full value if it remains trapped within individual organisations. Likewise, supply-chain resilience cannot depend solely on reacting quickly after a disruption; it requires relationships and coordination that are already in place.

Bakker acknowledges that collaboration is not always straightforward. Different companies have different commercial priorities and responsibilities. The objective, she argues, is not to make everyone agree on everything, but to create enough trust to identify common problems and work towards practical solutions.

The Workforce Behind the Technology

There is another element to the transformation that can easily be overlooked: people.

As AI and automation take on more tasks, the skills required across air cargo will change. Bakker argues that workforce development needs to be treated as an immediate leadership responsibility rather than a future concern.

That means identifying the skills organisations will need, giving existing employees opportunities to develop them and creating stronger pathways for younger professionals entering an industry they may know little about.

Technology may change the way cargo is managed, but the people operating those systems will determine whether the transformation succeeds.

For an industry facing rapid technological change, that makes training, mentorship and knowledge transfer as important as software and infrastructure.

From Discussion to Action

Bakker's message also contains a challenge for an industry that has spent years discussing digital transformation, sustainability, security, resilience and talent.

Talking about those issues is necessary, she argues, but progress ultimately has to be measured by what changes as a result.

That does not mean every airline, airport, handler or technology company needs to move at the same speed. Air cargo is too diverse for a single approach.

Instead, the emphasis is on experimentation, learning and sharing what works—and what does not.

The objective is to move from identifying problems to testing solutions.

Miami Becomes the Meeting Point

Those themes will be central to the conversations taking place at **Air Cargo Forum 2026** in Miami later this month.

TIACA expects more than **4,000 air cargo professionals from more than 80 countries**, alongside **150-plus exhibitors**, representing airlines, airports, freight forwarders, ground handlers, shippers, technology providers, equipment manufacturers, logistics companies and other parts of the global cargo ecosystem.

The forum's official theme—**"The Future Won't Wait – Act Faster. Move Smarter. Lead Louder."**—closely reflects Bakker's September message.

The programme will include discussions on artificial intelligence and digital transformation, the global economic and air cargo outlook, sustainability, e-commerce, fleet innovation, regional challenges and partnerships.

For Bakker, however, the value of the event will extend beyond what happens on stage.

Face-to-face discussions, she argues, can challenge assumptions in ways that formal presentations cannot. A customer may raise an issue an organisation has overlooked. A partner from another part of the supply chain may offer a different solution to a familiar problem.

Those exchanges can turn an industry conversation into something more practical.

Preparing for a Future That Has Already Started

Nobody can predict precisely what air cargo will look like a decade from now. But Bakker's argument is that the industry does not need a perfect forecast to begin preparing.

It needs to listen more closely to customers, collaborate beyond traditional organisational boundaries, invest in people and adopt technology where it delivers genuine value.

That puts the responsibility for the industry's future not solely with technology companies or airlines, but across the entire cargo ecosystem.

As the industry heads to Miami, the message from its association chair is therefore less about predicting the future than preparing for it.

The future may be uncertain, but the decisions shaping it are already being made.

ACL Airshop and Atlas Air Sign a Long-Term ULD Management Agreement

ACL Airshop, a global leader in Unit Load Device (ULD) fleet management and logistics solutions, has signed a long-term ULD Management Agreement (Agreement) with Atlas Air, Inc., a subsidiary of Atlas Air Worldwide, the leading global provider of outsourced aviation logistics. Building on decades of collaboration, the partnership focuses on efficiency, digital innovation, and service excellence in worldwide ULD operations.

Through the Agreement, ACL Airshop will provide integrated ULD management services—including fleet management, MRO, digital tracking, and global logistics support—to help ensure Atlas Air's ULD assets are available where and when they are needed across its worldwide network.

Atlas Air will benefit from ACL Airshop's IoT-based tracking technology and proprietary ULD management software, offering real-time visibility, utilization insights, and analytics to optimize fleet performance. Continuous monitoring and proactive interventions will minimize disruptions, reduce costs, and maximize availability. The partnership also highlights ACL Airshop's strength in charter ULD logistics, combining its global footprint with rapid-response capabilities to manage both routine and extraordinary demands. Together, the two companies aim to set a new standard for efficiency, customer focus, and simplifying ULD business in the global air cargo industry.



Bobby Wood, Vice President, Ground Operations, Atlas Air: *"Operational excellence depends on having the right resources in the right place at the right time." This agreement strengthens our global ULD capabilities through greater visibility, improved fleet management and a trusted partner that understands the complexity of our worldwide operation. Together, these enhancements will help us deliver even greater reliability and service for our customers."*

James W. Harris, CEO of ACL Airshop: *"Atlas Air is one of the world's largest and leading cargo airlines, and we're proud to continue building a long-standing partnership founded on trust, innovation, and shared success. By combining our global infrastructure, digital capabilities, and deep operational expertise, we're helping create a more connected, efficient, and resilient ULD management operation for the future."*

flydubai partners with Unilode to power the next phase of passenger and cargo growth with full ULD management

flydubai has signed a long-term agreement with Unilode Aviation Solutions, one of the world's largest outsourced fleets of Unit Load Devices (ULDs), to provide full ULD management services, as the airline expands its passenger and cargo freighter operations and prepares for future fleet growth.



The partnership marks another important milestone in the airline's growth while further strengthening Unilode's presence across the Middle East. Under the agreement, Unilode will deliver a fully outsourced ULD management programme, featuring specialised boxes and pallets that fit inside aircraft cargo holds, for both passenger and cargo freighter operations for the airline's forthcoming widebody operations of its Boeing 787 Dreamliners and long-term fleet expansion. This includes ULD supply, maintenance and repair, fleet planning, repositioning and digital asset tracking, supported by its global maintenance and repair network.

Since launching operations in 2009, flydubai has built a network spanning more than 125 destinations across 56 countries, strengthening Dubai's position as a global aviation and trade hub. As the airline continues to expand its cargo capabilities, support freighter programmes and prepare for future fleet growth, access to a scalable, fully managed ULD solution will be key to maintaining operational efficiency and supporting long-term growth strategy.

By managing flydubai's passenger and cargo ULD fleet, Unilode will help ensure equipment is available where and when it is needed. Supported by Unilode's digital tracking technology and global logistics infrastructure, the solution will improve fleet visibility, maximise asset utilisation and simplify day-to-day ULD operations.

Mohamed Hassan, Senior Vice President of Airport Services & Cargo at flydubai, said: *"As flydubai continues to progress, having trusted partners that can scale alongside us is essential. This partnership with Unilode supports our ongoing investment in fleet, network and cargo capabilities while helping us maintain the efficiency and flexibility required to serve our customers and support Dubai's position as a global aviation and trade hub."*

Rashed Albashri, Vice President of Cargo at flydubai, added: *"We have a longstanding commitment to investing in the latest technologies and adopting best practices. As we introduce our dedicated freighter operations and prepare for our future Boeing 787 passenger and cargo services, improving the visibility and availability of our cargo equipment becomes increasingly important. Unilode's digital capabilities and global network will help us optimise operations, improve ULD utilisation and support reliable service delivery across our expanding network."*

Ross Marino, Chief Executive Officer of Unilode Aviation Solutions, said: *"We're proud to welcome flydubai to the Unilode customer portfolio. flydubai has established itself as one of the Middle East›s most dynamic and ambitious airlines, and this partnership reflects our shared commitment to supporting its continued growth. As flydubai expands its passenger network, strengthens its cargo freighter operations and prepares for future fleet development with the expected delivery of its Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft, our outsourced ULD management solution will provide the flexibility, visibility and operational resilience needed to support every stage of that journey. We look forward to helping flydubai focus on growing its business while we manage its ULD operations."*

The partnership comes as flydubai expands its cargo operations, including the introduction of its dedicated freighter operations from October 2026. With three Boeing 737-800 freighter aircraft operating from 01 October 2026 at Al Maktoum International Airport (DWC), the freighter operation will complement the airline's existing belly-hold cargo capabilities across its fleet of nearly 100 Boeing 737 aircraft.

The partnership reinforces Unilode's position as a trusted ULD management partner for airlines across the Middle East and the world, delivering flexible, digitally enabled solutions that improve asset availability, operational performance and long-term efficiency.

Swissport Saudi Arabia and Riyadh Air partner to establish the Kingdom's first Centralized Load Control center

- *Long-term partnership combines Swissport's global aviation expertise with Riyadh Air's growth ambitions and investment in Saudi talent.*
- *New Riyadh-based center will manage load control for Riyadh Air flights across its global network, creating a new specialized aviation capability in the Kingdom.*



Swissport, the world's leader in aviation services, and Riyadh Air, Saudi Arabia's new national carrier, have entered into a long-term strategic partnership to establish the Kingdom's first Centralized Load Control (CLC) center in Riyadh.

Expected to be operational within eight months, the center will provide centralized load planning, weight and balance calculations and load documentation for Riyadh Air flights across its domestic and international network. Centralizing these activities in Saudi Arabia will provide a dedicated capability to support Riyadh Air as it builds its global network.

The partnership will combine Swissport's global operational expertise with Riyadh Air's growth ambitions, while creating opportunities to develop Saudi talent in this highly specialized area of aviation. Both companies will invest in knowledge transfer and skills development to establish a sustainable local capability.

Dirk Goovaerts, CEO Continental Europe, Middle East, Africa, India and Global Cargo Chair, Swissport, said: "Riyadh Air is building a new generation of aviation in Saudi Arabia, and we are pleased to support that ambition through this strategic partnership. Establishing the Kingdom's first Centralized Load Control center brings specialized aviation expertise closer to the airline's operations while creating opportunities for Saudi professionals to build skills in an important area of flight operations."

Hamad Alhemede, CEO of Swissport Saudi Arabia, said: "This partnership is an important step in developing specialized aviation expertise in the Kingdom. We will combine Swissport's global standards and experience with local talent, supported by Swissport Academy, to build a strong team capable of operating the center and supporting Riyadh Air's growing network from Saudi Arabia."

Pankaj Handa VP Ground Operations at Riyadh Air, said: "At Riyadh Air, we are building a global airline from the Kingdom, and we believe achieving that ambition starts with developing strong and sustainable operational capabilities here at home. Our partnership with Swissport Saudi Arabia is an important step in developing specialized expertise and strengthening local capabilities in a critical area of airline operations, supporting the growth of our global network and our ambitions for the future. The value of this partnership goes beyond the delivery of operational services. It is about transferring knowledge, developing capabilities and contributing to the wider aviation ecosystem in the Kingdom as the sector continues its rapid transformation."

We will combine Swissport's global standards and experience with local talent, supported by Swissport Academy, to build a strong team capable of operating the center and supporting Riyadh Air's growing network from Saudi Arabia.

Building specialized aviation expertise in Saudi Arabia

Centralized Load Control is a specialized function within airline operations, responsible for planning aircraft loads and ensuring weight and balance requirements are met before departure. Centralizing these activities enables specialist expertise and consistent processes to support flights across an airline's network.

The Riyadh center will operate in line with Swissport's global systems, procedures and operational standards. Through Swissport Academy, Saudi professionals will have access to structured learning pathways and training in load planning, weight and balance and related operational processes.

The new center also adds Centralized Load Control to Swissport Saudi Arabia's portfolio of aviation services and creates a platform for developing further load control capabilities in the future.

Supporting Saudi Arabia's aviation growth

Saudi Arabia is undergoing a major transformation of its aviation sector under Vision 2030, with significant investment in infrastructure, connectivity and the development of a broader aviation ecosystem.

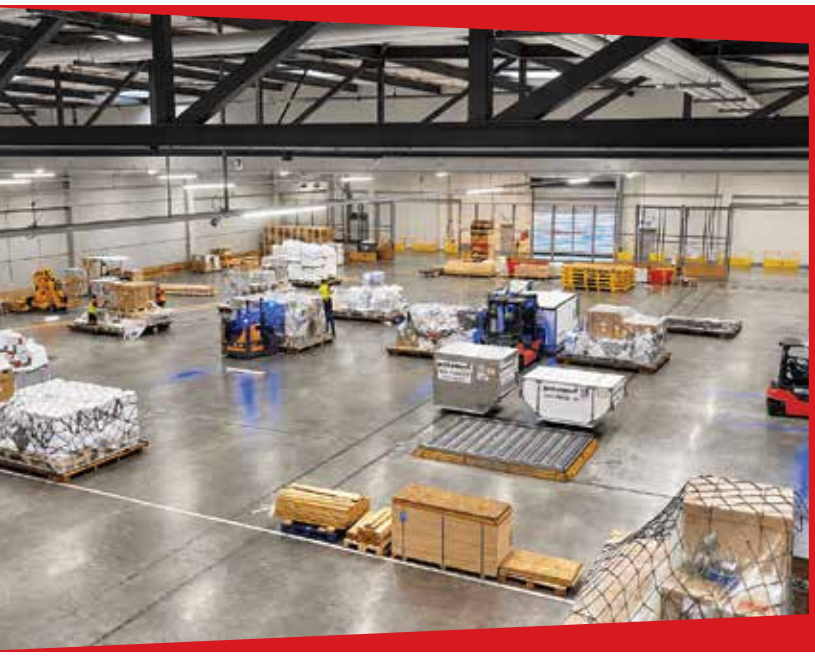
As the Kingdom's new national carrier, Riyadh Air is central to these ambitions, with plans to connect Saudi Arabia with destinations around the world and strengthen Riyadh's position as a global aviation gateway.

Swissport has operated in Saudi Arabia for 10 years and today employs more than 6,000 aviation professionals, serving customers at 20 airports across the Kingdom. The company's continued expansion reflects its long-term commitment to supporting the development of Saudi Arabia's aviation sector.

The partnership builds on this presence, bringing together Riyadh Air's network ambitions, Swissport's global expertise and Saudi talent to develop a new specialized aviation capability in the Kingdom.

Swissport starts operations in France with new cargo operation at EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse

Swissport is expanding its European presence with the launch of Swissport Cargo Services France at EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse. The new 3,000 m² cargo warehouse in the French sector marks Swissport's return to the French market and creates a platform for future growth.





Swissport, the world's leading provider of airport ground services, air cargo handling and airport hospitality, has launched a new cargo operation in the French sector of EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse. The new warehouse provides 3,000 m² of cargo handling space, including a 1,000 m² French customs zone and 2,000 m² of international handling space for the build-up and breakdown of airline pallets.

Initially, Swissport Cargo Services France will focus on airline cargo handling activities. While operating as an independent entity for the French market, the new operation will work closely with Swissport's established Basel cargo operation, benefiting from its expertise and Swissport's global standards in safety, quality and operational excellence.

"France is an important aviation market with significant long-term potential for Swissport," says Bruno Stefani, Regional CEO Switzerland, Italy and France at Swissport. "The launch of Swissport Cargo Services France marks a significant step in strengthening our presence in the country. Beyond cargo, we see opportunities to bring our global expertise in airport ground services and hospitality to the French market and to build strong, long-term partnerships with airlines and airports."

"The new operation allows us to build on the strong expertise of our established Basel cargo team while developing a dedicated presence in France," said Andreas Behnke, Head of Cargo Switzerland, Italy and France and Station Manager Basel-Mulhouse at Swissport. "Our focus is on bringing the same commitment to teamwork, safety and operational excellence to our new operation and providing a strong foundation for its future development."

The launch strengthens Swissport's European cargo network, which forms part of a global network of more than 120 cargo centers. Worldwide, Swissport handles over five million tons of air freight annually, combining global scale and standardized processes with local operational expertise.

Hacis extends SuperLink China Direct service to Vietnam



Hong Kong Air Cargo Industry Services Limited (Hacis) – the value-added logistics arm of Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminals Limited (Hactl) – has announced the extension of its SuperLink China Direct service to Vietnam. This strategic expansion will bring additional cargo flow to the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA), further strengthening the city's position as a leading global air cargo hub. It will also benefit the airfreight and logistics industries as well as customers, while offering Vietnamese enterprises and overseas shippers a more convenient and costeffective logistics and air-road intermodal solution, creating a winwin outcome for stakeholders.

Building on the proven SuperLink China Direct model – Hacis' scheduled, Customs-bonded road feeder service connecting HKIA with Chinese Mainland – the new service extends Hacis' cross-boundary network to Vietnam.

Under the Single E-lock Scheme, a successful trial of the extended Hacis SuperLink China Direct service has already been completed, with Hacis partnering with Vietnamese logistics company U&I Logistics Corporation to deliver Hong Kong's first pilot shipment under a seamless logistics solution connecting Vietnam, Chinese Mainland, and Hong Kong. The import shipment was transported from Vietnam by truck to Wuzhou, before being carried onward to Hong Kong via Hacis' Customs-bonded road feeder services.

The new service is expected to generate additional import and export cargo flows through Hong Kong, supporting cargo growth at HKIA and creating new opportunities for freight forwarders and logistics service providers. It also offers Vietnamese businesses and overseas shippers greater flexibility and a wider range of routing options to access international markets via Hong Kong and Chinese Mainland. Leveraging Hong Kong's Single E-lock Scheme and Hacis' Customs-bonded road feeder services, it provides customers with a more seamless, secure and efficient logistics service, further strengthening the connectivity between Vietnam, Hong Kong and global markets.

Says Ringo Chan, Executive Director of Hacis: "With the support of the Customs in Hong Kong and Chinese Mainland, SuperLink China Direct has become a trusted cross-boundary logistics solution connecting Hong Kong with Chinese Mainland. The extension to Vietnam marks the first expansion of this proven intermodal network beyond Chinese Mainland, with the potential to extend further into other parts of Asia in future, further strengthening Hong Kong's regional connectivity. By linking Vietnam with Hong Kong's extensive global air cargo network, the new service provides customers with more routing options and greater flexibility, while generating additional cargo flows through Hong Kong and creating new opportunities for the logistics industry."

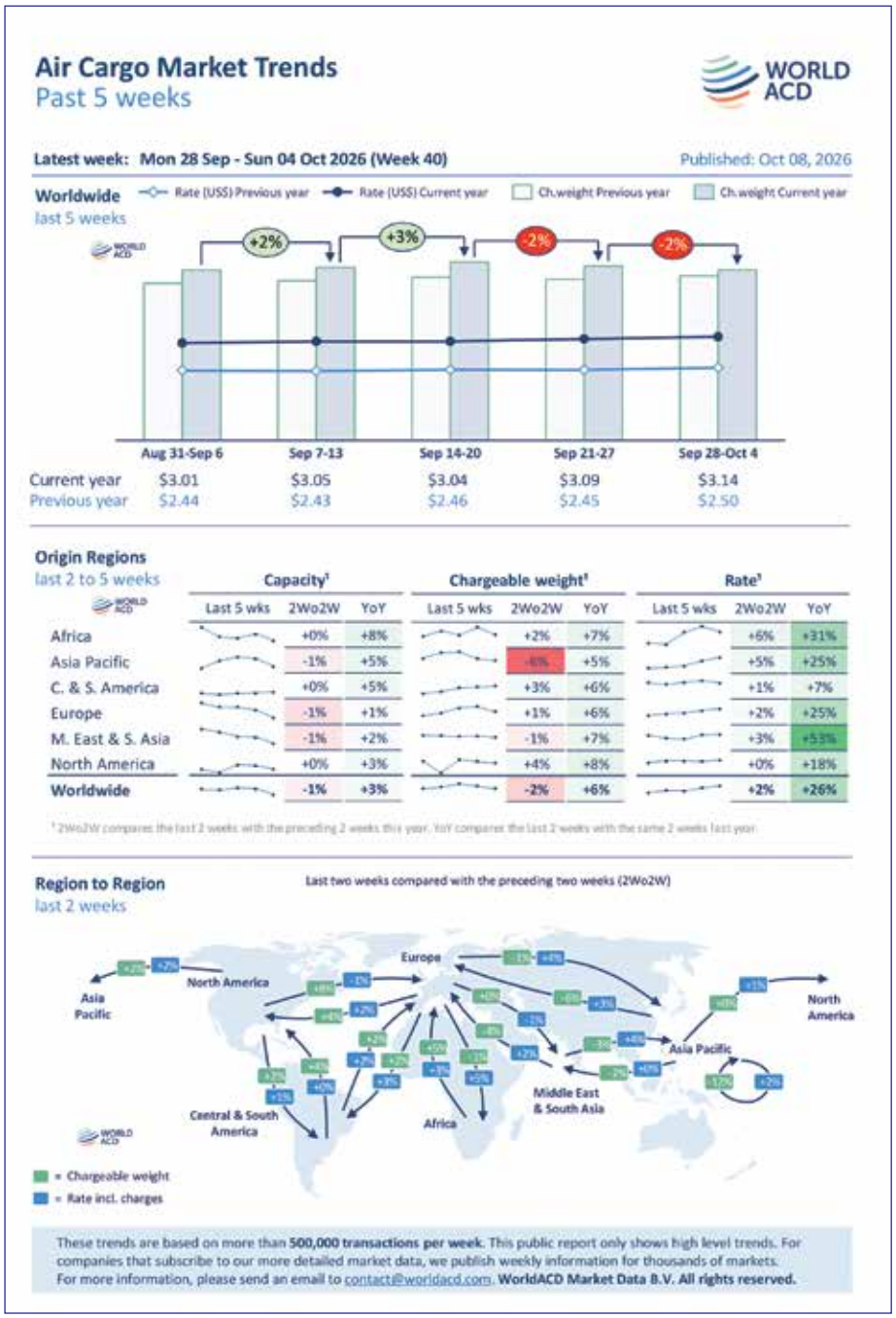
Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Chief Executive Officer of U&I Logistics Corporation, states: "SuperLink China Direct is an innovative solution that combines efficiency and costeffectiveness. We are delighted with our collaboration with Hacis, which opens a brandnew logistics route for Vietnamese enterprises beyond traditional sea and air transport, enabling cargo to move by land through Chinese Mainland and Hong Kong and further connecting to international markets. It not only enhances the flexibility and reliability of crossborder transportation but also provides businesses with diversified options. We believe this initiative will help strengthen trade between Vietnam, Chinese Mainland and Hong Kong, creating mutual benefits for all parties."

Under the Single E-lock Scheme, a successful trial of the extended Hacis SuperLink China Direct service has already been completed, delivering Hong Kong's first pilot shipment under a seamless logistics solution connecting Vietnam, Chinese Mainland and Hong Kong.

Through SuperLink China Direct service, the import shipment was transported from Vietnam by truck to Wuzhou, before being carried to Hong Kong via Hacis' customsbonded road feeder service.

Global Air Cargo Tonnages Rise 9% in September as Asia and North America Lead Growth

WorldACD data points to a resilient market, with higher volumes and elevated freight rates despite weaker China-Europe e-commerce flows and continued disruption to Middle East capacity.



Global air cargo demand strengthened in September, with worldwide tonnages rising 3% from August and increasing 9% year on year, according to WorldACD Market Data. Growth across the major origin regions points to a market that has maintained momentum despite shifting trade patterns, geopolitical uncertainty and changes in e-commerce flows.

Asia Pacific and North America were the leading contributors to the annual increase, each recording 10% year-on-year growth in September. Volumes from the Middle East and South Asia rose 9%, while Europe and Africa each recorded an 8% increase. Central and South America posted more moderate growth of 5%.

The September performance followed a 4% year-on-year increase in the same month last year, extending the market's growth trend. Demand from high-technology industries has been an important source of support, while air freight continues to play a significant role in moving high-value and time-sensitive products across international supply chains.

The overall strength, however, masks substantial differences between trade lanes. While China-to-US volumes continued to expand, shipments from China and Hong Kong to Europe remained under pressure following changes to European Union rules governing low-value imports.

Freight rates remain well above last year

Air freight pricing strengthened modestly in September after declining

in June and July and stabilising in August. WorldACD reported that average worldwide full-market rates increased 1% month on month, with rates rising 4% from Africa, 2% from Asia Pacific and 2% from Europe. Rates from the Middle East and South Asia were broadly unchanged, while North American rates fell 3%.

Compared with September 2025, average full-market rates were 25% higher. The increase reflects a market in which capacity constraints, changing trade flows and higher fuel costs continue to influence pricing.

The Middle East and South Asia recorded the largest year-on-year percentage increase, at 52%. Rates from Africa were up 27%, Europe 24% and Asia Pacific 23%. North American rates increased 18%, while Central and South America recorded a more modest rise of 8%.

These figures show that higher cargo volumes have been accompanied by elevated transport costs. The impact varies by region, with disruption affecting some markets more severely than others. For shippers, this makes route selection, shipment timing and capacity planning increasingly important.

Capacity grows, but Middle East disruption persists

Global air cargo capacity remained broadly stable through September, despite fluctuations linked to holiday periods and renewed volatility in the Middle East.

By week 40, covering 28 September to 4 October, worldwide capacity was approximately 4% higher than a year earlier. Freighter capacity increased 7%, while passenger aircraft bellyhold capacity grew 2%.

Compared with late February, before the escalation of the US-Iran conflict referenced in the report, global capacity was around 2% higher. The global picture nevertheless conceals a more difficult situation across Middle Eastern routes. Capacity to and from the Middle East and South Asia was about 10% below its late-February level, while capacity to and from the Gulf region was down approximately 17%. South Asian capacity was close to its previous level, at around 1% lower.

The figures underline how regional disruption can continue to affect global air freight even when aggregate capacity is increasing. Reduced capacity on key routes can limit routing choices and place upward pressure on rates, particularly where alternative services cannot fully absorb displaced cargo.

Third-quarter volumes increase as rates ease

WorldACD's quarterly figures show that global air cargo tonnages rose 3% in the third quarter compared with the second quarter and were 6% higher than in the third quarter of 2025. All major origin regions contributed to the year-on-year increase.

Average worldwide full-market rates, meanwhile, declined 7% from the unusually high levels recorded in the second quarter, when the effects of the US-Iran conflict caused severe market disruption. Despite that quarterly easing, rates remained 24% higher than a year earlier.

For the first nine months of 2026, global tonnages increased 5% year on year, while average full-market rates were up 22%.

The combination of rising volumes and lower rates compared with the previous quarter suggests that some of the exceptional pricing pressure seen earlier in the year has eased. However, the substantial annual increase in rates indicates that the market has not returned to the pricing levels of a year ago.

China-Europe trade shows signs of stabilisation

One of the clearest changes in the market has been the decline in air cargo moving from China and Hong Kong to Europe. WorldACD attributes much of the weakness to the removal, from 1 July, of EU de minimis exemptions for lower-value imports, which has particularly affected e-commerce shipments originating in Hong Kong and southern China.

Combined tonnages from mainland China and Hong Kong to Europe fell 10% year on year in September. That was a smaller decline than the 14% drop in July and the 15% fall in August, suggesting the market may be beginning to stabilise.

The difference between the two origins was pronounced. Hong Kong-to-Europe tonnages were down 24% year on year in September, while mainland China-to-Europe volumes fell only 2%. Mainland China shipments had recovered close to their June levels, according to WorldACD.

The US market has followed a different path. China-to-US tonnages increased 17% year on year in September, reinforcing the contrast between the two major trade lanes.

Pricing also reflected the divergence. Average full-market rates from China to Europe fell from US$5.22 per kilogram in June to US$4.26 in August, before recovering to US$4.53 in September. The September rate was 9% higher than a year earlier, compared with a 30% year-on-year increase in June.

Spot rates from China to the US averaged US$6.05 per kilogram in September, up 30% year on year.

A resilient market entering the peak season

The latest figures point to a global air cargo market that continues to expand, but with growth and pricing increasingly dependent on individual trade lanes. Strong demand from Asia and North America is offsetting weakness in some China-Europe flows, while regional capacity constraints and higher operating costs continue to shape freight rates.

For airlines, forwarders and shippers, the approach of the fourth-quarter peak makes capacity planning and market-specific forecasting especially important. The overall growth in September provides a positive backdrop, but the contrasting performance of China-Europe and China-US traffic shows why global averages alone do not tell the full story.

CMA CGM Completes US$1.4 Billion FedEx Supply Chain Acquisition



The deal nearly triples CEVA Logistics' North American contract logistics footprint and establishes a broader commercial partnership with FedEx covering ocean freight and planned air cargo cooperation.

CMA CGM Group has completed its US$1.4 billion acquisition of FedEx Supply Chain, significantly expanding its contract logistics operations in North America and strengthening its strategy to provide integrated supply chain services across ocean, air, land and warehousing.

The transaction, which closed on 1 October 2026, brings FedEx Supply Chain's assets and nearly 10,000 employees into CEVA Logistics, the logistics arm of the French transport group. The acquisition marks a major step in CMA CGM's efforts to build a broader logistics platform, combining transportation capacity with warehousing, distribution and value-added services.

With the integration of the acquired business, CEVA Logistics' North American contract logistics footprint has nearly tripled. The combined operation adds approximately 34 million square feet of warehouse space and operates around 150 warehouses, expanding CEVA's presence across the region to more than 240 locations and a workforce of approximately 20,000 people.

The expanded network gives CMA CGM a stronger position in the North American logistics market, where customers increasingly seek providers capable of managing several stages of the supply chain through a single relationship.

Building a more integrated logistics network

For CMA CGM, the acquisition extends beyond increasing warehouse capacity. It supports a long-term strategy to connect ocean shipping, port terminals, inland transport, air freight and contract logistics within a more integrated service offering.

The group has been investing in logistics capabilities to complement its established shipping operations. Through CEVA Logistics, it can provide services that begin with international transportation and continue through storage, inventory management, order fulfilment and distribution.

The addition of FedEx Supply Chain strengthens that proposition in the United States and Canada, adding infrastructure and operational expertise in sectors including healthcare, technology, consumer goods and retail.

These industries often require more than transportation alone. Healthcare shipments may involve specialised handling and strict delivery schedules, while technology and retail businesses depend on coordinated inventory management, distribution and fulfilment to respond to changing customer demand.

CMA CGM said the acquisition would also bring together complementary digital and operational capabilities, with opportunities to accelerate the deployment of automation and



robotics across the North American network. The pace and scope of those developments will depend on how the businesses integrate their systems, facilities and processes.

A broader commercial partnership with FedEx

The transaction also establishes a wider commercial relationship between CMA CGM and FedEx, extending cooperation beyond the transfer of FedEx Supply Chain.

Under a multi-year, non-exclusive agreement, CMA CGM will become a preferred ocean carrier for FedEx, providing ocean transportation and related carrier services. The arrangement is intended to strengthen the connection between FedEx's transportation network and CMA CGM's global shipping operations.

The companies also plan to collaborate on air cargo capacity on selected strategic routes, including the Asia-Europe corridor. The proposed cooperation is intended to improve aircraft utilisation, provide greater flexibility on long-haul routes and strengthen connectivity between their respective networks.

The air and ocean arrangements are expected to be implemented in phases. They therefore represent a longer-term opportunity for cooperation rather than an indication that all services or capacity arrangements have changed immediately following the acquisition.

For customers, the potential benefit lies in closer coordination between different modes of transport. Combining ocean freight, air cargo and logistics services can give shippers more options when balancing cost, transit time, inventory requirements and delivery commitments.

Reinforcing North American investment

The completed deal also underlines CMA CGM's long-term commitment to the United States, a strategic market for its logistics and transportation operations. The company has described the acquisition as part of its wider effort to strengthen supply chain resilience and provide customers with more comprehensive services.

Rodolphe Saadé, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of CMA CGM Group, said the completion marked an important stage in the development of the group and CEVA Logistics in North America. He said the enlarged contract logistics operation would strengthen the group's ability to offer integrated solutions across ocean, air, land and logistics.

For FedEx, the sale supports a different strategic priority: concentrating more closely on its core transportation network and the services where it sees the strongest opportunities for long-term value. The two companies will continue to work together through their commercial agreements, even as FedEx Supply Chain becomes part of CEVA Logistics.

The acquisition brings together two established businesses with complementary capabilities. CMA CGM contributes global shipping capacity and a broad logistics network, while the acquired operation adds warehouse infrastructure, fulfilment expertise and established customer relationships across North America.

The challenge now is execution. Integrating people, facilities, technology and operating processes will be central to turning the expanded footprint into a consistent customer offering.

With the acquisition complete and the commercial agreements set to develop in phases, CMA CGM has strengthened its position in one of the world's most important logistics markets. The move advances its ambition to offer customers a more connected supply chain, with transportation and logistics services linked across multiple stages of the journey.



AI-Powered Robots Begin Handling Zalando Returns in Germany and Poland

CEVA Logistics has deployed Sereact's dual-arm robotic systems at two European facilities, marking the first operational step in a partnership aimed at expanding automated fashion returns processing across the region.

The growing volume of online fashion sales has created a complex challenge for logistics operators: managing the steady flow of returned goods. Now, Sereact, Zalando and CEVA Logistics are turning to artificial intelligence and robotics to make that process more efficient, with automated returns handling now operating at facilities in Germany and Poland.

The systems have entered live operations at CEVA Logistics sites in Greven, Germany, and Świebodzin, Poland, where they process returned fashion items for Zalando, the European online fashion and lifestyle retailer. The deployment is the first operational milestone in a wider collaboration intended to expand AI-driven returns automation across Europe.

At the centre of the project is Cortex, Sereact's Physical AI platform, which enables dual-arm robotic systems to grasp, identify and sort

returned items. Unlike conventional automation that depends on predefined instructions or training for specific products, the technology is designed to handle items it has not encountered before, without requiring individual training for every article or fixed stock-keeping unit (SKU) profiles.

The capability addresses one of the more difficult tasks in e-commerce logistics. Unlike new products arriving in standard packaging, returned garments can be crumpled, loosely packed or presented in different conditions. Their appearance and position can vary considerably, making consistent handling difficult for traditional robotic systems.

For logistics operators managing high return volumes, the ability to recognise and handle a wider variety of items could reduce reliance on repetitive manual sorting and help create a more adaptable warehouse operation.

Tackling the complexity of fashion returns

Returns handling presents a combination of operational pressures. Volumes can fluctuate sharply with seasons and promotions, while each returned item may require inspection, identification and sorting before it can move to its next destination.

The time and labour involved can be significant, particularly when products arrive in inconsistent condition. Delays also matter: fashion items can lose commercial value as they spend longer moving through the returns process.

Sereact's Cortex platform is designed to respond to this variability by identifying and grasping objects dynamically rather than relying exclusively on pre-programmed movements for known products. The dual-arm configuration supports the physical handling process, while the AI platform guides the system's response to the items presented to it.

The companies have not disclosed specific throughput, accuracy or cost-saving figures for the new installations. The significance of the launch is therefore the move into live operations and the demonstration of the technology in a working fulfilment environment, rather than a quantified claim about productivity gains.

Robotics as a service

The installations are being delivered under a Robotics-as-a-Service (RaaS) model. Instead of relying solely on a conventional equipment purchase, the model provides robotic capabilities as a service, supporting deployment and use within the customer's operation.

For CEVA Logistics, the objective is to take on repetitive handling tasks while maintaining the human oversight needed to manage exceptions and protect quality. Warehouse employees can focus more on supervising stations, resolving unusual cases and conducting quality checks, rather than carrying out every routine handling step themselves.

The companies say the approach is intended to reduce physical strain on employees and create opportunities for teams to move towards roles requiring greater judgement and operational oversight. The deployment is presented as a model in which automation and human expertise work alongside each other.

Chris Walton, Senior Vice President of Contract Logistics at CEVA Logistics, has highlighted the challenges of returns operations, including unpredictable volumes, manual quality checks, seasonality and high processing costs. He said the robotic systems are intended to classify items faster, reduce manual handling points and provide more consistent processing at scale.

For warehouse operators, the wider question is how reliably these systems can perform across changing product mixes and demand levels. Successful implementation will depend not only on robotic capability, but also on integration with existing warehouse processes, exception handling and quality controls.

A partnership with wider European ambitions

The launch builds on a strategic relationship between the three companies. In July 2026, Zalando joined Sereact's Series B funding round as a strategic investor, strengthening the commercial relationship as the partners work to advance intelligent automation across their shared European logistics operations.

Masood Choudhry, Senior Vice President of Logistics at Zalando, said the collaboration reflects a belief that technology and human potential should progress together, with the aim of addressing difficult fulfilment challenges in fashion and lifestyle e-commerce.

Sereact, founded in Stuttgart, Germany, develops AI software that enables robots to handle objects they have not previously encountered. Its technology is designed for environments where products, packaging and handling conditions can change from one task to the next.

For CEVA Logistics, the deployment offers an opportunity to evaluate how AI-powered robotics can support the demands of a large-scale fashion returns operation. For Zalando, it forms part of a broader effort to improve the handling of goods moving back through its fulfilment network.

The two sites represent an initial step rather than a completed Europe-wide rollout. The companies intend to use the collaboration as a foundation for scaling automated returns processing, although they have not announced a detailed timetable or named additional locations.

As e-commerce supply chains face growing pressure to handle returns quickly and consistently, the project illustrates how physical AI is moving beyond controlled demonstrations and into day-to-day logistics operations. Its longer-term value will depend on measurable performance, operational reliability and the ability to extend the approach to a wider range of products and facilities.

Cathay Cargo becomes launch customer for **Unilode's Fire Containment Cover Leasing Solution**

Unilode Aviation Solutions is proud to announce Cathay Cargo as the launch customer for its new Fire Containment Cover Leasing Solution, marking a significant milestone in the evolution of cargo safety and asset management.



The partnership brings together Cathay Cargo's commitment to operational excellence with Unilode's global expertise in aviation asset management, providing a fully managed leasing solution that gives airlines flexible access to certified Fire Containment Covers whenever and wherever they are needed.

As the world's leading provider of outsourced Unit Load Device (ULD) management, Unilode is extending its proven asset management capabilities to Fire Containment Covers, offering airlines a smarter, more efficient alternative to ownership. This solution brings global availability, certification, maintenance, repair, and lifecycle management together into one end-to-end service, reducing operational complexity and ensuring the highest standards of safety and compliance.

Tim Wong, General Manager Cargo Service Delivery at Cathay Cargo, said:

"Safety is at the heart of everything we do at Cathay Cargo, and we are continually looking for innovative solutions that strengthen our operations while delivering the highest levels of service to our customers. Unilode's Fire Containment Cover Leasing Solution provides flexible access to certified equipment, backed by comprehensive global support and lifecycle management.

We are pleased to be the launch customer for this initiative and look forward to continuing our long-standing partnership with Unilode as we work together to support safe, reliable and efficient cargo transport worldwide.»

Janis Balkens, Chief Operations Officer at Unilode Aviation Solutions, said:

"At Unilode, we are committed to delivering smarter asset management solutions that help our customers operate more safely, efficiently and sustainably. We are delighted to welcome Cathay Cargo as the launch customer for our Fire Containment Cover Leasing Solution.

Building on our extensive global repair and asset management network, this solution gives airlines immediate access to certified Fire Containment Covers without the cost and complexity of ownership. We are proud to support Cathay Cargo with a solution that enhances operational resilience while maintaining the highest standards of cargo safety."

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