

## APERTURE & FOCUS

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### GLOBAL APERTURE

Global airfreight tonnage [declined by 2%](#) in the week ending August 10<sup>th</sup>, according to new data from air cargo analyst WorldACD, with reductions out of North America, Europe, and the Middle East & South Asia (MESA), while Asia Pacific remained flat. Air cargo flows are beginning to realign across major trade lanes, with China-Europe volumes falling for the fourth straight week. Analysts point to shifting tariff structures and trade policy changes as drivers, prompting carriers and shippers to adjust networks in response to evolving demand patterns.

Air cargo volumes between Asia Pacific and the US, however, [have shown recent growth](#)—particularly from China—amid signs of rebalancing due to new US tariff arrangements, while exports to Europe have declined for four consecutive weeks. This shift suggests a renewed focus on the US market, supported by rising demand and changing trade flows.

## REGIONAL FOCUS - AMERICAS

**United States:** Hurricane Erin is [tracking northeastward off the U.S. East Coast](#) after previously reaching Category 4 strength with sustained winds of 130 mph, creating hazardous conditions for shipping lanes and East Coast ports. As of Thursday, Erin has weakened to a large Category 2 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 100 mph, but it continues to generate dangerous marine conditions across a broad area. The U.S. Coast Guard has issued warnings at select East Coast locations, restricting vessel movements and causing delays for maritime logistics. Hazardous seas and strong rip currents are still impacting coastal regions from the Carolinas to New England, as well as shipping routes between the East Coast and Bermuda.

Effective August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, de minimis duty-free treatment (for items valued \$800 or less) under 19 U.S.C. §1321(a)(2)(C) will no longer apply to shipments entering the U.S. that are not covered under Title 50 of the U.S. Code. This change, issued under [Executive Order 14324](#), impacts shipments arriving through all entry modes, including international mail. Importers should be prepared for new declaration requirements and reporting methodologies as outlined by CBP.

For more information on this and other compliance updates, refer to [our latest Customer Advisory](#) brought to you by KWE-USA Corporate Compliance.

**Canada:** Air Canada has resumed passenger operations on following a four-day strike by flight attendants from August 16<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, but Air Canada Cargo [continues to run a reduced freighter schedule](#). The airline reports it may take 7–10 days to return to normal operations, with temporary cancellations, restrictions on specialty commodities, and a modified freighter program (including temporary service to Europe) in place to protect capacity.

## REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

**Australia:** Hundreds of ground workers at Perth International Airport in Western Australia [will strike](#) from 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, to 10:00 a.m. on Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, causing major disruptions for international flights including air freight. The strike is expected to affect routes to Singapore, the UAE, South Africa, Vietnam, and New Zealand.

**Thailand:** Authorities in Thailand have [ramped up inspections, spot checks, and documentation reviews](#) to prevent Chinese goods from being transshipped through the country and avoiding steep U.S. tariffs, responding to intense pressure from the U.S. to close tariff loopholes. Customs checks, X-ray scans, and stricter origin certification are increasing delays with heightened pressure on Thai exporters amid ongoing U.S.-China trade tensions.

**Sri Lanka:** The Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) has outlined plans [to expand Colombo Port's container capacity](#) to 25 million TEUs by 2030 through projects including the West Container Terminal, East Container Terminal, and North Port. Additional initiatives include industrial development at Trincomalee, cruise and harbor upgrades, and investment in hybrid equipment and digital systems, reinforcing Sri Lanka's role as a regional maritime hub.

## REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

Major container gateways in North Europe are facing [persistent congestion](#) and high utilization, creating delays in vessel turnarounds and reducing schedule reliability. On-time performance for Asia–Europe services fell to 28% in July, down from a 2025 high of 45%. Carriers and analysts warn that port bottlenecks could continue for several years as demand outpaces available capacity.

**Germany:** Between August 14<sup>th</sup> and August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the Port of Hamburg reported [strong growth](#) in container throughput, handling 4.2 million TEUs in the first half of the year, a 9.3% increase year-on-year. This growth was driven by increased trade with Asia, particularly China and Malaysia, and the addition of new liner services connecting Hamburg to the United States and India.



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