

APERTURE & FOCUS

WEEK 6 | 7 FEB 2024



GLOBAL APERTURE

The Panama Canal Authority [plans to maintain its vessel transit limit at 24 per day until April](#), pending a dry season assessment, with hopes to increase to 36 per day if rainfall permits. While last year's drought and increased demand due to Red Sea security issues have impacted transit patterns, May's rainy season is expected to restore water levels to normal, according to the Panama Canal Authority.

REGIONAL FOCUS - AMERICAS

United States: California [experienced heavy rainfall and hurricane-force winds between February 4th and 7th](#), causing power outages for 900,000 residents and prompting evacuation orders. The state declared a state of emergency in eight counties, including Los Angeles and Long Beach, where [flights were canceled or delayed](#) and [roads were closed along major trucking routes](#). Weather conditions are expected to improve throughout the remainder of the week.

Mexico: Despite the federal government's claim of having reached an agreement with unions,

truckers across Mexico [initiated a national strike on February 5th](#) to protest against the insecurity on highways. The strike involved an estimated 150,000 drivers and highlights ongoing issues with highway robberies, challenging the government's efforts to ensure safety and causing significant economic losses.

REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

Australia: After a three-day negotiation that ended on February 2nd, DP World and the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) [have ended four months of strikes](#) with new a four-year agreement. While work has continued at Australian ports, delays are expected to continue until at least March while the backlog is cleared.

REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

Rail demand from China to Europe [has surged amid disruptions in the red sea](#) as travel time for journeys via ocean liners increases to nearly 40 days in many cases— significantly longer than the 14-25 days offered by rail. The fast-approaching Lunar New Year holiday is expected to further stimulate this demand.

Germany: Lufthansa Cargo anticipates [significant disruptions to its freighter operations](#) due to a strike by ground staff called by the labor union ver.di, affecting all German locations including major hubs in Frankfurt and Munich. The strike, demanding a 12.5% wage increase for workers, will impact a considerable number of passenger and freighter flights, with the carrier aiming to stabilize operations post-strike.
