

APERTURE & FOCUS

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GLOBAL APERTURE

Despite the deployment of numerous new container ships this year, the number of available vessels [remains at a record low](#) as carriers struggle to address schedule delays and manage essential maintenance. According to a recent survey, only 67 vessels were recorded as idle in August— just 0.6% of the global fleet, most of which are smaller ships under 2000 TEU. However, more capacity is on the horizon with around 1 million TEU expected to be delivered by the end of 2024 and an additional 2 million TEU by 2025.

Air cargo [demand grew 13%](#) year over year in July despite a global IT outage that caused significant flight delays and cancellations. The sector quickly recovered from the disruption, with high demand expected to continue through September, driven by e-commerce.

The digitization of dangerous goods as air cargo through online booking platforms [faces challenges](#) due to outdated systems and the complexity of compliance checks. However, advancements in technology and safety measures are gradually improving the reliability and security of transporting hazardous materials.

REGIONAL FOCUS – AMERICAS

United States: Dallas Fort Worth (DFW) International Airport [launched the first U.S. air cargo centralized examination station \(CES\)](#) on August 15th with direct access to the airport's Air Operations Area, streamlining cargo inspections by eliminating additional transport needs. This facility enhances the efficiency of processing international e-commerce shipments, using non-intrusive inspection technology to expedite clearance and ensure national security.

The Port of Long Beach and the neighboring Port of Los Angeles [reported their busiest July ever](#), driven by strong import growth and efficient cargo movement ahead of peak shipping season. Additionally, the Port of Long Beach [received federal funding](#) for a new rail facility, which aims to expedite cargo movement across the nation, reduce congestion, and improve air quality by shifting more freight from trucks to trains.

Canada: As of 00:01 ET on August 22, CN [has locked out](#) TCRC-represented employees. This lockout has resulted in a complete halt of train movements within Canada and between Canada and the United States. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority has [implemented proactive measures](#) to manage vessel arrivals and maintain cargo flow. These measures include adjusting ship arrival times to prevent congestion and managing anchorage assignments to ensure the safe movement of vessels. With two-thirds of the port's cargo reliant on rail, disruptions could severely affect the movement of containers.

Mexico: Construction [has begun to](#) build a second bridge to expand the Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge, which is a critical gateway for U.S. imports of Mexican produce. The [expansion project](#) has been ongoing since 2018, adding two more cargo truck lanes, additional inspection booths, and infrastructure to improve traffic flow and trade efficiency between the U.S. and Mexico.

REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

Bangladesh: The cargo backlog at Chittagong Port in Bangladesh is [easing as shipping lines deploy additional vessels](#) to address congestion. The situation has improved with increased container movements and new intra-Asia services planned, despite ongoing political instability.

India: A planned three-day strike by container transporters at Nhava Sheva Port [has been postponed](#) for two weeks following intervention from port authorities. The delay allows for the implementation of a new standard operating procedure aimed at improving payment processes and addressing operational delays.

REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

South Africa: A containership [lost approximately 99 containers](#) off the east coast of South Africa due to severe weather on August 19th, following a [similar incident](#) with another vessel last month. The South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) has issued a navigational warning and requested reports of any lost containers that may still be floating at sea.

Germany: The Port of Hamburg [processed 3.8 million containers](#) in the first half of 2024, maintaining stable container handling despite challenges in the Red Sea and moderate economic performance in Germany. Bulk cargo throughput declined due to a significant drop in coal handling, reflecting the ongoing energy transition and shift towards alternative energy sources.
