

APERTURE & FOCUS

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GLOBAL APERTURE

The air cargo sector is expected to [grow](#) in 2025, driven by increased demand for semiconductor shipments, particularly AI-related products, and stable global GDP growth, with e-commerce continuing to fuel demand. However, the sector faces potential challenges from increased regulatory scrutiny of major [e-commerce platforms](#) which could disrupt trade flows and affect air freight demand. Geopolitical tensions and potential tariff implementations, especially between China and the U.S., could further impact the industry's growth trajectory. Airlines are benefiting from a prolonged December peak, driven by strong demand for consumer electronics and non-ecommerce volumes, extending into late January ahead [of Chinese New Year](#).

In response to the Panama Canal Authority's new booking system set to take effect on January 1st, 2025, aimed at optimizing transit operations, major carriers such as MSC and CMA CGM [have announced a surcharge](#) for all cargo types on services connecting Asia to the U.S. East and Gulf Coasts. These surcharges are intended to offset increased costs associated with the canal's revised tariff structure and reservation fees.

REGIONAL FOCUS - AMERICAS

United States: The Port of Long Beach is on track to set [a new annual cargo record](#) in 2024, projecting 9.6 million TEUs by year's end, surpassing the previous record of 9.3 million TEUs set in 2021. This achievement is driven by six consecutive months of record-breaking volumes, with November alone seeing a 20.9% increase over the same period last year.

US container gateways and the inland intermodal chain have managed surging [traffic](#) without disruption, with container volumes in 2024 remaining strong due to factors like tariff concerns and potential strikes. Analysts noted that while rail speeds have slightly slowed, the system has remained resilient, and growth is expected to shift more toward east and Gulf coast ports as trade patterns evolve. President-elect Donald Trump expressed strong [support](#) for International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) workers by reposting a message from ILA Executive Vice President Dennis Daggett on his Truth Social page, boosting the ILA's efforts to secure a new Master Contract before the January 15th, 2025 deadline.

REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

Asia Pacific leads the global parcel delivery [market](#), with a forecasted market size of \$303bn by 2028, driven by robust ecommerce expansion and advancements in delivery technology. This sustained growth highlights the region's market size increasing from \$229bn in 2024 to \$303bn in 2028, while the global market is projected to reach over \$748bn by 2028, fueled by rising ecommerce demand and logistical innovations, with North America and Europe growing at slower rates.

India: A new five-year labor agreement has been approved, easing fears of a [strike](#) at Indian government ports. The Bipartite Wage Negotiation Committee Settlement, which updates wage and pension rules for dockworkers, was welcomed by unions and industry stakeholders, preventing potential disruptions at major gateways.

REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

Netherlands: The Dutch government has confirmed its decision to [limit](#) flights at Schiphol Airport to 478,000 aircraft movements next year, a 4.4% reduction from the current 500,000 limit, in efforts to reduce noise. Air cargo groups have warned that the reduction in flight numbers will disproportionately affect freighter operators, as they often rely on unused slots that are put back into a pool, and with fewer slots available, the number of unused flights is likely to decrease.

France: The Port of Lyon is set for transformation with a 30-year concession to [operate](#) two container terminals, including a \$42 million investment to connect Lyon to Fos-sur-Mer and double freight volumes on the Rhône by 2032.
