

APERTURE & FOCUS

WEEK 22 | 30 MAY 2024



GLOBAL APERTURE

Air cargo [volumes rose by 11.1% in April 2024](#) compared to the same month in 2023, marking the fifth consecutive month of double-digit growth despite a 6.5% decline from March. Robust demand is attributed to booming e-commerce and capacity constraints in maritime shipping, with Asia-Pacific and European airlines showing the highest growth rates.

The container shipping industry has surpassed a significant milestone with the "MegaMax" class vessels, [reaching a total cargo capacity of over 4 million](#) Twenty-foot Equivalent Units last month. As carriers seek economies of scale amidst emerging emissions regulations, the rise of "MegaMax" class vessels signifies a trend towards larger capacity ships.

REGIONAL FOCUS – AMERICAS

United States: The US Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) has [implemented new rules on detention and demurrage \(D&D\)](#), effective May 28th, establishing stricter billing practices and dispute resolution timelines. Under these rules, D&D invoices can only be issued to the

consignee, the party contracting for ocean transportation, or the person responsible for the cargo.

Texas ports are [bracing for an above-average hurricane season](#) in 2024, with predictions of up to 25 named storms and 8 to 12 hurricanes. The predicted severe weather is attributed to La Niña conditions and exceptionally warm sea surface temperatures. The ports, including Houston, Corpus Christi, and Beaumont, have developed comprehensive preparedness plans.

John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport will [receive a new Centralized Examination Station \(CES\)](#) by Worldwide Flight Services (WFS), set to begin phased opening in early 2025. This facility will be the first on-airport CES at JFK, facilitating comprehensive U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspections. The CES will offer over 100,000 square feet (about the area of a Manhattan city block) of space and enable efficient transportation of shipments from airline facilities.

Canada: The Customs and Immigration Union (CIU), along with members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), representing approximately 9,000 Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) workers, [has voted overwhelmingly in favor of strike action](#). This decision may lead to disruptions at airports, land crossings, and ports this summer.

REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

Korea: Kintetsu World Express (Korea) will [open a new warehouse in Pyeongtaek](#) in October 2024 to support the growing semiconductor industry. The facility will include temperature-controlled storage to handle diverse cargo, including semiconductor equipment, enhancing KWE's service offerings in this strategic sector.

Singapore: Severe congestion at one of the world's busiest container ports, Singapore, has reached critical levels, with some [ships waiting up to seven days to berth](#). The congestion is primarily due to diversions from the Red Sea crisis and carriers skipping Malaysia's Port Klang. As a result, some carriers are omitting Singapore calls, causing downstream ports to handle additional volumes with spillover congestion and schedule disruptions.

South Asia: On May 26th, Cyclone Remal significantly [disrupted port operations in Bangladesh and India](#), with Chittagong Port suspending services for two and a half days and West Bengali ports for over 12 hours. Colombo Port, which handles cargo for both countries, also experienced delays due to adverse weather conditions.

Australia: Melbourne Airport, Australia's largest curfew-free airport, [handled 44,700 tons of cargo in the first quarter of 2024](#), representing 40.2% of the country's total airfreight export volume. This surge, driven by belly capacity in passenger planes, underscores the airport's critical role in supporting the country's economy, with fresh meat being the top export by volume and pharmaceuticals being the most valuable.

REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

Netherlands: Schiphol Airport is grappling with [flight capacity limitations but is actively advocating to preserve slots for cargo aircrafts](#). The airport is enhancing its cargo operations through upgraded tech platforms for better data handling, slot booking systems to reduce congestion, and increased security for high-value shipments.
