

APERTURE & FOCUS

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GLOBAL APERTURE

The air cargo market has seen [a strong start to 2025](#), marking 14 consecutive months of double-digit demand growth, with an 11% year-on-year increase reported in January. In addition, [a surge of new routes between Europe and Asia](#) have been announced as demand for capacity and enhanced connectivity continues to rise. Airlines are responding with additional services to key hubs, introducing new direct links aimed at improving transit times and streamlining supply chains. However, stakeholders remain cautious amid ongoing economic uncertainties and potential challenges in sustaining this momentum.

Major players in global shipping are optimizing their networks to meet evolving market demands. Steamship line Hapag-Lloyd has revamped its feeder network with [new schedules and port rotations](#), preparing for the launch of its Gemini service to improve connections between Southeast Asia and India. Similarly, the Ocean Alliance, a partnership of major shipping lines (including CMA CGM, COSCO Shipping, Evergreen Marine, and Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) that collaborates to optimize routes and share resources, has

introduced [three new services](#) and is focusing on the transpacific trade lane for 2025, aiming to optimize capacity and service reliability between Asia and North America.

REGIONAL FOCUS - AMERICAS

United States: On January 8th, US dockworkers and port employers [announced a tentative agreement for a new labor contract](#), easing fears of potential disruptions at major ports. This resolution comes after months of negotiations, offering relief to importers and exporters reliant on these critical gateways. However, an import surge [is expected to continue at major US ports](#). Industry analysts warn that the increased cargo volumes, driven by restocking and preparations ahead of Lunar New Year, may still strain port operations in the coming months.

The US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has proposed [changes to rules on low-value imports](#), aiming to tighten regulations under the de minimis framework—regulations that allow low-value imports to enter a country with simplified customs procedures and without duties or taxes. These updates, announced in January, would affect exemptions for certain goods, particularly those benefiting from trade agreements, and seek to address concerns about unfair advantages in cross-border e-commerce.

Mexico: MAS Cargo Airline and AeroUnion have become the latest airlines [to relocate their operations to Felipe Ángeles International Airport \(AIFA\)](#), joining ten other cargo carriers at the facility. This move is part of a broader initiative to consolidate cargo operations at AIFA (NLU), easing congestion at Mexico City International Airport. The relocation aims to enhance operational efficiency and support the growing demand for air freight services in the region.

REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

Air freight capacity constraints from Asia [are expected to persist through 2025](#), driven by ongoing supply chain disruptions and high demand for exports. Industry analysts warn that limited space and logistical bottlenecks could lead to longer lead times and increased operational challenges.

Bangladesh: A rail service crisis in Dhaka, caused by infrastructure and capacity constraints coupled with operational inefficiencies, has led to [a significant backlog of shipping containers](#). With the Ramadan and Eid holidays approaching, the delays could exacerbate congestion at the port, raising concerns among importers and exporters ahead of peak holiday demand.

REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

European Union: The Electronic Freight Transport Information (eFTI) Regulation, an EU-backed initiative, is developing [a unified freight data exchange system](#) to streamline logistics operations and enhance supply chain transparency. The regulation aims to establish a

standardized platform for sharing freight-related information among carriers, shippers, and authorities across Europe. This innovation is expected to improve efficiency, reduce administrative burdens, and support the EU's sustainability goals.

The European Commission has launched [an investigation into green claims made by airlines](#), scrutinizing their environmental commitments and sustainability practices. The inquiry aims to address concerns about potential greenwashing, ensuring that carriers' claims align with their actual environmental impact. This move reflects the EU's push for greater transparency and accountability in the aviation sector..
