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EXCELLENCE



ARABIAN
CARGO
AWARDS
2026

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of putting
things on ice



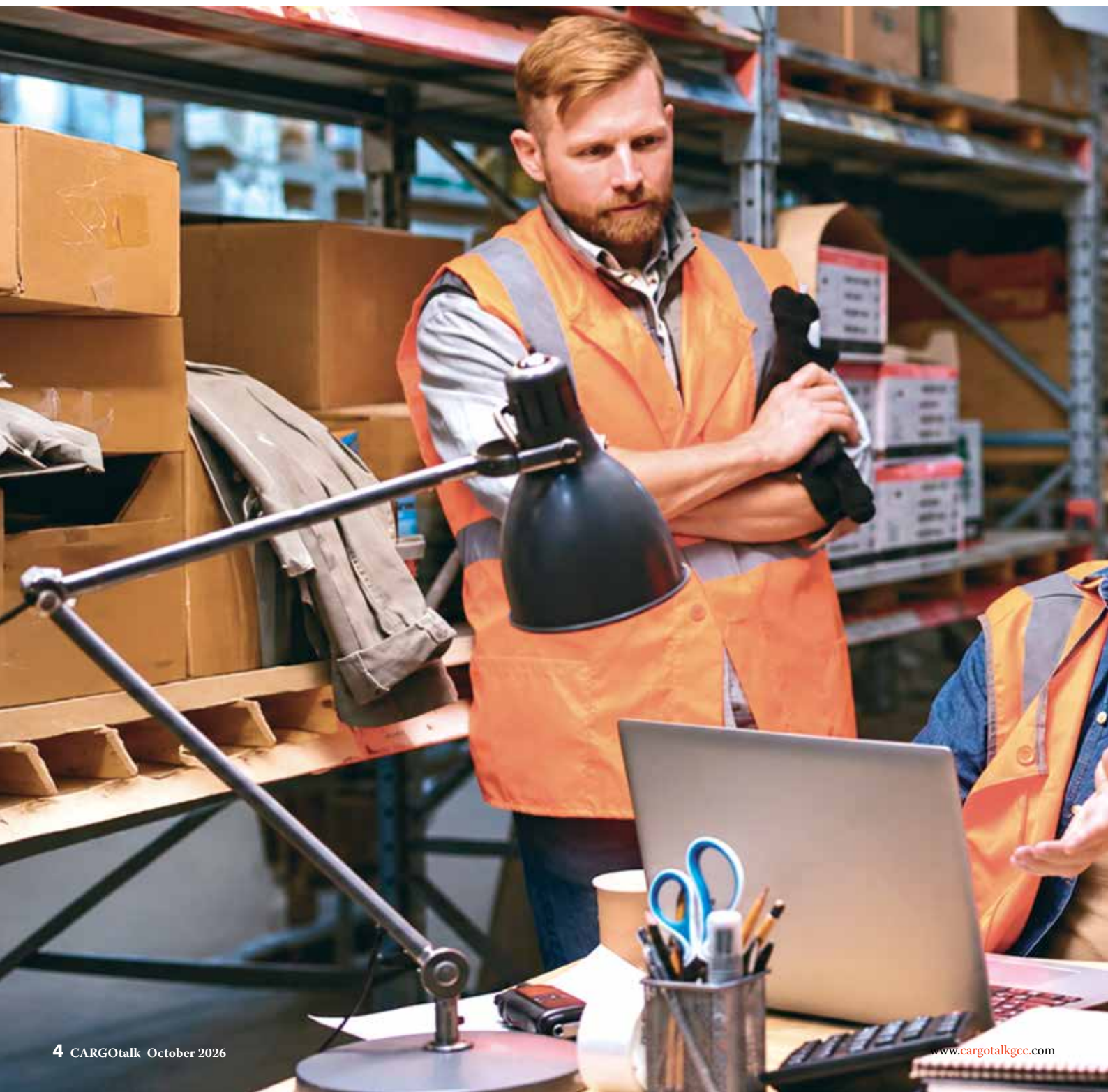
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Dubai
Customs' cargo
transactions up
53% in H1

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Air cargo workforce IN NEED OF A MAKEOVER

Logistics is changing faster than ever, and the skills needed to keep cargo moving are evolving with it. Knowing how to execute a shipment is no longer enough. The on-field teams need to understand the process — from demand, routing, and regulations to costs, technology, and risk. Teams also need the confidence to make the right decisions when plans suddenly change.





As the logistics becomes more connected, automated, and data-driven, the need for a skilled workforce has become increasingly important. With demand for greater speed, visibility, and reliability increasing, companies are working to upskill, train, and build an efficient workforce. Cargo movements are becoming more complex, making it important for employees to understand not only their roles but also how different parts of the shipment cycle work together.

Operational knowledge, trade compliance, digital skills, and problem-solving ability are becoming increasingly important. Companies are, therefore, focusing on continuous learning, practical experience, and career development to prepare their teams for the ever-changing demands of the logistics industry.

Industry professionals note that the focus is increasingly on building skills in stages, starting with the fundamentals and moving towards supervised execution, cross-functional exposure, and more complex responsibilities.

Cargo flow is becoming more complex, making it important for employees to understand their roles, and how parts of the shipment cycle work together

Mentoring and measurable milestones can help employees develop the judgement needed to manage costs, margins, routing, regulations, and risk.

Practical training is particularly important when dealing with specialised cargo. Certification, documented procedures, simulations, supervised handling, and regular assessments can help teams build competence before taking responsibility for dangerous goods, pharmaceuticals, or project cargo. Scenario-based exercises can also prepare employees to manage customs, security requirements, and unexpected disruptions.

Job rotation across sales, operations, documentation, air, ocean, road, and warehouse functions can create a wider understanding of the shipment cycle. Alongside this, teams need stronger digital and data literacy, including knowledge of booking tools, revenue management, warehouse systems, analytics, artificial intelligence, and interline processes. Continuous learning can also help build more adaptable teams.



Cargo needs people who understand the stakes

The priority is to develop commercial and operational judgement alongside trade compliance. Forwarding cannot rely solely on staff who execute cargo. Talent must understand the transaction: end users' requirements, routing, regulations, costs margin, and risk. Competency



Noha Chalhoub
Group Admin, HR Director
Compass Logistics Int'l

“Competency should be built in stages, fundamentals, execution, cross-functional exposure, and complex ownership.”

should be built in stages: fundamentals, execution, cross-functional exposure, and complex ownership, backed by measurable milestones before employees advance to multimodal responsibilities.

Specialised cargo demands special skills

Operational planning and specialised cargo handling require particular attention. Supply chains are becoming automated, data-driven, and interconnected, and there is demand for speed, visibility, and reliability. Staff need to understand cargo flow, technology, and system interfaces while developing the judgement to manage disruptions and exceptions. Firms should combine training with mentoring and responsibility, allowing staff to master fundamentals before gaining hands-on exposure. Specialised cargo requires training and procedures.



Martin Bremen
Managing Director
DIMOS FZCO

“Firms must combine training with mentoring and responsibility, allowing staff to master fundamentals before gaining exposure.”

Skills are the foundation of resilience

For cross-border operations, we conduct scenario-based training to demystify customs protocols and cargo security, turning drivers into logistics problem-solvers. The approach integrates real-time telematics with coaching to boost road safety and fuel efficiency. We are



Rizwan Kareem
Director, Air Freight Ops
ATS World

“We are committed to career progression, changing drivers into mentors, safety specialists, and operations leaders.”

committed to career progression, changing drivers into mentors, safety specialists, and operations leaders. By fostering learning, we ensure teams are prepared for the sophisticated trade corridors of tomorrow.

Training in compliance prevents borders delays

Training teams in real-time compliance prevents costly border delays, avoids penalties, and protects client supply chains. It makes regulatory mastery a competitive advantage in today's volatile market. Forwarders should combine job rotation across ocean, air, and land operations with real-world case studies, pairing junior staff with senior mentors on complex routes. Firms need certified external training, routine internal audits, and hands-on simulation modules so that teams master regulatory compliance before handling live cargo.



Abid Hamza
Director
Freight Hub Shipping LLC

“Forwarders should combine job rotation across ocean, air, and land operations with real-world case studies.”

Skilling helps people think beyond shipment

Job rotation exposes staff to sales, operations, and documentation, building an understanding of how each function affects the shipment cycle. Training between the teams helps them anticipate downstream challenges and communicate



Rohit Thakwani
Chief Executive Officer
Airglow Aviation

“Many teams are adapting to data-driven booking and revenue management tools, slowing down decision-making.”

across departments while growing into broader and more versatile roles over time. Two gaps stand out: digital literacy and interline linkage knowledge. Many teams are adapting to data-driven booking and revenue management tools, slowing down decision-making.





Cross-training builds a bigger cargo picture

Firms can use job rotation and cross-training by mapping out key warehouse functions, identifying transferable skills, and giving teams exposure to different tasks, from inbound and fulfilment to outbound. Regular training,



Roxi Corp
Head, HR, ME & Africa
DHL Supply Chain

“Training, shadowing, and supervised practice help build confidence while skills matrices show where capability is needed.”

shadowing, and supervised practice help build confidence, while skills matrices show where capability is needed across the team. Alongside expertise, staff should develop digital and data literacy skills to work with WMS, analytics tools, and AI solutions.

Trade complexity is raising the skills bar

Customs and trade compliance require upskilling. Tariff regime lists change monthly, and one misclassified HS code can trigger penalties. Behind it sits commercial capability. Forwarders can move a box, but far fewer can read a supply chain and advise on it. Programmes work best in tiers, each with competencies and supervisor sign-off. People progress from single-lane bookings to transshipment, multimodal, and cross-border moves as they qualify. These need formal certification — IMDG for dangerous goods, GDP for pharma — not in-house shadowing.



Toby Edwards
Director
Trade Tech

“People progress from single-lane bookings to transshipment, multimodal, and cross-border moves as they qualify.”



From air cargo movement to **connected logistics**

The industry is undergoing a change, shifting from transportation to agile logistics networks driven by evolving demands. To succeed, logistics players must focus on shifts across transport modes and high-growth sectors. The evolution is propelled by firms that require e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, and perishables, among others.

 CT Bureau

Freighter operators, airlines, airports, and freight forwarders are responding to the changing

demands in diverse ways. Dedicated freighters are helping link markets that may not have enough direct or regular capacity, while airport-led systems

are bringing together cargo operators, free zones, logistics parks, and customs. Freight forwarders are offering more flexible multi-modal solutions, combining

air, sea, road, and rail modes of transport based on cost, urgency, and destination. Technology is also becoming a key part of this shift. AI, real-time shipment



intelligence, tracking, APIs, and route optimisation are helping operators improve visibility, make better decisions, and build responsive supply chains.

For time-sensitive cargo, reliability remains central. Pharmaceuticals, perishables, electronics, aerospace components, and high-value industrial goods require speed, temperature control, and dependable connectivity. Freight capacity can provide more flexibility while better network planning can improve connectivity between Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

Infrastructure is developing around these needs. An integrated cargo landscape can connect free zones,

logistics parks, customs, handlers, and operators, helping cargo move faster and with greater visibility. New facilities are likely to support automated handling, cool chain solutions, and digital connectivity.

On the ground, trucking and forwarding companies are adopting different truck options, smarter route planning, warehousing, fulfilment, customs clearance, and last-mile services. Multimodal transport is becoming important with air supporting urgent shipments and sea, road, and rail helping regional distribution. AI and real-time data are also helping identify demand, match shipments with suitable partners, and improve route and fleet efficiency.



Cargo operators build more agile networks

E-comm, pharma, perishables, and other time-sensitive cargo have increased demand for reliable, flexible freighter capacity across the Middle East. Networks must offer higher frequency, faster connections, temperature-controlled handling, and schedule consistency. This is



Tayssir Awada
Chief Services Officer
SolitAir Holding

“Pharma, perishables, and other time-sensitive cargo have increased demand for reliable, flexible freighter capacity.”

pushing operators to build more agile regional networks linking production and consumption markets. Freighters fill a vital gap by linking markets that may not have direct or regular capacity.

Airport-led cargo fortifies supply chains

Airport-led cargo strengthens supply chain resilience and improves efficiency by integrating free zones, logistics parks, customs, and cargo operators, enabling faster movement, lower costs, and greater visibility. In Abu Dhabi, this demand is backed by Velora's coordinated capabilities. Growth in e-commerce, pharmaceuticals, perishables, and high-value cargo is driving demand for specialised, technology-enabled infrastructure. Velora's future cargo capabilities will support this through materials handling, cold-chain solutions, and digital connectivity.



Naresh Ranganathan
Vice President, Cargo
Velora

“Growth in e-commerce, pharma, perishables, and high-value cargo is driving demand for tech-enabled infrastructure”

Integration is cutting cargo bottlenecks

Truck firms are opting for flexibility by offering options for smaller and full truckload shipments, better links with other modes, smarter route planning, and distribution solutions. It is worth noting that each industry has separate demands, and this needs specialisation and



Fadi Azzi
Senior Global Director
Logistics, Aramex

“Integration improves a product's lifecycle, thereby reducing transit times, and creating more efficient end-to-end supply chains.”

customisation. Integration reduces bottlenecks and, in the process, relieves constraints. This improves the lifecycle of a product, thereby reducing transit times and creating more efficient end-to-end supply chains.

Visibility has been the goal for decades

Freighters deliver capacity, providing lift and the ability to carry cargo that narrowbody aircraft cannot accommodate. Shipment visibility has been an industry goal for decades. Powered by technology, airlines are moving beyond siloed, document-centric milestone tracking to sharing operational data with airports, handlers, and forwarders using APIs to create a shipment view and single source of truth. Adoption is fragmented, and one of the challenges is inclusion. It is vital that technology helps democratise data rather than create a barrier.



Liana Coyne
Director
Coyne Airways

“Airlines are moving beyond siloed, document-centric milestone tracking to sharing data with airports and forwarders.”

Multimodal is becoming the new cargo route

The region is moving from shifting cargo to moving it faster and across complex routes. A rise in manufacturing, and re-exports is creating frequent and time-sensitive shipments. At GOODS2LOAD, we see AI helping forwarders dis-



Jessica Panigari
Founder & CEO
GOODS2LOAD

“Manufacturing, e-commerce, and re-exports are creating frequent and time-sensitive cargo shipments”

cover demand, identify the right partners, and build solutions around air cargo. The future is not choosing between air, sea, road, or rail; it is knowing when to combine them. Forwarders are designing multimodal journeys around cost, urgency, and destination.





Pharma, high-value cargo relies on linkage

As supply chains diversify and prioritise resilience, e-commerce, perishables, and high-value cargo, operators must optimise freighter networks, capacity deployment, and partnerships to ensure reliable connectivity, agility, and uninterrupted



Fitsum Abadi
Managing Director, Cargo
Kenya Airways

“Time-sensitive and time-controlled products make end-to-end supply chain visibility essential to prevent product losses.”

cargo flow across the Middle East. Perishables, pharma, electronics, semiconductors, e-commerce, aerospace, and industrial spares rely on dependable linkage. These products are time-sensitive and temperature-controlled to make end-to-supply chain prevent losses.

Choose the right mode to balance costs

The growth of regional manufacturing, e-commerce, and re-export activity is pushing forwarders to offer integrated solutions. Beyond transportation, end users require warehousing, fulfilment, inventory management, customs clearance, and last-mile delivery. Freight forwarders are developing flexible, tech-driven supply chains that provide faster transit, better visibility, and regional distribution capabilities. Freight forwarders are using multimodal transport to balance costs, speed, and reliability across the region.



Razmal Assen
Executive Director
Scanwell Logistics LLC

“By selecting the best mode and route, forwarders can reduce transit times and improve supply chain resilience.”

Etihad Cargo adds second weekly freighter to Paris

Etihad Cargo has added a second freighter between Abu Dhabi and Charles de Gaulle Airport, increasing capacity between France and the UAE. The new service improves cargo connections moving between Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, thereby giving freight forwarders and shippers more options.

CT Bureau

The move to add a second weekly freighter comes as demand grows across several industries, including pharmaceuticals, perishables, equine transport, and cultural logistics.

Paris is an important point in Etihad Cargo's network for specialised cargo. Pharmaceutical shipments are handled through its PharmaLife service, while FreshForward supports perishable products. SkyStables is used for equine transport, and FlyCulture supports the movement of art and other cultural cargo for museums and institutions.



Stanislas Brun
Chief Cargo Officer
Etihad Airways

"France remains an important market for Etihad Cargo and the additional service reflects demand for greater capacity and flexibility," said Stanislas Brun, Chief Cargo Officer, Etihad Airways.

The frequency provides capacity on Abu Dhabi–France route and adds another link to Etihad's wider network

"By increasing our services to Paris, we are enhancing connectivity between Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, while strengthening Abu Dhabi's position as a leading global logistics and multimodal cargo hub," he added. This gives freight forwarders and shippers another routing

option between France and markets across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, while helping them manage various cargo requirements and delivery schedules.

Etihad Cargo has supported cargo movements between France and its Abu Dhabi hub for over two decades. In 2025, it ferried 26,000 tonnes of cargo to and from Paris.

The additional freighter forms part of Etihad Cargo's wider expansion of its European network and another link to Etihad's wider network, supporting trade flows between Europe and major markets further east and south. 



Two new African routes add to SolitAir network

Africa is becoming a vital market for trade and expansion. With demand for air cargo links growing across the continent, carriers are looking beyond established gateways. SolitAir Holding is among those expanding its African footprint, adding new routes and fortifying air cargo links between the Middle East and Africa.



SolitAir Holding is adding two new destinations in Africa — Port Harcourt, Nigeria, through Port Harcourt International Airport, and Hargeisa in Somaliland, through Egal International Airport. The new routes expand SolitAir's African network to 20 destinations across 16 countries, strengthening its role as a connector between the Middle East and some of Africa's growing but underserved markets.

"Nigeria and Somaliland are vital additions to our African network, giving us an opportunity to strengthen links between the Middle East and these markets. As we continue to expand, we are focused on identifying routes where there is demand for cargo services and where we can add value to existing trade flows," said Hamdi Osman, Founder and CEO of SolitAir.

With SolitAir having an established East African hub in Nairobi, the new routes mark its first direct presence in Nigeria and Somaliland, expanding its reach across Africa and strengthening its position along the continent's trade corridors. The expansion gives businesses in these markets another air cargo connection to the UAE and wider Gulf region.

The new locations strengthen SolitAir's access



Hamdi Osman
Founder and CEO
SolitAir

to key trade markets. Port Harcourt International Airport sits at the heart of Nigeria's oil and gas economy and is one of the country's busiest cargo gateways, supporting the movement of goods across the region.

Its location provides access to the industrial and commercial activity in southern Nigeria, where demand for the movement of equipment, spare parts, and

SolitAir operates seven Boeing 737-800BCFs, each with a capacity of 20 tonnes, from its hub at DWC

other time-sensitive goods supports air cargo activity.

Egal International Airport in Hargeisa serves a market where exports such as livestock and time-sensitive farm goods rely on reliable capacity. The route adds another link between Somaliland and the Middle East, backing cargo flow between the regions.

The two destinations form part of SolitAir's wider network expansion as it responds to demand

along emerging trade corridors. Currently, the carrier operates seven Boeing 737-800BCFs, each with a capacity of 20 tonnes, from its hub at Dubai World Central.

SolitAir is targeting a fleet of 20 aircraft by next year-end as it continues to expand its international cargo network. 🇦🇪

GLOBAL NETWORK

- ❖ Two new African destinations: Port Harcourt & Hargeisa
- ❖ 20 African destinations across 16 countries
- ❖ 20 aircraft targeted by 2027
- ❖ First direct entry: Nigeria & Somaliland
- ❖ Key corridors: Gulf-West Africa and Gulf-Horn of Africa



Aramex maps the road to electric fleets

Trade and logistics are essential to keeping goods moving and businesses running. As these activities impact the environment, we are shifting towards fleet electrification to reduce their environmental impact, says **Manosij Ganguli, Group Chief Sustainability Officer, Aramex.**

CT Bureau

How does Aramex determine which routes are ready for electrification?

At Aramex, we assess routes for electrification based on operational feasibility, infrastructure readiness, and total cost of ownership. Key considerations include daily mileage, route predictability, vehicle utilisation, payload requirements, and availability of reliable charging infrastructure. We consider access to suitable EV models and the vehicle replacement cycle, ensuring electrification aligns with natural fleet renewal.

Routes with predictable mileage, consistent utilisation, and suitable payload requirements can



Manosij Ganguli
Group Chief Sustainability Officer
Aramex

offer stronger opportunities for deployment of electric vehicles (EVs), especially where charging can be integrated effectively into operations. Our focus is therefore on deploying EVs where the vehicles can deliver environmental and operational benefits while delivering competitive operating costs over the vehicle lifecycle.

Investment in renewable electricity can strengthen the environmental case for electrification

What changes help logistics firms speed up fleet electrification in the UAE and KSA?

The expansion of reliable public and commercial charging networks will be fundamental, but for operators, access to depot-based charging is important. Making it quicker for logistics operators to install charging infrastructure and secure the electrical capacity needed to charge larger EV

fleets allows firms to scale EV fleets. Standardisation of charging solutions helps operators manage regional networks. Fleet electrification is part of our sustainability strategy and 2030 decarbonisation roadmap. Investment in renewable electricity can strengthen the environmental case for electrification. Speeding up the transition will require collaboration between governments, utilities, charging providers, vehicle manufacturers, and logistics firms to ensure infrastructure develops in parallel with commercial fleets' requirements.

Is Aramex using renewable energy such as solar to power EV charging?

We see fleet electrification and renewable energy as



complementary parts of our decarbonisation strategy. Aramex has invested in renewable energy, including solar installations, across markets such as the UAE, Jordan, Egypt, and Ireland while increasing the role of renewable electricity across our operations.

Our aim at Aramex is to increase renewable energy use across our facilities, which can, in turn, support the wider transition to electric mobility. We do not disclose a specific percentage of fleet charging powered directly by renewable sources, and providing one would be inaccurate. The direction, however, is clear: combining cleaner vehicles with cleaner electricity strengthens the overall emissions-reduction potential of fleet electrification.

What are the biggest challenges the company is facing in deploying EVs across the region?

The operating environment varies across the Middle East, so there is no particular approach to electrification. Charging availability and site electrical capacity differ between markets while access to suitable commercial EV models can constrain deployment. Longer-distance routes may



For logistics operators, predictability is vital because investment decisions involve vehicles

not yet be appropriate for full electrification, and the region's high temperatures require careful vehicle selection, testing, and operational planning.

This is why, at Aramex, we take a phased, evidence-based approach. Before introducing EVs into our UAE last-mile fleet, for example, Aramex conducted rigorous trials at different

times of day and year to account for weather conditions and ensure vehicles could support reliable delivery operations.

Is Aramex's delivery fleet electrified, or does it use a mix of EVs and conventional vehicles?

Currently, Aramex operates a mixed fleet. Our approach is to electrify progressively, wherever viable operationally and commercially, rather than applying a single solution across every market or route. We introduced fully electric delivery vehicles in Jordan in 2017, tested EVs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and introduced EVs in our UAE last-mile delivery fleet in 2023.

Today, our fleet strategy combines electric and other lower-emission vehicles, alongside sustainable fuels. Fleet electrification remains an important part of our wider decarbonisation strategy. But successful deployment depends on vehicle availability, infrastructure, and the operational requirements of each market.

How do govt perks, charging, and renewable energy speed up transition?

All three are important enablers of fleet electrification at scale. Government incentives can improve the economics of the transition by reducing upfront

investment barriers while reliable and accessible charging infrastructure is essential to maintain day-to-day operations and allow fleets to operate at scale. Renewable energy development can increase the emissions-reduction potential of electric vehicles by enabling cleaner charging.

For logistics operators, predictability is significant because investment decisions involve vehicles, depots, charging infrastructure, and grid capacity.

Collaboration between policymakers, utilities, vehicle manufacturers, charging providers, and logistics operators can therefore help accelerate adoption while ensuring that the transition remains commercially and operationally sustainable. 🚀

QUICK FACTS

- ❖ Depot charging is key
- ❖ Grid capacity must keep pace
- ❖ High temperatures remain a challenge
- ❖ EVs vary by market
- ❖ Aramex operates mixed fleet
- ❖ Solar power supports cleaner operations
- ❖ Incentives can speed up adoption
- ❖ Collaboration will drive scale



Air Senegal builds UAE–West Africa links

Airglow Aviation has been appointed as the GSA for Air Senegal in the UAE. Under the pact, the firm is responsible for developing and managing Air Senegal's cargo sales activities across the UAE. This includes commercial representation, cargo bookings, among others.

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Since Air Senegal currently operates as an offline carrier in the UAE, a central part of the role is to build reliable interline solutions that link the UAE with Air Senegal's network, while establishing a dedicated local commercial presence and stronger market awareness for the airline. "We will assist with documentation and operational coordination to help shipments move smoothly through the network," said Rohit Thakwani, CEO, Airglow Aviation. He was named the DDP Face of the Future at the 2024 Arabian Cargo Awards.

The appointment aims to create flexibility across DXB, DWC, and Sharjah relying on routing, capacity, handling needs, and interline linkage. While DXB backs a large base of scheduled global cargo flows, DWC offers freighter and logistics infrastructure, and Sharjah is a gateway with competitive operating economics. Access to all three airports allows the appointment to design solutions for each shipment rather than curbing the market to a single gateway. This flexibility is crucial for offline cargo flows into West Africa, where routing options and connection times can vary by shipment type.

MAJOR GATEWAYS

Air Senegal's cargo capacity for the UAE market will depend on the routing and the



Rohit Thakwani
Chief Executive Officer
Airglow Aviation

operating carrier used for the first sector out of the UAE. Airglow Aviation will develop interline solutions through major gateways, particularly Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris, from where Air Senegal connects cargo to Dakar and onward across its West African network.

The objective is to convert the existing UAE–West Africa cargo flows onto the Air Senegal network

Air Senegal's wide-body operations offer stronger cargo capability on selected sectors, while regional linkages carry different payload limitations. "Rather than committing to a fixed weekly tonnage at this early stage, our focus is on building dependable, scalable capacity with partner airlines and matching each shipment



and destination to the most suitable routing".

CARGO VOLUMES

As this is a newly established offline GSA operation, the UAE market is being developed from a modest existing base rather than established direct-service volumes. Airglow Aviation would prefer not to disclose a specific tonnage target while interline arrangements and capacity allocations are being finalised. The aim is to convert existing UAE–West Africa

cargo flows onto the Air Senegal network.

Dubai remains a vital consolidation and re-export hub for Africa, and volumes are likely to grow steadily as routing options, transit reliability, and market awareness strengthen. The focus is on a long-term build rather than a short-term target. The potential for growth depends on the type of cargo that can be moved dependably through the network. There is long-term potential across a range of



commodities moving from West Africa into the UAE. As an offline operation today, however, time-sensitive cargo such as perishables and seafood is more difficult to transport given the variability of interline transit times.

In the near term, potential is seen in general cargo and niche export products that are less transit-sensitive and can utilise Dubai as a redistribution hub. The main constraints are consistency of air freight capacity,

interline transit reliability, cold chain requirements, and pricing.

On the UAE–West Africa route, the cargo mix is general cargo, electronics, and spare parts. The main challenge is limited direct connectivity, and even where it exists, it is restricted to certain airports. Most of the cargo, therefore, must move via transit hubs, which adds time and complexity. Pricing on direct options is high, and while transit routings offer some

flexibility, capacity remains limited and pricing stays elevated across the board.

These connectivity constraints affect the movement of more time-sensitive products. As routing and connectivity strengthen, perishables and other time-sensitive commodities should become viable over time. Addressing the linkage gap is central to the strategy, with Airglow Aviation working to bring more capacity into the market to meet growing demand. 🇸🇪



HAZMAT faces **fragmented border landscape**

When chemicals and HAZMAT are transported, they require more than just precision. Firms need to go further and ensure every step of the process is carefully managed — from packing to transportation, says **Aaron Smith, CEO, ACI Logistics** while talking about moving hazardous materials across the Middle East.

 Sonia Sali

What are the key regulatory challenges in moving HAZMAT across GCC borders?

Regulatory fragmentation is the biggest hurdle. Individual GCC states layer their own rules on top of international standards such as the UN Recommendations on Transport of Dangerous



Aaron Smith
CEO
ACI Logistics

Individual GCC states layer their own rules on top of international standards, which becomes a hurdle

Goods. The UAE applies Federal Law No. 24 of 1999 on hazardous materials

alongside its own import and export permits, while the UAE and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia require separate civil defence approvals for transport and storage not uniformly mandated elsewhere, and road standards such as the ADR are now being considered in parts of the region. For multi-border shipments, we plan around that variation rather than assuming one approval applies across every crossing.



How do you prevent leaks, spills, and contamination during transport of DGs?

Safety starts with controls rather than a single safeguard. Our vehicles, packaging, and containers meet UN and IMDG/ADR-equivalent standards, loading and leak-detection checks built into every handover. Teams follow labelling protocols for substances, and every site carries spill-response kits and emergency shutdown procedures. Drivers and other staff complete certified training covering packaging, labelling, and emergency response, refreshed annually or after any incident.

What technology is used to monitor HAZMAT cargo in real time?

We rely on GPS on every hazardous consignment,

giving real-time visibility into location, route adherence, and unplanned stops. Temperature and humidity sensors monitor sensitive cargo continuously, with automated alerts if readings drift outside safe thresholds, and tamper-evident seals confirm the load has not been opened in transit. All of this feeds into our operations team, which monitors the data around the clock, so any deviation — from a temperature excursion to an unscheduled route detour — triggers a response.

Lithium batteries are barred from pax aircraft, while devices with built-in batteries need individual airline approval

How does extreme heat affect DG transport, and is infrastructure enough to handle growing volumes?

Extreme heat is a genuine operational constraint. Many chemicals have narrow stability ranges and summer road and container temperatures can exceed safe limits within hours, therefore, temperature-controlled vehicles and insulated packaging are not optional for sensitive cargo; they are essential. Loading and unloading are scheduled around the peak heat time. Regionally, infrastructure, although improving is still uneven: major hubs and highways are well equipped while some border facilities and secondary routes lack dedicated hazardous cargo bays, climate-controlled storage, or rapid inspection lanes. As regional trade volumes continue to grow, continued investment in purpose-built HAZMAT infrastructure will be essential to keep pace safely.

What routes are planned for HAZMAT shipments, and what routes are avoided?

Route planning for hazardous cargo starts well before the vehicle leaves the yard. Depending on the class of hazardous material, routes are mapped to avoid densely populated urban centres, tunnels, and sites with restricted hazardous transit permissions, favouring routes specifically approved for dangerous cargo movement.

For some DGs, we need to factor in proximity to hospitals, schools, and water sources while selecting alternatives, and coordinate timings to avoid peak traffic where an incident would have greater impact. Certain border crossings and facilities without proper HAZMAT handling infrastructure are

excluded entirely. Every route is reviewed against current permits, seasonal restrictions, and local conditions before dispatch, not assumed valid from a previous shipment.

What certifications, permits and approvals are needed to transport dangerous goods by air, and how do they vary by degree of hazard?

Transporting hazardous goods by air requires IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR) certification for staff in acceptance, DG handling, and documentation, backed by a qualified Dangerous Goods Safety Advisor.

Civil aviation approvals and cargo-specific permits apply, and needs shift with the material: standalone lithium batteries, for example, have been barred from passenger aircraft entirely, while devices with built-in batteries need individual airline approval.

Explosives, flammable liquids, toxic substances, and corrosives have classification, packaging, and documentation obligations under UN Recommendations and IATA DGR, so no two hazard classes clear the same way. 🚚

HAZMAT FACTS

- ❖ GCC HAZMAT rules vary across borders
- ❖ Safety relies on layered controls
- ❖ GPS and sensors track cargo in real time
- ❖ Heat requires temperature-controlled transport
- ❖ Air cargo requires IATA DGR certification
- ❖ Requirements vary by hazard class
- ❖ Routes must avoid high-risk areas



Scanwell adds **in-house customs** to its portfolio

Scanwell Logistics LLC has brought in-house customs clearance services as it looks to simplify the movement of import and export cargo and reduce delays in the clearance process. The move is likely to give end users greater visibility of shipments and closer coordination across different stages of cargo flow.

 CT Bureau

The initiative gives Scanwell Logistics LLC's customs team responsibility for coordinating clearance activities, allowing it to work with other parts of the logistics chain. This could help improve visibility of shipments and reduce the handovers involved in moving consignments through customs.

For freight forwarders and cargo owners, customs clearance remains a vital part of cross-border logistics, with documentation, regulatory requirements, and coordination affecting how quickly shipments can move. Bringing the function in-house can give logistics providers control over this stage of the supply chain and make it easier to coordinate clearance with transportation, warehousing, and final delivery.

"Our expanding presence in Africa, including our branches in Kenya, strengthens our ability to support users with reliable logistics solutions across key African markets and beyond," said Razmal Assen, Executive Director, Scanwell Logistics LLC.

The UAE operation will use its logistics network to support cargo flow between the UAE and global markets. Besides, its presence in African markets, including Kenya, backs cargo flows between the UAE and Africa. This is relevant as trade



Razmal Assen
Executive Director
Scanwell Logistics LLC

Bringing customs in-house makes it easier to coordinate clearance with transportation and final delivery

links between the Middle East and African markets continue to grow, creating demand for logistics services that can manage different customs and regulatory requirements across borders. The initiative aims to provide a more connected process spanning customs clearance, freight forwarding, transportation, warehousing, and delivery.

For the logistics sector, greater integration between these activities can help reduce gaps between different stages of cargo movement. It can also allow firms to respond quickly when documentation or clearance issues arise, rather than



relying on separate service providers to resolve them.

As cross-border cargo flows become complex, customs clearance is increasingly being linked with wider supply chain operations. Having clearance teams work directly with freight and transport could help logistics providers improve coordination and give cargo owners better visibility from origin to destination.



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Ferrying perishables mandates specialised ops

As demand for fresh produce and other perishables grows, efficient cold chain logistics is essential to link the produce with international markets while preserving product quality. **Julian Sutch, Global Head, Cool Chain, Emirates SkyCargo**, discusses evolving trade flows, specialised handling, and cold chain solutions.

 Sonia Sali

What are the carrier's perishable corridors, and how is trade evolving across the ME, Asia, Europe, and Africa?

Emirates SkyCargo transports a range of perishables through its global network, linking production regions with markets across Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Key trade corridors include fresh fruits and vegetables from Africa and Asia into Europe and the Middle East, seafood from Asia to global markets, flow-ers from Africa to Europe and the Middle East, and premium perishables moving into high-consumption



Julian Sutch
Global Head, Cool Chain
Emirates SkyCargo

We manage cargo throughout the journey, with management of storage, handling, and transfer processes

destinations across the GCC nations and Asia.

Trade patterns evolve constantly, influenced by varied factors, shifting production areas, opening of new trade lanes, trade agreements, and broader global developments. It is vital to have resilient supply chains that create opportunities for new routings and logistics solutions.

To support these evolving requirements, the carrier continues to leverage its global network, including road feeder services and deployment of dedicated freighter capacity where demand is strongest. This flexibility enables us to provide farms and shippers with reliable connections globally and ensure that, through our specialised solutions,

end users across the world can access perishables in the best conditions.

How do you maintain cold chain and product quality while ferrying perishables through extreme climates?

Maintaining the integrity of perishables begins with preserving the cold chain from origin to destination. Emirates SkyCargo supports this through specialised handling processes, temperature-controlled facilities, and dedicated products designed for time- and temperature-sensitive shipments.

We monitor shipments throughout the transportation journey, with careful management of storage, handling, and transfer



providers, and can vary by market and commodity type. From our perspective, our role is to ensure shipments are delivered efficiently and in optimal condition to end users at the destination.

To this end, we make sure that our agents and skilled teams at these destinations follow the best practices to ensure the integrity of consignments through correct handling and temperature control protocols.

Once released, the products enter the end users' networks from where they are transported to distribution centres, retailers, food service providers, and other markets, based on their commercial needs.

In Dubai, we work with retailers providing guidance on developing bespoke warehouse-level logistics solutions, along with technical expertise, and strategic consultation to design, develop and optimise infrastructure and operational capabilities such as building and breaking down pallets for shipping and receiving perishables and other goods at scale. 🚚

processes to minimise temperature deviations. Our facilities in Dubai include dedicated cool chain infrastructure, and specialised solutions such as cool dollies, which are used to protect shipments during ramp transfers and dedicated reefer trucks for transfers between DWC and DXB airports.

By combining operational expertise, dedicated infrastructure, and collaboration with ground handling partners at every point of sales across our network, we help ensure products transit from farms to shops in optimal condition regardless of external climatic conditions in 24–48 hours.

How does packaging maintain freshness, temperature stability, and quality during air transport?

Packaging choices are made by the shipper or farm and are based on the specific requirements of the commodity being transported. Different perishables have varying sensitivities to temperature, humidity, ventilation, and transit duration.

Emirates SkyCargo works closely with freight forwarders to provide detailed insights wherever needed to encourage the use of packaging that protects product quality, supports

temperature control, allows safe handling throughout transportation, and complies with applicable regulatory requirements. Appropriate packaging, combined with an uninterrupted cold chain and efficient transportation, play an important role in helping preserve freshness during transit.

We make sure our agents and skilled teams follow the best practices to ensure integrity of consignments

We support product packaging with an additional layer of temperature protection by using equipment such as cool dollies or thermal covers.

What certifications and documentation are needed to ferry perishables? How does the airline support compliance?

The certification and documentation requirements for perishables vary depending on the commodities, country of origin, and the destination market. These may include phytosanitary certificates, health certificates, export

permits, import approvals, and customs-related documentation.

While freight forwarders are responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable regulations, the carrier works with them and regulatory authorities to provide guidance on regulations and facilitate the smooth movement of perishable shipments.

How are farmers and producers adapting to global export requirements? How does the airline support the trade?

While cultivation and production practices are addressed by growers and exporters, the carrier focuses on quality assurance, traceability, sustainability, and compliance with import requirements in destination markets.

Emirates SkyCargo supports global trade by providing reliable and efficient air cargo solutions that help producers and exporters access international markets. Through our network and specialised perishables handling capabilities under Emirates Fresh, we ensure fresh products reach consumers quickly, while maintaining quality and freshness throughout the transportation process.

How does the carrier ensure perishables are handled efficiently before entering local distribution networks?

Distribution after arrival is managed by importers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and logistics

AT A GLANCE

- ❖ Fresh produce, seafood, and flowers among cargo flows
- ❖ End-to-end cold chain protection
- ❖ Three-tier Emirates Fresh solution
- ❖ Dedicated cool chain infrastructure in Dubai
- ❖ Cool dollies and thermal covers for added protection
- ❖ Farm-to-market transit in 24–48 hours
- ❖ Flexible routing and dedicated freighter capacity

Freight Hub turns Sharjah into West Africa gateway

To strengthen connectivity between the UAE and West Africa, Freight Hub is setting up an air cargo hub in Sharjah with scheduled freighter services planned for Senegal and Guinea. The new facility will serve as the launchpad for charter operations and scheduled regional networks into Africa.

CT Bureau

Abid Hamza, Director, Freight Hub Shipping LLC, said, "Sharjah International Airport was selected due to its strategic geographical location, swift runway-to-ramp turnarounds, lower congestion compared to traditional regional hubs, and 24x7 freighter-friendly operations." The airport provides cost-competitive handling structures, streamlined customs processing, and inter-modal links across the UAE.

The hub will allow Freight Hub to optimise charter consolidations, bypass congested air corridors,



Abid Hamza
Director
Freight Hub Shipping LLC

and establish a control tower tailored to demands of serving high-growth West African corridors.

As part of the new operation, Freight Hub plans

Each freighter will offer 45 to 60 MT of payload per rotation for oversized, heavy, general cargo

to connect Sharjah International Airport with Dakar-Diass in Senegal and Conakry in Guinea.

The service will initially operate twice weekly using medium-to-wide-bodied freighters such as Boeing 767-300 and Airbus

A330-200 freighters. Each freighter will offer around 45 to 60 metric tonnes (MT) of gross payload per rotation, providing capacity for oversized, heavy, and general cargo.

Senegal and Guinea were prioritised because of significant supply chain bottlenecks, limited direct main-deck air capacity, and surging commercial trade with the GCC countries. Dakar acts as West Africa's primary economic gateway, with demand driven by retail, consumer goods, and automotive parts.

Conakry's demand is heavily propelled by





infrastructure development, mining, and energy sectors, which require specialised logistics support.

The direct scheduled main-deck access will address critical trade flows and meet importer demand for dependable, scheduled maindeck space without depending on multi-leg transshipments.

The new services are intended to address existing gaps in the UAE–West Africa cargo connectivity

DIRECT ACCESS

Outbound cargo from the UAE is likely to comprise industrial machinery, automotive spare parts, electronics, telecommunications gear, oil and gas equipment, and pharmaceuticals. Inbound cargo from West Africa will mainly focus on high-value perishables, agricultural products, raw minerals, and diplomatic cargo.

“Outbound demand from the UAE currently leads initial volume projections. We anticipate growing bi-directional cargo flows as West African exporters gain direct, reliable access to Middle Eastern and distribution markets in Asia through the Sharjah hub,” said Hamza.

The new services are intended to address existing gaps in the UAE–West Africa cargo connectivity. Freight Hub stated that air freight between the two regions has faced belly constraints, long transit times, and unpredictable indirect routings through European or North African hubs.

Freight Hub’s scheduled freighter services reduce transit times from

multi-day itineraries down to a single-leg flight window. The model eliminates offload risks, provides maindeck volume for out-sized freight, offers reliability, and gives regional shippers direct gateway access into West Africa.

The Sharjah facility marks a change in Freight Hub’s model. “The Sharjah hub alters Freight Hub from an asset-light broker into an integrated operator,” he added. The air cargo hub will offer on-site customs clearance, short-term warehousing, temperature-controlled storage, dangerous goods (DGs) handling, multimodal sea-to-air consolidation, and deliver end-to-end visibility and agility. 🚚



NAFL brings air cargo community **under one roof**

National Association of Freight and Logistics (NAFL) held a networking session bringing the community together to discuss the latest updates, Gulf Cooperation Council trade opportunities, and upcoming international logistics events, including FIATA RAME 2026 to be held in Qatar.





In the business of putting things on ice

Cold chain logistics demands precision. In the Middle East, extreme temperatures add a layer of complexity to moving sensitive cargo. In an interview, **Sebastian Sommer, Chief Logistics Officer, AJEX**, explains how the firm manages temperature-sensitive shipments and maintains product integrity throughout the journey.

 Sonia Sali

How does extreme heat in the ME affect cold chain transportation?

Cold chain logistics is more than an operational need in the Middle East; it is a necessity. Extreme heat and long transport corridors make resilient, compliant infrastructure vital to protecting food security and public health. At AJEX, we address these conditions through temperature-con-



Sebastian Sommer
Chief Logistics Officer
AJEX

trolled vehicles, purpose-built storage, specialised packaging solutions, and

facilities engineered for the extreme heat. We use live GPS and temperature monitoring from -20°C to $+25^{\circ}\text{C}$, giving our teams visibility to identify and address potential temperature deviations in transit.

What temperature-sensitive cargo does AJEX transport, and what makes it challenging to handle?

AJEX handles temperature-sensitive goods and healthcare shipments, including rare disease medications,

biological samples, and direct-to-patient deliveries such as HIV medicines, making precise handling and monitoring essential.

Different products require specific temperature profiles and handling protocols, while some shipments may involve dry ice or specialised passive packaging. The company uses specialised temperature-controlled packaging and pre-conditioning, including Phase Change Materials, alongside continuous pharmaceutical-grade





temperature monitoring to ensure product integrity from pick-up to delivery. Critically, our teams are trained in the packaging and handling of sensitive cold-chain shipments

to maintain the required conditions throughout the cargo journey.

Can the region become a pharmaceutical and life sciences cold chain hub?

As the Middle East advances Vision 2030 ambitions around localisation, healthcare, and supply chain resilience, demand for industry-leading cold chain standards is accelerating.

Our teams are trained in packaging and handling of cold chains to maintain required conditions

AJEX recorded 84 per cent year-on-year growth in cold chain transportation revenue and 43 per cent growth in warehousing in 2025. We also opened the first and only GMP-GxP certified cold chain logistics facility, a purpose-built 3,000 sqm

depot in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Ongoing investment in pharmaceutical-grade infrastructure, technology, and trained talent will be important in supporting the growth of the pharmaceutical, life sciences, and wider logistics sectors.

How do documentation needs vary across pharmaceuticals and temperature-sensitive cargo?

Requirements vary according to the product and applicable regulatory framework, but pharmaceuticals and biological samples demand particularly stringent traceabil-

ity, temperature records and chain-of-custody controls.

At AJEX, these requirements are embedded within our ISO-certified Quality Management System (QMS), which integrates, SOPs and unified processes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and the Kingdom of Bahrain and aligns with international standards, including those of the European Union and World Health Organisation. This helps streamline compliance reporting, reduce audit friction, and accelerate clearance for regulated shipments. AJEX is certified by the Saudi Food and Drug Authority. 🇸🇦

Cold chain

- -20°C to +25°C temperature monitoring
- Live GPS and temperature tracking
- Purpose-built cold chain facilities
- Specialised packaging and PCM solutions
- Trained cold chain handling teams

Growth

- 84% growth in cold chain transport revenue
- 43% growth in warehousing
- 3,000 sqm GMP-GxP facility in Riyadh
- Operations across KSA, UAE, and Bahrain
- SFDA-certified cold chain operations



dnata upgrades cargo centre, links DXB & DWC

dnata has upgraded its cargo control centre in Dubai to give teams a real-time view of cargo movements across Dubai International Airport and Al Maktoum International Airport. The system refreshes data every 10 seconds to help identify bottlenecks, manage capacity, and coordinate resources faster.



Nabil Sultan Al Murr, Group CEO, dnata, and Guillaume Crozier, Chief Cargo Officer, dnata

CT Bureau

The new Cargo Integrated Command Centre (CICC) brings data from different cargo and landside systems onto one dashboard. This gives operations teams a clearer picture of cargo movements across DXB and DWC and allows teams to respond immediately when the workloads or conditions change.

The move comes as Dubai handles growing volumes and prepares for the expansion of DWC. For airlines, freight forwarders, and other logistics companies, the new centre will create better visibility across airport operations and can help reduce delays, improve coordination, and make cargo movements more predictable.

The move comes as Dubai handles growing volumes and prepares for the expansion of Dubai World Centre (DWC)

“Cargo operations involve thousands of interconnected activities daily, making operational visibility essential to maintaining performance at scale. Our enhanced cargo command centre is part of our ambition to continuously evolve our operating model and infrastructure to strengthen Dubai’s position as a leading global logistics hub,” said Nabil Sultan Al Murr, Group CEO, dnata. During the 2025-26 financial year, the CICC covered

an operation that handled more than one million tonnes of cargo, 189,000 flight movements and 46,000 truck movements.

Its dashboard drew information from dnata’s One Cargo management system, which recorded operational activities and transactions in real time. It also connected with the Appointment and Dock Management system, providing visibility of truck movements at DWC and DXB, as well through Calogi, dnata’s cargo community platform.

By bringing these data sources together, the teams can track activity across facilities and identify where congestion or capacity issues may arise. This can support quicker decisions on staffing, space, equipment, and air cargo handling.

The CICC is part of a wider shift towards greater use of digital tools in airport cargo operations. dnata has recently introduced autonomous drones for warehouse inventory checks and a centralised cargo screening control room developed with Dubai Police.

AT A GLANCE

- ❖ Links DXB and DWC operations
- ❖ Data refreshed every 10 seconds
- ❖ Cargo and landside data in one dashboard
- ❖ Faster capacity and resource decisions
- ❖ Helps identify operational bottlenecks
- ❖ Covers 1 million tonnes of cargo annually

DHL boosts China–ME capacity with **Shenzhen expansion**

DHL Express is increasing its global capacity in China, including a new daily freighter service linking Shanghai to Bangkok, Bahrain, and Brussels. The move adds capacity between China, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe as manufacturers and exporters continue to depend on these trade corridors.



The new Boeing 767 freighter will provide up to 50 tonnes of additional daily capacity on the Shanghai–Bangkok–Bahrain–Brussels route. For the Middle East, the addition of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the route gives shippers another link between major manufacturing centres in China and other regional markets. The expansion increases options for moving heavier, time-sensitive shipments through the region, particularly for industries with supply chains spread across Asia and Europe.

“Global supply chains continue to adapt to changing economic conditions, geopolitical disruptions, and evolving demand. Our focus is to ensure that users have the flexible, dependable, and high-quality logistics networks they need to connect with suppliers and production locations across the world. These



John Pearson
Chief Executive Officer
DHL Express.

investments enhance the connections between China and international markets and reinforce DHL’s role as the logistics partner of choice for global e-commerce and fast-growing sectors such as data centres, semiconductor logistics, life sciences, healthcare, and new energy,” said John Pearson, CEO, DHL Express.

The new service comes alongside a €177 million expansion of DHL Express’ Shenzhen ‘Super Gateway’ at Shenzhen Bao’an International Airport. The

investment has tripled the facility’s processing capacity to 900 tonnes a day.

The expanded gateway serves southern China, which is one of China’s key manufacturing and export regions. Higher processing capacity is likely to support the movement of cross-border e-commerce shipments and international express cargo as trade volumes and shipment sizes change.

The expansion increases options for moving heavier, time-sensitive cargo, particularly for industries with supply chains

The combination of additional air capacity and larger ground handling capability points to a wider shift in how express networks are being built

around China. While firms are diversifying their supply chains, China remains a source of manufacturing goods, components, and technology for global markets. The new route is aimed at sectors that depend on reliable flow of higher-value or time-sensitive cargo.

For freight forwarders, the uplift could be relevant as shipments become larger and supply chains need frequent links between production sites and end markets. The investment comes as global trade routes continue to adjust to geopolitical changes, shifting production bases, and changing sourcing patterns. For the sector, this is creating demand for more links between manufacturing hubs and regional gateways.

With China remaining central to Asian manufacturing, more capacity on routes linking it to the ME and Europe could help provide more options for businesses moving goods across these markets. 📦



New capacity

- 50 tonnes of additional capacity daily
- New Boeing 767 freighter service
- Shanghai–Bangkok–Bahrain–Brussels route
- Links China, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe

Expansion

- An investment of €177 million
- Processing capacity triples to 900 tonnes per day
- Supports e-commerce and express cargo
- Strengthens capacity in southern China

TruKker road corridor opens new route to Europe

Moving road cargo is about reaching a destination and having the right route to get there. Road freight offers flexibility and direct connectivity that can be vital for businesses moving goods across borders. TruKker is now looking to strengthen this option with a new road corridor linking the Middle East with Europe.

CT Bureau

Amid emerging new routes and the Middle East exploring alternative ways of moving cargo, TruKker has launched road corridors linking the GCC and Jordan with Türkiye, Europe, and Central Asia, offering an alternative route for cargo moving in and out of the Gulf. The service provides door-to-door transit of six to nine days between Türkiye and the UAE, while Europe–UAE movements take 18 to 24 days. The service operates on demand and in both directions.

“The Gulf’s supply chains have spent six months working around a constrained sea route. This corridor gives importers and exporters a door-to-door overland alternative between Europe, Türkiye,



Gaurav Biswas
Founder and CEO
TruKker

Central Asia and the GCC, with a transit time that can be planned for and with the terms clearly stated before a load is booked,” said Gaurav Biswas, Founder and CEO, TruKker.

The corridors cover the UAE, the Kingdoms of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Jordan, with European and Central Asian cargo joining

The Middle East supply chains have spent six months working around a constrained sea route

the network through Türkiye. Cargo moves through Türkiye, Syria, and Jordan into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia before onward delivery across the GCC.

The service could give shippers another option as sea routes into the Gulf face longer and less predictable transit times. Road transport can help businesses move time-sensitive cargo without relying on port handling and waiting times while providing a link be-

tween production and delivery points. The corridor avoids port dwell times in the chain.

The route provides a link for cargo moving between Europe, Central Asia, and the Gulf without requiring the full journey to depend on sea transport. For businesses managing supply chains across several markets, having another route can provide an option when planning shipments.

Cargo will move under coordinated TIR and customs transit procedures, with transshipment in Türkiye. TruKker said shippers will receive status updates at each border crossing and transit times will be reconfirmed before any commitment. The service is managed by TruKker’s Cross Border Division in Türkiye. 🚛



AT A GLANCE

- ❖ GCC–Europe road link
- ❖ Covers seven GCC markets and Jordan
- ❖ Türkiye–UAE in 6–9 days
- ❖ Europe–UAE in 18–24 days
- ❖ On-demand, two-way service
- ❖ TIR and customs transit
- ❖ Border updates at each crossing

Dubai Customs' cargo transactions up 53% in H1

As more goods move through the network, the question is no longer about how much cargo can be handled but how quickly it can clear the border. Dubai's air cargo network handled a rise in customs activity in the first half of this year, as growing trade and e-commerce put pressure on speed and clearance.

CT Bureau

Dubai Customs processed 18.2 million cargo customs transactions between January and June, up from 11.9 million during the same period in 2025 — a rise of 53 per cent. The weight of shipments rose by 47 per cent, reaching 1.3 million tonnes compared with 886,000 tonnes last year.

The increase in transactions comes as air cargo and e-commerce continue to grow, with a focus on how quickly goods can move through customs. For airlines, freight forwarders, and logistics providers, faster clearance can help keep cargo moving through the supply chain and reduce



Abdulla Ahmad Alblooshi
Director, Air Cargo Centres
Management
Dubai Customs

the time between arrival and delivery.

The Free Zone Department recorded a higher increase, with customs transactions reaching 17.7 million in the first six months, up 62 per cent

The rise in customs transactions comes as air cargo and e-commerce continue to grow

from 10.9 million a year earlier. It also handled 6.2 million postal parcels during the period. The figures highlight the growing volumes moving through Dubai's air cargo centres, with e-commerce generating several parcels that need to be processed quickly. The focus is on shortening the time between a shipment's arrival and its entry into

the market, said Abdulla Ahmad Alblooshi, Director, Air Cargo Centres Management, Dubai Customs.

"As shipment sizes continue to rise, we are ramping up the capabilities of our inspectors and staff, while equipping our centres with smart technologies, devices, and AI to improve the efficiency of examination, inspection, and processing without compromising protection and customs requirements," he added.

Dubai Customs has raised the customs duty exemption threshold for eligible goods in cross-border e-commerce to \$1,000, effective 3 August 2026. The highest daily volume increased from 1.24 million kg in January to 2.11 million kg in May 2026, showing the need for capacity to keep pace with rising cargo flows and avoid delays. 🇦🇪



NUMBERS

- ❖ 18 million transactions in H1 this year
- ❖ 53% increase in transactions
- ❖ 1 million tonnes of cargo handled
- ❖ 47% growth in cargo weight
- ❖ 17 million Free Zone customs transactions
- ❖ 6 million postal parcels processed

Upcoming Events

OCTOBER

- 5-6 Gartner Supply Chain Planning Summit**
London, UK
- 6-7 FlyPharma Europe**
Copenhagen, Europe
- 8 Global Trade Finance Expo**
Fairmont Dubai, UAE
- 16-18 Logistics Expo Thessaloniki**
Thessaloniki, Greece
- 20-21 European Supply Chain Summit**
Düsseldorf, Germany
- 21-22 Saudi Maritime and Logistics Congress**
Jeddah Superdome, Saudi Arabia
- 21-23 NextGen Supply Chain Conference**
Nashville, Tennessee, USA
- 21-23 Cargo Facts Symposium**
Nashville, Tennessee, USA
- 26-29 TIACA Air Cargo Forum**
Miami, Florida, USA

NOVEMBER

- 4 Trans-Log Moz**
Maputo, Mozambique
- 4 Future of Logistics, Operation and World Trade**
Dubai, UAE
- 18 Arabian Cargo Awards**
Embassy Suites Hilton, UAE

For more information contact: talk@ddppl.com

The dates shown on the Events calendar are subject to change. Please refer to EventTalk in CARGOTALK to track the changes in dates

China, Egypt to engage in cross-border trade

Egypt and China are moving ahead with plans to strengthen Egypt's role as a regional logistics and trade hub connecting Asia, Africa, and the EU, with new industrial activity around the Suez Canal likely to support cross-border trade.

 CT Bureau

Egypt and China agreed to launch the third phase of the Egyptian-Chinese industrial zone in the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCEZ) while adding manufacturing capacity that could generate new cargo flows and strengthen Egypt's position in regional supply chains.

"The expansion would open a new stage of business cooperation. The third phase of expansion of the Egyptian-Chinese industrial zone in the SCEZ launches a new period of business," said Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, President of Egypt.

The plan is to align Egypt's Vision 2030 with China's Belt and Road Initiative and develop the country as a hub for industry, logistics, and trade. Egypt's location along the Suez Canal gives it an important position on trade routes connecting Asian production centres with the European and African markets.

The industrial zone expansion will include automobile manufacturing, textiles, and chemical fibres. The countries will also explore local production of EVs, ships, solar panels, and other products.

For the logistics sector, increased manufacturing in the SCEZ could mean more movement of raw materials, components, and finished goods through Egypt. This



Xi Jinping, President, China, and Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, President, Egypt, in Cairo

The two countries will also explore local production of EVs, ships, solar panels, and other products

could support demand for road transport, warehousing, freight forwarding, and distribution services, while creating opportunities to link Chinese production with African and European markets through Egypt.

"China would encourage its companies to increase investment in Egypt, citing the country's strategic location. The two nations are seeking to increase trade in both directions. They agreed on an 'early harvest' pact to improve access for Egyptian products into the Chinese market and support more balanced trade," said Xi Jinping, President of China.

Egypt and China agreed to renew and increase their

bilateral currency swap arrangement, encouraging the use of local currencies for trade and investment settlements. The partnership covers infrastructure and digital sectors, including data centres and cloud computing, which could support the development of Egypt's wider trade infrastructure.

For Egypt, the focus is on using its geographic position and industrial base to handle more regional trade. For Chinese firms, the country could provide a production and distribution base closer to African and European markets.



Anchanto links platforms with NAQEL Express

Anchanto has integrated its commerce and supply chain platforms with Saudi Arabia-based NAQEL Express, allowing retailers, brands, and logistics providers to manage fulfilment, delivery, returns, and parcel tracking through a connected system, said Vaibhav Dabhade, CEO of Anchanto. The integration would help businesses simplify logistics as KSA's digital commerce sector expands. The partnership covers Anchanto's Order Management System, WMS, Operations Experience, and Parcel Tracking platforms.



GWC expands Oman cold chain operations



Gulf Warehousing Company (GWC) is adding an additional route for frozen cargo into Qatar. Extending its services from vessel handling and temperature-controlled storage to cross-border distribution, it completed its first-ever frozen bulk vessel operation in Oman, said Matthew Kearns, CEO, GWC Group. Frozen goods enter Oman in standard containers, but handling the first full frozen bulk vessel demanded expertise at every stage from vessel offloading, temperature-controlled storage to distribution.

Unilever, Union Coop expand electric trucking

Unilever and Union Coop have started using an e-truck for deliveries between Unilever's warehouse and Union Coop's distribution centre in the UAE, said Ahmed Kadous,



VP, Customer Operations, Unilever GCC, Turkey, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The truck is likely to save 8,900 litres of fuel and reduce 23.9 tonnes of emissions each year. The route will later be extended to selected retail stores. The deployment is aimed at testing electric transport in FMCG distribution, where high loads, regular routes and reliable delivery times are important. The truck has a capacity of 25 tonnes or 26 standard pallets and can travel 375 km on one charge.

FedEx secures 30 IATA pharma certifications

FedEx has secured 30 IATA CEIV Pharma certifications across its global air hubs and cargo handling facilities, boosting its ability to handle time- and temperature-sensitive pharma cargo across its network, including links serving the ME, said Brendan Sullivan, Global Head, Cargo, IATA. The milestone backs the flow of health-care products through trade lanes linking markets in the region and beyond. The certifications cover facilities involved in the handling and movement of pharma cargo and recognise their compliance with industry standards for quality and temperature-controlled logistics.



The milestone gives FedEx a larger global network of air cargo facilities certified under the IATA CEIV Pharma programme.

Ethiopian Airlines opens Chengdu–Africa Cargo route

Chengdu Tianfu International Airport has launched its first direct all-cargo route to Africa, connecting southwest China with Addis Ababa and opening another air freight link to African and Middle Eastern markets. Ethiopian Airlines will operate the service using Boeing 777Fs, with two flights a week, on Mondays and Fridays, said Tang Ruibo, General Manager, Ethiopian Airlines, China. The frequency is planned to rise to four flights a week. The new service gives exporters and importers in southwest China a direct air cargo option to Africa, reducing the need for indirect connections and supporting faster movement of time-sensitive and high-value goods. 🇪🇹



PACTL expands e-comm handling capacity

Shanghai Pudong Int'l Airport Cargo Terminal Company Limited (PACTL) has expanded its Cross-border E-commerce Handling Centre at PACTL West in Shanghai, increasing the facility to 4,170 sqm and doubling its daily handling capacity, said Carsten Hernig, DGM. The centre has also launched digital systems for cargo tracking, operational monitoring, and automated release checks. The expansion is aimed at handling growing cross-border e-commerce volumes, while improving the flow and control of shipments.



DSV expands direct air cargo links for pharma



DSV is expanding its Air ThermoDirect network with a new direct Luxembourg–Shanghai link and an upcoming Indianapolis–Shanghai route for pharmaceutical shipments, said Kenneth Kallström, EVP and Global Enterprise Vertical Head, Healthcare. The services will use freighter capacity, specialised cold chain handling, and reusable thermal packaging to support temperature-sensitive cargo. The expansion will give healthcare firms more direct options between Europe, the USA, and Asia.

Dronamics joins EU drone airspace project

Dronamics has joined the SESAR IRINA2 project to help develop ways for large remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS) to operate safely in European airspace. Its Black Swan aircraft will be used in live flights to test cross-border RPAS operations and how unmanned aircraft can work with existing air traffic management systems. The project could help open European airspace to more commercial drone cargo ops. Large RPAS currently operate in segregated airspace because systems that allow them to detect and avoid other aircraft are still being developed. IRINA2 will examine operations in both controlled and uncontrolled airspace.



LOT adds Bangkok and Hanoi cargo connections

LOT Polish Airlines is adding direct services from Warsaw to Bangkok and Hanoi, creating more belly cargo capacity between Southeast Asia and Europe, said Michał Grochowski, Head of Cargo, LOT Polish Airlines. The Warsaw–Bangkok route will start on 7 October 2026, while the Warsaw–Hanoi service is planned for 31 March 2027. The new links will give forwarders routing options for cargo moving between Thailand, Vietnam, and European markets. Shipments can link LOT's Warsaw hub to destinations across Central, Eastern, and Western Europe, while Europe-originating cargo will



get another route into the two Asian markets. Thailand and Vietnam are important manufacturing and export markets, making extra capacity useful for businesses.

MSC Air Cargo formalises partnership with NAP

MSC Air Cargo has formalised a strategic partnership with Neutral Air Partner (NAP), giving the carrier closer access to NAP's network of vetted freight forwarders, consolidators and specialised logistics providers across more than 150 countries, said Jannie Davel, CEO of MSC Air Cargo. The partnership is expected to strengthen engagement between the airline and the independent forwarding community, creating opportunities across regular airfreight, specialised cargo, charter, and project movements. It will also give MSC Air Cargo insights into the changing requirements of freight forwarders and help identify new cargo opportunities across key markets. 🇮🇪



Lufthansa Cargo to acquire LUG Aircargo Handling

Lufthansa Cargo is set to acquire Germany-based LUG Aircargo Handling from Dettmer Group, adding 50,000 sqm of covered warehouse space and 18,000 sqm of office and infrastructure space to its network, said Frank Bauer, COO, Lufthansa Cargo. The deal covers LUG's operations at Frankfurt, Munich, and Hamburg airports and is subject to antitrust and regulatory approval. The acquisition will give Lufthansa Cargo more handling capacity, helping it manage future cargo growth and strengthen its handling infrastructure.



Royal Air Maroc launches Casablanca–LA cargo link



Royal Air Maroc Cargo has launched a direct Casablanca–Los Angeles (LA) service, opening a new cargo link between Africa and the US West Coast, said Rita Chraïbi, VP Cargo, Royal Air Maroc. The route operates thrice a week with Boeing 787 aircraft, providing belly capacity between the two markets. The new service gives exporters and forwarders an option for moving goods between Africa and the western US, while supporting connections into the wider North American and Asian markets.

China Eastern resumes flights to Stockholm

China Eastern has resumed flights between Shanghai Pudong and Stockholm Arlanda after a six-year break, with cargo handler WFS securing a three-year contract to support the route, said Kim Elfström, MD, WFS Sweden. The airline operates three weekly flights using Airbus A330 aircraft, with the service expected to carry 1,000 tonnes of cargo between the two airports each year. The return flight adds capacity between China and Sweden and gives shippers another air link between the two markets. WFS will provide cargo handling services in Sweden, where it previously handled China Eastern's cargo operations before the pandemic.



Teleport invests US\$ 50 mn to expand Asia cargo network

Teleport is investing US\$ 50 million to expand cargo capacity and linkage across key Asia-Pacific and Asia-Europe corridors, with the company targeting the second-half e-commerce peak," said Pete Chareonwongsak, CEO, Teleport. The investment follows a 35 per cent YoY rise in revenue to US\$ 156.4 million in H1 2026. The expansion will add capacity on routes linking China with the Middle East through Bahrain, Asia with Oceania, Penang with Europe via the Maldives, and China with the Philippines. The move is likely to give shippers routing options as e-commerce demand continues to drive cargo



volumes across the region. Teleport stated that it volumes grew by 34 per cent in the first six months, three times the regional market's growth rate of 12 per cent.

CJ Logistics starts cold chain centre in Anseong

CJ Logistics has started operations at a 19,000 sqm B2C Cold Chain Centre in Anseong, South Korea, adding capacity for e-commerce sellers handling refrigerated and frozen goods. The facility can process up to 25,000 orders a day and currently handles 2,040 products from 112 e-commerce sellers. The centre is designed to improve the speed and control of temperature-sensitive fulfilment. Its AI-powered LoIS eFLEXs system manages orders, inventory, picking, packing and shipping, while LoIS OnDo monitors temperature and humidity around the clock. The facility uses Digital Picking Carts to improve order accuracy and reduce travel time for workers. 📦



Movements



SALAMAIR Muscat, Oman

Eng. Yaqoob Al Kiyumi has joined SalamAir as CEO. He will lead the airline's next phase of growth, focusing on efficiency and strengthening its network. He will boost connections between Oman and regional and global markets, backing trade links and the movement of goods. His focus will include strengthening SalamAir's role in Oman's aviation sector.



OMAN AIR Muscat, Oman

Nasser Al Sharji has been appointed CEO of Oman Air. He will support the airline's business development. His logistics background will help fortify cargo ops, supply chain links, and ties between Oman and vital regional and global markets. He will focus on improving trade links and supporting Oman Air's role in logistics and trade networks.



ARAMEX Dubai, UAE

Faysal El Hajjami has joined Aramex as CCO. In his new role, El Hajjami will lead Aramex's commercial strategy, strengthen sales and pricing, grow customer relationships, and expand account management across its global network. He will work with teams across the firm to improve performance and support sustainable, profitable growth.



HELLMANN WORLDWIDE LOGISTICS Dubai, UAE

Vidya Veettill has joined as Head of Road freight, GCC & Egypt at Hellmann Worldwide Logistics. She will lead the road freight and business development across the GCC and Egypt, focusing on developing new routes. She has about 15 years of experience.



KENYA AIRWAYS Nairobi, Kenya

Habil Waswani has been appointed Acting Group Managing Director and CEO at Kenya Airways. He will lead the airline's operations on an interim basis as it continues its turnaround efforts. Waswani will also focus on improving reliability, strengthening financial performance, supporting network, and expanding the airline's fleet growth.



ECS GROUP Miami, USA

Eric St Amand has been appointed CEO, Americas, at ECS Group. He will lead the Group's operations across the Americas, work with regional teams and airline partners to strengthen operational performance, and support business growth, with a focus on developing the firm's activities across North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean.



B&H WORLDWIDE Heathrow, London, UK

Matt Silverberg has been appointed CEO at B&H Worldwide. Silverberg will lead the firm's global operations and growth strategy, focus on expanding its network, and strengthen its aerospace logistics capabilities. Silverberg will also drive investment in technology and innovation, MROs, OEMs, and aerospace suppliers.



AWERY AVIATION SOFTWARE London, UK

Gianluca Marcangelo has been appointed Executive VP, Global Sales, at Awery Aviation Software. He will lead Awery's global sales efforts, expand its customer base among airlines and GSSAs. Marcangelo will work with cargo firms to identify where AI and digital tools can improve operational efficiency. 🚀

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