

OCTOBER 2026

FOCUS

MURKY WATERS

Global trade in a disrupted world



**THE €3 PARCEL DUTY'S
HIDDEN COSTS**

**CHINA'S ELECTRIC
TRUCKS HEAD WEST**

**HORMUZ: WHEN CRISIS
HITS THE HUMANITARIAN
SUPPLY CHAIN**

**WHO HOLDS THE
UK'S LOGISTICS
CAPABILITY PICTURE?**



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Importance of global trade

Export and import are a fact of life, from fashion to steel and anything in between. Global trade equals lower prices and better availability of a variety of products but that is often no longer the case.



In the UK, exports account for roughly 30.6% of GDP, totalling around £927 billion and imports account for about 31.9% of GDP, totalling around £945 billion. Bringing total trade to around 62.5% of the country's total economic output. The UK traditionally runs a small trade deficit, importing slightly more than it exports which might be a surprise to some people. But that is before you break it down to product types.

Some people claim that there are barriers to export products such as foodstuff, fish and shellfish and others that there are barriers to import things like animal products and plants.

Then there is regulatory change such as licencing, documentation and policy interfering at a local level for both export and import but also on the global stage.

Sanctions continue to bite for example against Russia with lengthy legislation, with people, companies and countries sanctioned.

The USA continues to use tariffs to affect local and international trade

against the EU, Canada and China for example, who in turn use retaliatory tariffs.

The UK and the EU are working toward a new Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement which is hoped to start in 2027, that will dynamically align Great Britain's food safety, animal health, and plant health rules with EU standards.

Then there are other considerations such as money laundering, forced labour, child labour, modern slavery, whether or not minerals like lithium, cobalt, nickel, rare earths, diamonds or gold are in the supply chain.

And exactly where does logistics, transport, customs and compliance fit in? Everywhere and sometimes nowhere!

It's a wonder that anyone bothers with global trade at all!

But it's global trade that makes the world go round. No one country is self-sufficient in everything so we do have to trade internationally. But given all that is mentioned above who do we have to do it for us? An army of lawyers, specialists both consultants

and employees, warehouse staff, freight agents, customs specialists, logisticians, hauliers, project managers, computer specialists and AI. But many companies decide on a product and then employ junior staff to sort all this out, don't give the time to them to sort it out and then go ballistic when it doesn't work and they end up with fines and sometimes prison terms! This often leaves Directors to complain they 'didn't know' so this makes them less liable? Of course not!

Instead of complaining what we need is skills in all these things, from entry level to degree level and beyond. This where your Institute comes in. Offering training at all levels from starter to degree to specialist. From short courses in customs and international trade compliance to longer courses in transport and logistics that lead to degrees. What's stopping you from having an interesting and fulfilling career. ☹

SUSAN MORLEY FCILT
Chair, Customs and International Trade Compliance Forum, CILT(UK)

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

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ADAM ANDREWS

Commercial Director,
East Midlands Airport

Adam Andrews is Commercial Director at East Midlands Airport, the UK's largest dedicated air cargo hub, where he leads growth across its cargo and passenger business. He previously served as Head of Strategic Insights at parent company Manchester Airports Group, and before that held network development and scheduling roles at British Airways.

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DR HAJAR FATORACHIAN

Associate Professor in Supply Chain,
Leeds Business School

Dr Hajar Fatorachian is a Reader/Associate Professor in Supply Chain Sustainability and Digitalisation, and she is a dynamic and forward-thinking academic whose career bridges higher education, research, and industry. With extensive experience in operations and supply chain management, she combines a strong academic record with hands-on industrial expertise.

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ADRIAN LEIGH

CEO,
Logistics Learning Alliance

Adrian Leigh is CEO and Managing Director of Logistics Learning Alliance (LLA), a UK training provider in commercial and humanitarian logistics, whose Certification in Humanitarian Logistics, run with the Fritz Institute and CILT, won a European Supply Chain Award.

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RICO LUMAN

Senior Sector Economist, Transport
and Logistics, ING

Rico Luman is a senior sector economist with a focus on transport, logistics and the automotive industry. He also looks at ports economics and mobility in general. Formerly he worked as a credit analyst and joined ING in 2001. Rico studied economics as well as law at the University of Amsterdam.



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Seeing what's coming

This issue's global trade special has one thread running through it. Goods still move by ship, road, rail and aircraft, but the advantage now goes to those who can see disruption coming and have a plan ready when it arrives.

The past year has not been short of tests. Adrian Leigh, from the Logistics Learning Alliance sets out how the disruption to the Strait of Hormuz, where ship movements reportedly fell by around 95%, rippled through fuel, freight and insurance costs. It more than doubled what it cost UNHCR to move relief supplies from Dubai to Sudan and Chad. It's a sobering reminder that when commercial supply chains wobble, humanitarian ones feel it first. Shaista Kanwal takes us into the Middle East, Africa and South Asia air cargo corridor, where calm 'simply isn't on the calendar'.

There, resilience is shifting from firefighting to forecasting.

Closer to home, Mike Garratt and Neil Gould of our Public Policies Committee let the data do the talking. World trade has grown, but UK exports have fallen, and the UK's Logistics Performance Index ranking has slipped from an average of eighth to 19th. Jason Silver FCILT echoes their call for joined-up policy across government. He argues that no one holds the full picture of the UK's logistics capability, and that CILT(UK) is well placed to help build it.

Regulation keeps moving too. Susan Morley FCILT unpacks the US consultation on supply chain disclosure and the EU's customs overhaul. Our look at the EU's new €3 duty on low-value parcels shows how a small charge can quietly multiply once returns and exchanges

enter the picture. It's worth modelling before the golden quarter.

Then there's the shape of what's next. John Lucy FCILT reports back from Shanghai on China's electric truck revolution. Battery-electric trucks are now around 30% of China's heavy truck market, and the first Chinese manufacturer is set to arrive in the UK later this year. Dr Hajar Fatorachian of Leeds Business School reminds us that technology alone won't fix fragmented supply chains: it has to start with the decision you're trying to improve.

These are different authors in different corners of the world, but they reach the same conclusion: resilience is built long before the crisis hits. I hope this issue gives you a few ideas for building yours.

MEL STARK

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LOGISTICS & TRANSPORT FOCUS

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CILT(UK) appoints two new Vice-Presidents

The Institute is pleased to announce the appointment of Steven Bishop FCILT and Stephen Fidler OBE FCILT as Vice-Presidents, bringing extensive public and private sector experience to the Institute.

The appointments strengthen CILT(UK)'s representation of the transport and logistics profession and its role in supporting members. Both Steven Bishop and Stephen Fidler bring extensive experience across transport, government and the wider built environment, spanning policy, strategy, planning, infrastructure and passenger transport.

Steven Bishop is also Director at Steer, a leading international consultancy specialising in infrastructure, cities and transport advisory and planning.

A transport planning and economic development professional, Steven has worked for more than two decades across the public and private sectors, working with government, operators, investors, academia and local communities to integrate economic development, planning and mobility.

Steven is also an active contributor to the profession, regularly speaking at industry events and aiding discussions on local and regional transport,

sustainable growth and the wider role of transport.

Commenting on his new role, Steven Bishop said:

"I'm delighted to take on the role of Vice-President at CILT(UK). At a time when transport has such an important role in supporting economic growth, connecting communities and assisting new homes and development. CILT(UK) has a crucial role in bringing different perspectives together, sharing knowledge and strengthening the professional expertise we need to adapt and grow."

"I look forward to adding my experience and helping ensure our profession continues to make a strong contribution to the challenges and opportunities ahead."

Stephen Fidler is also the Director of Local Passenger Transport & Inclusion at the Department for Transport (DfT). As a senior civil servant with more than 30 years' experience in transport across government. His previous roles include the No 10 Policy Unit and the then Department of the Environment, as well as senior positions within DfT. He is a Fellow of CIHT and CILT(UK) and received an OBE for services to transport in the 2019 New Year Honours List.



Steven Bishop



Stephen Fidler

Commenting on his appointment, Stephen Fidler said:

"I am hugely motivated by the difference transport can make for people and communities. It is a privilege to be invited to become one of the Vice-Presidents and play my part in supporting the Institute's vital work. I have seen the difference that committed and skilled transport professionals make to people's lives and growth. I look forward to supporting that work and helping the Institute grow from strength to strength."

Leon Daniels OBE FCILT, CILT(UK) President, added:

"Firstly, I want to thank our two outgoing Vice-Presidents, Steve Gooding, CB & FCILT, and Elizabeth Gilliard, FCILT, for their service. They have been great advocates, and I know they will continue to support us in the future."

"The appointments of Steven Bishop and Stephen Fidler are a perfect combination – bringing together perspectives from consultancy, government, transport planning, policy and passenger transport. As Vice-Presidents, they will help us champion professional excellence, encourage knowledge sharing and support the contribution of transport and logistics professionals to the UK's economy and communities."



Novus programme reaches new milestone with 26 university partnerships across the UK



The Novus Programme has achieved a significant milestone, welcoming eight new university partners over the past year and expanding its network to 26 universities across the UK.

University of Greenwich, University of Lancashire & University of Wales Trinity Saint David have joined existing Novus universities, Anglia Ruskin University, Aston University, Cardiff University, Coventry University, Keele University, Middlesex University London, Northumbria University Newcastle, University of Bradford, University of Derby, University of Huddersfield, University of Hull, University of Leeds, University of Lincoln, University of Northampton, University of Salford Manchester, University of Sheffield, University of Westminster and University of Worcester.

This growth marks an exciting chapter for the early careers initiative, which continues to connect ambitious students with leading employers in

logistics, supply chain management, and a wide range of business functions.

The Novus Programme is a charitable initiative designed to bridge the gap between academia and industry. Through partnerships with universities and employers, Novus raises awareness of career opportunities within logistics and supply chain while equipping students with the skills, experiences, and industry connections needed to succeed in today's competitive job market.

Since its launch, the programme has helped hundreds of students gain valuable insight into the sector through exclusive internships, yearlong placements, graduate opportunities, industry events, site visits, mentoring, and employability support.

The addition of eight new university partners in the last year reflects the growing recognition of Novus' impact in developing future talent and supporting employers facing increasing demand for skilled graduates.

Open to all first and second year undergraduate students, the Novus Programme offers opportunities across a broad range of disciplines. While logistics and supply chain management remain at its core, students can also explore careers in areas including IT, HR, finance, marketing, operations, and business management.

"Logistics and supply chain management wasn't an area that I was overly aware of but it was very clear to me that it was an area that had opportunity. I genuinely believe that Novus sets you apart from other business graduates. It gives you a set of skills which are in really high demand. Novus gave me the skills and Arla gave me the opportunity."
Sales Controller Value Retail, Arla, Novus Graduate.

"I'm passionate about connecting students with opportunities that can shape their future careers. Working closely with academics helps me reach the right students, and building strong relationships with our sponsors has enabled us to provide exclusive opportunities for Novus students."
Zara Nash, Novus Programme Manager, CILT(UK)

Reaching 26 university partnerships is a fantastic achievement and a testament to the strength of collaboration between CILT(UK), higher education and industry. We are proud to provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop their skills, build professional networks, and discover rewarding careers. Welcoming eight new universities this year enables us to engage with even more talented students and continue addressing the future skills needs of the sector.

The programme's continued expansion demonstrates its commitment to creating accessible career pathways for students while supporting employers in attracting diverse, skilled, and work-ready graduates.

As Novus looks ahead, the programme remains focused on strengthening partnerships, enhancing student experiences, and inspiring the next generation of professionals who will shape the future of logistics, supply chain, and business.



CILT(UK) welcomes Fliss O'Hara and Lee White to its Board



Fliss O'Hara



Lee White

CILT(UK) is pleased to welcome Fliss O'Hara FCILT and Lee White FCILT to its Board, following their election to the roles.

Both bring extensive experience from across the transport, logistics and wider business landscape, alongside a strong commitment to the Institute and its role in supporting professionals, sharing knowledge and raising the profile of the sector.

Their appointments strengthen the breadth of experience represented on the CILT(UK) Board and support the Institute's ongoing work to champion the profession, develop future talent, share knowledge and increase its influence across the sector.

Lee White is a long-standing CILT(UK) member whose career spans bus and coach operations, local government, consultancy, transport planning and infrastructure development. He has held a variety of operational and commercial roles before moving into local government, where he managed a portfolio of major transport projects and served as Head of Transport.

Lee originally joined the Institute to access its education choices. He has since become an active CILT(UK) volunteer, serving on a regional committee and currently contributing to the Bus and Coach Forum, Public Policies Committee and as Chair of the Bus and Coach Policy Group.

Today, Lee works across bus and rail, infrastructure development and transport planning, with a focus on projects that influence transport behaviours and help shape policy.

Lee decided to stand for the CILT(UK) Board as an opportunity to give something back to the Institute and contribute to its future development.

Lee explained: *"I have seen a change in how the Institute operates and firmly believe we need to strengthen the education offering and grow our influence. Hopefully, I can add value in these areas whilst also bringing experience of board level activity from my role at the Chamber of Commerce. By joining the Board I hope I can widen everyone interest in our work and promote our education offer."*

Felicity O'Hara, known as Fliss, began her career in the aerospace industry, where she became CIMA qualified, before moving into logistics following the events that impacted the aerospace sector in 2001.

She subsequently moved into commercial leadership, where she established a full Business Development function and developed vast experience in customer relations – supporting tendering and business growth. Fliss joined Whistl in April 2023 as Commercial Director, before being promoted to Managing Director of Fulfilment in September 2024. She joined the Executive Board in January 2025.

Fliss hopes to bring practical experience from within a logistics business, alongside her expertise in financial leadership, governance and strategic decision-making.

She explained: *"I believe strong governance and financial discipline create the foundations for growth. My aim on the Board would be to*

bring practical industry experience, balancing strategic ambition with the realities faced by businesses and professionals across the logistics sector every day."

Together, Fliss and Lee bring complementary perspectives from across logistics, transport operations, commercial leadership, local government, consultancy, governance and professional development.

Helen Hardy, CILT(UK) CEO, added: *"We are thrilled to welcome Fliss and Lee to the Board. Both bring vast amounts of experience and insight from across the transport and logistics profession – but most importantly I am excited about their passion and commitment in supporting our members and strengthening our sector."*

"I'm also confident they will help us as we continue to deliver greater value for our members – ensuring we work towards our long-term goal of professionalising the profession. They are joining at a fascinating time for the Institute, and I look forward to collaborating with them." ☺





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UK GOVERNMENT AIMING TO INCREASE RAIL FREIGHT BY 40% BY 2040

Great British Railways (GBR) have received a target from the government to increase rail freight by at least 40% by 2040.

The Department for Transport announced the target on Tuesday 8 September, the same day that the Railways Bill establishing GBR entered its committee stage in the House of Lords.

Rail freight currently carries goods worth around £34 billion annually. Achieving the 2040 target could add around £15 billion to the value of goods transported by rail each year.

The programme has also been linked to road congestion and emissions, with estimations that achieving the new target could avoid up to one million tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually compared with moving the same freight by road.



UK FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS NEED PROTECTING ACCORDING TO NEW REPORT

A recent report from the National Audit Office (NAO) has revealed that the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) needs to collaborate more closely with households, communities and industry to ensure the UK's food supply chain can handle increasingly likely disruptions such as extreme weather, cyber-attacks and disease outbreaks.

Food has been designated by the government as one of 13 Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) sectors regarded as essential to the country's functioning. During recent crises, including the Covid-19 pandemic, private sector businesses helped to keep the food supply chain operating without requiring substantial government support. However, the risks threatening the supply chain are becoming more probable and potentially more damaging, especially with climate change increasing the frequency of extreme weather. Consequently, Defra is now uncertain as to whether the private sector could withstand future disruptions without stronger government intervention.

PASSENGER NUMBERS FALL DURING PEAK SEASON AT HEATHROW

Heathrow airport has seen a fall in passengers during the peak summer holiday months - flagging challenges across the aviation sector.

The airport said that 7.87 million passengers travelled through them during August, down 2.1% year-on-year, despite a record busy day on Sunday 2 August with nearly 272,000 passengers. Similar trends were seen earlier this summer, with passenger numbers falling by 1.8% year-on-year in June and 1.5% year-on-year in July.

The London airport was recently overtaken by Istanbul as Europe's busiest airport in July but remained the most punctual airport in Europe with 98% of passengers waiting less than five minutes at security.

NEXT ISSUE

Rail and freight



- Rail freight: from coal to commerce
- High-speed rail revolution
- Smart railways: digitisation and connectivity



HIGHEST EVER DIESEL PRICES TO AFFECT THE UK'S SUPPLY CHAIN AND ECONOMY

Diesel prices are likely to hit all-time high next week, according to the RAC, as businesses warn of a knock-on effect on prices due to higher costs for the movement of goods.

The RAC, a British automotive services company, said that the average price of diesel is now at 195.32p per litre - which is only 4p off the record of 199.09p set in June 2022.

Prices of fuel are rising again due to the collapse of the US-Iran ceasefire in July, which sparked a new surge in the cost of oil.

According to the RAC, the cost of a full tank of petrol for a 55-litre family car is now £94.61, which is £21.55 higher than at the end of February when the Iran war began, and the cost to fill up with diesel is now £107.43, which is £29 higher than the end of February. Simon Williams, Head of Policy at the RAC, said that this price increase means that the average household which buys fuel twice a month is having to find an £43 extra for petrol and £58 for diesel compared to the start of the conflict.



TRAIN OPERATOR RENATIONALISED AFTER 30 YEARS

Chiltern Railways has been brought into public ownership after 30 years as a private company, making it the 10th rail company now under the Great British Railways (GBR).

Chiltern Railways, which was privatised in 1996, operates services from London Marylebone to Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Warwickshire, as well as destinations in the West Midlands.

The Government said the transfer into public ownership would tackle overcrowding by introducing 25 additional daily services from December, and the Department for Transport (DfT) said the additional weekday services under GBR would provide 10,000 extra seats. The DfT also claimed that they would include half hourly services during weekdays on the Chiltern Main Line between London and Birmingham, as well as more weekend services.

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Experts at CILT(UK) have expressed their support for continued growth in air transport but are very clear in their view that Heathrow's expansion plans must reflect how the aviation market has changed since the early 2010s, be fit for purpose and be affordable in respect of additional charges levied on passengers including many who will not experience an expanded airport.

CILT(UK) recently submitted its response to the draft HENPS (Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement) consultation. Setting out its views, based on the expertise and knowledge of its membership in logistics and transport. Drawing on its

members' expertise across logistics and transport, CILT(UK) highlights rising passenger numbers alongside stable aircraft movements, driven by larger aircraft and higher load factors.

Chris Tarry, Chair of the Aviation Policy Group at CILT(UK), said: "The Institute agrees with the government that air transport will continue to grow, but this growth must be managed to ensure that the benefits continue to outweigh the impacts. Over recent years whilst passenger numbers have grown, the number of flights has not, as the average size of aircraft serving the UK market has grown.

Experts also noted the reduction in the proportion of connecting passengers at Heathrow as airlines fill their aircraft

with more point-to-point passengers and at the same time new generation of aircraft have resulted in direct services from North America to smaller cities in Europe replacing the need to transfer. While total demand continues to grow, the structure of demand has changed significantly since the early 2010s, which was the basis for the Airports Commission's analysis, on which the HENPS continues to be based.

Chris added: "Heathrow cannot be considered in isolation – we need an airport strategy that looks at capacity and demand across the whole country. With expansion already approved at Gatwick, Stansted and Luton, and further capacity available at airports

The UK needs a clear, coordinated airports strategy



such as Manchester and Edinburgh, the Government must consider how Heathrow fits into the wider UK aviation network.”

CILT(UK) argues that the HENPS does not adequately deal with air cargo. It does not include any air cargo forecasts and, while the economic and trade benefits are clear and substantial, there is no real understanding of how the freight sector operates. Most tonnage is carried in the belly holds of long-haul flights from Heathrow, but there are significant all-cargo flights operating as part of an integrated network of multimodal freight activity across the whole country, with East Midlands and Stansted as the main hubs.

As well as submitting a response to the draft HENPS, CILT(UK) has provided written evidence to the House of Commons Transport Committee, which is undertaking a scrutiny inquiry into the HENPS.

Chris concluded: “A ‘public transport first’ approach is the right ambition, but it will only work if it is supported by better rail links and clear measures to move people away from car use, beyond the drop off charges levied by airports which have a negligible impact on behavioural change.

“CILT(UK) does not seek to take sides in the debate over Heathrow’s economic benefits. Instead, we want to focus on a practical question: how should the expansion be paid for?

Who should take the risk? and beyond this, what is actually affordable in the real world? As it stands there are many questions that have yet to be addressed arising from the current proposals to expand Heathrow.”

As the Government develops its policy, it should ensure that future capacity is based on up-to-date and the latest demand figures, ensure air freight is fully included and planned for, and that the funding and delivery of vital access improvements are visibly set out.

A coordinated, UK-wide approach will be essential to ensuring aviation growth delivers maximum benefit while managing its wider impacts. ☹

Celebrating excellence at the Annual Conference and Awards Ceremony





CILT(UK)'s Annual Conference & Awards took place at the East Midlands Conference Centre on Thursday 24th September.

The conference provided an opportunity for senior leaders shaping strategy, people and performance in logistics, transport and supply chain to focus on what effective leadership looks like in a constantly changing environment. The awards evening celebrated the outstanding achievements in our profession – honouring innovation, leadership and best practice across the UK.

The conference began with a welcome from our Chair, Anna-Jane Hunter, followed by a keynote from our headline sponsor, Toyota Automated Logistics. James Osborn, Director of Customer Engagement, and Christina Morgan, Business Development Director, from Toyota discussed how to build fluid supply chains that think, adapt and perform – stating that we “cannot introduce tomorrow’s technology while developing yesterday’s workforce”.

Our first keynote session of the day was on Leadership & Professionalism by Katy Leeson, Former MD of Steven Bartlett’s Social Chain. Katy spoke about imposter syndrome and the importance of putting people, confidence and culture at the heart of performance and growth in order to unlock the full potential of leaders.

The second keynote session of the day was on Growth & Productivity, by Shao Lin, Chief Data & AI Officer at InPost. InPost were #1 in CILT(UK)’s Top 30 Logistics Service Providers for 2026. Shao explored how organisations can scale operations without compromising on consistency, reliability or customer trust. He examined how technology and data can strengthen performance without creating unnecessary complexity, and how a culture of continuous improvement supports sustainable growth – commenting that “we’ve all experienced disruption, it’s about what we do afterwards”.





This keynote was followed directly by a panel session, led by Fabiola Gara Balmori from the Ministry of Defence, about leading high-performance cultures for growth and productivity. The panellists – Vicki Hooper, Chief People Officer at Unipart; Avery Morgan, CEO at Pod Talent; and Tim Eaton, Manufacturing and Supply Chain Director at Rockwool – outlined how leaders can build high-performing organisations by shaping cultures that drive productivity, support change and empower people to deliver consistently strong results. Drawing on perspectives from logistics, defence and organisational leadership, the panellists debated the behaviours, decisions and leadership approaches that can turn culture into a lasting competitive advantage.

After a short networking break with our exhibitors – Toyota Automated Logistics; oneAdvanced; aptean; Dawsongroup; DP World; Hatmill; M6toll; PTV Logistics; Solvares Logistics; and Winder Phillips Associates – an Innovation & Transformation discussion was led by Erin Meehan, Head of Partnerships at CILT(UK). Erin was joined by James



Moffatt, Director at Baringa; Darren Twistleton, COO at KernTerminal UK; Jim Harsthornel, Managing Director at Unipart; and Grace Smith, Supply Chain Director UKI&N at Mars. Together, they explored how experienced leaders make confident decisions when the path ahead is unclear. Against a backdrop of geopolitical instability, changing regulation, shifting customer expectations and technological disruption, the group considered how strong leaders can balance long-term strategy with immediate uncertainty.

This discussion was followed by an Innovation & Transformation Sustainability Panel, led by Tom Fitz-Walter from TMX Transform. The panellists – Paul Farr, Vice President for Ground and Rail Europe at Ceva Logistics; Nicholas Mazzi, VP Sustainability for DP World; Shayley Mann CMILT, Head of Supply Chain Transformation at Mountain Warehouse; and Tony Byrne, Senior Supply Chain and Operations Leader at Boathouse Consulting – examined how organisations are redesigning, operating and leading their supply chains.



Director from Symmetra, who answered the question: Are senior leaders and the next generation aligned on what the future workforce needs? The panellists were: Denis Twomey, Global People Capability Lead – Procurement & Supply Chain, Babcock; Tara Matthews, Project Manager at the Rail Delivery Group; Daniel Blair, General Manager at B&M Retail Ltd; and Amanda Barnes, VP Talent Management, Development and Certified Learning UKI, DHL Supply Chain. They explored how leadership, culture, career development and evolving expectations can build engaged and future-ready teams.

Following an afternoon networking break, Tim MacDonald from SSE and Dan Jones from DHL delivered an Infrastructure & Investment keynote on how logistics is enabling the UK's energy transition. To learn more about the collaboration between the two organisations, please click [here](#). Their keynote session was followed by a senior-level panel, hosted by

Daniel Parker-Klein, Director of Public Policy, Communications and Insight at CILT(UK). Daniel was joined by Josh Finch, Logistics Risk Manager at the TT Club, and Neil Gould, Chair of CILT(UK)'s Freight and Logistics Policy Group, both of whom examined how the strategic decisions and investments needed to unlock capacity, strengthen resilience and drive long-term economic growth.

After a drinks reception, sponsored by oneAdvanced, our Awards evening was opened by Helen Hardy, CEO of CILT(UK). Helen welcomed attendees and congratulated our finalists, announcing that the evening marked the first year of CILT(UK)'s Awards for Excellence taking place since being acknowledged with the Outstanding TrustMark Award - recognising their strong governance, processes and standards. The host for the awards, Dave Keeling from Laughology, then took to the stage to announce the winners, with a break in between for dinner.

The morning finished with a Leadership & Professionalism keynote on building trust, talent, and high-performance operations. Ian Keilty, CEO of Whistl, used his extensive operational experience to highlight the behaviours, standards and mindset that build trust, strengthen performance and enhance credibility in a complex and fast-moving sector.

After a networking lunch, the afternoon was kicked off by an interactive Pecha Kucha-style debate on future skills and talent with Kelly Hobson, MD from Shape Tomorrow, Phil Wood, Director of Strategic Programmes at Mondelez, and Jacqueline Henderson, Head of Contract Review UKI at CEVA Logistics. The trio debated which leadership skills will matter most throughout the next 100 years, with each speaker championing a different perspective – from strategic foresight and resilience to emotional intelligence, systems thinking and data literacy.

This debate was then followed by a Future Skills & Talent panel, hosted by Antoinette Irvine, Associate Executive

The 2026 winners are:

Adaptive Capacity – Strategic & Organisational Resilience

- GB Global Government & Defence

Excellence in Environmental Impact

- Leidos Europe/Kuehne & Nagel, NAD Group, Ministry of Defence

Excellence in Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- Customer1st (UK) Ltd

Excellence in Operations and Supply Chain Management

- Simply Supply Chain/ASDA/ORCA Software

Excellence in Passenger Transport

- Torbay Council/WSP/Stagecoach

Excellence in People & Culture

- The Very Group

Excellence in the use of Technology

- Transport for London

Logistics Best Practice

- SEC Storage

Logistics Research Network

- University of Southampton/ Versapak International Ltd/Inteliports/Solent Transport

Operational Excellence in Logistics & Transport

- Bicester Transport

Rising Star

- Samuel J Shirley – Shirley Transport Solutions Ltd

Unsung Hero

- Kirsty Liggins – Ministry of Defence, NAD Group

Sir Robert Lawrence Award

- Vice Admiral Sir Andy Kyte KBE CB FCILT

Celebrating 30 years of LRN

CILT(UK) marked three decades of the Logistics Research Network Conference this year, with the 30th anniversary event hosted by Liverpool John Moores University from Wednesday 2 to Friday 4 September.

Day one began with a PhD & Early Career Researcher Workshop, led by Liz Jackson, followed by a networking lunch where the delegates were welcomed to LJMU by Professor Keith George, Pro-Vice

Chancellor for Research and Knowledge Exchange at LJMU, and Dr Christian Matthews, Director of the School of Engineering and the Built Environment at LJMU. The pair discussed the history of logistics in

Liverpool and the intersection of societal changes and challenges facing the industry today.

The conference was opened by Dr Dimitrios Paraskevadakis FCILT, LRN Conference Chair, who discussed his own career journey and introduced the agenda for the three days, followed by Professor Vasco Sanchez Rodrigues from Cardiff University, the Chair of CILT(UK)'s LRN Forum, who discussed the evolution of LRN and importance of events such as these.

Our first keynote speaker of the conference was John Lucy FCILT FIEEx, Founder and CEO of John Lucy International, a senior transport and logistics leader with over 40 years of experience. John discussed the

Industry panel hosted by Geoff Clarke, who was joined by (from left to right) Tim Morris, Louis Jones, Kelly Hobson, Chris Rowland and Professor Thanh Trung Nguyen



current geopolitical climate, and the impact that has had on global supply chains, and the rise of the electric vehicle market in the UK.

The second keynote session of the day was by Ruth Wood, CEO of Mersey Maritime, who discussed maritime's economic impact in Liverpool, where the third busiest estuary in the UK is located, and the necessary future skills in regards to data analytics, autonomous systems, cyber resilience and low carbon fuels.

After the keynote sessions, our first parallel research sessions began, covering topics such as: Sustainable freight, decarbonisation and modal shift; Digital supply chains and AI; Port and Maritime logistics; and Global trade and supply chain sustainability. These sessions allowed for delegates to present their research findings, share knowledge and discuss solutions to ongoing problems within the sector.

Day one ended with an Awards Ceremony and Dinner, celebrating the research and accomplishments of professionals within our industry. Congratulations to:

- **Rosie Cullen Targett, from Cardiff University, for the best MSc dissertation – 'Renewable Energy in UK Ports: Systemic Barriers, Enabling Factors, and Decarbonisation Strategies'**
- **Dr Ruikai Su, from Cardiff University, who won the James Cooper Cup for the best PhD dissertation – 'Modelling and Estimation of In-port Ship Emissions: A Scalable Multi-stage Data-driven Framework'**
- **The winners of best paper for Impact Excellence – 'Iterative Stakeholder-Driven Development of an Interactive Online Planning Tool for Electric HGV Charging Infrastructure in Scotland' – Fariya, Utomo, Logan, Cole, Kodikara, Walker, Greening, O'Connor and Gripton from Heriot-Watt University**

Day Two began with our third keynote session of the conference by Professor Phil Leigh, from the University of Cumbria, on 'The Irish Sea Rim – Strategic Logistics and Regional Connectivity'. This session

focused on how ports and logistics support employment, manufacturing and international trade around the ISR.

The morning continued with a set of parallel research sessions on: Port and maritime logistics; Farming and livestock supply chains; Logistics education, employability and leadership; and Global trade and supply chain sustainability.

After a networking lunch, Professor Geoff Clarke, Chair of the Environmental & Sustainability Forum at CILT(UK), moderated a freight decarbonisation industry plenary which included sessions on policy, operations, zero-emission vehicles, and sustainable infrastructure. This plenary concluded with an industry panel on decarbonisation challenges and solutions with Kelly Hobson, Chris Rowland, Louis Jones, Tim Morris, and Professor Thanh Trung Nguyen.

Day two concluded with further parallel research sessions, then a closing speech by Helen Hardy, CEO of CILT(UK):

"And that brings Day Two to a close. Thirty years of LRN is a remarkable achievement, but what matters most is not the longevity - it's the contribution of ideas shared, questions challenged, the evidence debated and the thinking that has been provoked. Because research only really matters when it changes how we understand something and, ultimately, how we do something.

"So, as you leave today, I hope you take away one new idea, one new question, and perhaps one assumption you're prepared to challenge.

"Thank you for your contribution to LRN over 30 years – and here's to the next 30!"

The third and final day of the conference kicked off with further parallel research sessions on 'Sustainable freight, decarbonisation & modal shift' and 'Last mile & urban logistics', followed by two concurrent workshops. The first workshop, 'Towards a UK Subject Benchmark for Transport, Logistics and Supply Chain Management Education', began with an evidence presentation by LRN

Conference Chair Dr Dimitrios Paraskevadis FCILT and Dr Robyn Pyne from LJMU, followed by a session on workforce development, skills gaps and graduate readiness by Domina Monka from Home Bargains and Zara Nash, University Programme Manager from Novus. The second workshop, 'Decarbonisation and last-mile logistics', began with an evidence presentation by Matt Lott from WSP and Jay Daniel from the University of Derby, followed by a session on the zero-emission vehicle transition in practice, fleet data and deployment experience by Dominic Scholfield FCILT from Cenex.

The conference finished with a closing plenary on research synthesis and workshop outcomes by Professor Paul Townsend, Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor for Health Innovation, Technology and Science; Professor Britta Gammelgaard, Editor-in-Chief at The International Journal of Logistics Management; LRN Conference Chair, Dr Dimitrios Paraskevadis FCILT; and Dr Jay Daniel from the University of Derby. Professor Vasco Sanchez Rodrigues then announced that LRN 2027 will be held at Cranfield University. After lunch, some delegates then got the opportunity to stay on campus for the afternoon and experience LJMU's brand new, state-of-the-art Full-Mission Maritime Bridge Simulator.

Darrell McGivern, Director of Awarding Services, said:

"The 2026 Logistics Research Network conference saw the coming together of industry professionals to share thought-provoking research and insights into current issues affecting our sector.

"Celebrating its 30th year, LRN 2026 provided a fantastic opportunity for researchers, academics and industry professionals to collaborate and share thoughts on solutions to real-world problems that are currently prominent within logistics, transport and supply chains.

"The sense of community was tangible, and I was thrilled to be a part of it.

"A huge thanks to the LRN Forum, Liverpool John Moores University and the CILT(UK) team who made this such a huge success!"



***“In supply chains,
the costliest
disruption is often
the one you never
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Christopher Cook

Christopher Cook

Maersk UK & Ireland's Managing Director Christopher Cook tells Focus that global trade is being redrawn rather than reduced, with Asian volumes still growing despite a 40% fall in Middle East imports during the Hormuz crisis. In this interview, he also discusses post-Brexit border friction, pressure on port capacity and the role of AI in spotting supply chain risks.

How would you describe the state of global trade right now?

When we look at global trade, we are often influenced by the container market, as ocean freight represents around 93% of world trade. The second quarter was another clear proof point of the new era of heightened volatility we have entered.

However, despite this global volatility, we have continued to see strong and steady demand from the Far East. This is creating significantly more unbalanced trade flows, a greater need for capacity and, at the same time, further investment in the infrastructure ecosystem.

While ocean volumes have grown steadily over recent years, there has been general underinvestment in port capacity, resulting in constraints and higher levels of port congestion across multiple geographies. The same is true for landside transportation in many parts of the world. This continues to challenge supply chain capacity and flexibility.

Red Sea rerouting, tariff shifts, Brexit friction – which of these is UK & Ireland trade struggling with most, from what you are seeing?

Each of these factors has a significant impact, and there are other aspects of trade that are also creating challenges. Unfortunately, disruption has become the new normal for global trade, which means we need to continue adapting.

For instance, our new East-West network, with its hub-and-spoke design, is one example of how we are adapting to the constant delays caused mainly by port congestion. The hub-and-spoke design is more resilient to disruptions than a traditional service loop because issues such as bad weather or congestion can be isolated before they affect the wider ocean network. With a schedule reliability target of 90%, cargo owners can reduce the safety buffers in their inventories once again.

Nevertheless, tariff shifts, delays and additional costs caused by events across the Middle East continue to impact all areas of our customers' businesses. As markets evolve and are affected by high levels of uncertainty, we remain focused on helping customers respond quickly to change and maintain the integrity of their supply chains.

With bottlenecks remaining deeply entrenched, we must continue to invest in critical trade infrastructure and scale so that we can keep delivering the best possible value to our customers. The different parts of the supply chain cannot be addressed in isolation; we need to consider the full supply chain ecosystem.

At the beginning of the conflict with Iran, there were 47,000 TEU of cargo en route to Gulf countries. By July, we had delivered 44,000 TEU of that cargo, although not all by sea. By leveraging our work with partners and stakeholders, we were able to flex delivery modes and help deliver on our customers' promises, including medicines, perishables and critical foodstuffs across the region.

Are you seeing genuine shifts in trade patterns – deglobalisation, or is that overstated based on the volumes you're moving?

Generally, there is a lot of discussion about nearshoring and deglobalisation, but the reality appears to be the opposite. Trade from Asia continues to grow.

In Q2 2026, global container trade demand exceeded expectations, growing by between 3% and 4% year-on-year. Looking at individual



“Many of our customers have been able to reduce inventory and, therefore, costs significantly.”

trade lanes, we have of course seen some shifts. Imports into the Middle East contracted by 40%, but this was more than offset by import growth in other regions. The fastest-growing regions were Africa at 13%, Latin America at 7% and North America at 5.8%. Far East exports, especially from China, were once again the main engine of trade growth.

These figures suggest that we are seeing movements in trade patterns, rather than evidence of deglobalisation. Of course, we are not just an ocean provider, and another part of our integrator business shows that these patterns are also affecting air freight.

Global air freight demand, excluding low-value goods, is estimated to have grown by between 6% and 8% in Q2 2026. Growth was driven by strong imports into North America and Europe, up 18% and 6.7% year-on-year respectively in April and May 2026, more than offsetting the 14% contraction in imports into the Middle East.

How real is nearshoring/friend-shoring in practice – are you actually seeing UK trade lanes shift?

Although the intent and interest in nearshoring continues, in reality we have not yet seen any tangible shift. In fact, in 2026 we have seen an even greater share of cargo coming from China, driven by China’s ability to control and reduce production costs while other manufacturing economies continue to struggle with inflationary pressures and, in particular, the fuel crisis.

What does the UK’s post-Brexit trade position look like from where you sit, versus five years ago?

It has been an interesting period. Fundamentally, there has been a decline in goods exports from the UK of around 14% in real terms.

What we have also seen is that trade analysts forecast a strong pivot to Rest of World trade, but this has not happened at the scale anticipated. There has been increased trade with the US, Australia and CPTPP members, but the EU remains an important trading partner for the UK. In 2025, UK exports of goods and services to the EU were

£384 billion, representing 41% of all UK exports. Imports from the EU were £472 billion, representing 50% of the UK total.

We welcome the continued focus from Government on striking trade deals with Rest of World countries. A strong recent example is the new UK-India trade deal. To date, we have helped our customers save over £1 million in duty, and we expect the trade deal to act as a catalyst for further import and export growth with India. We also support further trade deals that help UK businesses and accelerate UK export growth.

It is also fair to say that most traders have, at some point, experienced significant friction at the border following Brexit. Maersk helps customers import a significant portion of the UK’s perishable food, including meat, fruit and vegetables. The operating model for SPS goods has been onerous and costly for traders, and just-in-time supply chains have been prone to delays. Maersk welcomes the government review of SPS processes to support trade, and it will be interesting to see how Defra and the Port Health Authorities can use a new solution to continue keeping borders safe from biological risks.

Northern Ireland has also been an area of discussion, and traders have had to navigate requirements under the Windsor Framework. We have helped customers do this through the current TSS system. The Government plans to launch the new TSS solution in the coming months, and Maersk is committed to supporting customers throughout this period.

To summarise, Brexit has not been easy, but Maersk sees growing potential in cross-border trade with both the EU and Rest of World countries. Of course, Brexit is one major factor affecting UK cross-border trade, but there are many other factors to consider too, particularly areas of conflict and global climate change.

We are committed to supporting customers of all sizes, and it is fantastic to see our UK and Ireland Ocean, Landside, Warehousing, Contract Logistics and Customs products growing. In turn, this helps our customers grow too, which is a positive sign for UK cross-border trade and the UK and Ireland economy.

How exposed is UK & Ireland trade to US-China tensions, given it's not a direct party to them?

Geopolitics has continued to dominate the external environment this year, and our role is to navigate this in the best possible way for our customers. The situation in the Middle East has been a defining challenge for the industry and global trade in 2026, with ripple effects across the global economy, including higher energy prices, a higher cost of living and fertiliser scarcity in some regions.

Unsurprisingly, consumer confidence has taken a hit globally, resulting in softer consumption.

Despite this, global industrial production continued to expand in Q2 2026. Emerging Asia remains the main engine of growth, led by Taiwan, South Korea and China, which grew by 4.6% year-on-year in Q2 2026. US industrial production remains resilient, with 1.3% growth. The resilience in the US may be due to stockpiling to get ahead of any further input price increases.

The Global Composite Purchasing Managers' Index averaged 51.9 in Q2 2026, reflecting continued expansion. Generous fiscal spending and AI-related investments have helped offset the drag from higher energy prices, resulting in a more resilient global economy than initially feared. Geopolitical risks remain elevated, and the outlook continues to be shaped by the evolving diplomatic and security landscape.

What's an underappreciated risk to supply chains that you don't think is getting enough attention?

Capacity constraints in supply chains are a challenge for future growth. I have already mentioned landside and terminal bottlenecks. Maersk is investing heavily through its terminal business, APM Terminals, to enhance productivity and capacity and help address bottlenecks where we operate.

However, building a new terminal or upgrading an existing facility is not something that can be done overnight, and it cannot be handled in isolation from the rest of the supply chain.

The reality is that across Europe, in particular, there has been

underinvestment in infrastructure. As this is an asset-heavy industry, it depends on long-term planning and execution in close collaboration with national stakeholders to deliver the greatest impact.

This need is increasingly being recognised as an important part of national infrastructure planning. At the same time, there are many other underappreciated risks, and these can vary by industry vertical.

In supply chains, the costliest disruption is often the one you never see coming. Early warning signs can be easy to miss, and when disruption hits, critical updates can get lost in the noise. Without clear visibility of what is truly at risk, businesses are forced to choose between reacting too slowly or overreacting. Real foresight buys time, and time creates options.

Investing in visibility, insight and optionality means that whatever risk may hit the supply chain next, customers will be in the best possible position to respond, as we saw recently in Hormuz.

You joined as a trainee in 2002 – what's changed most about the industry since then?

Many things have changed in recent years, but the way information is exchanged and used has probably been the most significant shift.

In 2002, China had only just joined the WTO. The next acceleration of global sourcing was just beginning, and there was still a high degree of paper documentation being moved around.

My first role was on an import desk, receiving large courier pouches of physical documents, matching import documents to GSPs and filing them. Looking at supply chains today, the value added across the supply chain has changed significantly because of the way information is handled and how readily available it is to supply chain players. Documents are now sent digitally, may be validated automatically or interpreted by an AI tool. The interconnected nature of the supply chain has increased, and planning has changed as a result, alongside the speed enabled by technology.

Coming from IMEA, what's the biggest mindset shift in returning to lead UK & Ireland?

The privilege of working internationally is that you bring what you learn with you. I like to think I carry much of the mindset I developed overseas with me here in the UK and Ireland. That said, there are of course differences.

IMEA is home to many of the fastest-growing economies in the world, with rapidly growing populations and rising consumption. India, where I was most recently based, is clearly operating at a different scale. Among other priorities, it is focused on growing its economy by developing its manufacturing base to support its growing population. The business and policy landscape is constantly changing, which requires a lot of agility to stay ahead and adapt. Moving into a more mature economy like the UK, the pace of growth is naturally different and the policy landscape is less changeable, although the competitive landscape remains.

Ultimately, what I take with me is a clear sense of how interconnected economies are, and the opportunities that creates.

What trade trend are you watching most closely right now that you think will define the next few years?

Sustainability is, of course, one of the most important topics, but most people now understand its impact and are deciding how to manage it within their businesses.

Where there is still a forming trend, and uncertainty across the industry, is AI. The real value of AI in upstream planning lies in helping organisations make better decisions under uncertainty.

Maersk invests in AI solutions that make supply chains more efficient and robust. For example, our digital trade and tariff compliance platform is AI-infused and searches for disruptive risks in our customers' supply chains. In other words, we find the weak points in complex, multi-layered supply chains before the cargo gets stuck at a customs station.

Our customers can solve these invisible roadblocks upfront — with our support, if needed — so cargo crosses borders more smoothly. Many of our customers have been able to reduce inventory and, therefore, costs significantly. ☹

Global trade has changed

Five years of political upheaval and climate disruption have upended established supply chain practice. This article examines what the data reveals about UK trade performance, and what policy needs to do next. ↪



Authors: **MIKE GARRATT & NEIL GOULD**
Freight Logistics Policy Group Members, CILT(UK)



During the last five years, the changes in global trade have upset established supply chain practice. Politics and climate change combined have had a detrimental effect, particularly the former in the UK, where since 2021 UK export tonnage has seen a slow decline. Consumer expectations and government priorities are slowly adjusting to these changes. The impact of policy changes on trade is clear from the trends. Clear and consistent policies are needed to navigate the more volatile trading environment and restore growth.

Trends global and UK

The indices below indicate that while mean world imports and exports increased by 20% and 15% respectively, UK imports increased by only 10% and exports fell by 6%, reflecting a post Brexit decline in both the UK's competitiveness and its economic capacity. Similarly, US exports have declined and import growth has been curtailed in part by tariffs. (See figures 1 and 2)

The trend is reflected in containerised traffic where overall volume has remained flat but the emphasis has shifted to South Coast Ports. (See figure 3)

UK RORO trade has declined by 6% in the period from 2021 to 2026. Roro efficiency has declined in the same period. Vehicle dwell time at Dover is longer than in 2021 further affecting vehicle productivity (See figure 4)

UK ranking in the Logistics Performance Index (LPI), a proxy for trading efficiency, indicates that UK slumped from an average 8th position in ten years to 19th place in 2023. This LPI does not reflect the deterioration in RORO activity.

The growth of the Far East

The most important trend in global trade over the last 20 years has been the growth of trade with the Far East. From 2005 to 2025, the Far East has gained market share as an exporter of manufactured goods to all other world regions. Over this time period,

it has grown to exceed half of global imports of machinery and transport equipment (SITC 7) and manufactured consumer goods (SITC 8). There is a small but notable decline in the Far East share of imports of machinery and transport equipment to North America, in light of the US imposing a 100% tariff on Chinese EVs. (See figures 5, 6 and 7)

Policy impacts in UK and US

Two important impacts on trade have been the UK's departure from the EU and the USA's strategies with respect to tariffs.

The following histograms show how the UK's tonnage imports have fallen very little post Brexit but that exports have dropped significantly, reflecting the fact that UK has little choice of supply in terms of goods it sources from the EU but the EU has a much greater choice of its own supply of goods. (See figures 8 and 9)

The EU's trading performance has, however, also been relatively stagnant, as the next histograms reveal. (See figures 10 and 11)

Overall UK imports have remained largely unchanged from their 2016 levels. Despite the presence of non-tariff barriers to trade with the EU, imports only decreased by 6% pointing to the UK's reliance on EU goods, particularly food imports. The EU's share of UK imports remains at approximately 40% and combined with non-EU European and Mediterranean countries, the share is over 60%.

UK exports overall and to the EU fell substantially compared with imports, by a total of 26% from 2016. Nonetheless, the EU still accounts for almost 70% of the UK's exports.

Over half of EU imports are from other EU countries, with the second largest group non-EU European and Mediterranean countries. Of the 20% share, the UK makes up only 3% of EU's imports from the region.

Inter-EU trade has remained at close to 2016 levels, while exports to all other world regions has been decreasing.

Overall, EU trade has only decreased by 2% from 2016 to 2025 while UK trade decreased by 10%, mainly in its exports to the EU.

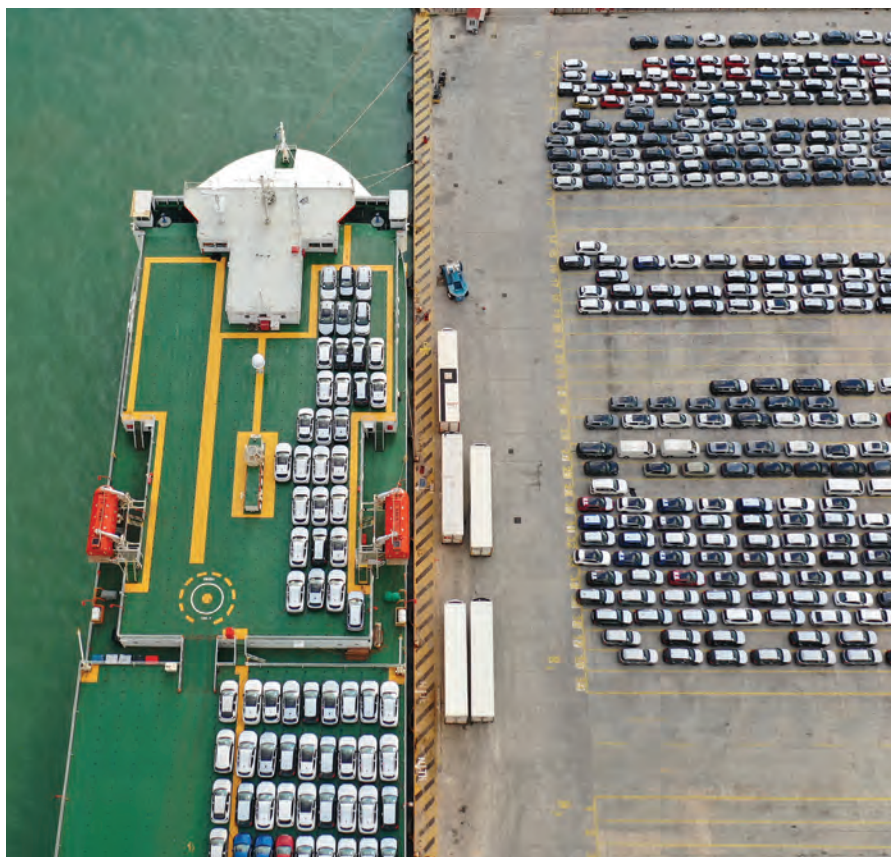


Figure 1

Global unitised exports by world region, index 2018Q1 = 100

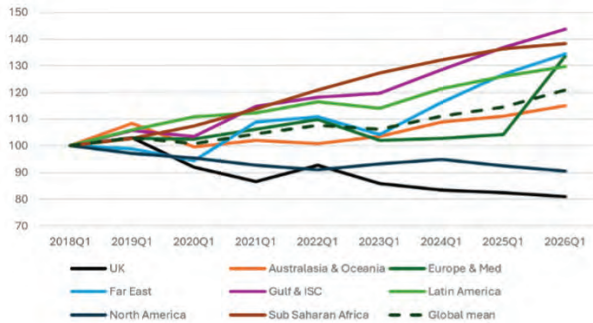
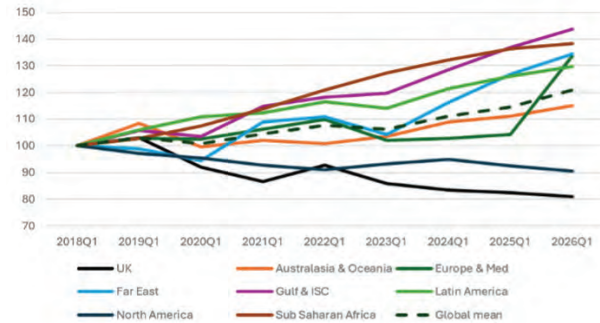


Figure 2

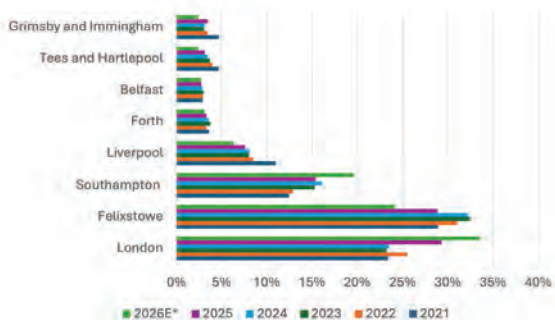
Global unitised imports by world region, index 2018Q1 = 100



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD), MDS Transmodal

Figure 3

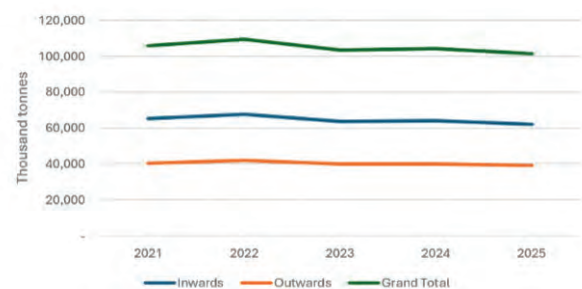
LOLO port market shares, top eight major ports 2021–2026



Source: DfT (*Note: 2026 is estimated based on the first quarter of the year)

Figure 4

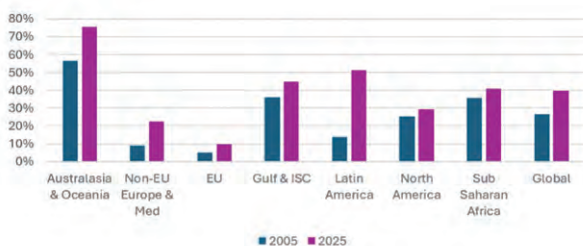
UK RORO trade in tonnes, by direction. Source: DfT and Eurotunnel



Source: DfT and Eurotunnel

Figure 5

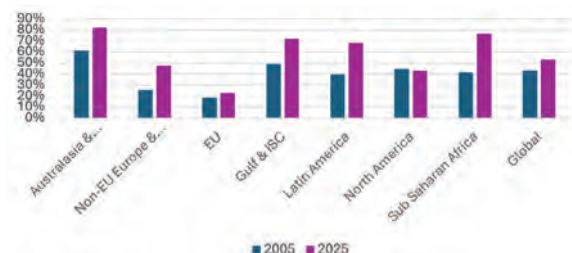
Far East exports' share of manufactured goods (SITC 6) imports by world region, 2005–2025 by tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD), MDS Transmodal

Figure 6

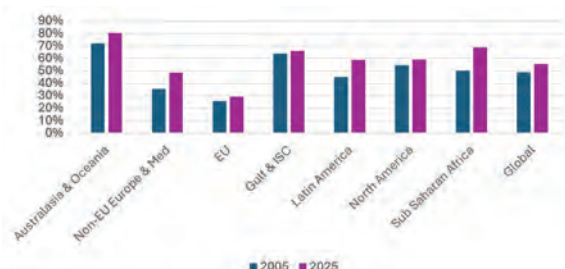
Far East exports' share of machinery and transport equipment (SITC 7) imports by world region, 2005–2025 by tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD), MDS Transmodal

Figure 7

Far East exports' share of misc. manufactured articles (SITC 8) imports by world region, 2005–2025 by tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD)

Figure 8

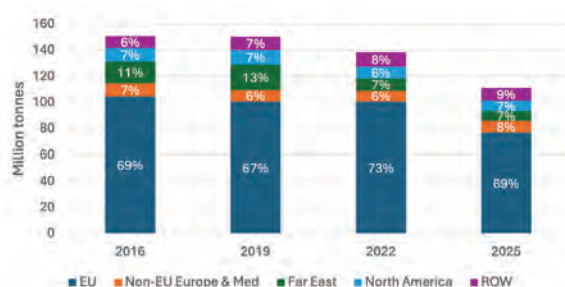
UK imports by world region 2016–2025, in tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD)

Figure 9

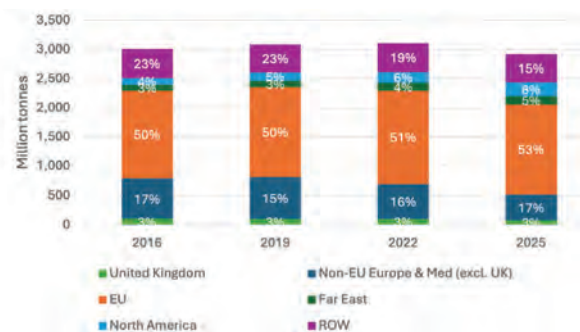
UK exports by world region 2016–2025, in tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD)

Figure 10

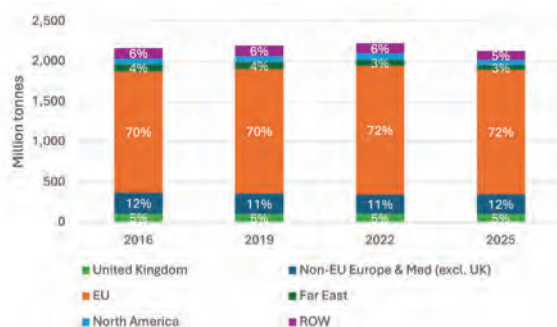
EU imports by world region 2016–2025, in tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD)

Figure 11

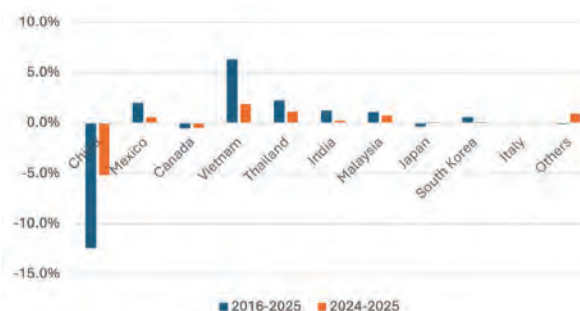
EU exports by world region 2016–2025, in tonnes



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD)

Figure 12

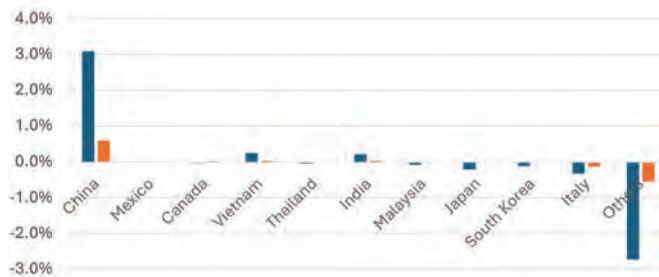
Change in share of total USA imports, 2024 to 2025 (% points)



Source: World Cargo Database (WCD), MDS Transmodal

Figure 13

Change in % share of European imports



The impact of changes in trade agreements and tariffs and policy reaction: the USA

There has been relatively little change in the levels of trade between the UK and USA (which accounts for less than 2% of total lo-lo and ro-ro traffic through GB ports). However, the impact of tariffs overall on the source of goods to the USA has been quite dramatic. This graph shows how sourcing has switched from China to other Asian suppliers, as Chinese enterprises have themselves moved into other countries. (See figure 12)

By contrast, an opposite and balancing impact has taken place on the sourcing of European imports; China's share growing as volumes to the USA have fallen. (See figure 13)

Navigating the future for UK

Following the protracted implementation of UK's departure from the EU, policy implementation has been inconsistent in restoring the smooth flow of goods and maintaining control of trade flows.

The policy paper UK Trade Strategy, released in July 2025, sought to promote export trade focused primarily on investment in financial measures supporting target sectors which may be commercially beneficial but do not directly provide infrastructure improvements for the physical export flow.

Digitisation and further revisions to establish a more efficient SPS process

post 2021 will be welcome. However digital improvement has been an objective for many years. The pace of development and implementation risks being outstripped both by the speed of changes in the global trading environment and the introduction of newer technologies.

The release of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in August is a breakthrough in the recognition of freight and logistic's critical role in supporting UK growth in the UK economy. It is to be hoped that this will allow distribution related projects to move more rapidly through a coherent connected planning system and reverse the trends reflected over the last five years.

Priorities shifting: resilience replaces lead time

From the direct effect of natural events such as reduced water levels in strategic routes such as Panama and the Rhine, to political disruption, contingency planning and securing supply has replaced just in time and inventory reduction as the supply chain North Star. However, this comes at a cost and is counter to the consumer expectation of goods arriving next day at their door at a low cost; whether urgent or not. These trade offs need to be made clear to consumers.

Too much noise?

It is not surprising that given the pace of political and climate events combined, policy makers are racing to respond to the pressure. New

Global Trade affects all departments whether the flows are importing food, medical and defence equipment to exporting to grow the economy.

technologies, albeit offering the potential for productivity gain, sometimes compound the complexity by generating more data. This leads to a desire for quick answers, create new initiatives and launch new consultations. However, there are limited financial resources to meet any proposals to resolve the challenges.

The way ahead?

Increase Interdepartmental Collaboration

There are numerous projects underway currently in Department for Transport, HMRC, Department of Business and Trade, DEFRA. At the same time, Regional and Devolved bodies are developing their own plans.

Global Trade affects all departments whether the flows are importing food, medical and defence equipment to exporting to grow the economy. Projects need to be coordinated and require collaboration between all areas of government. Decisions need to be judged across departments with Treasury ultimately recognising the Supply Chain and Logistics infrastructure as directly as a lever of the economy.

Prioritisation

Minimising the cost, maximising value to economy and beneficial social outcomes need to be assessed. A review of projects already in the pipeline leading would allow go/no-go decisions to be made quickly with less cost and time wasted projects that do not deliver value.

The UK's hidden engine of global trade



East Midlands Airport handles more dedicated freight traffic than any other UK airport, moving goods for tens of thousands of people on every cargo flight. Commercial Director **Adam Andrews explains how a 25-year masterplan, a new Freeport and a shifting e-commerce landscape are shaping the airport's next chapter.**

*Exports are growing too:
British manufacturers are
using East Midlands to move
high-end vehicles out to
international markets.*



Most people picture an airport through its passengers: departure boards, security queues, the walk to the gate. Adam Andrews, Commercial Director at East Midlands Airport, sees it differently. "A passenger aircraft has maybe 200 people on it, but a cargo aircraft has goods potentially going to 30,000 people," he says. "It's really hidden."

East Midlands Airport runs 18,000 dedicated freight aircraft movements a year – roughly double the volume of the next closest UK airport – and treats its cargo operation as a different business, run entirely separately from passenger flights. "We're pretty unique in the UK in that we're prioritising our cargo operation as much as our passenger operation," Adam says. "The infrastructure

development for cargo here is entirely separate from our passenger development. We prioritise the 30,000 people who are connected to the cargo travelling on the aircraft as much as the 200 flying through our terminal."

That cargo-first approach has built the airport's global connectivity, anchored by based operators DHL and UPS, and increasingly by newer



arrivals bringing in high-value goods and time-sensitive imports like medical supplies. Exports are growing too: British manufacturers are using East Midlands to move high-end vehicles out to international markets. "For an island nation, we're always going to need dedicated freight to do that," Adam says.

Keeping up with trade winds

To keep pace with demand, the airport launched its Cargo Max development scheme, a masterplan identifying four key sites across the site for future cargo growth – 55 hectares of land earmarked for warehousing, aircraft stands and taxiways. Adam calls the initiative's scale totally unique in the UK.

Day to day, that means constant monitoring of cargo flows and close coordination with airlines and handling partners. "The strapline is seamless trade," he says. "The airport isn't the pain point in the cargo's journey. We should just be the part that no one mentions. The goods need to arrive, and we need to get them off the aircraft and out the door as quickly as possible."

E-commerce has become one of the clearest drivers of that growth. Much of it moves as just-in-time freight, driven by consumer demand for next-day delivery, and the airport has had to build in flexibility to handle both scheduled contracts and ad hoc flights at short notice. The major Chinese freight forwarder Yun Express opening its own dedicated facility at East Midlands in the former UPS warehouse has also been a significant development. "That's given Yun Express their own dedicated facility to handle end-to-end e-commerce from China, which isn't common within the UK," Adam says. He says further announcements on East Midlands' handling capacity are expected within the next year as the airport works with new partners on its five-year plan.

Freeport ambitions

East Midlands' Freeport status is currently going through planning, with a decision expected within the next few months. Development on

the adjacent site is expected to begin early next year, with tenants already being secured. While the Freeport site sits outside the airport boundary itself, Adam expects the businesses locating there to drive further aviation growth.

Crucially, he sees this as targeted, higher-value growth in the region. "It's high-end logistics growth – potentially pharmaceuticals and manufacturing," he says, pointing to the airport's existing East Midlands Gateway development on the northern side of the site as a preview of what's to come. "The companies going into these sites are purposely positioning themselves around the airport because they're international and want to import and export. The airport is the beneficiary of that."

Steering through disruption

Geopolitical instability has had a direct impact on East Midlands' cargo strategy, most visibly through fuel prices. "The Middle East conflict has driven the fuel price increase, and that gets to a point where demand does drop off," Adam says. "There's very little we can do as an airport to mitigate that." The response has been to focus on keeping aircraft full in both directions – driving exports and

UK manufacturing alongside securing the imports UK consumers rely on – to make each route as resilient as possible long term. "I've been in aviation for 20 years, and it's always been volatile," he adds. "We're working with our partners to make sure we're the airport of choice for them in the UK."

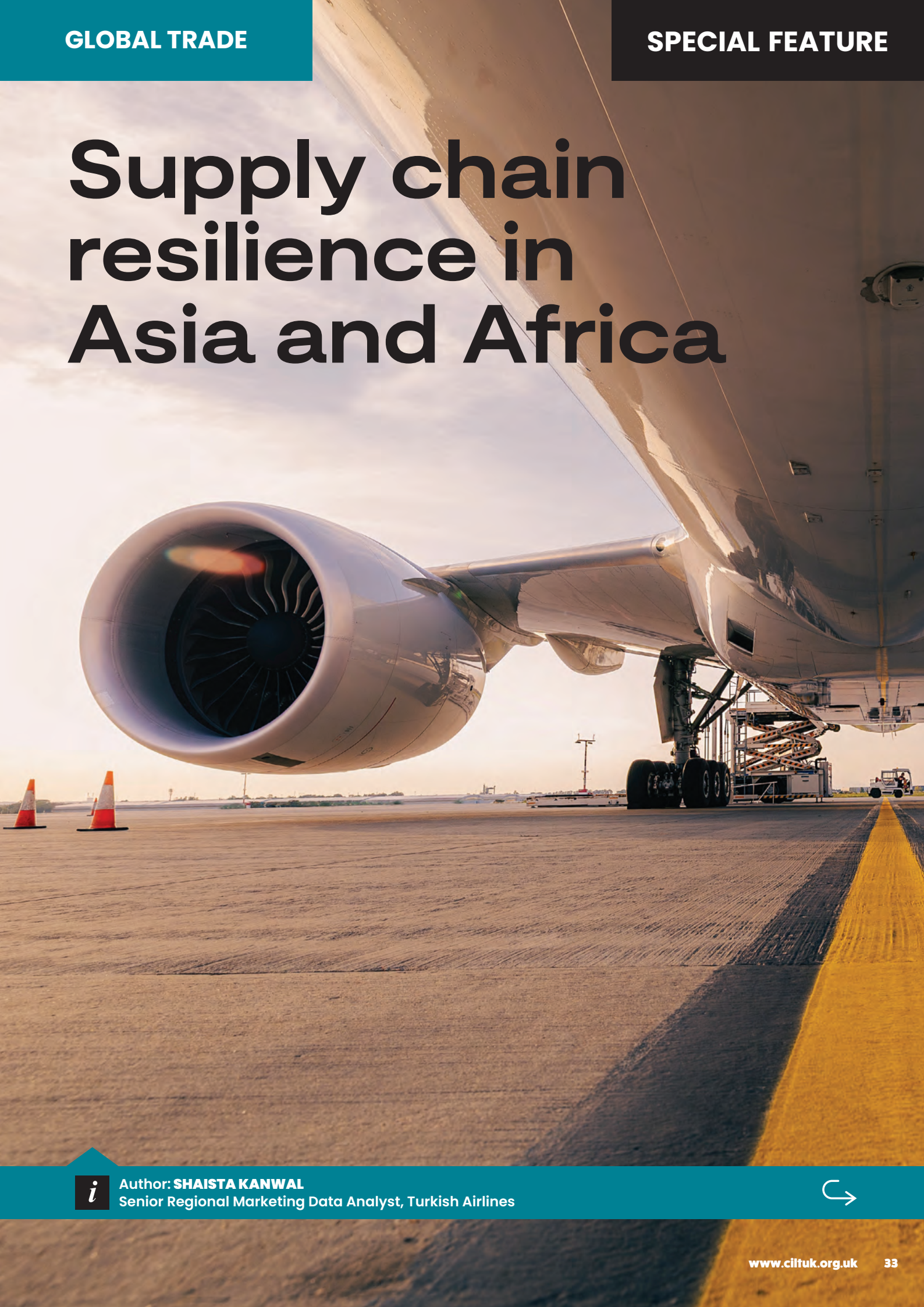
On policy, Adam would like to see the UK push harder for open skies-style cargo agreements, rather than the permit-based arrangements that still govern routes such as China to the UK. Post-Brexit trade progress, he argues, has been slower than hoped, with paperwork continuing to weigh on the logistics sector. One current advantage: unlike the EU, the UK has not introduced a de minimis tax on low-value imports, giving it a competitive edge for now.

A location built for logistics

When asked what stands out about East Midlands Airport, Adam comes back to geography. Within a four-hour lorry journey, the airport can reach 85 per cent of the UK's population – a wider reach than any London airport can claim. "It's really just highlighting its location," he says, "and the fact that we're at the heart of the UK logistics cluster."



Supply chain resilience in Asia and Africa



Author: **SHAISTA KANWAL**
Senior Regional Marketing Data Analyst, Turkish Airlines



Inside the South Asia and Africa cargo corridor, resilience has become less about reacting to crises and more about forecasting them. Shaista Kanwal, Senior Regional Marketing Data Analyst at Turkish Airlines, explains what that shift looks like in practice.

Few regions test the limits of an air cargo network quite like the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia corridor. Just in the first half of 2026, the area had to navigate sudden geopolitical tensions affecting major Gulf hubs, volatile fuel prices, and constantly shifting trade policies.

Yet, despite these hurdles, data from IATA reveals that Middle Eastern and African carriers actually recorded some of the highest year-on-year cargo growth globally. This boom was largely driven by an explosion in e-commerce and shippers rushing to move goods before new tariffs kicked in.

This exact mix of high risk and high growth makes MEASA the ultimate testing ground for true logistics resilience. In this part of the world, you can't just wait for things to calm down before making your next move. Calm simply isn't on the calendar.

"Resilience in air cargo is no longer a contingency plan, it is a competitive differentiator."

A real-world test

We saw this play out vividly during the airspace closures of 2025 and 2026. When a major regional carrier had to halt operations for long stretches, the ripple effects were instant. Local reports pointed to over 11,000 flight cancellations in and out of the Middle East in just the first few days of the disruption. Suddenly, massive capacity shortages opened up across South Asian and African trade routes overnight.

The airlines that kept moving were the ones that already had diverse regional networks, backup routes, and solid ground alternatives ready to go. They absorbed the extra demand seamlessly, while others were left scrambling to figure out how to rebook cargo. It was a stark reminder of a simple truth: you build resilience long before the crisis hits, not while you're in the middle of it.

From firefighting to forecasting

For much of my career, resilience meant a strong operations team that could react quickly once something broke: a diversion, a customs hold, a capacity crunch triggered by conflict or a natural disaster. That reactive capability still matters, but on its own

it is no longer sufficient. Fast moving Regional networks evolves at a pace where disruptions compound too quickly, for pure reaction to protect service levels or yield.

What has changed, in my experience working across pricing, yield management and regional strategy, is the shift from firefighting disruption after it happens to forecasting where it is likely to happen next. Carriers with strong regional data capability can spot early signals, e.g. a spike in booking cancellations on a corridor, a widening gap between demand and available capacity, a fuel cost trend that will eventually show up in yields, well before those signals become operational emergencies.

The analytics behind operational resilience

Building that forecasting capability is not about buying a single magic tool. It's about connecting data that has historically sat in separate systems: commercial bookings, network capacity, ground handling performance, weather and geopolitical risk feeds, and historical disruption patterns.

When you bring these streams together and model them properly, it allows Regional teams to ask much sharper, more strategic questions:



Resilience in air cargo is no longer a contingency plan, it is a competitive differentiator.



- Which trade lanes face the highest exposure if a critical corridor shuts down?
- Where does the network hold genuine redundant capacity, and where are we running dangerously lean?
- Which time-sensitive shipments; like cold-chain pharmaceuticals, perishables, or high-value electronics — must be prioritized when disruption forces tough trade-offs?

"The carriers gaining ground in Middle East, Africa and South Asia are not the ones with the most capacity, but the ones who can see disruption coming."

None of this removes uncertainty from the equation. Instead, what it actually does is compress the time between a disruption starting and a network responding to it. That response window is where resilience is actually won or lost. A network that adjusts within hours protects yield and customer trust in a way that a network adjusting in days cannot.

Moving beyond the dashboard

Data and analytics only turns into real-world resilience when they actually change decisions and not just how a dashboard looks. For regional teams, making this shift usually requires investing heavily in two areas that often get overlooked.

First, risk and forecasting insights need to be shared in a way that pricing, network planning and operations teams can act on quickly. This means moving away from dense, highly technical reports that just sit on a server, and instead focusing on clear insights that keep a human decision-maker firmly in the loop.

Second, it takes deep cross-functional trust. Commercial, operations and network planning teams need to work from the exactly same understanding of risk. Otherwise, resilience efforts stay isolated, siloed and slow.

In the region, this looks like building flexibility into contracts, routings and ground-handling partnerships in advance. Whenever a corridor gets disrupted, the network should already have pre-agreed alternatives ready to launch rather than forcing teams to negotiate under intense pressure. Furthermore, sustainability is becoming a major part of these calls, as rerouting and diversion choices carry their own impact on carbon emissions.

The road ahead

Asia and African Region, is set to stay one of the most demanding regions in global air cargo. We're looking at a landscape constantly shaped by shifting trade lanes, geopolitical tensions, and volatile fuel costs, none of which show signs of slowing down. Industry forums like IATA's World Cargo Symposium hit the nail on the head this year by centering the conversation on digitalization and network adaptability. That is exactly where our focus needs to be.

"Data has quietly become a fourth pillar of network design, alongside aircraft, routes and ground infrastructure."

The carriers that come out on top won't just look at resilience as a one-off backup plan to pull off the shelf during a crisis. Instead, they will treat it as an ongoing, everyday analytical discipline. That is how you protect both service reliability and financial performance through the next disruption, and the one after that. In a region where unpredictability is the only true constant, the real competitive edge belongs to those who can see past the immediate chaos and anticipate what's coming next.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this article are the author's own and are based on her independent professional experience and research. They do not represent the views, positions, or statements of any current or former employer.



Custom duty's hidden costs



Three months after the EU's new €3 customs duty on low-value e-commerce imports took effect, its impact looks different from pre-July forecasts. Expected national charges haven't materialised – but UK retailers now face a new problem: the duty changes the economics of returns and exchanges. With the golden quarter approaching, retailers should factor in not just the cost of getting orders into Europe, but what happens when they come back.

When the European Union introduced its new customs duty on 1 July, much of the industry's attention focused on a simple number: €3. The reality is more complicated. The charge applies per tariff heading rather than simply per parcel. This means a shipment containing goods falling under two different tariff categories can attract €6 in customs duty. For retailers selling relatively low-value products, mixed baskets or accessories, that distinction matters. But according to Paweł Zakielarz, CEO of Shopreturns, the bigger issue is what happens after the sale.

"Retailers naturally model the cost of getting an order to the customer. What is much easier to overlook is what happens when the customer sends it back or asks for an exchange. That is where a relatively small customs charge can start multiplying across the transaction."

A €3 duty is not always a €3 problem

Consider a UK retailer sending a €40 order to a customer in France containing products classified under two tariff headings. The customs duty amounts to €6 rather than €3. If the customer keeps the order, this is a relatively predictable cost that can be incorporated into the retailer's landed-cost model. Returns make the calculation more difficult. The original import has already generated a customs cost. The product then needs to move back through the reverse logistics chain. If the customer requests an exchange rather than a refund, the replacement sent from the UK becomes another import into the EU and can trigger the duty again. One customer transaction can therefore generate several separate logistics and customs events. That is particularly significant in categories with structurally high return rates, such as fashion.



Retailers naturally model the cost of getting an order to the customer.



"Businesses need to stop calculating cross-border profitability only on successful deliveries," says Zakielarz. "The more useful metric is the cost of the complete customer journey: delivery, potential return, verification, refund and, where applicable, replacement. A business can be growing its European sales while simultaneously losing margin through the reverse leg."

Returns change the economics of low-value orders

A fixed customs charge affects a €15 or €20 purchase very differently from a €150 order. This creates a particular challenge for retailers selling accessories, lower-priced fashion products and mixed baskets. The commercial question is no longer simply whether European customers are willing to buy from a UK retailer. It is whether each transaction remains profitable after customs, fulfilment and returns are included. That distinction becomes increasingly important as businesses prepare for Black Friday and Christmas, when

order volumes increase rapidly and the resulting returns often arrive several weeks later. A strong sales in November can therefore produce a very different profitability picture in December and January. For Zakielarz, this should change the way retailers approach the golden quarter.

"Q4 planning usually focuses on acquisition, stock and outbound fulfillment. This year UK retailers selling into the EU should add return scenarios to the same model. What happens to margin if returns rise by five percentage points? What happens if a significant share of customers choose exchanges? And how many of those replacements cross the UK-EU border again? Those are financial questions, not simply logistics questions."

The first lesson from 2026: regulation can change faster than pricing models.

The first months of the new regime have also demonstrated how quickly assumptions can become outdated. Ahead of July, retailers were preparing for a patchwork of potential national and European

charges. France, for example, had introduced its own small-parcel charge earlier in the year but suspended it when the EU-wide measure came into force on 1 July. The French experience also demonstrated another feature of cross-border e-commerce: parcel flows respond rapidly to changes in cost. When France introduced its national measure, declarations through French entry points reportedly fell sharply as operators redirected flows through other European countries. An EU-wide duty changes that equation because retailers can no longer avoid the charge simply by changing the member state through which a parcel enters the single market. For UK retailers, this strengthens the case for reviewing not only prices but the architecture of their European operations.



At what point does local EU infrastructure make sense?

There is no universal order volume at which moving stock or returns infrastructure into the EU automatically becomes cheaper. The calculation depends on average order value, margin, product mix, tariff classifications, destination markets, fulfilment costs and return rates. But the new customs regime makes that calculation more relevant. For some retailers, continuing to fulfil individual orders directly from the UK will remain economically rational. For others, particularly those generating several hundred or thousands of EU orders per month, holding inventory inside the EU or processing returns locally may begin to change the economics materially. Local returns

can be particularly important because the customer's parcel can initially move domestically within their market rather than immediately beginning an international journey back to the UK. The returned product can then be inspected, consolidated, restocked, resold or transported in bulk depending on the retailer's operating model. This shifts the discussion around returns from customer convenience to infrastructure.

"Returns used to be treated primarily as a customer-experience issue," Zakielarz says. "They are becoming a question of where inventory sits, where products are inspected and how many times an individual order has to cross a customs border. For cross-border retailers, reverse logistics is increasingly part of the market-entry model."

For cross-border retailers, reverse logistics is increasingly part of the market entry model.

November brings another reason to review customs data

The July change is also not the end of the regulatory adjustment. Further customs-data requirements are approaching, including mandatory product identifiers from November. Retailers selling across multiple categories will therefore need accurate product and tariff information embedded into their processes rather than treating customs classification as a back-office exercise. The exact cost implications of further planned handling measures remain less certain, making scenario planning more useful than relying on a single forecast. For retailers preparing for Q4, there are therefore two different issues to manage. The first is compliance: making sure product and customs data are ready for the next requirements. The second is commercial: understanding whether the current fulfilment and returns model still makes sense after the July changes.

The metric retailers should calculate before Black Friday

The most useful exercise may also be the simplest: take one month of actual European orders and calculate profitability at transaction level rather than shipment level. That means including the tariff headings within each order, customs charges, outbound fulfilment, return rate, cost of the reverse journey and the number of replacements requiring another cross-border shipment. The result may show that the existing model still works.

But it may also reveal something that topline European sales figures do not: some products, baskets or markets have become substantially less profitable than others. And that is likely to matter more during the golden quarter than the headline €3 charge itself.





Fragmented supply chains

Global trade has always depended on ships, ports and warehouses to move goods – but **Dr Hajar Fatorachian** of Leeds Business School argues the real competitive edge now comes from what happens behind the scenes, as organisations learn to connect data, break down silos and turn visibility into faster, smarter decisions.



Author: **DR HAJAR FATORACHIAN**
Leeds Business School, Leeds Beckett University



*For many years,
global supply chains
were designed
primarily around
efficiency, cost
and scale.*

Global trade has always depended on movement. Raw materials, components and finished goods travel across borders, through ports, warehouses and distribution centres, often involving dozens of organisations before reaching the final customer.

What has changed is the environment in which these supply chains now operate.

For many years, global supply chains were designed primarily around efficiency, cost and scale. Those priorities still matter, of course, but they are no longer enough on their own. Businesses are operating in a world where disruption can emerge quickly and where a delay in one part of the network can have consequences much further downstream. In that environment, the ability to see what is happening,

share information and make timely decisions is becoming just as important as physical movement itself.

Our research on Industry 4.0 and supply-chain performance, together with our more recent work on freight transportation sustainability, points to a simple but important conclusion: digital technology creates the most value when it helps organisations connect information, processes and decisions across the supply chain.



Moving beyond fragmented supply chains

One of the persistent problems in supply-chain management is fragmentation.

Procurement teams may focus on suppliers, production teams on output, logistics teams on transport and inventory teams on stock availability. Each part of the organisation can be working hard and performing well, while the wider supply chain still suffers from poor coordination.

This is where digital technologies can make a real difference.

Our research shows that technologies such as the Internet of Things, cyber-physical systems and big-data analytics can improve the way information moves across procurement, production, inventory management, distribution and retail. Their value is not simply in automating individual activities. The bigger opportunity lies in connecting parts of the supply chain that have traditionally operated separately.

That matters in global trade because a problem rarely stays within one function.

A delayed shipment can affect production schedules. A production delay can create inventory problems. Inventory shortages can affect customer service and purchasing decisions. What begins as a transport issue can quickly become a wider supply-chain issue.

When information sits in separate systems, organisations often find themselves reacting after the problem has already developed. When information is better connected, they have a much stronger chance of understanding what is happening early enough to respond.

Visibility is useful only if it improves decisions

Supply-chain visibility has become one of the most commonly used terms in logistics. Yet simply having more data does not necessarily improve performance.

The real question is what organisations can actually do with that information.

This was particularly clear in our recent study of freight transportation sustainability, which examined how the Internet of Things, big-data analytics and cloud computing can work together within freight operations.

These technologies can support real-time shipment monitoring, improve security, make better use of resources, support transport planning and enable more proactive maintenance. They can also create services that would have been difficult to deliver through traditional logistics systems, such as real-time tracking and predictive maintenance.

For logistics operators, that changes the role of information.

Knowing where a vehicle or shipment is located is useful, but the greater value lies in what happens next. Can a potential delay be identified early? Can a route be adjusted? Can a customer be informed before the disruption becomes critical? Can resources be moved elsewhere? Can a maintenance problem be addressed before it leads to vehicle downtime?

This is where visibility becomes valuable. It is not the amount of data that creates competitive advantage, but the ability to turn that data into better and faster decisions.

Efficiency and sustainability do not have to compete

There is also an important sustainability dimension.

Discussions about sustainable freight sometimes create the impression that environmental improvement comes at the expense of operational performance or cost. In practice, the relationship can be much more positive.

Better transport planning can improve vehicle utilisation and reduce unnecessary journeys. More accurate monitoring can reduce wasted time and resources.

Predictive maintenance can improve reliability and reduce avoidable downtime. Better information sharing can also improve coordination between logistics providers and customers.

In other words, some of the same practices that support better operational performance can also support better environmental outcomes.

This is increasingly important because sustainability is no longer a separate issue for global supply chains. It is becoming part of day-to-day operational decision-making.

Logistics organisations now have to balance cost, service, reliability, resource use and environmental performance at the same time. That means the challenge is not to optimise one of these objectives in isolation. It is to understand where better information and coordination can improve several outcomes together.

Technology alone will not solve the problem

There is, however, a risk in treating digital technology as the solution in itself.

Buying new systems does not automatically create a connected supply chain.

An organisation can invest heavily in sensors, cloud platforms and analytics and still struggle if the underlying processes remain fragmented. Data may exist, but not be shared. Systems may collect information, but not communicate with one another. Decision-makers may receive more data, but still lack the capability to turn it into action.

This becomes even more challenging in global supply chains, where many different organisations are involved.

Manufacturers, suppliers, freight forwarders, carriers, ports, warehouses and customers may each hold a different part of the information needed to understand what is happening across the network. No single organisation necessarily has the complete picture.

This is why digital transformation in logistics needs to begin with the decision rather than the technology.

Instead of asking, 'Which technology should we invest in?', a more useful starting point is, 'Which supply-chain decision are we trying to improve?'

That decision might concern route planning, inventory positioning, shipment monitoring, maintenance, supplier coordination or customer communication. Once the decision is clear, organisations can identify the information they need, where that information currently sits, and how technology can help make it available at the right time.

What this means for global trade

The future of global trade will still depend on ships, trucks, aircraft, warehouses and physical infrastructure. But increasingly, it will also depend on the quality of the information and decisions that sit behind those physical networks.

Cost and efficiency will remain fundamental. The difference is that organisations also need visibility, coordination and the ability to respond quickly when conditions change.

Our research suggests three practical priorities.

First, organisations need to connect information across functions rather than simply digitising individual activities. Second, they need to turn visibility into decision-making capability. Third, they need to stop treating sustainability and operational performance as separate agendas.

The biggest shift, then, is not simply from manual systems to digital ones. It is from fragmented supply chains to more connected decision networks.

In global trade, the organisations that perform best will not necessarily be those with the most technology. They will be those that use technology well: to understand what is happening across their supply chains, to coordinate more effectively and, ultimately, to make better decisions about how goods move through an increasingly complex world.



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Building the UK's capability picture



Author: **JASON SILVER FCILT**
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The UK's commercial logistics sector contributes over £180 billion to the economy and employs 2.5 million people – yet no one holds the full picture of its capability. Jason Silver FCILT argues logistics has a critical role in helping Government and industry understand and orchestrate the sovereign capability that already exists. ➔

***Around 85 per cent
of UK international
freight by weight
moves by sea.***



For more than four decades, competition, open markets and increasingly sophisticated procurement have helped the United Kingdom develop one of the world's most capable commercial logistics sectors. Industry has responded by investing in infrastructure, technology, people and operating models that support almost every part of national life.

Commercial logistics is far more than the movement of goods. It encompasses freight forwarding, road, rail, maritime and air transport, warehousing, ports, customs, inventory management and the digital systems that connect them.

The sector contributes more than £180 billion to the UK economy each year and employs over 2.5 million people. Around 85 per cent of UK international freight by weight moves by sea. Collectively, this is not simply an industry; it is a significant component of national capability.

A changing strategic environment

The model remains highly successful, but the environment around it has changed. Covid-19 exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has reinforced the importance of industrial mobilisation and sustained logistics. Disruption to international shipping routes has demonstrated how quickly geopolitical events can affect freight capacity, cost and availability. At the same time, the Strategic Defence Review and wider Government resilience policy place increasing emphasis on preparedness, sovereign capability and a Whole of Society response.

This does not mean the commercial logistics model has failed. It raises a different question: should the way Government and the profession understand and develop logistics capability evolve alongside the strategic environment?



Procurement and capability are complementary

Procurement answers an essential question: who should Government contract to deliver a defined requirement? Capability asks something broader: what underlying skills, infrastructure, capacity and commercial resilience does the UK possess, and how could that capability respond if demand increases rapidly or normal market conditions no longer apply?

The distinction matters because logistics capability is inherently distributed. Government understands the contracts it awards; businesses understand their own assets and ambitions; trade associations understand their memberships; and professional institutions understand standards, competence and professional development. Yet no single organisation appears to maintain a comprehensive picture of UK commercial logistics capability as a whole.

The sector comprises well over 200,000 enterprises, overwhelmingly SMEs, alongside mid-tier businesses, larger UK-headquartered groups and international operators. That diversity drives competition and innovation, but it also makes national capability harder to understand as a coherent whole.

From supply chains to capability networks

The challenge is therefore not simply whether the UK has enough logistics capability. Evidence suggests that substantial capability already exists. The harder question is how it could be identified, connected and orchestrated if national circumstances required a coordinated response.

This is particularly important when the requirement moves beyond business-as-usual. Warehousing capacity changes, vehicles and equipment move between customers, freight capacity responds to international demand and specialist SMEs develop capabilities that may sit outside traditional Government supply chains. A resilient national response therefore needs to behave



more like an adaptive capability network than a fixed contractual chain.

A UK commercial logistics capability framework

One possible response is a UK Commercial Logistics Capability Framework that complements existing procurement rather than replacing it. The framework could improve visibility of commercial capability, connect regional and specialist networks, assess readiness, test capability through exercises and provide Government with a clearer national capability picture.

The principle is deliberately straightforward. Commercial organisations retain their independence and Government continues to procure competitively. What changes is our collective ability to understand capability beyond individual contracts and to build the relationships needed before a crisis occurs.

Making orchestration practical

Digital technology can help turn the concept into something practical. Rather than creating another large centralised Government logistics system, a federated approach could connect appropriate information from existing commercial platforms, warehouse and transport management systems and specialist providers. An authorised user could then develop a richer picture of what capability exists, where it is, whether it is available and appropriately assured, and how different capabilities might be combined against an operational requirement.

The objective is not automated control of industry. It is better shared situational awareness and faster human decision-making while businesses retain their own systems, data ownership and commercial independence. A representative mobilisation exercise could test the concept at manageable scale and identify the real barriers, whether they are data, technology, security, accreditation, commercial arrangements or organisational behaviour.

The role of the profession

This is where the logistics profession has an important role. Government cannot develop a national capability picture alone, and no individual company or trade association sees the whole market. CILT(UK) occupies a distinctive position because it connects practitioners across modes, sectors, Government, Defence, academia and industry, while remaining focused on professional standards and the development of the profession.

CILT(UK) does not need to become an operational coordinator or commercial gatekeeper. Its value could be in convening the right organisations, developing common language around capability and readiness, supporting research and professional standards, and helping Government and industry test how a Whole of Society logistics model might work in practice. Trade associations would continue to bring deep sector knowledge; industry

would provide operational capability; Government would define outcomes and policy. The opportunity is to connect those strengths more effectively.

A profession-wide opportunity

The principles extend beyond Defence. The UK's resilience increasingly depends on capabilities outside direct Government ownership across energy, telecommunications, manufacturing, healthcare, transport and digital infrastructure. Logistics connects many of those sectors and therefore provides a useful place to test a broader Whole of Society approach.

For logistics professionals, the question is consequently larger than the next contract or procurement framework. It is whether we understand the collective capability of our profession and industry well enough to help the nation prepare for circumstances in which normal commercial assumptions may not apply.

Procurement should remain central to how Government buys logistics services. Alongside it, however, we have an opportunity to build better visibility, stronger relationships and greater readiness across the wider commercial ecosystem. The UK already possesses extraordinary logistics capability. The next step is ensuring that it is sufficiently understood, connected and ready to support the nation when it is needed most.

If procurement has helped define the UK's commercial logistics model over the past forty years, perhaps orchestration will help define the next forty.

This article is adapted from Jason Silver FCILT, *From Procurement to Orchestration: How the UK's Defence Commercial Logistics Model Must Evolve to the New Normal*, drawing on the Strategic Defence Review 2025, Defence Industrial Plan, UK Resilience Framework, Department for Transport, Office for National Statistics and professional-sector sources cited in the full paper.



US and EU customs transparency



Author: **SUSAN MORLEY FCILT**

Chair, Customs and International Trade Compliance Forum, CILT(UK)

As US Customs and Border Protection consults on sweeping new supply chain disclosure requirements, and the EU presses ahead with its own customs overhaul, Susan Morley FCILT, Chair of CILT(UK)'s Customs and International Trade Compliance Forum, explains what both sets of changes could mean for importers, exporters and the confidentiality of supply chain data.

USA CBP have started a consultation on transparency in the supply chain by looking at foreign export documentation and greater supply chain traceability.

This is not yet law in the US but is indicative of the direction of thinking in the government. They seek to find out about/know much more about the supply chain and those involved in it. This has implications for confidentiality and competitive advantage.

CBP is thinking of requiring the importer to hold or send electronically documents that the exporter used to clear the goods through export customs such as:

- Export customs declarations
- Commercial invoices
- Packing lists
- Certificates of origin
- Export permits or licenses
- Bills of lading, air waybills, and other transportation documents

CBP is looking at ways that this data could be used:

- Mandatory transmission with the entry
- Retention as part of the importer's records
- Submission only when requested by CBP
- Random requests to verify compliance

- **Mandatory submission as a condition of entry for products or countries designated as high risk to national security**

The need for the importer to gather these documents presents risks for the importer because they would have to be able to verify the documents and receive them in a timely fashion. In addition the importer would need to somehow verify the value, quantity, classification, origin, or weight and hold evidence that any discrepancy was legitimate. All of this could result in additional costs

It is also true that there can be, and in some instances there should be differences between things like commodity codes, value and units of measure which would have to be explained and documented before CBP becomes involved.

CBP is also considering whether the entry should be required to be filed earlier so that it can review the documentation and determine admissibility before the merchandise arrives. This could impact on the time the importer has to gather the data and documents.

The MID code could also change with the full legal name, physical address, and other identifiers for each party included. The additional information could separately cover each of the following:

- Manufacturer or producer
- Supplier

- Shipper
- Exporter/Seller/Distributor/Packer
- E-commerce platform
- Ultimate recipient of the merchandise, even when different from the initial consignee

Importers and exporters would need to work together to see if the data is available and if they are willing to disclose it due to commercial confidentiality and if indeed the data is known at all.

CBP is also looking at other information that could be provided for example a DUNS number and tax numbers. Overall they are trying to capture the whole supply chain of an item for not just customs but the examination of the use of child labour, forced labour, money laundering and sanctions busting. CBP is not only after data and traceability of the product but also the use of technology and AI.

Start a dialogue with your American customers, encourage them to take part and worry how you would fulfil the requirement if it became mandatory. The full consultation is available via the Federal Register.

Change is also coming to the EU. The EU Council on September 3rd gave final approval for a massive overhaul of the EU customs framework. It is to help level the playing field in e-commerce. It will make the collection of customs duties more efficient and tighten controls on non-compliant, dangerous or unsafe goods. There will be an EU agency for customs, which will help to establish priority control areas and risk criteria at EU level. It will be located in Lille, France and begin operations in 2027. The new centralised hub to record Customs data will become mandatory for e-commerce businesses on 1 July 2028. This on top of the €3 fixed duty per item and an administration charge. This is changing the way e-commerce low value shipments are distributed with more larger shipments to EU warehouses being a noticeable trend. The hub will open for all traders from 1 March 2034.



HUMANITARIAN FOOD BOX

Слава Україні!



WITH
Ukraine.org

1 Person Box

Packing Date



Author: **ADRIAN LEIGH**
Managing Director, Logistics Learning Alliance

Humanitarian logistics in a disrupted world

When people think about international supply chains, humanitarian logistics is not always the first sector that comes to mind.

Humanitarian organisations depend on many of the same ports, airports, transport providers, customs systems, fuel markets and international trade routes as commercial supply chains.

The difference is that humanitarian logisticians often must operate when those systems are already under extreme pressure. Their supply chains must continue to deliver food, shelter, medicines and other essential supplies into environments affected by conflict, disaster and displacement.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, humanitarian organisations have faced continuing disruption, rising costs and reductions in international aid funding. By the end of May 2026, more than 252 million people were reported to be in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and protection. With demand increasing while resources are under pressure, resilient humanitarian supply chains have rarely been more important.

A shared global supply chain

Humanitarian logistics does not operate separately from global trade. Humanitarian organisations rely on commercial shipping, aviation, road transport, fuel markets, suppliers, ports and customs systems. When those networks are disrupted, the humanitarian consequences can be immediate.

Higher fuel prices increase transport costs. Reduced shipping capacity can delay critical supplies. Disruption to ports or airspace can force cargo onto longer routes. Increased freight and insurance costs can consume funds that would otherwise be available to purchase or distribute assistance.

Humanitarian supply chains have also developed valuable experience of operating in uncertain environments. Agility, contingency planning, risk management and rapid sourcing have become increasingly relevant across the wider logistics profession.

Hormuz: local disruption, global consequences

The disruption to the Strait of Hormuz in 2026 provided a striking example of how closely humanitarian and commercial supply chains are connected.

The Strait is one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints, carrying around a quarter of global seaborne oil as well as significant volumes of fertiliser and other commodities. As conflict in the region escalated, ship movements through the Strait were reported to have fallen by around 95%.

The effects spread quickly. Fuel prices increased, tanker freight rates rose and war-risk insurance costs increased for vessels operating around the Gulf. Disruption to fertiliser movements also created wider concerns for agricultural production and food prices.

For humanitarian organisations, those market effects became operational problems. UNHCR reported having to reroute shipments through Aqaba and make greater use of land corridors across the Arabian Peninsula and Türkiye. The cost of moving relief supplies from Dubai to operations in Sudan and Chad more than doubled, from approximately US\$927,000 to US\$1.87 million.



Technology, infrastructure and inventory are important, but supply chains ultimately depend on people making decisions.



Other humanitarian organisations experienced delays affecting medicines, vaccines and emergency supplies as maritime diversions and airspace restrictions slowed procurement and delivery.

These are not simply higher logistics costs on a balance sheet. When budgets are already constrained, additional transport expenditure can mean fewer supplies purchased, fewer shipments made or fewer people reached. At the same time, rising energy, transport and fertiliser costs can contribute to higher food prices and greater humanitarian need.

A regional transport disruption can therefore create a double impact: humanitarian organisations face higher costs while the number of people requiring assistance may also increase.

Resilience starts before disruption

The lesson from events such as Hormuz is not that every disruption can be predicted. It is that organisations can prepare to respond more effectively when disruption occurs.

Diversified sourcing, pre-positioned stock, alternative transport routes, stronger supplier relationships and improved supply-chain visibility all provide options when normal arrangements fail. Scenario planning is equally important. Developing alternatives before a crisis gives organisations choices; doing so after ports have closed or transport capacity has disappeared means making the same decisions under far greater pressure.

Collaboration also matters. Humanitarian organisations work alongside commercial carriers, suppliers, governments, donors and other agencies. Strong relationships across these sectors can provide access to information, resources and alternative capacity when established supply chains are disrupted.

People are part of resilience

Technology, infrastructure and inventory are important, but supply chains ultimately depend on people making decisions. This makes professional development an important part of humanitarian supply-chain resilience.

At Logistics Learning Alliance, this change has been visible through



many years of working with humanitarian logistics learners and professionals around the world. The knowledge required of practitioners now extends well beyond the movement and storage of goods, into areas such as strategic supply-chain management, procurement, risk, sustainability, medical logistics and cold-chain management.

2026 marks the 20th anniversary of the launch of the Fritz/CILT(UK) Certification in Humanitarian Logistics (CHL) Programme. First introduced in 2006, CHL was designed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of humanitarian logistics practitioners. Since then, the professional-development pathway has expanded as the demands placed on the sector have evolved.



The Fritz/CILT(UK) Certification in Humanitarian Supply Chain Management (CHSCM) provides experienced personnel with a more strategic perspective, focusing on the management and resilience of the wider humanitarian supply chain. The Fritz/CILT(UK) Certification in Humanitarian Medical Logistics Practices (MedLog) addresses specialist areas including medical procurement, storage, disposal and cold-chain management.

Together, these programmes reflect how the profession itself has changed. Today's humanitarian logisticians may be required to redesign supply routes at short notice, assess market risks, coordinate with commercial partners, manage scarce resources and protect the continuity of critical medical and food supplies.

Preparing for what comes next

The next major disruption may result from conflict, extreme weather, economic instability or infrastructure failure.

What remains consistent is the need for humanitarian supply chains

capable of adapting when established plans no longer work. Resilience comes from more than stockpiles or technology. It comes from combining robust systems, effective partnerships and people with the knowledge and confidence to make good decisions under pressure.

Twenty years after the launch of CHL, that need remains as relevant as ever.

In humanitarian logistics, resilience is not about preventing disruption. It is about maintaining the ability to deliver when disruption is unavoidable.

SOURCES

UNOPS – It is time for a confidence-building Operational Mechanism for the Strait of Hormuz

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Trade in transit

Rico Luman, Senior Sector Economist for Transport and Logistics at ING Research, talks energy shocks, low rivers and a decade of Brexit fallout – and what UK businesses need to do to stay ahead of it all.



Rico Luman, Senior Sector Economist for Transport and Logistics at ING Research, has had a busy year. Between shifting energy flows, low water levels on Europe's rivers, and a fresh round of disruption to Middle East shipping lanes, 2026 has given him plenty to track – and a huge amount of analysis for the businesses trying to plan around it.

"This year we've been totally swamped with short-term questions about disruptions," Rico says. "It's clearly something which is having a huge impact in all markets, and there's a lot which is constantly changing – which affects our ability to make medium and long-term forecasts and we need to consider multiple scenarios currently."

Energy squeeze

Rico says the most significant impact on global trade this year has been in energy. The UK imports a significant share of its fuel – kerosene and diesel among them – and the ongoing Middle East conflict has pushed trade patterns to shift over the past six months, sending buyers towards new suppliers and reshaping shipping and trade lanes in the process. The dependency has prompted a rethink at government level, too. The EU's recent State of the Union address renewed the case for accelerating electrification, partly to reduce reliance on fuel imports from politically sensitive regions – something Rico expects will shape policy discussions over the coming years.

The disruptions come with cost shocks in shipping and logistics, some businesses in the sector benefit, but others such as carriers on the road struggle to pass the bill on to their clients.

Trade agreements are still catching up with the UK's new relationship with Europe. Car exports and imports between the UK and EU currently operate under a temporary tariff exemption, with no permanent agreement yet in place. Given the scale of UK car imports from the EU, Rico sees this as an area still needing a long-term fix. "There's still something to work on there, and to find a real long-term solution," he says.

Ten years on from the Brexit vote, goods trade between the UK and EU is yet to fully recover. UK exports have fallen compared with pre-Brexit levels, and Rico is candid about the impact. "It has been detrimental for trade in general," he says. "It's a hurdle for free trade, like the many other barriers we're now seeing around the world – including the actions coming out of the US." A free trade zone between the UK and the EU, he adds, would still be the better outcome for both sides.

Rivers running low

Weather has also become a major trade disruptor. Rico points to drought-stricken regions with low water levels: the Rhine and the Danube in Europe, and the Amazon in Latin America, with the Panama Canal also limiting daily transits make them wait longer to transit or pay high fees for priority. Rhine levels in particular have stayed close to record lows for over two months, with little sign of recovery. "This lack of water lingers long after it rains again," Rico says, pointing to melted glaciers in the Alps as ongoing consequences of drought. "Less snow in the Alps means there's less water feeding the recovering river, which keeps levels low for longer, right through summer and into autumn." Relying on the rivers, barge transport is one of the most efficient ways to move heavy industrial goods, so when water levels drop, costs rise and delays ripple down the supply chain.

The Rhine is one symptom of a wider trend in global shipping: routes are getting longer and less efficient. Rico points to the gap between global tonnage and tonne-miles – the distance goods actually travel.

Detours around Africa remain common, alongside longer shipping routes out of the US rather than the Middle East, and disruption on the Danube and the Amazon. "This shows there's much more inefficiency in the network," he says.

Congestion builds

A widening imbalance between exports from China and the rest of the world has left terminals across Europe struggling to keep up, with a growing surplus of empty containers

adding to congestion. Rotterdam – a key transshipment hub for UK-bound cargo, alongside Antwerp and Bruges – is experiencing record congestion as a result. "Vessels are delayed and reliability is low still," Rico says. "This has a big impact on businesses in the UK as well as transshipment destination, and the solution comes down to resilience," he continues. "It's about planning for that extra day or two of delay, so the shelves don't end up empty."

Some sectors are more exposed than others. Consumer goods that move in containers face the most immediate risk, alongside products such as fertiliser, much of which is produced in the Middle East. Energy intensive materials like aluminium, used across the automotive and aerospace industries, are seeing similar pressure, as well as rare earth metals, squeezed by the same geopolitical pressures.

The UK's outlook

One consequence of Brexit that Rico highlights is a shift in where UK-bound goods are stored and assembled. Warehousing that once sat on the European mainland has, over the past decade, gradually relocated to the UK, allowing businesses to avoid customs delays and shorten last-mile delivery times. "Sometimes it goes even further than warehousing," Rico adds, "with more local assembly or local production too." It also helps explain the decline in roll-on roll-off trailer traffic across the Channel and North Sea since Brexit – some of the goods once transported via that route are now produced closer to home.

Trade deals with the EU remain unresolved in places, but Rico notes the UK is still striking new agreements with other countries – something he believes will continue.

"Everything feels more extreme this year," he reflects. "It's an accumulation of all the geopolitical issues and intense weather events which all have significant supply chain impact." For businesses watching where the next shift in suppliers or routes might come from, he says keeping up to speed with that ongoing movement will only become more crucial.



China's electric truck revolution

From battery mega-factories to new overland corridors stretching from China to Europe, John Lucy FCILT explains how China's 15-year electrification strategy is set to transform the UK truck market – and the wider global freight landscape – much as it already has passenger cars.

Reports of Chinese truck operators making international journeys as far as Europe have increased significantly over the past year, alongside a growing sense that the UK truck market could undergo a seismic transformation, mirroring the changes already seen in the passenger car sector. Chinese manufacturers, some of which barely existed five years ago, now account for around 30% of the UK's electric car market.

With this in mind, the Transport Logistic Shanghai Expo in June 2026 provided the ideal opportunity to meet Chinese truck operators and manufacturers and understand what lies behind this unprecedented growth. What we are seeing is the first phase of China's 15-year strategy to develop and control electric battery production, from mining and manufacturing through to end-of-life recycling. The aim is to reduce reliance on increasingly volatile oil producers while meeting the country's 2030 climate targets.

With heavy trucks accounting for around 60–70% of China's diesel

consumption, freight transport has become a major focus for innovation and market incentives. Clear government policy support, falling battery prices and improving battery performance have driven sales of heavy electric trucks to more than 10,000 units a month. There is a national target for "new energy vehicles" to make up 40% of new truck (12–49 tonne) sales by 2030. With 1.145 million heavy trucks sold in China in 2025, and battery-electric models already accounting for around 30% of the market, that target looks comfortably achievable.

The race for range is very real. SANY's European models are claimed to offer around 500km, with the 1165 said to manage 800km with an additional battery pack. Independent reports appear to support manufacturers' claims that electric trucks can deliver a return on investment in as little as three years, and operators report that they are now cheaper to run than diesel. Manufacturers say battery-electric sales are now market-led for the first time.

China has 10 major heavy truck manufacturers, one of them state-

owned, and most have the UK in their sights. The first entrant, DeepWay, is expected to arrive later this year. The UK is viewed as a small but high-margin market, similar to New Zealand from a global rollout perspective, where Chinese-built trucks are already on sale.

Most trucks arriving from China are expected to be fully electric, priced only slightly above their diesel equivalents and offered with a claimed three-year return on investment, eight-year battery warranties and distribution through existing franchised dealer networks – the approach already adopted by Chinese car brands. The trucks on display in Shanghai featured Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) as standard and were said to be ready for autonomous and platooning operations as legislation permits. In some countries, the two are already being trialled together, with a human-driven lead truck followed by four autonomous trucks in platoon formation.

For UK buyers, who have traditionally faced substantial premiums for electric trucks and uncertain residual



Author: **JOHN LUCY FCILT**

values, this could mean a choice of more affordable models. As with passenger cars, purchasing decisions are likely to come down to cost, reliability, range and ease of operation.

Controlling the battery lifecycle

By controlling virtually the entire battery lifecycle, from lithium mining and cell production to recycling end-of-life packs, Chinese manufacturers are well placed to shape the future of electric vehicles. They can control the cost of batteries fitted to their own trucks while supplying battery technology to other manufacturers. Plans are also being considered for large battery factories in Europe and elsewhere to comply with local trade agreements and tariffs.

To support its growing fleet, China plans to build 3,000 HGV charging and battery-swapping stations covering around 30,000km of freight corridors. Battery swapping has undergone extensive research and real-world trials in China and may offer a glimpse of how electric truck operations could develop elsewhere.

Each swapping station costs the equivalent of around 10 trucks, making them unlikely to be viable for individual operators. They could, however, appeal to energy providers offering battery rental or leasing as an alternative to ownership. Chinese battery giant CATL has already signed a 10-year partnership with the UK's Octopus Energy to develop a European network of "mega hubs" offering both charging and battery exchange, with the first UK hub expected to open in 2027.

New routes west

Battery production, together with the rapid growth of e-commerce, is also driving China's unprecedented expansion into cross-border road transport. Because batteries are classified as hazardous cargo, are often oversized and are frequently needed urgently, air freight is rarely



practical, making road an attractive alternative. Since 2025, more than 300 operators running around 3,000 trailers have become TIR-certified, and the Chinese government has approved five major TIR border routes.

East-west traffic has traditionally been carried by Russian operators using the Northern Corridor via Moscow. The five largest each run more than 1,000 trailers and have served this market for around 30 years. Based largely in Belarus, many operate satellite depots in Poland and register vehicles in different countries to accommodate trade restrictions, allowing trailer swaps along the route.

Trade has expanded rapidly since sanctions were imposed on Russia, with traffic increasingly routed through countries such as Georgia, whose GDP has reportedly grown by around 9% a year since EU sanctions were introduced. Because Belarus and Kazakhstan are treated as part of the Russian customs area, goods leaving China can clear customs into Russia and travel onwards under the TIR system before being re-exported at the EU border. Chinese hauliers' rapid expansion is reportedly placing considerable pressure on established Russian operators, many of which have left the sector or ceased trading.

Not all freight can transit Russia, however, so the Middle Corridor (Trans-Caspian International Transport Route) has become an

increasingly important alternative. Trucks leave China via Kazakhstan, cross the Caspian Sea by ro-ro ferry to Azerbaijan, and continue through Georgia and Turkey into mainland Europe. The journey to Frankfurt takes around 25 days, compared with around 16 via the Northern Corridor. Should sanctions eventually be lifted, operators could once again have two viable overland routes into Europe.

As the source of much of this freight, China is also well placed to influence export supply chains. Chinese exporters show a clear preference for working with Chinese freight forwarders and hauliers wherever possible, improving communication and security, reducing costs and keeping more of the value in the domestic economy.

Pioneers on the road

The Chinese government is clearly committed to expanding its TIR carrier base and supporting further growth into Western Europe. Asked about the main challenges on these routes, hauliers cited inconsistent border procedures, corruption among some officials and a lack of harmonised standards – rather than theft. They also regard driver reliability as a strength, describing their drivers as dependable and low-risk on long-distance international work. There is also a desire to agree bilateral road transport permits with the EU, with major battery manufacturing investments in Europe potentially providing leverage in future negotiations.

Chinese hauliers in this sector see themselves as pioneers and continue to receive strong support from government and the media. Everyone we spoke to believed international road transport will become increasingly influenced by Chinese carriers, freight forwarders and trucks. Interestingly, there was also a clear preference to partner with suitable Western hauliers rather than compete directly, potentially creating new opportunities for established international operators.



Uncertainty teaches resilience



Mark Patterson, Chief Customer Officer, DHL Supply Chain tells *Focus* why global trade has become harder to navigate.

For many years, supply chain strategies concentrated primarily on efficiency: reducing cost, improving productivity and removing excess capacity from the network. Those priorities still matter, but they are no longer enough.

The question we increasingly hear from customers is, 'How well can our supply chain respond when conditions change?'

A resilient supply chain must maintain performance through geopolitical tension, changing trade policy, extreme weather, infrastructure disruption and sudden shifts in demand. Crucially, it must do so without adding unnecessary cost across the entire network.

Learning from disruption

Recent events have shown how quickly disruption in one market can affect production and availability elsewhere.

The semiconductor shortage provides a clear example. In the UK, car production fell by 6.7% in 2021, with the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders identifying the global shortage of semiconductors as one of the factors constraining output. It demonstrated how the limited availability of a relatively small but essential component could disrupt an entire production network.

The lesson was not simply that businesses should hold more stock. Companies need to understand where their critical dependencies lie and identify where alternative suppliers, inventory locations or transport routes would make the greatest difference.

We are seeing organisations respond by diversifying sourcing, staging inventory across different regions and considering near-sourcing options. Reducing avoidable concentration and creating practical alternatives before disruption occurs.

Responding to volatile demand

Geopolitical instability is only part of the challenge. Consumer behaviour has become more fragmented and less predictable. Demand peaks can

be shorter and more intense, with purchasing shifting rapidly between products, channels and markets.

This creates a difficult balance between availability, working capital and cost. Holding more inventory can offer protection, but it also ties up capital and increases storage and handling requirements. Adding permanent capacity throughout the network creates similar cost pressures.

Resilience therefore cannot mean building the largest possible buffer into every operation. It means identifying where flexibility has the greatest value.

Rather than concentrating inventory in a few large locations, organisations may use a more distributed network of facilities closer to customers. Others are adopting late-stage customisation, holding standardised components and configuring the final product closer to the point of use.

Testing decisions before disruption occurs

Digital twins allow organisations to create virtual representations of their supply chains and test the impact of different events. A business can model what might happen if a canal is blocked, a port closes, airspace becomes unavailable or a critical component cannot leave a particular region.

The value lies in understanding the operational and financial choices. Would an alternative route offer sufficient capacity? Would a second inventory location protect customer service? How much additional stock would be required, and would the benefit justify the cost?

Better data capture, established analytical models and AI-assisted integration mean these scenarios can now be developed and updated more quickly. This matters because planning horizons have shortened. Risks once considered over three or five years increasingly need to be assessed quarter by quarter.

Combining intelligence with execution

AI can analyse large amounts of information, identify patterns and

help organisations anticipate pressure involving transport costs, inventory, labour, critical materials and customer demand. However, data alone does not create resilience.

Supply chains operate in the physical world. Goods take time to manufacture, store and move. Warehouses have capacity constraints, while alternative transport services may not be available at short notice.

The strongest strategies therefore combine AI-generated insight with operational expertise. Technology can identify a potential failure point, but experienced teams must determine what action is practical, how quickly it can be implemented and whether the commercial benefit justifies the investment.

This is where we turn customer scenarios into executable plans by securing alternative transport capacity, redesigning inventory footprints, establishing secondary stocking locations and preparing flexible warehouse capacity.

Making resilience commercially sustainable

Standard processes, technology interfaces and operating models make it easier to replicate solutions, connect systems and deploy capacity in new locations. This creates a common operational foundation that can still be configured for different customer and market requirements.

Organisations that use data and scenario modelling to identify critical vulnerabilities, quantify the potential impact and invest selectively will be best placed for long term growth.

Customers now expect more than transactional logistics. They need partners that can anticipate risk, model choices and execute a response across warehousing, inventory and transport.

The next generation of resilient supply chains will combine intelligence with action. That is what turns resilience from an insurance policy into a source of business continuity, customer confidence and competitive advantage.



Inside SSE Logistics

A partnership built on capability

CILT(UK) recently visited SSE Logistics' operation to see first-hand how one of the UK's largest energy companies runs its supply chain – and to mark the next stage of a fast-growing partnership between SSE and CILT(UK).



The day was a celebration of SSE's recent achievement of Advanced Capability Recognition with CILT(UK), becoming one of the only three organisations at this level – joining BAE Systems and Babcock.

Capability Recognition is at the heart of transformational relationships between CILT(UK) and logistics, transport and supply chain organisations. It is a dynamic

self-analysis process giving organisations an opportunity to ensure that their approach to professional development supports their employees to deliver goals and to grow in their careers.

Since becoming a CILT(UK) partner in October 2024, SSE have supported the continued professional development of their staff, with over 100 CILT(UK) eLearning enrolments;

have been a finalist in the 'Supply Chain Innovation' category at the CILT(UK) Awards in September 2025; and have been awarded Advanced Capability Recognition within one year of accomplishing Recognised Capability in April 2025.

On top of celebrating recent achievements, the visit also provided an opportunity for SSE to share knowledge and best practise, demonstrating their commitment to innovation across the supply chain and logistics sectors. This included discussions regarding their recent launch of 'Transformation for Growth', a £33bn five-year infrastructure investment programme to help transform the UK's electricity infrastructure and deliver long-term benefits for society.

Helen Hardy, CEO of CILT(UK), said:

"Following SSE's achievement of Advanced Capability recognition, Tuesday's showcase brought together partners from across its supply chain ecosystem to share best practice and demonstrate how collaborative working is delivering measurable improvements in performance.

"Our visit also highlighted the value of CILT(UK)'s Capability Recognition programme in driving excellence, innovation and long-term resilience across critical supply chains."

Focus caught up with Ian Wing-Davis, Logistics Operation Manager, SSE to find out more about the process of CILT(UK) Advanced Capability and what it means to the organisation...

To find out more about Advanced Capability, visit:

www.ciltuk.org.uk/organisations/workforce-development/capability-recognition/

How long did the Advanced Capability stage take, from starting the process to being awarded it?

The process commenced on 28 January. The primary challenge was coordinating diaries and agreeing a clear plan of action for dividing and managing the evidence requirements. Once the three of us aligned on the approach, it took approximately four weeks to compile and organise the submission. A key milestone was establishing a structured SharePoint site, which significantly improved efficiency and collaboration. We completed our workshop with CILT(UK) on 26 March and received confirmation of the award on 10 April. Overall, the process took approximately two months from start to finish.

What did you have to demonstrate that you weren't already doing before you started?

While all the required evidence already existed within SSE, the key realisation was that the accreditation criteria extended beyond the Logistics team and reflected the capabilities of the wider organisation. This broadened the scope of our evidence-gathering activity and required us to look beyond our immediate function. A comprehensive review of SSE's intranet resources, combined with support from Subject Matter Experts across multiple departments, enabled us to identify, collate and present the evidence needed. This collaborative approach ensured we could fully demonstrate the values, processes and standards required to achieve the award.

Who within the business was involved in putting the submission together?

The core project team consisted of myself, Helen Bain (Customer Support Manager), and James Kennedy (Assistant Customer Support Manager) from Logistics. As the evidence requirements expanded beyond the Logistics function, we engaged colleagues from across SSE, including representatives from HR, Training, Distribution Engineering, the Graduate Programme, Future Networks, Network Management, and Corporate Communications. This cross-functional collaboration was instrumental in gathering and

validating the evidence required for accreditation, ensuring that we could accurately demonstrate the breadth of SSE's capabilities and values. Tim MacDonald (Head of Logistics) also played a key role, supporting the team during the assessment workshop with CILT(UK).

What was the hardest part of the process, if there was one?

The biggest challenge was getting started and agreeing the most effective format and structure for the submission. Establishing a clear approach from the outset ensured the evidence could be presented in a logical, cohesive manner and enabled the assessment workshop discussions to flow efficiently.

Was there anything that surprised you about what CILT was looking for?

One of the initial challenges was understanding the scope of the assessment. We had originally assumed that CILT(UK)'s focus would be limited to the Logistics and Transport function. However, it became clear that the accreditation evaluated the organisation as a whole, requiring us to demonstrate SSE's wider capabilities, culture and commitment to professional excellence across multiple business areas.

How did moving from Recognised to Advanced Capability differ from the first step?

The Advanced assessment was significantly more comprehensive than the Recognised accreditation. While the Recognised level focused primarily on providing evidence, the Advanced assessment required us to go much deeper, bringing real context, insight and passion to the submission. It was not enough to demonstrate that the required processes and standards existed; we also had to clearly articulate how they were embedded across the business and consistently delivered to a high standard. The assessment provided an opportunity to take the CILT(UK) panel on a journey through SSE, showcasing our culture, people and achievements, and bringing the evidence to life through practical examples, experience and subject matter expertise.

What changed operationally as a result of going through the process, versus just the accreditation itself?

Since achieving the accreditation, the team has demonstrated greater engagement with the professional development opportunities offered by CILT(UK), with colleagues actively enrolling in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes and e-learning courses to further enhance their skills and knowledge. The achievement has also strengthened team pride and professional identity. The Advanced Capability Recognition badge is prominently displayed on our SharePoint site and incorporated into email signatures, enabling us to showcase this accomplishment to both internal stakeholders and external suppliers while reinforcing our commitment to professional excellence and continuous improvement.

Would you recommend it to a similar sized logistics operation, and what would you tell them to prepare for?

Ian: Absolutely. Do not underestimate the scale of the undertaking. Achieving Advanced accreditation is not something that can be delivered in isolation; it requires the support, expertise and engagement of colleagues from across the wider business to gather robust evidence and effectively demonstrate the required values and standards. It is also important to invest time upfront in developing a clear structure for both the evidence submission and the assessment presentation. Once we had refined our approach and established a logical framework, the process became far more manageable, allowing the evidence and narrative to come together in a cohesive and compelling way.

What's next now you've reached the top level – is there anywhere to go from here, or is it about maintaining it?

Achieving Advanced accreditation is not the end goal, it establishes a benchmark that we are committed to maintaining as a minimum standard. However, our focus remains on continuous improvement, consistently looking for opportunities to enhance our capabilities, develop our people, and further strengthen the value we deliver across the business.

COMMUNITIES

Regions, Nations, & Groups

01536 740116

regions@ciltuk.org.uk

www.ciltuk.org.uk/regions

Forums

01536 740140

forums@ciltuk.org.uk

www.ciltuk.org.uk/forums

WAREHOUSE TECHNOLOGY AND MATERIALS HANDLING FORUM

Linde Material Handling (UK) Basingstoke visit

On a warm summer's morning in June, a group of CILT delegates were the first external guests to visit Linde's new experience centre at their Basingstoke site. This site has been part of Linde's history in the UK for over 75 years, originally being a full forklift manufacturing facility.

The forum's scope includes warehouse materials handling equipment (MHE) as well as automation and similar technology – this event was focused on the MHE element of warehouse operations, but of course this can now encompass AGVs, AMRs and similar technologies.

Linde is a true materials handling provider with a full range of handling equipment including AGV and AMRs together with a full suite of associated IT technology systems. The morning format was a great introduction to Linde and the full logistics sector offerings.

Following registration and refreshments, delegates were divided into three groups and each rotated through specific briefing areas, covering Fleet Management, Safety Solutions and Automated Solutions. Each focused session was led by a Linde expert with presentations and demonstrations of the latest technologies and their practical applications.

Modern fleet management systems offer greatly enhanced capabilities for



monitoring and managing MHE fleets – with benefits to operational efficiency and optimisation, safety, preventative maintenance and maximising return on investment.

Implementation of new safety systems using cameras in combination with AI technology can lead to major improvements in warehouse safety, protecting both pedestrians and MHE operators alike, helping to avoid needless accidents and downtime.

Warehouse automation now includes mobile robotics, conveyors and sortation alongside the more traditional fixed storage and retrieval

systems using cranes and shuttles. Delegates learned how Linde offers full end to end materials handling technology and associated software applications such as WMS and WCS, enabling design and implementation of full warehouse solutions, including of course automated MHE.

After the technology demonstrations, the groups came back together for a lively open Q&A session followed by a great lunch in the site canteen for those delegates who elected to stay.

It was clear that Linde put a great deal of time and effort into maximising the experience and benefits of the visit for attendees and feedback from delegates was overwhelmingly positive. A big thank you to Linde UK for staging this great event for CILT in their new and exciting facility – hopefully, we'll be back next year!



New trains for HS2

Since the Coronation Scot in the 1930s, the West Coast Main Line has connected Scotland with London in speed and style.

Electrification and tilting trains have already reduced London-Glasgow journey times to typically 4h36m with eight stops, although 4h08m was scheduled daily with one stop during the Virgin era. With work on the ground now well under way, the construction of HS2 between Lichfield and London presents the opportunity to cut times still further.

Chris Gibb's career as an operator has given him an awareness of the Scottish dimension that has been lacking from any pronouncements since 2020 by HS2. Yet Scotland's future will be bound up with the new line because trains will divert onto it, and Northern Powerhouse Rail will be no help to points further north. The timetable envisaged by HS2 has just one fast Anglo-Scottish train per hour linking Glasgow and London with stops at

Carlisle, Preston and Old Oak Common.

HS2 has ordered 54 8-carriage trains with 504 seats. Today's 11-carriage Pendolinos have 607 seats and operate twice an hour between Glasgow or Edinburgh and Euston. With 37% fewer seats than now, the HS2 order is insufficient to replace the 574 Pendolino carriages, and could result in compulsory reservations to choke off demand.

HS2's new trains won't tilt, which is how trains go faster north of Lancaster. Planned renewals with ETCS in-cab signalling can make even higher speeds a reality for tilting trains from 2040. But the 20 minutes gained by running via the new line would be lost by slower running without tilt further north.

The fire near Glasgow Central in March fortuitously occasioned a demonstration that Platforms 1 and 2 can accommodate trains as long as 286 metres, and the 1990s expansion of Polmadie Depot for Regional Eurostar created the capacity there. Tilt remains in vogue abroad, such as on the transalpine services linking Switzerland with Italy.

HS2 is now likely to connect with the WCML in 2040 at the same time as the Pendolinos retire. The solution is to start planning a tilting replacement, competitively tendering for 43 12-carriage trains that can reach 140 mph and run on HS2 to 186 mph. They could operate between Scotland and Euston providing 1500 seats twice an hour, also thrice an hour between Manchester and Euston. The Glasgow-Euston journey time with an hourly fast train could be 3 hours 38 minutes, highly competitive with air and motorway and good for economic growth.

John Yellowlees FCILT

M6toll Operations Centre visit

M6toll welcomed us to their Operations Centre near Lichfield followed by a fabulous lunch at a local pub. The event included a presentation on M6toll's history & development followed by tours of the Control Room & a visit to one of the Toll Booth plazas.

Sarah Gourlay FCLT welcomed CILT(UK) professionals from across the transport and logistics sector to M6toll's HQ in the West Midlands for a behind-the-scenes look at how the M6toll operates.

The session began with an overview presentation covering motorway operations, service delivery, and the role the M6toll plays in supporting efficient journey planning and its contribution to the West Midlands economy. This was followed by a

guided road tour of the network, providing delegates with a first-hand view of the infrastructure and traffic flow in action. As part of the tour attendees had the opportunity to visit the control room and M6toll Operations Centre, gaining insight into the systems and processes that underpin safe and reliable operations, and a visit to one of the Toll Booth Plazas where members were able to see vehicles passing through the barriers close-up!

The visit concluded with lunch, offering valuable time for networking and discussion. Feedback from attendees was extremely positive, with one delegate commenting that they 'never knew a piece of tarmac could be so interesting,' which reflects the level of engagement and interest throughout the day.

Our thanks go to Sarah & the rest of the team at M6toll for facilitating an excellent visit, much appreciated by all attendees.

David Grahamslaw
West Midlands Committee,
CILT(UK)

MEMBERSHIP REPRESENTATIVES
GROUP

Meet Andrew Hemmings FCILT

I have been involved with the work of CILT(UK) since 2006. My unique blend of skills and experience makes me particularly qualified to serve on the Membership Representatives Group which exists to create and sustain stronger links between members and CILT(UK) Board of Trustees. We want ideas, concerns and experiences to flow openly and quickly in both directions.

Twenty years ago, I became a member of the Institute whilst working in the Transport Directorate of the Welsh government in Cardiff. I was fortunate to combine the roles of Ministerial Adviser and project manager, not least in establishing the Intra Wales Air Service uniting the north and south of the country. I also served as the leading authority on rail freight, ports and logistics in Wales. On retiring from the Welsh government, I became a rail planner for an international private consultancy and took up the job of National Officer Cymru/Wales for CILT(UK). I enjoyed this spell of work on the front line, helping to recruit and retain members, working with employers, local authorities and educational establishments to facilitate events and meetings across the country.

I gained especial insight into the corporate nature of CILT(UK), bringing together different modes of transport, the patchwork of Nations and Regions and the educational accreditation side of the Institute. In May 2014 I was fortunate to be invited to be the voluntary/honorary Secretary of the newly formed Rail Freight Forum under the inspiring and knowledgeable leadership of Julian Worth.

I retired from this work this year, able to devote more time and effort to the Membership Representative Group MRG. I have interests in encouraging diversity and inclusion, supporting strategic planning and the role of volunteers. My 'secret reading list' and Boiled Frog story are still available to those interested in leadership and management training!

Outside of the Institute, I serve as Chair of the Advisory Body for Newport Harbour Commissioners. I am a volunteer speaker and guide for both the Commonwealth War Graves Commission CWGC and Newport Transporter Bridge. Last but by no means least I have written two books: 'From Lancashire to Yorkshire by Canal' and 'Secret Newport'. Both are published by Amberley Books. In this digital age I was historical adviser for the Heritage Lottery Fund films Newport and the Sea 1914-1918

My responsibilities on the Membership Representatives Group include nurturing the sectoral interests of Rail and Ports & Shipping. I also intend to work with CILT(UK) members on South West Region to provide a more focused and member friendly service. At a corporate level, I carry a banner for diversity, and for volunteer training and leadership. Please let me know if you are interested in any of these matters by contacting me at andrew.hemmings47@gmail.com. As ever you can reach the MRG directly at mrg@ciltuk.org.uk



FORTHCOMING COURSES

For queries and to stay up to date with online courses, contact the relevant department.

CILT Awarding Organisation:
01536 740170 or ao@ciltuk.org.uk

PTRC Courses:
020 7348 1970 or info@ptrc-training.co.uk

01536 740166 pd@ciltuk.org.uk info@ciltuk.org.uk

CILT ONLINE COURSES

FUNDAMENTALS OF BUSINESS PLANNING SYSTEMS



Location: e-Learning
Register:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 2

SUPPLY CHAIN PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS



Location: e-Learning
Register:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 2.5

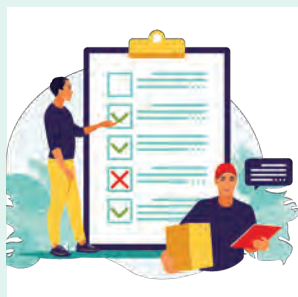
FUNDAMENTALS OF STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT



Location: e-Learning
Register:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 1.5

AWARDING ORGANISATION

AEO CERTIFIED PRACTITIONER



12-15 October
Centre: Morley Consulting Training Ltd
Location: Live Virtual Classroom
Booking: www.morley-consulting.co.uk
CPD hours: 22

ADVANCED CUSTOMS PRACTITIONER

4-6 November
Centre: Morley Consulting Training Ltd
Location: Live Virtual Classroom
Booking: www.morley-consulting.co.uk
CPD hours: 12

DIPLOMA IN PRACTICAL TRADE COMPLIANCE

12-14 November
Centre: Morley Consulting Training Ltd
Location: Live Virtual Classroom
Booking: www.morley-consulting.co.uk
CPD hours: 12

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORT MANAGERS CPC BLENDED LEARNING FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORT

27 October
8 December – Exam
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning and online classrooms
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 59

TRANSPORT MANAGERS CPC BLENDED LEARNING FOR ROAD HAULAGE

29 October
8 December – Exam
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning and online classrooms
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 59

TRANSPORT MANAGERS REFRESHER FOR ROAD HAULAGE

2 & 9 November
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning and online classrooms
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 9

CILT(UK) LEVEL 3 PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATE IN LOGISTICS, SUPPLY CHAIN AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

February 2027
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning and online classrooms
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk

CILT(UK) LEVEL 5 PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE IN SUPPLY CHAIN AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

February 2027
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning and online classrooms
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 9

CPD E-LEARNING SHORT COURSES

Online – anytime
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: Various

OLAT – ROAD HAULAGE E-LEARNING

Online – anytime
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 3

TMCP FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORT VIA SELF STUDY

Online – anytime
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning and online classrooms
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 40

TMCP FOR ROAD HAULAGE VIA SELF STUDY

Online – anytime
Centre: CILT(UK) Learning Centre
Location: e-Learning
Booking:
learningcentre@ciltuk.org.uk
CPD hours: 40

WHAT'S ON

✉ Nations, Regions & Groups
01536 740116
regions@ciltuk.org.uk

✉ Forums
01536 740140
forums@ciltuk.org.uk

✉ Events
01536 740148
events@ciltuk.org.uk

CILT Corporate

CILT Forums

CILT National

CILT Regional

CILT Association

OCTOBER

1st

CILT(UK) STUDENT MEMBERSHIP PRESENTATION

13:00 - 14:00

Online**Speaker:** Julia Ohela, CILT(UK) Go-to-Market Manager**Cost:** Members: Free
Non-members: Free**CPD hours:** 0.5

7th

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CILT(UK) CONSTRUCTION FORUM

12:00 - 14:00

Online**Speaker:** Various**Cost:** Members: Free
Non-members: Free**CPD hours:** 2

7th

KENT STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PRIORITIES

18:00 - 20:00

Registration 18:30

Online & Location: DHA

Planning, Eclipse House, Eclipse park, Maidstone ME14 3EN (Close to J7 of M20)

Speaker: Joseph Ratcliffe, Transport Strategy Manager, Major Capital Project Team, Kent County Council Highways and Transport.**Cost:** Members: Free
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT**CPD hours:** 1**RESILIENCE DURING CLIMATE CHANGE: SINK OR SWIM FOR DEFENCE LOGISTICS**

19:00 - 20:00

Online**Speaker:** Lucy Westgarth, ESG Lead, Leidos and Dominic McEvoy, FCILT, Chair One Defence Forum**Cost:** Members: Free
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

8th

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES WITH CILT(UK)

16:00 - 17:00

**Online****Speaker:** Rebecca Fox, Director of Membership & Communities, CILT(UK)**Cost:** Members: Free
Non-members: Free**CPD hours:** 1

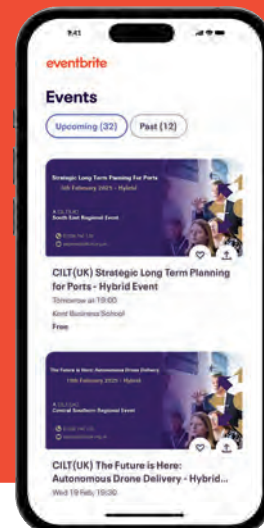
12th

DELIVERING EAST WEST RAIL

19:00 - 20:00

Online**Speakers:** East West Rail: Georgina Taylor; Shehab Choudhury; Anthony O'Dea; Ryan Robertson; Martin Catchpole**Cost:** Members: Free
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT**CPD hours:** 1CILT(UK) NOW ON
eventbrite

Stay in the know with our event details, special announcements, and ticket availability, follow our Eventbrite page



13th

**WHAT A CREDIBLE
ELECTRIFICATION BUSINESS
CASE ACTUALLY NEEDS**

12:30 - 13:30

Online

Speaker: Jonathan Carr,
Consulting and Propositions
Director, VEV

Cost: Members: Free
Non-members: Free

**THE STORY OF TECHNOLOGY,
LEADERSHIP AND THE SUPPLY
CHAIN**



19:00 - 21:00

Online & Location: University of
Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RH

Speaker: Paul Brooks FCILT,
Founder, Sales Leader, Investor
and self confessed CILT(UK)
advocate

Cost: Members: Free
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

CPD hours: 1.5

15th

**WEST MIDLANDS ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**

13:30 - 18:30

Location: Millenium Point, Curzon
Street, Birmingham B4 7AP

Speaker: Various

Cost: Members: £30.00 inc VAT,
Non-members: £45.00 inc VAT &
NOVUS students: £30.00 inc VAT

CPD hours: 2.5

20th

**SUPPLY CHAIN
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUPPORTING
INTERNATIONAL TRADE**



14:30 - 16:30

Online & Location: Forth Ports,
31 Bath Road, Leith, Edinburgh
EH6 7AH

Speaker: Sara Duncan, Head of
Transport and Logistics, William
Grant and Sons; Neil Gould,
Chairman, Freight and Logistics
Policy Group, CILT(UK)

Cost: Members: Free
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

CPD hours: 1.5

21st

**CUSTOMS & INTERNATIONAL
TRADE COMPLIANCE MEETING**



13:30 - 15:00

Online

Speaker: Susan Morley, Chair,
Customs and International Trade
Compliance Forum, CILT(UK)

Cost: Members only: Free
CPD hours: 1.5

**CILT(UK) MEMBER BENEFITS
WEBINAR - HOSTED BY MRG**

18:00 - 19:00

Online

Speaker: CILT(UK) Membership
Representation Group (MRG)

Cost: Members: Free
Non-members: Free

24th

**VISIT TO SHOREHAM
(BRIGHTON CITY) AIRPORT**



11:00 - 12:30

Location: Shoreham Airport
(Brighton City Airport) Cecil
Pashley Way, Shoreham-by-Sea
BN43 5FF

Cost: Members: Free
Non-members: £5 inc. VAT

Full listings of
Associated events
can be found online:
ciltuk.org.uk/events



Nearshoring:

The new standard for smarter outsourcing?



For years, outsourcing decisions have often come down to one question: How much can we save? But as businesses become more globally connected, the location of your outsourcing partner can be just as important as the cost. That is where nearshoring comes in.

Nearshoring means partnering with an outsourced team in a geographically and culturally closer location, rather than sending work to a distant destination. For European businesses, Central and Eastern Europe is increasingly becoming an attractive alternative, offering the benefits of outsourcing without some

of the challenges associated with significant geographical distance.

And the shift is already happening. The global nearshore sector generated more than £45 billion in revenue in 2025 and is projected to reach £89 billion by 2033. Research published in 2025 also found that 42% of large European corporations



Compliance and transparency

For UK and European organisations, outsourcing also means considering data protection, regulatory requirements and visibility over outsourced operations.

Sterling's nearshore operations provide a UK and EU GDPR compliant location, supported by robust compliance standards and maximum transparency. Our clients benefit from live dashboards, customised reporting and access to real-time call recordings, giving them clear visibility over performance.

Scaling without sacrificing quality

Outsourcing needs rarely stay the same. A business might need five dedicated agents today and hundreds tomorrow. Finding a partner that can scale quickly without compromising consistency can be difficult.

We have experience in onboarding 100 agents in a single month and more than 400 within four months. Whether you need five dedicated seats or a 500-seat operation, we scale around your requirements.

The sterling difference

Nearshoring is not simply about moving operations closer to home. Done properly, it should combine cost efficiency, stronger collaboration, cultural alignment, scalability and greater control.

With nearly two decades of BPO experience, our award-winning 24/7 global coverage and omnichannel CX, Sterling brings together the benefits of nearshoring with the depth of a global outsourcing partner. Logistics and beyond, we build outsourcing solutions around the businesses we support; never the other way around.

That is nearshoring, done by Sterling.

were considering moving from offshore to nearshore providers within the following years.

So, why are businesses making the switch?

Time zones and communication

One of the biggest frustrations with traditional offshore outsourcing is simply being several hours apart. When teams are based thousands of miles away, travelling to the site for meetings, training or operational support is time-consuming and costly. Even when offshore teams working hours are the same as their onshore counterparts, the physical distance creates additional logistical challenges.

With offices in Kraków and Łódź, Poland, Sterling gives UK and European businesses a strong nearshore option, with significant working-hour overlap. Our teams

can collaborate directly with clients during the same business day, supporting faster communication, smoother handovers and more responsive service.

Cultural alignment

Speaking the same language does not always mean communicating in the same way.

Cultural expectations, tone, idioms and customer behaviours all influence how an interaction is received. As outsourced teams become more integrated into businesses, cultural understanding is increasingly important.

Our customer-facing agents are C1+ or native-level speakers, bilingual in English and any other required language. They understand the cultural nuances and local context that help customers feel genuinely understood.

MEMBER ELECTIONS

The following members have been elected to **Institute Membership** and are now entitled to use the post-nominals **MILT**

Julia Lawrie, Logistics Manager, Soventix GmbH

Adithya John Luis, Logistics Operations Analyst, Post Office (Royal Mail Hub)

Jayampathi Abeykoon, Logistics and Supply Chain Planning Supervisor, Talke Logistics (TALKE)

Sylvie Nakweti

David Chapman, Logistics Manager, KLR Projects Ltd

Martin Knights, Director, Knights Environmental Compliance Ltd

Jarek Mykietyszyn, Logistics Supervisor, FLC Femern Link Contractors

Umair Choksy, Associate Professor in Management, University of Stirling

Femi Idowu, Fulfillment Operation Co-worker, Ikea

Adi Roser, Principal Transport Planner, WSP

Jack Walker, Transport Manager, Cleveland Cable Company

Deborah Towle, Transport & Operations Manager, RJK Logistics Ltd

Magdalena Zdanowska, Senior Customs Coordinator, Balfour Beatty VINCI Joint Venture | HS2

Innesza Perilo, UK Imports & Broker Control Specialist, GlaxoSmithKline

Paul John Badham, Training and Compliance Manager, Sortera Ltd (Uxbridge)

Patras Mehraj, Operations Manager, Ministry of Defence

Kerry Everett, Fractional Finance Director, Beyond Numbers Consulting Ltd

Pawel Jacek Kosakowski, Sales Representative, ECS Eurocargo

Rob Kitchener, Owner, RKTS

Ochanya Agbenyi, Logistics Administrator, CPI Books Limited

Bryam Flower, Operations Manager, DE&S

The following members have been elected to **Chartered Membership** and are now entitled to use the post-nominals **CMILT**

Joseph Kimbugwe, Founder CEO, IAM-VETTED Ltd

Carrie Smith, Operations Manager - People Coach, National Armaments Directorate Group

Paul Russell, Head of Transport Compliance, Svella Plc

Stanley Karnja, Head of Logistics & Distribution Services, Cold Solutions Kenya Ltd

Paul Warren, Transport Manager, Archer Daniels Midland Company

Nicholas Thomas, Transport Desk Officer & Team Leader, DE&S NAD Group

Carl Fulleylove

Tarkan Oz, Depot Manager, Turner (Soham) Ltd

Greg McDougall, Head of Logistics & Warehousing, Cranswick Continental Foods

Amanda Dean, Inventory Manager, Defence Equipment and Support

Daniel Dawson, Senior Logistics Manager, Red Sea Global

Faith Frank Alparslan, Senior Lecturer in Project Management, University of Northampton

Uma Ayyildiz, Shipping Manager, Marshall of Cambridge Aerospace Ltd

Ibrahim Bashir, Senior Procurement & Supply Chain Consultant, Deenscorp Royale London, UK

Anthony Butler, National Transport Manager, Aerial Platforms Ltd

Amey Carey, Senior Manager, Supply Chain Procurement, Wayfair

Lee Howard, Head of Site, The Very group

Neulla Hughes, Director, Co-founder, NLH Vehicle Movements, Officium Consulting, Fleetguard Compliance

Andrew Kirkman, Fleet & Compliance Manager, GBA Services Ltd

Tim Long, Site Manager, Powerday Plc

Tomasz Orlanski, Bus Operator, Metroline Ltd

Shawn Reiszner

Mohammed Khaja Hussain, Procurement Lead, Rua AlMadinah Holding Company

Adekunle Ibrahim Babalola, Fleet Manager, Dangote Cement Transport

The following members have been elected to **Chartered Fellowship** and are now entitled to use the post-nominals **FCILT**

Gareth Connah, Managing Director, Price & Pierce Tissue | Gould Paper Sales UK Ltd

Tim Hawkes, Head of Engineering, Dawsongroup

Kevin Costigan, National Service Delivery Manager, Dawson Group Bus & Coach

Gordon Bryce, Fleet and Transportation Manager, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Zai Khan, General Manager of Facilities, Transport and Future of Works, Aspire Housing

Marc Williams, Inventory Control Manager, Carnival UK

Ranald Robertson, Partnership Director, Hitrans

David Ashmore, Transport Economics and Policy Lecturer, University of Southampton

Martin Crabtree, Associate Director, Bryan G Hall Ltd

Aginatious Shiri, Programme Lead, Eiffage: EKFB – HS2

Laura Thornton, Procurement Director, GXO Logistics

Chris Cavendish, Senior Supply Chain Manager, MSI Reproductive Choices

Jug Johal, Director of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Support Services, NHS Grampian

James Fairchild, Managing Director, City Transport Group

Craig Geddes, Quarter Master, Motor Transport Officer, 157 (Welsh) Regiment Royal Logistic Corps

Katie Frost, Chief Executive Officer, Metroline London

Inayat Ali Shah, Senior Director, Octave Technology Solutions

Stephen Fidler, Director, Local Passenger Transport & Inclusion, Department for Transport




**SOLVARES
LOGISTICS**

Global trade needs better control

Why increasingly complex transport networks need more than just shipment tracking

Global trade is changing the shape of transport networks. Companies are reviewing sourcing strategies, diversifying suppliers and reconsidering established trade routes. Some are shortening supply chains; others are adding new markets, suppliers or transport corridors to reduce dependency and risk.

Each decision affects logistics. A new supplier may result in a new carrier or transport mode, while a diverted route can change lead times, tariffs, packaging requirements and inventory levels.

The challenge is no longer simply moving freight from A to B. It is maintaining control when the network between A and B keeps changing.

One shipment, multiple moving parts

International transport rarely follows a simple route. A shipment may include road transport to a port, an ocean leg and onward road or rail, involving several logistics partners.

Managing this complexity manually is difficult.

LP2, the Transport Management System from Solvares Logistics,



brings transport planning, carrier allocation, tariff management, shipment execution, tracking, freight cost control and reporting together in one platform.

It supports all transport modes, carriers, sites and transport legs, allowing rules and tariffs to be applied systematically rather than recreated for every shipment.

The objective is simple: to enable logistics teams to manage greater complexity without increasing administrative workload.

Transport starts before the loading bay

Packaging is increasingly part of the wider compliance and sustainability agenda. Companies need to consider not only how goods are transported, but how they are packed, labelled and prepared.

LP2 supports packaging as part of the transport workflow, including packing-station processes and mobile data capture. Suppliers can pack orders, assign items digitally to

packaging units and generate SSCC labels before creating the consignment. Returnable packaging is also tracked through LP2.

Visibility is more than just a dot on a map

For international transport, knowing where a shipment is remains important. More valuable, however, is understanding what its status means operationally.

If inbound material is delayed, a manufacturer may need to expedite another shipment, use an alternative supplier or adjust production.

LP2 maintains transport visibility throughout the end-to-end transport process from the supplier to manufacturing to distribution centre to customer.

This makes visibility proactive rather than reactive.

Transport disruption impacts inventory

Longer, less predictable lead times increase the need for safety stock, protecting production and customer service but tying up working capital and warehouse space.

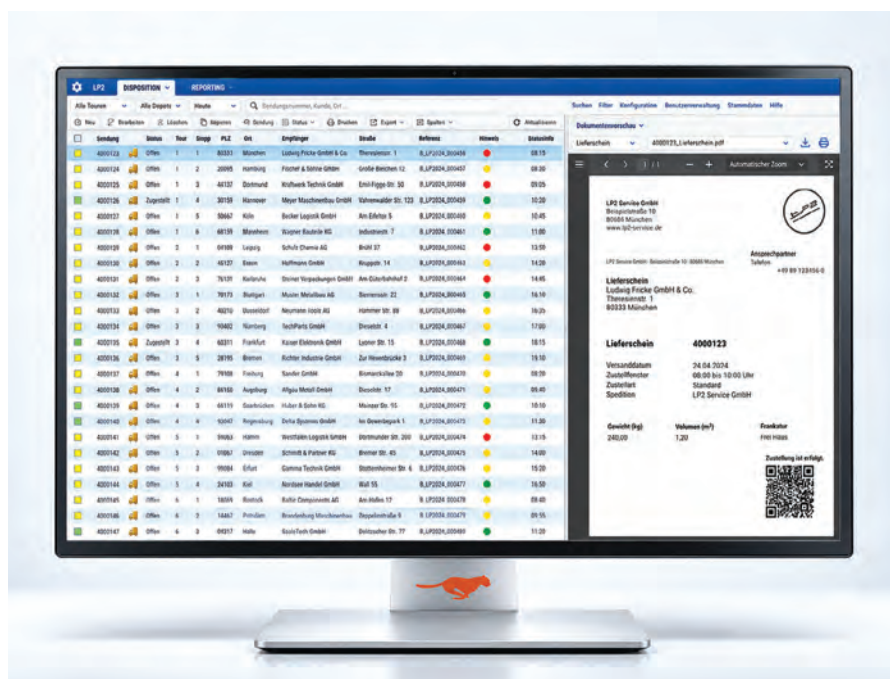
The answer is not simply to hold less stock, but to identify risk earlier.

If logistics teams know what is arriving, when it is due, which carrier is responsible and which transport leg has been disrupted, they have more time to respond before a logistics problem becomes a production problem.

Understanding the true transport cost

Global freight also creates a cost-control challenge.

International tariffs can include multiple components, including freight rates tolls and surcharges. Sea freight may contain several tariff elements across different legs and currencies, while road freight can be calculated by distance, zones,



weight, volume, loading metres or chargeable weight.

LP2 applies relevant carrier tariffs and surcharges to transport activity. Freight invoices are then systematically compared with calculated transport costs rather than checked manually line by line.

This becomes especially important as companies increase their carrier base to improve resilience. More logistics partners may reduce dependency, but without centralised cost control they can also create procurement and finance challenges.

Improving resilience should not mean losing sight of cost.

A single transport landscape

A TMS cannot prevent port closures, capacity shortages or geopolitical disruption. What it can do is give the people managing the consequences a reliable view of their options.

LP2 connects transport processes with ERP systems, carriers and web portals, maintaining consistent information across the end-to-end process. Transport data is connected to products, orders, suppliers rather than sitting in disconnected systems.

As the supply chain networks evolve, the underlying transport processes evolve with them.

Complexity is a fact of life

Nearshoring, reshoring and supplier diversification are changing global trade and increasing transport complexity. Many companies will operate hybrid networks involving multiple modes and a wider, more flexible carrier base.

It is impossible to predict every disruption. Competitive advantage will come from enhancing visibility across the network, understanding the operational and financial consequences, and being able to make decisions quickly.

That is the role of the modern logistics team, supported by modern transport management technology.

LP2 by Solvares Logistics is designed for complex transport operations across multiple carriers, transport modes, services and sites – from order management and packing through to execution, tracking and freight cost control.

Find out more at:
www.solvares-logistics.com/en/

MEMBER RECOGNITION

We continue our member recognition in listing those celebrating their membership anniversary in October. This list was compiled on 4th September 2026 and includes those members who qualify up to 31st October 2026.

5 years (2021)

Evanthia Thanou CMILT
David Brown CMILT
Mathew Chamberlain CMILT
Tinashe Mawoyo CMILT
Craig Cuthbert CMILT
Laura Rogers CMILT
Mark Houghton FCILT
Mark Fisher FCILT
Gordon Telling FCILT
Jay Traisnel FCILT
Antony Hayward MILT
Amit Bahadoor MILT
Craig Sadler MILT
Keith Diniz MILT
David Braisby MILT
John Townsend MILT
Jonathan McKenzie MILT
Neil Carter
Keith Holdsworth
Lee Horrocks

10 years (2016)

Nang Shri Seng Lao CMILT
Florian Scheuring CMILT
Steve Roberts CMILT
Christopher Mallinson CMILT
Geraldine Ritchie CMILT
Danny Alborough CMILT
David Fenlon CMILT
Matthew Sinnett CMILT
Ian Roberts CMILT
Michael Harrison CMILT
Matthew McNairn CMILT
Andrew Weatherill FCILT
Rachel Allcock FCILT
Ian Warr FCILT

Francis Cuthbertson FCILT
David Griffiths FCILT
Nachiappan Subramanian FCILT
Tim Boateng FCILT
Melville Holley FCILT
David Owen FCILT
Linda Rigby FCILT
Katharine Brough MILT
Devon Barrow MILT
Brian Stonard

20 years (2006)

Clara Yeung CMILT
David Heaton CMILT
Craig Gornall CMILT
Michele Mitchell CMILT
Simon Charles CMILT
Andrew Presly CMILT
Glenn Hall FCILT
Jon Eardley FCILT
Joanne Eves FCILT
Garry Mansell FCILT
Gary Basford MILT
David MacCallum MILT
Adrian Misson-Yates MILT

30 years (1996)

Brian Calverley CMILT
Karen Jessep CMILT
Mark Teale CMILT
Simon Speller CMILT
David McCallum CMILT
Sophia Ali CMILT
Christopher Holden CMILT
Graeme Brindle CMILT
Andrew Garnett CMILT
Richard Harper FCILT

Phillip Southall FCILT
Brian Kenny FCILT
Antony Francis FCILT
Stuart Higgins FCILT
Andrew Partis MILT
Christopher Brown MILT
Donald Chalker MILT
Christopher Greenwood
Christopher Salmon

40 years (1986)

Tiff Lynch CMILT
Timothy Ward CMILT
Nicholas Murray CMILT
Mark Fowles CMILT
Peter Nicholls CMILT
Irvine Piczenik CMILT
Steven Loh CMILT
Jerry Austen-Smith FCILT
Benjamin Bvempfepe FCILT
David Quarmby FCILT
Harry Gale MILT
Kenneth Asquith

50 years (1976)

Richard Hall CMILT
Roderick Moulding Hon FCILT
Gunther Kruse Hon FCILT

60 years (1966)

Victor Hall CMILT
David Davies MILT

**KAREN
JESSEP**
CMILT



“CILT(UK) membership provides me with an expert network of operations professionals and access to the latest industry trends and news to keep me informed and develop my knowledge.”

**JONATHAN
MCKENZIE**
MILT



“CILT(UK) membership has helped me develop a broader understanding of our industry by connecting transport requirements with health, safety and environmental responsibilities. The opportunity to learn from industry leaders, share experiences with peers and build a strong professional network has been invaluable throughout my career. Transport is an important part of everyday life, and being part of CILT(UK) helps me continue to contribute to its future development.”

**KATHARINE
BROUGH**
MILT



“CILT membership has enabled me to develop my network and reach a large cross section of professionals and managers working in infrastructure and logistics to deliver common goals to increase active and sustainable transport options for people across the country. I look forward to continuing to promote CILT membership and resources to peers and partner organisations.”



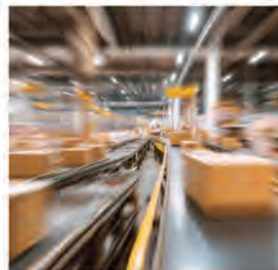
The Chartered
Institute of Logistics
and Transport

From Birmingham to the House of Lords, three events leading our autumn calendar.

SCAN TO
BOOK

West Midlands Annual Supply Chain Conference

Thursday 15 October, Birmingham.
Practical ideas for smarter supply chains,
from tackling empty miles to making
major investment decisions land.
Networking and 2.5 CPD hours.



East Midlands Road Show

Monday 2 November, Derby.
Meet the CILT(UK) Chair and
CEO as they hit the road to
hear directly from members.



Chartered Centenary Lunch

Thursday 10 December, House of Lords.
100 years of chartered professional
standards, celebrated where it counts. A
landmark lunch to end a landmark year.



Register for all events ➡ ciltuk.org.uk