JANUARY 2026

MARKET UPDATE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Uniserve Monthly Market Update, your comprehensive overview of the latest trends, challenges, and opportunities shaping global supply chains. This edition brings together expert insights from across GB Global Group Companies, offering a holistic perspective on key developments in ocean and air freight, warehousing and transport, European logistics, environmental compliance, and customs regulations.

Our teams have collaborated to provide actionable intelligence on current market conditions. This report is designed to help you navigate complexity with confidence and make informed decisions for the months ahead.

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- Risk and trade analysis

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OCEAN FREIGHT UPDATE

KEY HEADLINES

- Persistent port congestion, Red Sea diversions, and carrier blank sailings continue to constrain effective supply, keeping rates firm into early 2026.
- The approach of Chinese New Year in mid-February, with suppliers and trucking operations extending closures from early February through early March, is driving a pre-holiday cargo surge and increasing risks to equipment, trucking, and schedules.

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OCEAN FREIGHT GLOBAL MARKET OVERVIEW

On Asia to Europe, trade is now heavy owing to pressure created by the Chinese New Year holiday coming in February – this annual event helps to shape surrounding shipping behaviour.

The first week of February will stretch the market and currently appear to be the peak, expectation is that the market at this time will suffer from lack of equipment, issue with availability of trucks and drivers, as well as heavy port and deport congestion.

All should remain understanding that we are moving towards a period when market conditions are challenging, during the peak shipments face potential danger of delay, or being transferred onto alternative sailings.

Rate indications in early January continue to hold at comparatively elevated levels, particularly amongst the major carrier alliances, supporting carriers' continual efforts to stabilize pricing following year end volatility.

Peak harvests and associated exports are now in play with regards to the Grape Season in India, this annual pattern impacts the ocean freight environment. As this season tails out in February, domestically suppliers in India then consider the cycle of the financial year end which sees a push on output also which should hold to see the first quarter of the year perform strongly.

Quarter one is a strong period for Indian exports, considering a rise in demand with shipping lines for export, container equipment challenges, this all sees a reduction in available capacity and for freight price to remain strong.

Port issues in Asia and Europe (including UK access)

- **Underlying congestion picture:** Late 2025 data show that port congestion, not capacity cuts, is the main disruptor on key east–west trades. On Far East–Europe services, average departure delays reached 12.5 days in mid December 2025, one of the worst levels in three years, indicating heavy strain that is still feeding into early 2026 operations.
- **Asian port bottlenecks:** Earlier analyses highlight that bottlenecks at major Chinese ports (Shanghai, Ningbo, Qingdao) and other Asian hubs have delayed nearly 10% of global container capacity, with outbound containers facing 2.5–4 days of dwell time in some ports. While this data is from 2025, the same congestion and weather related

"Port congestion, not capacity cuts, is the main disruptor on key East–West trades."

Steve Ireland,
Director of Surface Freight Operations
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patterns are cited as continuing into 2026.

- **European/UK access:** For UK bound cargo, congestion at North European hubs (Rotterdam, Antwerp Bruges, Hamburg) and channel ports translates into:
  - Longer dwell times before transshipment or feeder loading.
  - Tighter feeder windows and occasional missed connections, especially when mainline vessels arrive late.

Direct take: there is no single catastrophic port shutdown, but persistent congestion at key Asian and North European hubs continues to ripple into UK arrivals.

Delays and schedule reliability

- **Global delay backdrop:** Industry updates at the start of 2026 emphasize that many of the pressures seen throughout 2025 are continuing—longer and less predictable transit times, with shippers warned not to plan around "best case" schedules.
- **Far East–Europe delays:** Average departure delays of over 12 days on Far East–Europe services in late 2025 show how deeply congestion and operational strain have affected this corridor; these conditions do not reset instantly on 1 January and are still influencing early 2026 sailings.
- **Practical impact Asia–UK:**
  - **Extended transit times** due to both port congestion and Red Sea diversions.
  - **Higher schedule variability**, with more frequent ETA changes, port omissions, and rotation adjustments.
  - **Need for larger buffers** in supply chains - importers are being advised to plan around realistic, padded lead times rather than historical norms.

Direct take: expect Asia–UK shipments in early 2026 to face meaningful delay risk; planning with extra lead time is essential.

Shipping Lines

New vessel deliveries in 2026 are scheduled to add around 8-10% capacity to market, this trend could work in favour of freight buyers as overcapacity extends, although caution should be considered as lines will continue to use blank sailings, and asset redeployment in an attempt to keep the balance steady between supply and demand. Effective capacity is constrained by longer routes (Red Sea diversions) and

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port congestion, which keeps ships and containers tied up for extended periods.

Chinese New Year 2026

Chinese government official guidance indicates that, Chinese New Year Holidays will begin on 15th February and run through until the 23rd February (a 9-day term).

Our overseas partners in this region will follow this pattern, although they will be available for matters that need attention during this public break.

Numerous suppliers in China and Truckers tend to extend this holiday period beyond the dates mentioned here, expectation should be that many will be flexible and extend this working break starting from the 10th February through until the 03rd March. We highlight this potential flex in the length of the holiday period as it does put pressure on some supporting services such as trucking (considering availability and resources).

UK and European Ports

DP World in the UK have expanded the existing Interport Train Service, this product now offers a rail solution connecting DP World London Gateway and DP World Southampton Terminals increasing to 5 weekly services per week. This service allows for the transfer of cargo between ports and allows for a greener solution to lower carbon emissions.

To match Berth 4 in size at 430 metres, DP World at London Gateway are currently in the process of constructing the ports Berth 5 as they continue to expand since its grand opening in 2013. The all-electric Berth 5 is scheduled to be fully developed and be ready to function fully next year in 2027.

Speculation continues to surround the sale of the Port of Felixstowe by current owners Hutchison, latest news suggests that that varies parties are engaged in potential investment talks. That aside investment is still on going by the port operator with more cranes and autonomous trucks on order.

ABP in Southampton move forward with regards to an expansion project to build a new new automotive terminal to expand its already established presence, further investment will see new facilities for truck drivers and additional accredited parking being made available.

“DP World in the UK have expanded the existing Interport Train Service.”

Steve Ireland,
Director of Surface Freight Operations
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OCEAN FREIGHT GLOBAL MARKET OVERVIEW

Suez Canal

The Suez Canal Authority continue to campaign and encourage a return for major shipping companies, special rates were offered during talks to further encourage transits. The Canal is a major source of foreign income for Egypt.

We continually monitor the position of this situation, in recent month's CMA and Maersk vessels have navigated the Canal, the first majors to have sent large vessels on this route since late 2023. A limited number of transits through the Suez and the Red Sea have been made possible so far when partnered security was available.

It's too early firmly to say how 2026 will evolve in this area but some commenters are hopeful that this year will see a breakthrough whereby a gradual improvement in traffic will come on this pathway.

ETS - Emissions Trading Scheme

Sitting as an ongoing cost being incurred alongside freight, ETS charges have increased for movements in 2026.

Several changes in both the UK and EU Emissions Trading Schemes (ETS) have to driven price increases.

ETS is applicable to ocean movements, to cover 100% emissions for voyages, exemption is given to Military, government, search & rescue, fishing, and some ferry services (currently).

- **Increased Costs:** Carriers pass on the cost of buying emission allowances (EUAs) to shippers via surcharges.
- **Transparency:** Greater focus on carbon reporting and fuel efficiency.
- **Incentive for Change:** Drives investment in low-carbon fuels and energy-efficient vessels to reduce costs.

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OCEAN FREIGHT GLOBAL MARKET OVERVIEW

INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

Ocean freight rates from the Indian Subcontinent and Middle East to Europe/ UK remain stable entering January 2026. Major carriers are reducing surcharges and exploring shorter routes as Red Sea tensions subside. Global overcapacity ensures ample availability, with no significant disruptions anticipated.

Key Service Updates

- Maersk ECS Reductions: Effective January 1, Maersk lowers Emergency Contingency Surcharges (ECS) on Indian Subcontinent shipments to North Europe and Mediterranean via services E3W and E4W. This covers origins including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, supporting consistent planning amid stabilizing Red Sea conditions.
- CMA CGM Route Optimization: CMA CGM resumes Suez Canal transits on INDAMEX services early 2026, bypassing Cape of Good Hope detours. Transit times shorten by 1-2 weeks, vessel capacity increases, and delays decrease across subcontinent-Europe lanes.
- HMM Network Revisions: HMM refines East-West liner services from early 2026, incorporating newbuild vessels for optimized Asia-Europe loops. Improved handling of subcontinent volumes reduces blank sailings and boosts on-time performance.
- ONE Capacity Enhancements: Ocean Network Express upgrades its 2026 East-West network with additional slots and direct calls from key subcontinent ports. Fewer transshipments streamline flows to UK/Europe, aligning with rising demand.

Regulatory & Market Outlook

- EU ETS Expansion: The EU Emissions Trading System applies to 100% of emissions in 2026. Carriers will pass through these green fees on all TEUs arriving in Europe/UK—budget accordingly.
- Capacity Dynamics: Global container fleet expansion of 3% drives overcapacity, providing surplus slots from subcontinent and Middle East origins. Expect steady conditions through Q2 2026, with vigilance on peak season pressures.

"Ocean freight rates from the Indian Subcontinent and Middle East to Europe/UK remain stable entering January 2026."

Shruti Jain,
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AIR FREIGHT UPDATE

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KEY HEADLINES

- Demand from China and Southeast Asia is expected to tighten through January and early February due to reduced manufacturing before the Chinese New Year period.
- Air freight from the Indian Subcontinent and Middle East to Europe/UK remains steady with strong capacity, supported by e-commerce and pharma demand, minor airline adjustments.

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AIR FREIGHT GLOBAL MARKET OVERVIEW

January would typically start slowing for the initial week and then volumes increase as manufacturing returns. Chinese New Year (CNY) on 17th February will bring with it the year of the Horse, and we would expect manufacturing in China, and much of Southeast Asia, to start to reduce from the second week of February, possibly through to 3rd of March when the Lantern Festival signals the end of the celebration period. The short window of manufacturing before this period is likely to put pressure on air freight demand as we move through January and early February. We would expect a gradual rise in rates and tightening of capacity, so would encourage our customers to talk to us well in advance on new bookings to minimise any impact.

The Indian Subcontinent, largely unaffected by the CNY, is expected to see volumes increase as we move through the month. Market rates are expected to pick up slightly, with the balance between demand and supply quite evenly matched at this stage. New rules on duty rates for some products from Sri Lanka, effective from the start of the year, should see a growth in the sourcing form the country in the coming months.

Transpacific volumes will see similar impacts to Europe on traffic from China.

With transatlantic volumes slowing a little from the year end demand, though still strong.

There continue to be economic and geopolitical challenges as we head into 2026. The air freight market remained resilient through 2025 and is expecting the same as we take on the New Year.

“The short window of manufacturing before Chinese New Year is likely to put pressure on air freight demand as we move through January and early February.”

Leighton Bonnett,
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AIR FREIGHT GLOBAL MARKET OVERVIEW

INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

Air freight from the Indian Subcontinent and Middle East to Europe/UK remains steady in January 2026, with strong capacity availability. Firm demand from e-commerce and pharma persists. No major disruptions expected, only minor airline adjustments.

Key Service Updates

- Qatar Airways Capacity Boost: Qatar Airways enhances frequencies from India/ Pakistan gateways like Delhi, Lahore to Europe via Doha. Mid-December updates support urgent B2B cargo without delays.
- Emirates Route Optimization: Emirates restarts optimized direct Dubai-Europe flights early 2026, tailored for subcontinent cargo. Reduces transit by 1 day, skips trans ship delays and increases belly space for Middle East feeders.
- Lufthansa Network Tweaks: Lufthansa refines Europe-bound networks early 2026, deploying new freighters on Asia-Europe routes via Frankfurt hub. Improves subcontinent volume handling and on-time performance.
- Turkish Airlines Slot Additions: Turkish Airlines adds capacity on Istanbul-Europe paths from key origins. Reduces transshipments for India-Bangladesh-Pakistan flows to UK.

Regulatory & Market Outlook

- EU Emissions Rules Expansion: EU emissions regulations intensify for air cargo in 2026, applying to all Europe/UK flights. Carriers pass through green fees per kg.

“Air freight from the Indian Subcontinent and Middle East to Europe/UK remains steady in January 2026.”

Shruti Jain,
Head Partner Development - Asia
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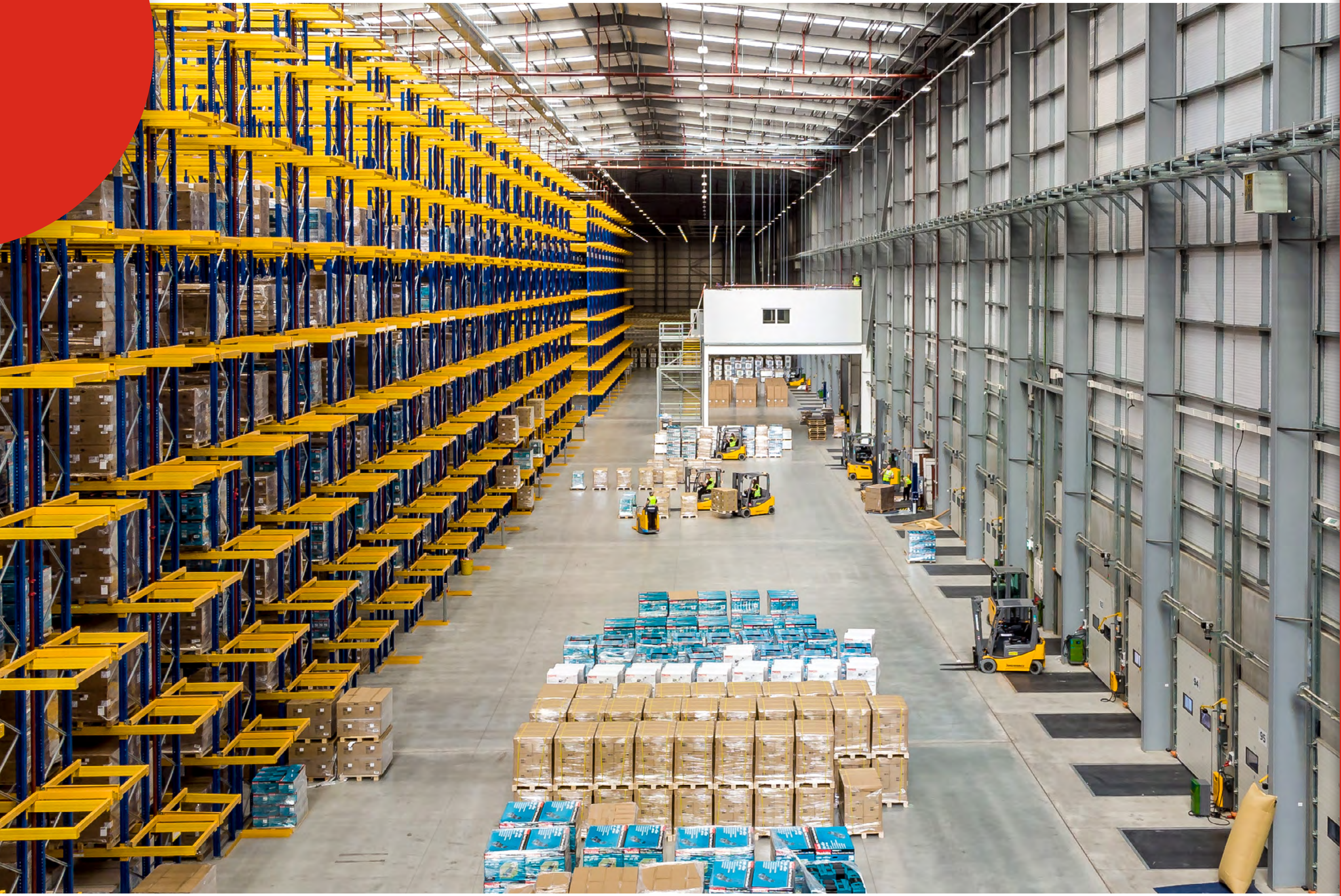
WAREHOUSING & TRANSPORT UPDATE



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KEY HEADLINES

- In 2025, Uniserve collectively covered millions of miles across South Kirkby, Chepstow, Northampton and Tilbury.

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WAREHOUSING & TRANSPORT MARKET OVERVIEW

Mileage Round up 2025

As 2026 is now upon us, let's take a moment to celebrate the incredible distances covered by our teams last year.

South Kirkby – 3,766,907 miles

That's a staggering distance! If a Yorkshire pudding is about 4 inches across, laid end-to-end, this would be around 238 billion inches, which would be a distance equivalent to 59.5 billion Yorkshire puddings in a row - enough that each person in the world could have 7 each on their Sunday dinner.

Northampton – 143,844 miles

This is equivalent to driving around the Silverstone circuit about 39,300 times. That's enough laps to complete every British Grand Prix for the next 750 years. Talk about going the extra mile!

Chepstow – 1,296,877 miles

UK Special Forces selection involves completing the "Fan Dance" - a famous endurance hike in the Brecon Beacons/ Bannau Brycheiniog, South Wales. The route is approximately 15 miles in total and involves crossing Pen y Fan, the highest peak in South Wales (886 meters), twice - once from the west and once from the east. The terrain is challenging, with steep ascents and descents, and often harsh weather conditions. This distance represents doing the Fan Dance 86,459 times.

Tilbury – 4,687,547 miles

The county of Essex has around 1,200 pubs. If you visited one pub every mile, you could do the entire Essex pub crawl 3,906 times with this mileage.

Our teams have gone above and beyond in 2025, covering millions of miles and achieving feats that, when put into perspective, are nothing short of extraordinary. Here's to an even more successful 2026!

"Our teams have gone above and beyond in 2025, covering millions of miles and achieving feats that, when put into perspective, are nothing short of extraordinary."

David Barry,
Director of Warehouse & Transport
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EUROPEAN TRANSPORT UPDATE

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KEY HEADLINES

- Government signals support for deeper EU alignment in the national interest.
- France Regime 42 Changes Now in Force.
- ICS2 transition for road transport.
- German Rail Infrastructure Disruptions.

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EUROPEAN TRANSPORT MARKET OVERVIEW

Government signals support for deeper EU alignment in the national interest

Prime Minister Keir Starmer has signalled a move toward closer alignment with the EU single market, which he argues would provide greater economic benefit than forming a customs union and would avoid reopening recent trade deals with the United States and India and reduce friction in UK – EU goods movement.

Ongoing alignment in food and agriculture standards should help cut border checks and documentation requirements, improving reliability on major routes such as Dover to Calais and Holyhead to Dublin. The food and drink agreement under negotiation is expected to support smoother handling of perishable goods once finalised.

Political opposition from Reform UK and the Conservatives adds uncertainty. Critics argue that deeper alignment risks limiting regulatory independence, which could influence long term planning for transport, warehousing and cross border operations.

Starmer has ruled out full freedom of movement, but progress on a youth mobility scheme may help ease labour pressures in warehousing and entry level logistics roles.

France Regime 42 Changes Now in Force

Since 1st January 2026, France has enforced significant reforms to Customs Procedure 42, which have reshaped how UK businesses move goods into the EU via French entry points. The former one-off fiscal representation mechanism has been abolished, meaning UK companies can no longer use a third party's French VAT number when importing goods destined for onward EU movement.

UK businesses using Regime 42, particularly under DDP terms, are now required to register directly with the French tax authorities, obtain their own French VAT number and file French VAT returns. France's automatic reverse charge system now applies to import VAT, removing the need for payment at the border but increasing the importance of accurate VAT reporting within France.

In addition, sales made by UK suppliers not established in France to French VAT registered customers now fall under the domestic reverse charge mechanism, placing the VAT accounting responsibility on the French buyer.

We are ready to support businesses through these adjustments, and we can assist with VAT registration,

"The Prime Minister has signalled a move toward closer alignment with the EU single market to reduce friction in UK–EU goods movement."

Lauren Liddell,
European Network Development Manager
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EUROPEAN TRANSPORT MARKET OVERVIEW

compliance requirements and any further developments that may come into effect. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at unieuropecommercial@ugroup.co.uk.

ICS2 transition for road transport

The EU's shift to Import Control System 2 is now active for road freight. Since 1st January 2026, several EU countries have moved fully to ICS2, requiring all Entry Summary Declarations for road transport to be submitted through the new system. There is no grace period, so operators must already be compliant.

ICS2 requires complete shipment data to be filed in advance, with a separate declaration for each consignment. Accurate information and timely submission are essential to avoid delays and penalties at EU borders.

France has also implemented the Électronic Logistics Obligation system, which mandates electronic submission of logistics and customs documentation for goods entering via French ports and borders. ELO aims to improve traceability and compliance by replacing paper-based processes with digital workflows, and operators must ensure their systems are integrated with ELO to avoid clearance delays.

Countries already enforcing ICS2 before 2026

Austria, Germany, Denmark and several others have applied ICS2 since September 2025.

Countries enforcing ICS2 from 1st January 2026

Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Lithuania, Hungary, Finland, Greece and Bulgaria.

The United Kingdom is also affected in Northern Ireland, which applies ICS2 for road movements. Great Britain is not applying ICS2.

Countries enforcing ICS2 from 1st June 2026

Croatia, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

This transition represents a significant procedural change for operators moving goods into the EU and Northern Ireland. Ensuring systems, partners and internal processes are aligned with ICS2 is essential for smooth and compliant cross border movements.

"There is no grace period, so operators must already be compliant."

Lauren Liddell,
European Network Development Manager
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German Rail Infrastructure Disruptions

Rail operations in Germany remain generally stable, although network congestion and minor delays at key port terminals continue to affect the smooth flow of freight. The long term closure on the Berlin to Hamburg route is still in place, but no additional widespread blockages are currently impacting services.

Further disruption is expected throughout 2026 due to ongoing reconstruction works in the Elbe Valley. These works will affect traffic moving between Central and Eastern Europe and major northern hubs including German ports, Rotterdam and Duisburg.

Confirmed closures include:

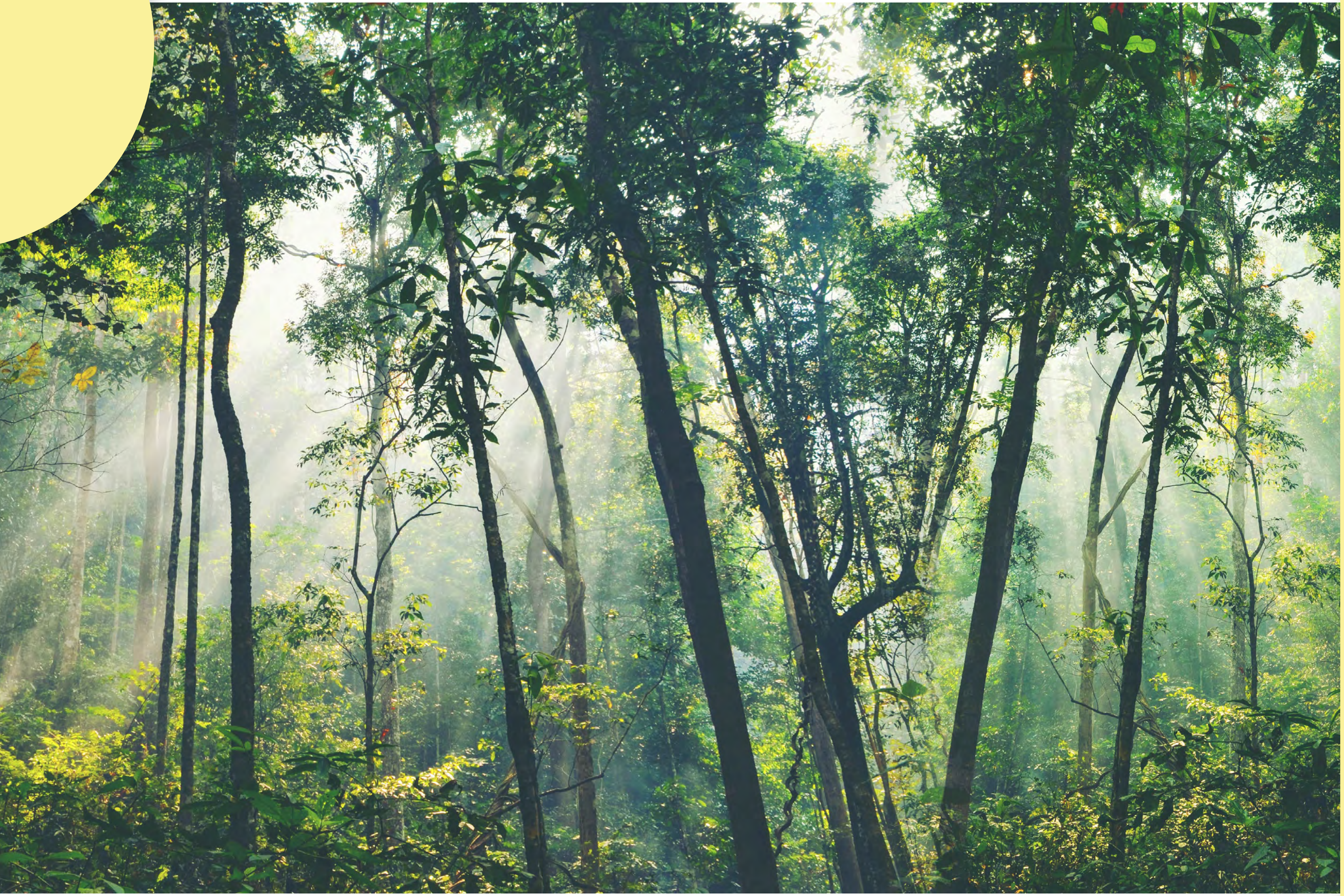
- 9th to 12th January 2026: Full closure in Dresden with diversions via Cheb or Schirnding, Horka and partly Passau.
- 14th to 16th February 2026: Another full closure in Dresden, with diversions via Cheb or Schirnding and Horka. Passau is expected to be unavailable due to repairs on the Nuremberg to Regensburg line from 6 February 2026.
- 21st to 26th February 2026: Partial closures on Kurort Rathen to Pirna and Bad Schandau Ost to Königstein.

Operators are coordinating with the German infrastructure manager to reduce the operational impact, but delays should still be expected. Customer service teams remain available to assist with any shipment specific queries.

With costs rising for everyone, price competition is no longer sustainable. Logistics companies will need stronger pricing discipline, better contract structures and more careful customer selection to protect profitability. Longterm contracts should include mechanisms that adjust automatically when labour or fuel costs rise, and retention strategies will be important as customers respond to higher rates.

“Operators are coordinating with the German infrastructure manager to reduce the operational impact, but delays should still be expected.”

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE UPDATE



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KEY HEADLINES

- Packaging EPR – A look ahead to 2026.

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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE MARKET OVERVIEW

Packaging EPR – A look ahead to 2026

pEPR and current state of play

“The way UK organisations responsible for packaging must carry out their recycling responsibilities has changed” – UK Government Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (pEPR) Policy

2024 ushered in changes to the reporting and financial obligations of producers who handle packaging in the UK. This new Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system passes the full financial costs associated with the collection, sortation, and recycling of packaging on to the companies who are responsible for putting that packaging on the market. The new regulations also create a comprehensive and adaptable framework that incentivises recyclable packaging, waste reduction, future labelling requirements, and improved data gathering up and down the supply chain.

The past couple of years have brought huge upheaval to the packaging sector with a vast increase in the amount and granularity of data required by producers from across the supply chain, increased bi-annual reporting, short deadlines, last-minute changes, and increased costs. But the dust is finally settling, with two full years of reporting under our belts, and the first invoices (Notices of Liability) sent to relevant producers.

That’s not to say that the next couple of years aren’t full of changes and challenges for producers, but to paraphrase Margaret Bates, the previous interim head of pEPR Scheme Administrator, PackUK; Packaging EPR is here!

Now that systems are adapting to the new reporting requirements, teams and knowledge are being rooted into companies, and the financial cost has been laid before finance teams, producers are going to have to look forward to the coming years to innovate and develop their packaging to keep their costs in check and to stay competitive in a changing market.

Development of the RAM (Recyclability Assessment Methodology) and the effect of modulated fees based on those recyclability assessments will be one of the big levers for change. Thankfully, PackUK released a RAM roadmap in October 2025 to give producers an idea of how the methodology will develop until 2030.

We’ve laid out a timeline of major events for the coming year under some key headings, starting with pEPR updates, fees, and the related Deposit Return System (DRS)

“The way UK organisations responsible for packaging must carry out their recycling responsibilities has changed.”

Emily Baker,
Marketing Leader
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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE MARKET OVERVIEW

regulations. This is followed by a general overview of the wider circular economy and waste collection reforms, before delving into some parallel regulations and how they may affect you as producers.

Timeline for the coming year

Packaging EPR Updates

- 1st January 2026 – Amended pEPR comes into force
- Jul 2026 – RAM 2027 expected to be released
- 'Summer' 2026 – Potential update on mandatory labelling
- Nov 2026 – Potential future regulatory amendments to be debated in parliament

Reporting Schedule

- 1st January 2026 onwards – Producers will need to start gathering Nation of Sale data, and (where applicable) Self-Managed Organisation Waste data, as well as data for Carrier Bags supplied in England for future reporting by 1st April 2027 and 1st August 2026.
- 1st April 2026 (deadline) – Large producers must report Jul-Dec 2025 packaging data, small producers must report annual 2025 packaging data.
- 1st August 2026 (deadline) – Large producers must register and report their Jan-Jun 2026 packaging data, including mandatory Self-Managed Organisation Waste data.

Fees

- 14th October 2025 – Notice of Liability (NoL) sent to relevant producers
- 3rd December 2025 (deadline) – Deadline for first payment of NoL
- 16th December 2025 – Illustrative 2026 base fees (inc. modulation)
- June 2026 – 2026 base fees published
- October 2026 – 2026 NoL to be issued
- December 2026 – Illustrative 2027 base fees (with separate fees for rigid and flexible plastic)

A reminder that producers still also have a PRN obligation alongside their Notices of Liability. PRNs will usually be procured by your compliance scheme if you are registered with one or will have to be self-fulfilled if registered directly with the appropriate authority.

Deposit Return System (DRS)

While there is nothing concrete at the moment from UK Deposit Management

"A reminder that producers still also have a PRN obligation alongside their Notices of Liability."

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Organisation (DMO) about their roadmap for 2026, it is expected that they will move from the 'set-up phase' of the deposit management organisation to the 'delivery phase'; building sorting centres, IT systems, setting up return points, details of DRS labelling, system testing and consumer-engagement, to be ready for go-live in October 2027.

There was confirmation from Defra in October 2025 that Westminster is working with Welsh Government on interoperability with DRS in the rest of the UK.

Circular Economy

- 31st January 2026 – Circular Economy Strategy (Scotland) consultation closes
- 'Spring' 2026 – Circular Economy Strategy (England) released as a white paper

Simpler Recycling (SR)

- 31st March 2026 – Households in England will have to separate recycling (ex. flexible plastics) and collect waste food for Simpler Recycling (SR) Year 2
- 'End' 2026 – Scotland are co-designing a new 'Code of Practice for Household Waste Recycling', which might lead to similar policies as SR in England, with an aim to release this as a consultation end 2026.

Parallel Regulations

Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

From 1st January 2026, the voluntary Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) only period will begin for the expansion of the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) into the waste sector. This will enable operators to better understand participation in the scheme and support further policy development by the UK ETS Authority ahead of the waste sector being included in UK ETS, and associated fees, from 2028.

What this means for you

This is crucial work at a crucial time for producers under pEPR. Current estimates are that 20-30% by weight of fossil material waste sent by Local Authorities (LAs) for incineration is in scope of pEPR. This means that from 2028 the cost associated with disposing of this waste via incineration will be included in pEPR disposal costs.

The good news is that mandatory collection of flexible plastics from households from 31st April 2027 should reduce the amount of fossil wastes being incinerated to temper this cost increase.

Digital Waste Tracking (DWT)

'Spring' 2026 will see the voluntary testing of the Digital Waste Tracking (DWT) system by

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waste receiving sites in the UK which will lead up to a mandatory rollout for all waste receivers from October 2026.

What this means for you

As the movement and treatment of waste will be traceable, producers will have increased visibility and accountability over what happens to their waste and where it ends up. Producers will need to work with their waste contracts to ensure collections are correctly digitally logged and ensure that their contractors have traceability and are compliant with the new DWT requirements.

European Packaging Regulations

Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) was implemented in February 2025 (superseding the previous packaging Directive) and is due to take effect in the EU from August 2026, introducing an array of packaging requirements for producers, importers, and manufacturers alike. PPWR aims to prevent and reduce packaging waste (including through reuse and refill systems), make all packaging on the EU market recyclable by 2030, safely increase the use of recycled plastics, and decrease the use of virgin materials.

What this means for you

PPWR will apply to all businesses placing packaging on the EU market, including UK exporters, and it introduces major changes rolling out from 2026 through to 2040, making long-term planning essential. Up to 80% of existing packaging may need redesign to achieve PPWR recyclability and minimisation goals; however, changes to packaging take time, on average a minimum of 2 years, so businesses need to begin preparing for PPWR now.

Upcoming webinar: Environmental Policy & Regulatory Shifts for 2026: Shaping the Year Ahead

Tuesday 3rd February 2026, 10:00am

This webinar is designed to provide clear and practical insight into the policy and regulatory developments set to influence the year ahead. The session aims to support attendees in maintaining compliance, managing risk, and identifying opportunities to strengthen performance throughout 2026 and beyond. Register your free place here.

“Upcoming webinar: Environmental Policy & Regulatory Shifts for 2026: Shaping the Year Ahead.”

Emily Baker,
Marketing Leader
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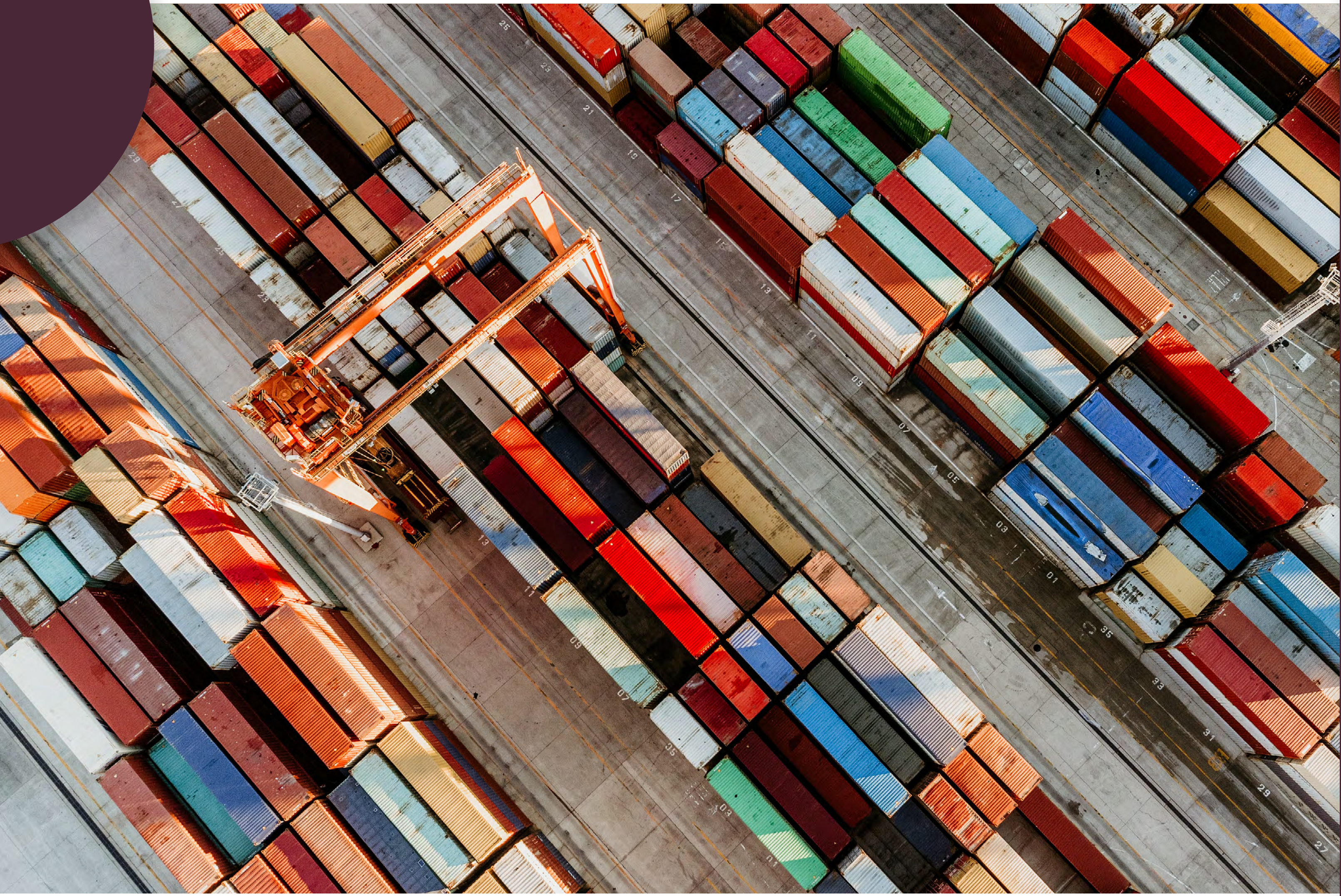
BKR CONSULTANTS UPDATE



BKR CONSULTANTS LIMITED

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KEY HEADLINES

- A practical guide to navigating the next wave of Global Trade Change.

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BKR CONSULTANTS MARKET OVERVIEW

BKR Consultants Publish “Customs Roundup 2026/27”: A Practical Guide to Navigating the Next Wave of Global Trade Change

BKR Consultants has published its latest Customs Roundup 2026/27 - a comprehensive publication aimed at importers, exporters, supply-chain leaders, finance teams, and compliance professionals who need to stay ahead of fast-moving customs and trade policy change.

Encompassing a brief analysis of the key developments that shaped 2025, the publication crucially looks ahead at some of the key milestones that organisations need to be planning for in 2026 and beyond.

These include the conclusion of key EU transitional measures, changes to France’s application of Regime 42, free access to HMRC customs data via the Government Gateway, and the introduction of EU duties on low-value goods. It also examines the growing compliance burden created by environmental and sustainability legislation, including the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the EU Deforestation Regulation, and the emergence of Digital Product Passports.

More conceptually, the Customs Roundup highlights how rising tariffs, increased transparency, and stricter enforcement are reshaping expectations on traders, and why “not knowing” is no longer a viable defence in today’s regulatory environment.

Looking further ahead, the publication assesses developments on the horizon, including potential US Supreme Court rulings on tariffs, the UK’s own Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, and upcoming reviews of major free trade agreements. Together, these insights underline a clear message: the global trade environment is becoming more complex, more transparent, and less forgiving of weak compliance.

The full publication is now available from BKR Consultants here.

“Not knowing is no longer a viable defence in today’s regulatory environment.”

Toby Spink,
Director at BKR Consultants Limited
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SUPPLY CHAIN ACADEMY

supply chain academy

Part of GB Global

KEY HEADLINES

- Join our upcoming Funding & Skills Webinar.
- Unlock Your Supply Chain Potential with Short-Courses from Supply Chain Academy.

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SUPPLY CHAIN ACADEMY OVERVIEW

Unlock Funding & Skills for Your Team!

We're excited to spotlight our upcoming Funding & Skills Webinar - built for supply chain professionals, by supply chain professionals. This interactive online event is designed to help you access funding to train your procurement, logistics, planning, and operations teams with practical, real-world insight and guidance.

Date & Time: 29th January 2026 at 12:00pm

Ideal for: Supply chain, logistics, and procurement professionals, HR managers, team leads, and directors focused on upskilling teams and future-proofing their organisation.

What You'll Learn

- How to identify and access the right funding for training across your supply chain functions.
- An overview of key Supply Chain Academy programmes, including the Practitioner, Leadership and Operations, and Degree pathways.
- Practical strategies to enhance efficiency, resilience, and talent retention in your organisation.

Whether you're expanding skills internally or planning for strategic growth in 2026, this webinar will equip you with the tools to make funding work for your people. Stay tuned, register early, and make the most of this chance to supercharge your training strategy!

COURSES AVAILABLE

FUNDAMENTALS OF SUPPLY CHAIN

An introduction to end-to-end supply chain principles and how decisions impact the wider business.

12 Feb, 24 Feb & 13 May (AM)

FUNDAMENTALS OF FREIGHT FORWARDING

Covers the essentials of freight forwarding, documentation, and transport management.

13 May (PM)

"We're excited to spotlight our upcoming Funding & Skills Webinar."

Alex Mortimer,
Commercial Director at Supply Chain Academy
am@supplychainacademy.org.uk

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SUPPLY CHAIN ACADEMY

JANUARY 2026

SUPPLY CHAIN ACADEMY OVERVIEW

FUNDAMENTALS OF UK CONTRACT LAW

Builds understanding of contractual obligations, risk management, and supplier agreements.

15 Apr & 22 Apr (AM)

ADVANCED PROCUREMENT TECHNIQUES

An introduction to end-to-end supply chain principles and how decisions impact the wider business.

15 Apr & 22 Apr (PM)

SALES & OPERATIONAL PLANNING

Supports alignment of demand, supply, inventory, and operational planning.

12 Feb (PM)

WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT

Practical guidance on warehouse operations, inventory control, and workflow optimisation.

03 Mar & 25 Mar (AM)

MANAGING LOGISTICS

Covers key principles of logistics management, including transport planning and service delivery.

03 Mar & 25 Mar (AM)

Alex Mortimer,
Commercial Director at
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