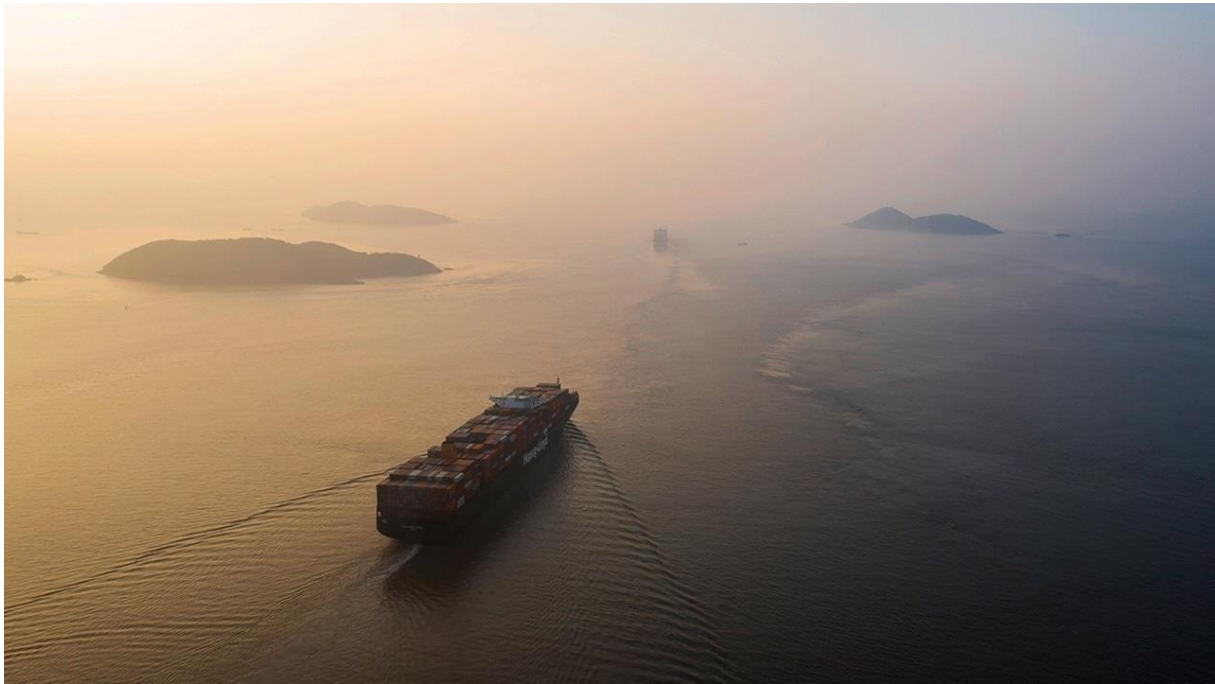


Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd falling far short of Gemini reliability target

The Gemini Cooperation's schedule reliability target of 90% will require significant improvement from both Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd.

[Gary Howard](#), Middle East correspondent

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Credit: Hapag-Lloyd

At a Glance

- Global schedule reliability was just 52.1% in July according to Sea-Intelligence
- Red Sea diversions have set back container lines' post-pandemic recovery in reliability
- Hub ports owned by Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd will play a key role in improving transshipment efficiency

There was a time when a container line setting a schedule reliability target of 90% would have seemed like something that was reasonably reachable, if difficult to sustain. In 2019, global schedule reliability across the top container lines fluctuated through the year between 73% and 83%, according to data from Sea-Intelligence, leaving 90% well within reach of the best performers before the pandemic.

Measures of reliability vary by analyst, but using Sea-Intelligence's definition of a vessel arriving at port plus or minus one day from its scheduled arrival time, global schedule reliability was 52.1% in July 2024.

Maersk was the strongest performer among the top 13 carriers in the reliability rankings for July 2024 at 54.6%, with soon-to-be alliance partner [Hapag-Lloyd](#) in fifth with 48.8%. The data leaves [Maersk](#) looking for 35.4% more of its calls to be on-time, and Hapag-Lloyd an extra 41.2%.

The recent impact of Red Sea diversions and the knock-on effects across supply chains are evident in these latest figures. Route changes around the Cape of Good Hope knocked the smooth flow of vessels, bunching up arrivals in some regions, causing port congestion.

Prior to the Red Sea disruption, container lines were steadily recovering from the pandemic and a year of 30%-40% reliability in 2021.

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In July 2023, global schedule reliability reached 64.1%, with Maersk's 69.5% earning it second place behind MSC, and Hapag-Lloyd taking fifth place with 61.7%. In the space of 12 months, the Gemini partners each lost over 10% in their reliability scores.

Looking back to pre-pandemic figures, 90% has proven a difficult target for container lines. The CKYHE alliance reached over 90% reliability for a month in 2015 and three months in 2016, while Maersk's current 2M Alliance with [MSC](#) reached 90% for two months in 2016 and four months in 2019. An alliance regularly achieving over 90% reliability would be an anomaly.

Gemini said that hub ports owned by Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd will play a key role in improving transshipment efficiency. Maersk's APM Terminals will expand its hubs' capacity by 30% to meet the new network's needs, it said.

Shuttle services are another focus for Gemini. In October, the alliance will choose either its [Suez](#) or Cape of Good Hope service network to launch in February 2025, both of which have 30 shuttle services planned. The shuttle services will enable fewer calls on the backbone mainliner services, reducing opportunities for disruption, the partners said. Maersk will fully operate the dedicated Gemini shuttle services, with an average of two to three calls on each service.

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The network decision next month will be critical to the alliance's plans. Gemini said it will return to the Suez network as soon as it is safe to do so, but that it had prepared for both scenarios. While there is no indication of a short-term resolution in the Red Sea, the phase-in of the new network in February 2025 left time for developments in what is a dynamic situation, it added.

Gemini said it expects to reach over 90% reliability once the new network is "fully phased in".