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Air Updates

Scant Room for Sustainable Growth in Aviation, Says Watchdog T&E

Plans for the growth of aviation's cargo and passenger flights are 'diametrically opposed' to EU targets, according to activist group Transport & Environment (T&E).

Boeing announced in November it anticipated a global fleet of 3,900 widebody cargo aircraft by the early 2040s, while Airbus predictions from the year before saw the market increasing by 108% within the same time frame, driven by e-commerce.

Despite a growing hostility by regulators toward Chinese e-commerce giants Shein and Temu over *de minimis* – the loophole that allows tax-free imports of sufficiently small parcels – air cargo has been “firing on all cylinders” recently, with e-commerce accounting for two-thirds of air freight out of China.

Meanwhile, both aircraft manufacturers anticipate that the number of passenger flights will roughly double between the 2019 benchmark and 2050, meaning that, with just 42% of flights powered by SAF, as stipulated by EU law, there will be around the same number of fossil-fuelled flights as today.

“The numbers leave you speechless... the aviation industry's plans for growth are completely irreconcilable with Europe's climate goals and the scale of the climate crisis,” said Jo Dardenne, aviation director at T&E. “In a year, the sector will have exceeded its carbon allowance.”

Read more in an [article from The Loadstar](#).

Ocean Updates

Container Shipping from Asia to the U.S. Just Got More Expensive

Frontloading by shippers ahead of Lunar New Year helped boost container rates on trans-Pacific services to the United States as 2025 got underway.

“Transpacific container rates climbed sharply to start the year on GRIs [general rate increases] supported by pre-Lunar New Year demand,” wrote Judah Levine, head of research, in a weekly update for analyst Freightos.

The Freightos Baltic Index found Asia-U.S. West Coast prices increased 23% to \$5,929 per forty-foot equivalent unit for the week ended January 3. Asia-U.S. East Coast rates were up 13% to \$6,934 per FEU.

Read more in an [article from American Shipper](#).

Three New Services and a Transpacific Focus for Ocean Alliance in 2025

The Ocean Alliance (OA) has announced its shipping network for 2025, which includes three new services and a major bet on the transpacific.

On January 12, member carrier OOCL published the alliance’s updated schedule, to be fully implemented in April.

The network is notably weighted heavily in favour of the transpacific, with nine weekly services into the Los Angeles-Long Beach port complex and five a week into the North American Pacific north-west gateways.

The North American east coast ports will see eight weekly services.

As part of the update, OOCL also revealed that all the partners in the Ocean Alliance, Cosco, OOCL, Evergreen and CMA CGM, have agreed to extend the collaboration for “at least five more years.”

Read more in an [article from The Loadstar](#).

International Business/Government

China’s Economy Is Sputtering

In the latest indicators of China’s economic health, a confluence of falling bond yields, declining GDP growth and persistent consumer price deflation paints a concerning picture for the world’s second-largest economy. Throughout 2024, China’s GDP growth was a subject of intense scrutiny, with estimates from China-skeptical Rhodium Group ranging between 2.4% and 2.8%.

These figures starkly contrast with the official statistics reported by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), which indicated an annualized growth rate of 4.8% year to date through the third quarter. The divergence is most pronounced in the realm of gross fixed capital formation, where

investment figures differ significantly, compounded by discrepancies in household consumption data.

This underperformance marks a pivotal shift in the narrative surrounding China's economic trajectory. 2024 was a turning point, where Beijing's previously optimistic outlook was tempered by a persistent post-COVID malaise. The government's late acknowledgment of the need to bolster domestic consumption resulted in inadequate measures to salvage the year's economic performance – even now, the government is trying to encourage people to buy more clothing and home appliances with a trade-in program.

While Beijing continues to assert that it met its growth targets, skepticism persists both domestically and internationally, with organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) hesitating to fully endorse the official figures.

Read more in an [article from FreightWaves](#).

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