THE SHIPPING STANDARD

OUR EXPERTISE · YOUR ADVANTAGE

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Stoppage Time! How the World Cup Will Affect the Global Supply Chain

OEC GROUP

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Stoppage Time!
How the World Cup Will Affect the Global Supply Chain

For the logistics industry, the most disruptive impacts of the World Cup are typically felt immediately before and throughout the tournament. Historically, regardless of where the event is held, this period will see tighter freight capacity, shifting transportation priorities, and intensified competition for space, with supply chains under constant pressure like Courtois facing a barrage of shots while De Bruyne tries to orchestrate order in the midfield.

The World Cup spans nearly six weeks, and its effect on the global supply chain during that time can be highly volatile, turning every shipment into a high-pressure penalty kick. As a result, it is critical for shippers to recognize this reality and exercise greater patience when shipping and receiving cargo, as the likelihood of unexpected delays, congestion, and operational challenges increases significantly, making it a game of waiting for the right moment rather than forcing a risky shot from outside the box.

In the weeks leading up to the opening match, import volumes typically surge as demand for World Cup-related cargo escalates. As a result, importers shipping freight unrelated to the event often find themselves competing for increasingly limited space across all modes of transportation, like a substitute trying to take the pitch for Messi with the match on the line.

> ***"Once the tournament begins, pressure doesn't just intensify on the pitch, it intensifies throughout the supply chain," said Anthony Fullbrook, President of OEC Group's North American region. "Transporting cargo during the weeks immediately before and during the World Cup is generally not ideal, and shippers should expect higher rates, tighter capacity, longer transit times, and an increased risk of delays."***

While air freight and last mile deliveries into major metropolitan areas are expected to face the greatest impact due to last minute demand, think Mbappe sprinting onto a loose ball, ocean ports and rail hubs will also feel the strain. Event specific consumer goods, food, and beverage imports tend to dominate available capacity and operational focus, leaving everything else fighting for space like a winger trying to take the ball off Messi's foot.

At the same time, trucking and rail equipment often gets pulled into event driven distribution, tightening availability for routine shipments, more like being benched while Ronaldo, Neymar, and even a rising star like Yamal soak up all the touches.

> *"The biggest issue during the World Cup isn't infrastructure, it's timing. Since so much cargo arrives right before the tournament begins, there's very little room to recover if something goes wrong," said James Vanderloo, Station Manager for OEC Group's Milwaukee office. "For shippers who don't immediately need their cargo, my advice is to reserve space to ship their goods right after the World Cup ends. That way, you can avoid the congestion and actually sit back, relax, and enjoy the spectacle."*

SAGE ADVICE: TWO INDUSTRY LEADERS OFFER GUIDANCE ON HOW TO NAVIGATE CURRENT CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE LOGISTICS INDUSTRY

Today, everyone seems to have an opinion on how shippers and industry leaders should navigate the conflict in the Middle East and continuing tariff uncertainty. Hanna Stelzel, Director Containers, Port of Rotterdam and Bryan Glick, Founder and CEO of Chain.io discuss how the current geopolitical environment is impacting global logistics and offer practical guidance on how shippers can best respond.

Hanna Stelzel, Director Containers, Port of Rotterdam sat down with OEC Group to discuss what changes she has been seeing at the port in light of geopolitical tensions as she describes how Port of Rotterdam continues to connect Europe with the rest of the world.

Bryan Glick, Founder and CEO of Chain.io talks exclusively to OEC Group about the chaotic and fast moving nature of global supply chains. Mr. Glick explains how data agility and having clean, organized, and accessible information is essential for shippers to respond quickly to shifting conditions, especially in a volatile tariff and geopolitical environment.

THE LOGISTICS INDUSTRY NEEDS A SHARPER VOICE IN WASHINGTON

Few industries are as directly affected by federal policy as logistics, yet few are positioned to influence it at the moments that matter most. Ours is one of them.

While the logistics industry maintains a presence in Washington through trade associations, customs brokers, carriers, and forwarders, its voice is too often absent when policy is being shaped. By the time a new rule, tariff, law, or enforcement directive is finalized, the operational consequences are already in motion. The industry adapts, customers absorb the costs, and the broader economy bears the impact of decisions that could have been better calibrated.

Recent years have made this pattern unmistakable. Section 301 tariffs and IEEPA-based duties have reshaped sourcing strategies, classification decisions, and refund processes on compressed timelines. Conflict in the Middle East, including attacks in both the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea, have extended transit times and tightened global capacity.

Shifts in commercial driver's license enforcement have strained drayage and over-the-road capacity. None of these developments originated within logistics, yet the industry has consistently served as the shock absorber and, too often, the public face of disruptions it did not create.

That reality has shaped perception. Logistics providers are frequently cast as responsible for outcomes driven by policy decisions made elsewhere. In truth, the industry executes, adapts, and keeps goods moving under continuously shifting conditions, often without meaningful input into the policies that create those conditions. The result is predictable: delays, backlogs, and rising costs that ultimately reach businesses and consumers alike.

This is not an argument for preferential treatment. It is an argument for more effective policymaking. Policy developed without real-world operational input is more likely to produce unintended consequences. Logistics operates at the center of global commerce, where even minor regulatory adjustments can trigger immediate and far-reaching effects across transportation networks, supply chains, and pricing structures.

Those working within the industry understand these dynamics in ways that cannot be replicated from the outside. We see how customs enforcement shapes cargo velocity, how documentation requirements strain small and mid-sized importers, and how infrastructure constraints limit routing flexibility.

This perspective provides practical insight that can help policymakers achieve their objectives without undermining efficiency or compliance.

Timing is equally important. Earlier, more structured engagement creates the opportunity to evaluate downstream impacts before decisions are finalized. It allows the industry to prepare, guide customers, and implement changes with discipline rather than urgency. When engagement happens early, policy is stronger, execution is smoother, and disruption is reduced.

Achieving this requires sustained and coordinated effort. It demands consistent engagement across government agencies, supported by credible data and grounded operational insight. Constructive participation, not reactive opposition, builds the trust necessary to influence outcomes.

The logistics industry keeps the economy moving. Ensuring that reality is reflected in policymaking requires a more deliberate and engaged presence in Washington. The path forward is clear. More meaningful input, delivered earlier and backed by experience will lead to better decisions and more resilient supply chains.

Dear Ahab:

I’m hearing that importers can finally seek refunds on IEEPA duties. Is this real, and what do I need to know before jumping in?

– Refund Curious

Dear Refund Curious:

Yes, it’s real! U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) recently opened a formal electronic refund process, through its ACE Portal, for duties paid under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). Unfortunately, the refund request is only applicable to an importer with unliquidated entries and entries that are fewer than 80 days past liquidation. CBP will not even consider your refund request if you do not fit this description.

To submit your request, you will need to set up a new ACH account, which must be linked to a U.S. bank account, because refunds will only be issued via ACH.

Additionally, when preparing your submission, understand that accuracy matters. This means that you must make sure all IEEPA tariff codes are included and every entry number is correct.

Once submitted, the system will validate the request, and only completed filings will receive confirmation. If approved, refunds, plus interest, will typically be deposited into your account within 60 to 90 days.

One more thing to remember, help is available if you are having a difficult time filling out this request, because brokers are allowed to make the filing on your behalf. Therefore, if you need help, contact a broker who you trust. While there may be a fee, understand it is probably a small price to pay to get all the money back that you never needed to pay in the first place.

Dear Ahab:

As oil supplies seem to be dropping, are we in danger of running out of fuel to ship our cargo? If so, should I hedge my bets and start bringing cargo in now?

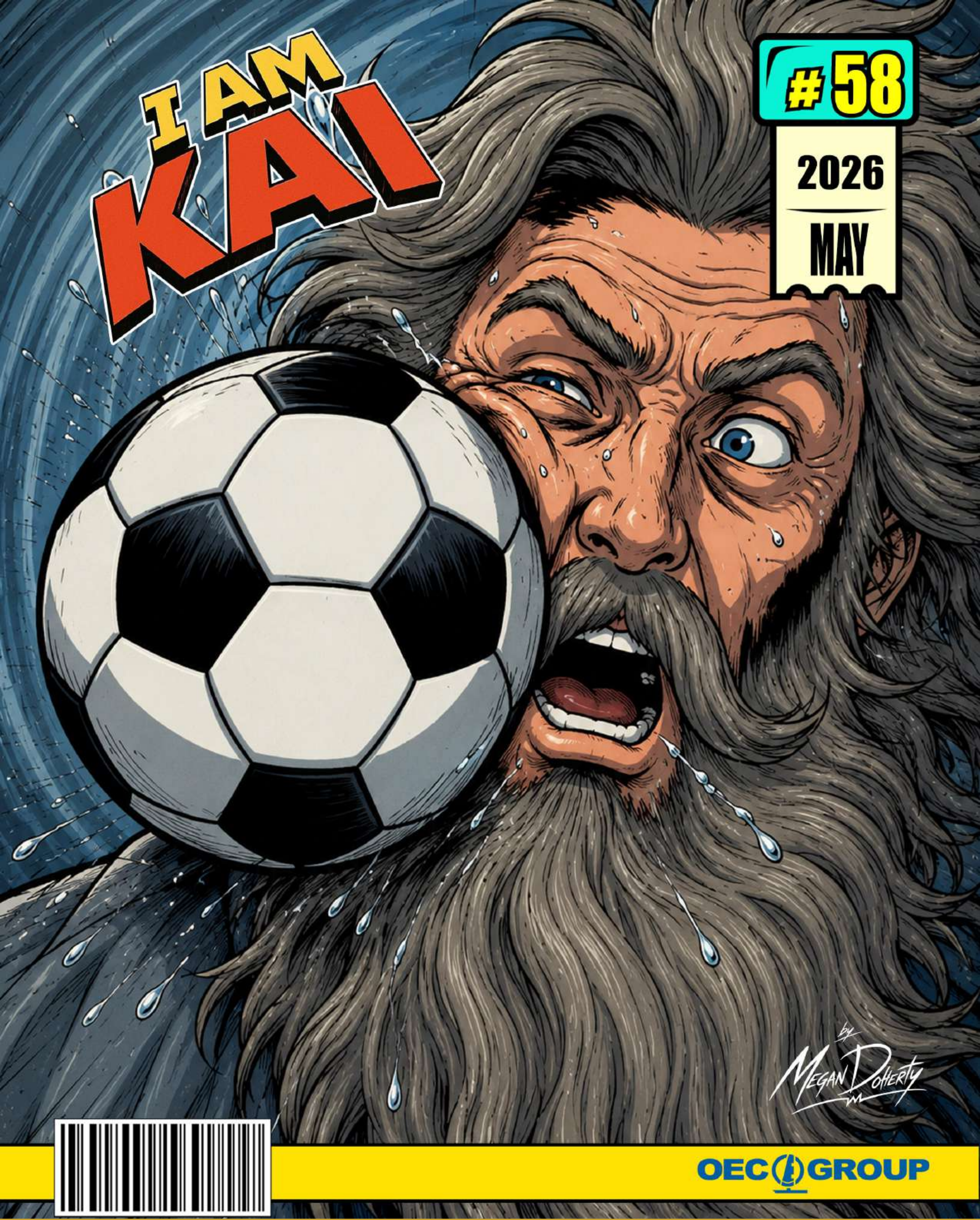
– Nautical Newby

Dear Preparing for the Worst:

Fuel markets are undeniably tight, but no, the industry is not on the brink of running out of fuel. What you're seeing is a supply risk premium driven by geopolitics, refinery constraints, and market uncertainty, not empty tanks. Fuel remains available, but it is more expensive, more volatile, and in some regions harder to secure at predictable prices. That volatility inevitably flows through to freight rates, fuel surcharges, and capacity planning.

Advancing shipments can make sense in the right circumstances, particularly if your inventory turns quickly, storage costs are manageable, and protecting margin is a higher priority than preserving cash flow. However, pulling cargo forward without a clear plan can just as easily leave you overstocked if demand softens or rates stabilize.

The smarter approach is measured, not reactive. Work with a trusted logistics advisory, understand your exposure to the fuel market, and make educated decisions based off of information in-front of you, rather than hedging out of fear.


I AM
KAI
58
2026
MAY
by
Megan Doherty
OEC GROUP


TOLL BOOTH
HAHAHA! NO ONE IS GETTING IN OR OUT OF ANY U.S. PORT UNTIL I FULLY RECOVER ALL MY TARIFFS!
THIS WAS A GREAT IDEA! I NEVER THOUGHT IN MY WILDEST DREAMS THAT I COULD GET AWAY WITH
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY WITH ANYTHING!
WHO SAID THAT!?!
I DID!
POW!
TOLL BOOTH
TOM BRADY!?! HOW DID YOU KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING!?!
COME ON, POSEIDON. YOU KNOW THAT I READ MINDS.
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO HIT ME IN THE FACE WITH A FOOTBALL? COME TO THINK OF IT, AREN'T YOU USING THE WRONG FOOTBALL?
TOLL BOOTH
ACTUALLY, IT WASN'T ME. IT WAS MY FRIENDS.
THEY WANT TO MAKE SURE NOTHING GETS IN THE WAY OF MAKING THE WORLD CUP A SUCCESS. PREVENTING CARGO FROM ENTERING U.S. PORTS COULD CAUSE A MAJOR PROBLEM.
THAT WAS A WARNING SHOT WE SENT YOU.
THE NEXT SHOT WILL REALLY HURT!
WE MEAN BUSINESS AND WE DON'T MISS!
MY ABS ARE BETTER!
LOOK AT MY ABS!
IS HE ALWAYS THIS VAIN?
YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT!

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Fun Facts About *SHIPPING CONTAINERS*

The modern-day shipping container was invented by Malcolm McLean

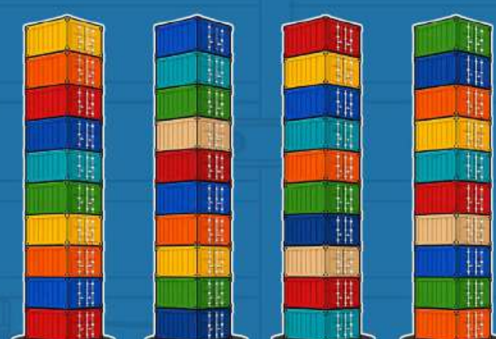
Roughly 95-percent of all cargo is transported through a shipping container.

97-percent of all shipping containers are made in China.

More than 17 million containers are currently in use worldwide.

Once retired, many shipping containers are repurposed into things such as mobile offices and even houses.

The modern-day shipping container is only 70 years old.



Shipping containers can be stacked up to 10 containers high.

Shipping containers are typically made from Corten Steel, a special kind of steel designed to endure very harsh weather conditions and resist corrosion.

Word Wheel

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Directions:

Insert the missing letter to complete the nine-letter word reading either clockwise or counterclockwise.

ABOUT

OEC GROUP

As an industry pioneer, OEC Group has become one of the world's leading logistics companies. We leverage in-house expertise, carrier partnerships, connections with ports and transportation hubs, and our network of offices in North America, Europe, Asia, India, South America, Australia, and the Middle East, to provide freight transportation, logistics, information, customs and brokerage, insurance, and technical services to over 50,000 customers of various sizes and industries.

We are also highly sought after for the advice we give shippers on how to optimally manage their supply chains. The guidance we provide is based on data analytics, best practices, and decades of industry knowledge.

We believe that relationships matter and treat your cargo as our own. Our experts are always investing in efficient, cost-effective, and cutting-edge services to evolve with the ever-changing market, address the complexities of any client's supply chain, and consistently perform at the highest level for our customers.

Our business is making our logistics expertise, your competitive advantage.

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