LIVRO GLOBAL SHIPPING NEWS

1. CNY 2025: Expect more blanks on Asia-NAWC

This year, Chinese New Year (CNY) will fall on January 29, which means that it is only a little over 3 weeks away. It also falls only a few days prior to the official launch of the new carrier alliance networks. While Chinese New Year by itself causes significant supply chain disruptions (due to blank sailings informed by a drop-off in demand), the phase-out of the existing alliance services and the phase-in of new services might amplify this impact. On Asia-North America West Coast, looking at the capacity across the 4-week CNY period (the week in which CNY falls plus the following 3 weeks) for 2025 and comparing it to previous years, there is a very sharp capacity growth for 2025 which cannot be explained by any current demand growth factors. Current capacity deployment for 2025 is just under 1.34 million TEU for the 4-week CNY period, which is the highest across the analysed period, and even higher than during the high-demand period of 2021. This corresponds to a 33.3% growth Y/Y, and a growth of 34.1% when compared to 2026-2019. In terms of blank sailings, carriers have so far scheduled blanked capacity of 9.0%, which is the lowest across the analysed period, and in sharp contrast with the 22.8% blanked in 2024, and the average 2016-2019 reduction of 18.3%. Just to put this into context, the blanked percentage in 2021 (where pandemic demand was surging) was higher at 10.7%.

Source: https://www.sea-intelligence.com/ 09.01.2025

2. Container Ship Orderbook hits new record high

"At the end of 2024, the container ship orderbook was 8.3m TEU, a new record compared with the previous high of 7.8m TEU in early 2023," pointed out Niels Rasmussen, Chief Shipping Analyst at BIMCO, who wrote the following analysis. As 4.4 million TEUs were contracted during 2024, the second highest ever, the orderbook grew despite deliveries hitting a new record high of 2.9 million TEUs. Making up 92% of the orderbook capacity, ships of 8,000 TEUs or larger dominate the orderbook. The largest segment, 12,000-17,000 TEUs, makes up 46% of the orderbook capacity, according to Rasmussen. Shipyards in China have benefitted the most from the last four years' contracting boom and currently hold 72% of the orderbook's 8.3 million TEUs while South Korean and Japanese shipyards hold 22% and 5% respectively. Liner operators control 79% of the orderbook capacity, significantly higher than the 61% they control of the fleet capacity. Having already increased from 56% at the beginning of 2019, liner operators' share of fleet capacity is therefore set to continue growing in the coming years.

Source: https://container-news.com/ 09.01.2025

3. Second US port strike averted

The union representing 45,000 longshoremen on the U.S. East and Gulf Coasts and their employers on Wednesday said they reached a tentative agreement to prevent additional port strikes, which had posed a risk to supply chains and threatened harm to the U.S. economy. In a joint statement, the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) described the deal as a "win-win." The tentative deal on a new six-year contract addresses the contentious issue of automation, which had been one of the main sticking points in the negotiations. "This agreement protects current ILA jobs and establishes a framework for implementing technologies that will create more jobs while modernizing East and Gulf coast ports – making them safer and more efficient and creating the capacity they need to keep our supply chains strong," the groups said. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. "The two sides agreed to continue to operate under the current contract until the union can meet with its full Wage Scale Committee and schedule a ratification vote, and USMX members can ratify the terms of the final contract," the groups said.

Source: https://www.workboat.com/ 09.01.2025

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4. Shandong Port Group bans entry of US-sanctioned vessels

The northern Chinese ports operator, Shandong Port Group, is banning all US-sanctioned vessels calling at its ports within Shandong provinces. In an operation notice, but not an official company statement, Shandong Port Group said that it would strengthen operation management related to US-sanctioned vessels and those vessels will not be allowed to dock, unload cargos at the ports managed by Shandong Port Group including the three major hub ports, Rizhao and Yantai. The notice also said it was forbidden to provide shipping and ship services including logistics, trading, land and agent services, as well as vessel supplies to the US-sanctioned ships. The ban is expected to increase shipping costs for refiners in Shandong province and affect oil imports for Chinese companies mainly from Russia, Iran and Venezuela. Implementation of the ban will bring more severe challenges to local independent refiners in Shandong, four of which had already filed for bankruptcy till October 2024.

Source: https://www.seatrade-maritime.com/ 09.01.2025

5. Shipping Rates Start 2025 With a Spike on Tariff, Strike Worries

Spot container rates for shipping goods to the US from Asia have spiked over the past month as companies look to avoid higher tariffs and pad their inventories ahead of a strike threatening to close ports responsible for roughly half of the nation's seaborne trade volumes. Booking a 40-foot container to the US West Coast from Asia went for $6,000 as of Jan. 1, a 50% jump from $4,004 a month earlier, according to data from Xeneta, an Oslo-based freight platform. The rate to the East Coast was $7,100, a 31% increase. The market is tightening on "a lot of uncertainty," said Emily Stausbøll, a senior shipping analyst at Xeneta, an Oslo-based freight analytics platform. "2024 was an extremely challenging year for shippers and life isn't getting any easier as we head into 2025."For more than a year, the world's container fleet has mostly avoided sailing through the Red Sea because of attacks by Houthis on vessels with connections to the west – diversions that are expected to continue until safe passage is restored. The longer journeys have reduced capacity, putting upward pressure on container rates for much of 2024.

Source: https://www.shippingtribune.com/ 08.01.2025

6. Maersk Air Cargo begins Billund-Zhengzhou airfreight route

Maersk Air Cargo has begun operating a new airfreight route between its Billund Airport hub in Denmark and Zhengzhou Xinzheng International Airport in China. The first flight arrived at Zhengzhou from Billund on Friday January 3. After loading cargo, it then returned to Billund, said Xinhua, China's state press agency. Maersk will reportedly use Boeing 767 freighters on the route and will offer six flights scheduled per week. Cargo will primarily comprise e-commerce and electronic products. *Air Cargo News* has requested confirmation and more details from Maersk. The launch of the route marks the first ever direct air cargo route between Henan province and the Nordic region. In recent years, Maersk Air Cargo has established several airfreight routes in Asia. In March 2023, the airline began scheduled flights to Hangzhou, China from Billund. Then in April 2023, the airline began operating flights between Greenville-Spartanburg in the US and Shenyang Taoxian in China, and flights between Chicago Rockford in the US and Hangzhou. Maersk Air Cargo's owned controlled fleet now comprises two 777Fs and 19 Boeing 767Fs. Last year, Maersk took delivery of two new Boeing 777 freighters. These were deployed on the airline's Billund to Hangzhou route.

Source: https://www.aircargonews.net/ 06.01.2025