



Middle East Conflict

Ongoing geopolitical tensions across the Middle East continue to disrupt key global shipping and aviation corridors. Security risks in the region, particularly around the Strait of Hormuz, have led many shipping lines to suspend bookings or adjust vessel routings, while cargo already in transit is being managed through alternative ports or contingency arrangements. As one of the world's most critical energy and shipping chokepoints, disruption in this corridor is contributing to broader volatility across global logistics networks. At the same time, many container services that previously transited the Red Sea and Suez Canal continue to operate via the longer Cape of Good Hope routing, adding transit time and increasing fuel consumption. Air freight networks are also experiencing pressure due to restricted airspace and reduced operations at major Gulf hubs. While global supply chains remain operational, these developments are expected to contribute to ongoing freight rate volatility, capacity constraints and schedule disruption across both air and ocean freight services in the near term.

Fuel Increases

Global bunker fuel prices have increased by approximately 30–35% in the past week, driven by escalating tensions in the Middle East and disruption around the Strait of Hormuz. As a result, airlines, shipping lines and domestic transport providers are introducing or reviewing fuel and bunker surcharges across multiple transport modes. Emergency bunker surcharges on ocean freight are being introduced across several trade lanes, while Australian transport operators have also advised fuel surcharge increases in the high-20% to low-30% range, meaning shipments in the coming weeks may be subject to revised fuel-related costs depending on the carrier, route and mode of transport.

IEEPA Refund Update

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is currently working to introduce new functionality within the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) portal that will allow Importers of Record (IORs) to submit tariff refund requests electronically. CBP has advised that the system update may take around 45 days before it is fully operational. Once available, refund applications will be processed through the ACE portal, meaning importers will need to ensure their accounts are correctly established within CBP's systems. This includes having an active ACE portal account and ACH payment setup in place. Importers who have not yet completed these steps are encouraged to prepare now so they are ready to lodge refund requests once the new functionality is released. Further updates will be provided as additional information becomes available.

New Staff Member Introduction

We are pleased to welcome Casey Smith to the SAL Global Logistics team! Casey brings 24 years of experience in the freight and logistics industry, with extensive knowledge across international shipping and supply chain operations. We look forward to the expertise she will bring to the team as we continue supporting our clients' global logistics needs.