

Global Supply Chain Intelligence Newsletter

GLOBAL SUPPORT GROUP LTD

Issue #7, 2026

Week of February 16-20, 2026

Navigating Global Trade with Intelligence & Insight

Critical Alerts

H  Ocean rates decline for 6th week


C  107 blank sailings announced

H  Shanghai congestion at 2.1 days

M  Brent crude +9.76% to \$71.61


\$1,919
 WCI Index
-1% WoW


71.6M
 Air Cargo (tonnes)
+2.4% YoY


107
 Blank Sailings
+38% vs forecast

Key Ports Status

LA/LB
 **Moderate**
3-4 days

Rotterdam
 **Clear**
0.12 days

Shanghai
 **Critical**
2.1 days

Singapore
 **Critical**
2.0 days

Week Highlights

- ✓ WCI declined to \$1,919, marking 6th week of rate decline.
- ✓ Carriers announced 107 blank sailings to manage capacity.
- ✓ Asian ports face congestion; European ports are clearing.
- ✓ Supreme Court ruling reshapes US tariff landscape.
- ✓ Energy prices surge on geopolitical tensions.



\$1,919

 WCI Index


 -1% WoW



\$1,946

 FBX Index

 Week of Feb 21



107

 Blank Sailings

 +38%

Spot Rates by Route

Shanghai to New York

\$2,782

 -1%

Shanghai to Los Angeles

\$2,219

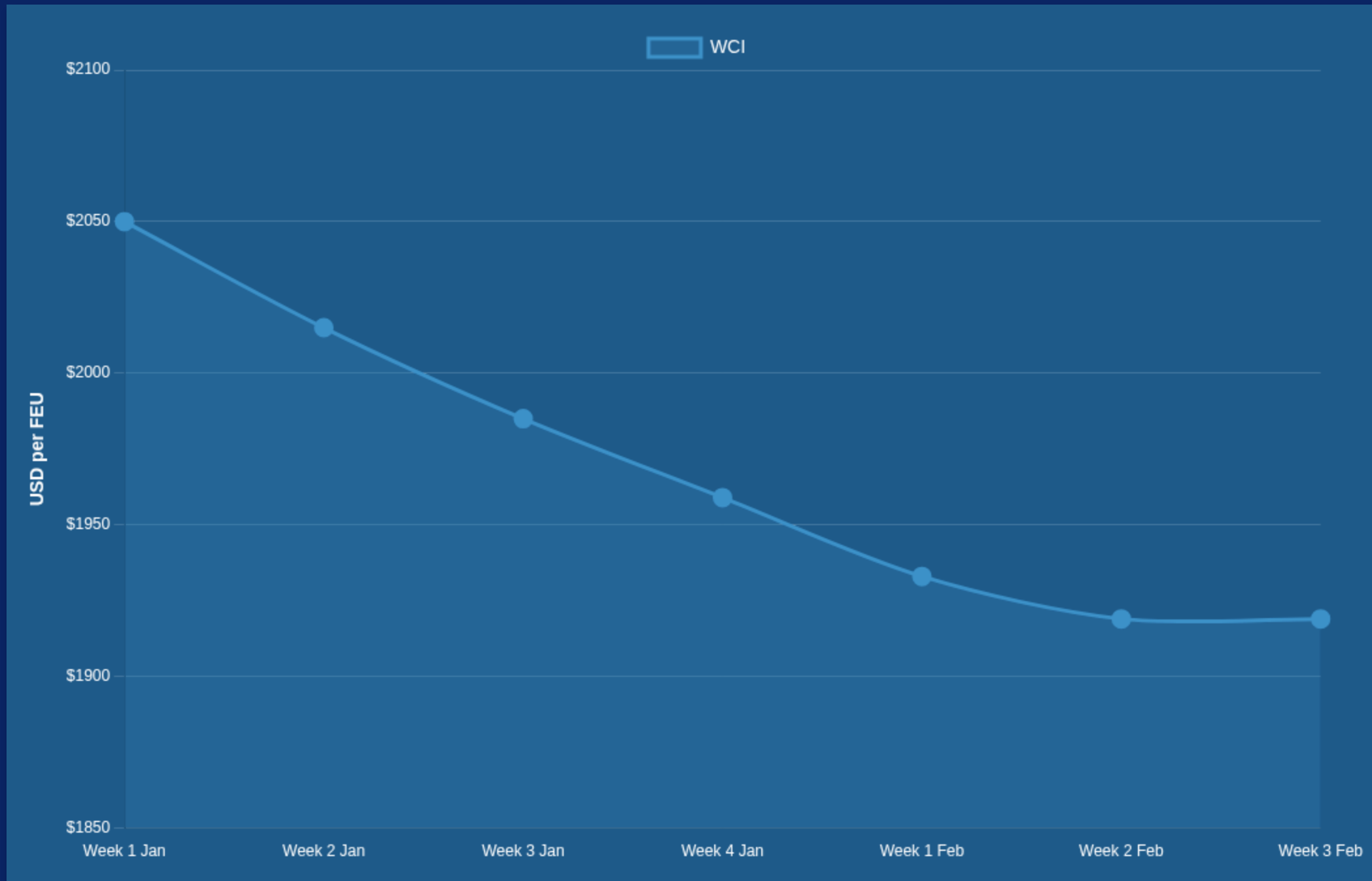
 Stable

Shanghai to Rotterdam

\$2,109

 -1%

WCI Trend (Jan - Feb 2026)




Capacity Management

31 **8**

 Transpacific Asia-Europe

 39 more announced for following week.

 **Key Insight**

 Rates are declining despite aggressive capacity discipline (blank sailings +38%). Expect continued softness through Q1.

ACTION: Lock ocean freight contracts now before Q2-Q3 stabilization.

71.6M
Total Volume (tonnes)
+2.4% YoY

\$158B
Total Revenue
+2.1% YoY

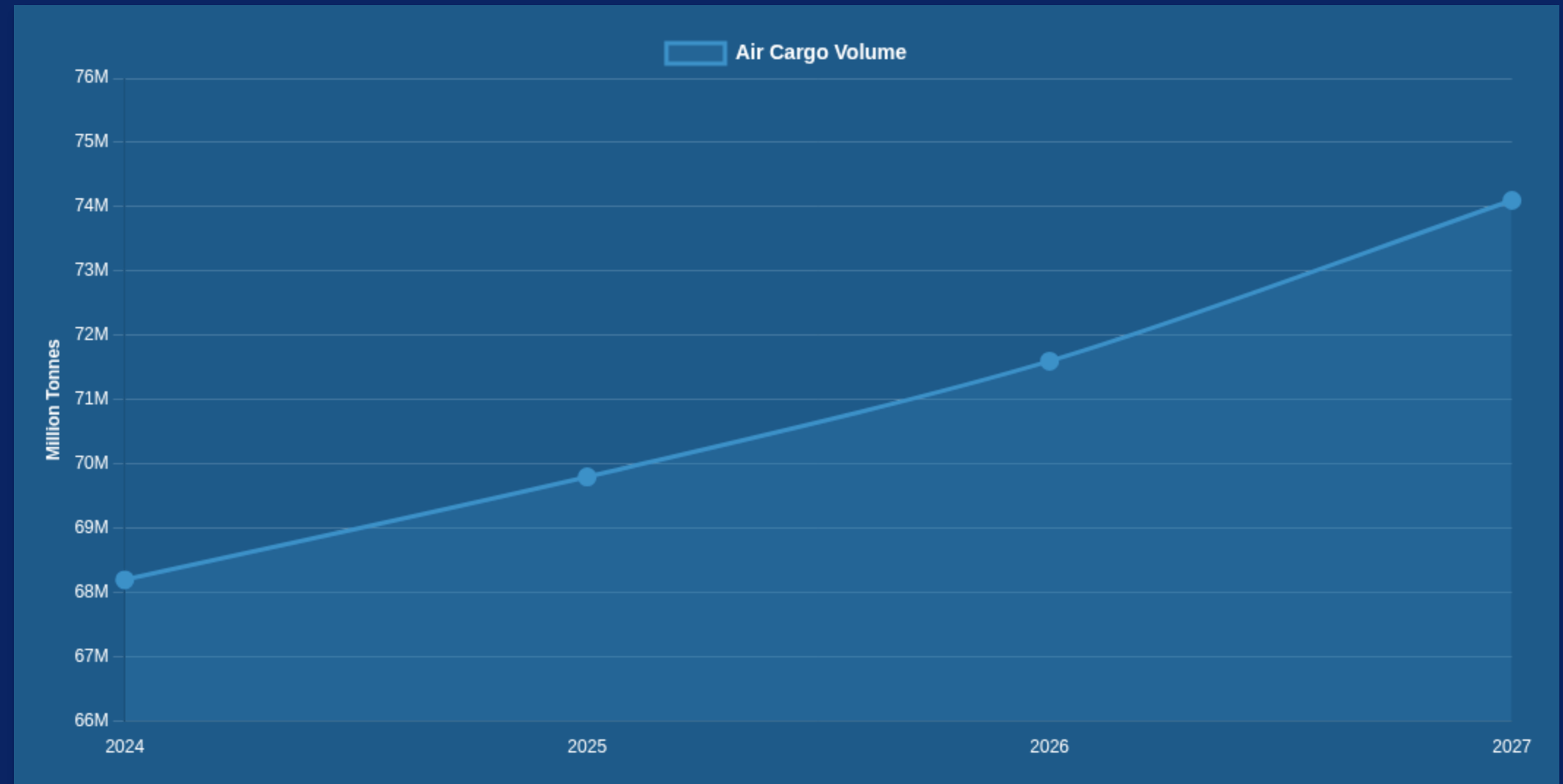
-0.5%
Cargo Yields
30% above pre-pandemic

+3.5%
Projected CAGR (2024-27)
Strong growth trajectory

Market Dominance
Asia-Pacific leads with 50% market share.
The region handles 35.8M tonnes annually, driven by e-commerce and manufacturing exports.

E-commerce Manufacturing

Air Cargo Volume Projection (2024-2027)



IATA Forecast

Regional Market Breakdown

Asia-Pacific
35.8M tonnes
50% share
+8.4% (2025)
Leading


Europe
15.2M tonnes
21% share
Stable
Strong

N. America
14.3M tonnes
20% share
-1.3% (2025)
Declining

ALERT: Shanghai and Singapore face critical congestion. Rotterdam operations have normalized. Consider rerouting Asia-Europe flows.

 **MODERATE**

LA/LB
US West Coast
Import Dwell
3.0 days
-12.1% vol

 **CLEAR**

Rotterdam
Europe
Median Wait
0.12 days
Congestion eased

 **CRITICAL**

Shanghai
Asia
Berth Congestion
~2.1 days
+22% YoY

 **CRITICAL**

Singapore
Asia
General Wait Time
2.0 days
80-85% yard density

Port Performance Comparison

Port	Region	Status	Wait Time	Utilization	YoY Change	Key Issues
LA/LB	US West Coast	● Moderate	3.0 days	Normal	-12.1% vol	Volume decline
Rotterdam	Europe	● Clear	0.12 days	Normal	↓ Improved	Backlog cleared
Shanghai	Asia	● Critical	~2.1 days	High	+22% YoY	CNY, fog, bunching
Singapore	Asia	● Critical	2.0 days	80-85%	↑ High density	Yard congestion

Blank Sailings by Carrier (107 Total - February 2026)



Strategic Insight

107
Blank Sailings (Feb 2026)
+38% vs forecast

31
Transpacific

8
Asia-Europe

Carriers prioritizing profitability over volume
Q1 blank sailings signal a shift to capacity discipline to maintain rate stability. Stabilization expected Q2-Q3.

Feb 2026

CNY Capacity Adjustments

Aggressive blank sailings post-CNY.

107 blank sailings in Feb (+38% vs projection). Asia-Europe & Med routes are 32% of cancellations.

Capacity discipline

Jan-Feb 2026

Suez Canal Resumption

Cautious return to Suez routing.

CMA CGM and Maersk resume some services. MSC cautious. May reintroduce 6-8% of global capacity.

Potential rate pressure

Q1-Q2 2026

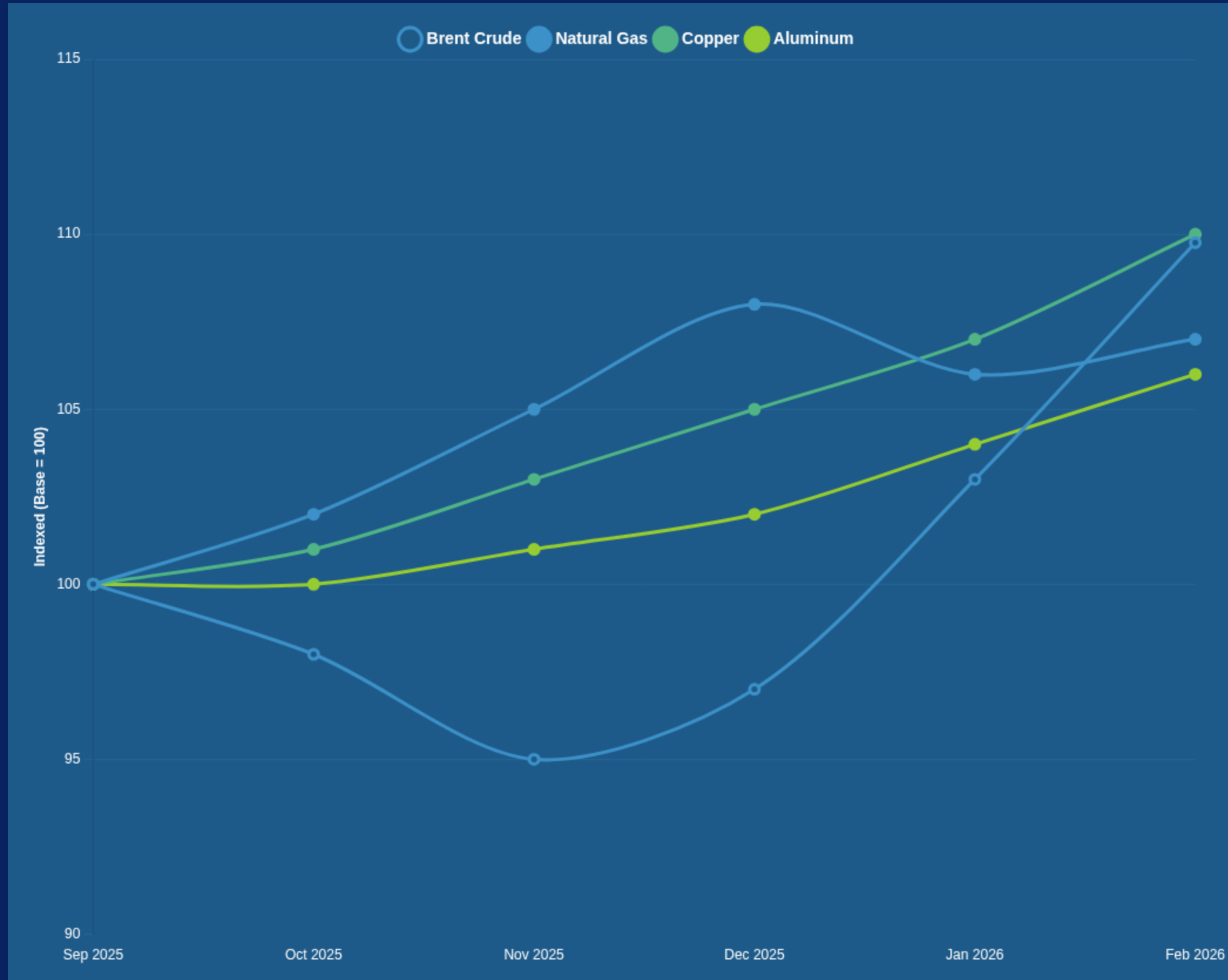
Extended Capacity Discipline

Alliances commit to blank sailings.

Carriers balance Suez return with blanking programs to prevent rate erosion; focus on reliability.

Rate stabilization expected

6-Month Price Trends (Indexed to 100)



Current Market Prices

↗ **Brent Crude**
\$71.61/bbl
 +\$6.78 (+9.76%)
 1 Month

↗ **WTI Crude**
\$66.30/bbl
 +\$5.68 (+9.37%)
 1 Month

→ **Natural Gas**
\$3.13/MMBtu
 \$3.20-3.80 fcst
 2026 Avg

↗ **Copper**
Rising
 Record highs
 2026

↗ **Aluminum**
Rising
 Supply constrained
 2026

↔ **Steel**
Stable
 Declining outlook
 2026-27

💡 Key Observations & Analysis

- **Energy Divergence:** Brent up on geopolitical risk, inventory draws.
- **Base Metals Strength:** Copper & Aluminum boosted by green tech & AI.
- **Steel Caution:** Iron ore prices likely to fall with slowing global growth.

ACTION: Monitor energy volatility; consider hedging critical materials.

BREAKING US Court invalidates IEEPA tariff authority. Avg. rate drops 7.7% to 4.5%. New 10% Sec 122 tariff effective Feb 24, 2026.

US Tariff Updates - Recent Changes

Country	Prev. Rate	New Status	Effective	Impact
China	Various (IEEPA)	Invalidated + 10% Sec 122	Feb 24, 2026	High
				Medium
Mexico	IEEPA rates	Invalidated + 10% Sec 122	Feb 24, 2026	Medium
				Medium
De Minimis	Exemption	Suspended (Aug 2025)	Active	Medium

Average effective US tariff: 7.7% → 4.5%

Regulatory & Policy Developments

EU De Minimis Elimination 2026
 Region: EU | Impact: \$26.9B in low-value goods affected

China Trade Surplus Record \$1.2T
 Region: Global | Impact: +5.5% export growth, strategic diversification

China Tech Controls Active
 Region: China | Impact: Increased scrutiny on tech transfers

Required Strategic Actions IMMEDIATE

High **Reassess tariff exposure post-Supreme Court ruling**
 Timeline: Next 14 days

High **Evaluate Section 122 tariff impact on all sourcing**
 Timeline: By Feb 24

Med **Prepare for EU de minimis elimination**
 Timeline: Q2 2026

Med **Monitor China export control developments**
 Timeline: Ongoing

AI Revolution in Procurement

Transformative

- Autonomous AI for supplier evaluation & risk monitoring
- Hyperautomation of end-to-end workflows
- Predictive intelligence for scenario planning

Impact: 25-40% efficiency gain

Nearshoring & Regionalization

Accelerating

- Diversifying from single-partner dependency
- Moving core production closer to demand
- AI simulators for strategy evaluation

Mexico: +24%
Manufacturing investment

E. Europe: +18%
Logistics hubs


ESG Compliance

Mandatory

- ESG shifting from reporting to core operations
- Carbon intensity embedded in sourcing decisions
- New EU/US regulations make compliance critical

Impact: Regulatory compliance & market differentiation

Key Capabilities for 2026

-  **1. AI/ML Integration**
Predictive analytics & automated decision-making
-  **2. Supply Chain Visibility**
Real-time tracking across multi-tier networks
-  **3. Risk Management**
Proactive risk identification and mitigation
-  **4. Sustainability Compliance**
Carbon tracking and ESG auditing


Strategic Imperative


Firms must integrate AI, nearshoring, and ESG to stay competitive.

- AI for efficiency, Nearshoring for resilience, ESG for compliance.

Laggards risk competitive disadvantage by late 2026.


2026 Outlook by Sector

 **Ocean Freight** Cautiously Optimistic
Rates declining, stabilization expected Q2-Q3
Capacity discipline supports rate floors. Lock contracts before stabilization.


 **Air Freight** Strong Growth
+2.4% volume, \$158B revenue
E-commerce and high-value cargo driving demand.

 **Commodities** Volatile
Energy divergence, metals strength
Oil surging on geopolitics. Monitor metals closely.


Immediate Actions (Q1 2026) URGENT


Critical  **Lock ocean freight contracts pre-Q2**
Secure capacity before rates stabilize. WCI expected to firm in Q2-Q3.
Timeline: Next 30 days

High  **Reassess tariff exposure**
Evaluate Section 122 impact. Average US tariff now 4.5%.
Timeline: Next 14 days

High  **Diversify air cargo routing**
Build flexibility to optimize cost vs. speed. Volume +2.4% YoY.
Timeline: Next 45 days

Strategic Initiatives (2026) LONG-TERM

 **Invest in visibility tech** High
Real-time tracking for predictive analytics.
Benefit: 30-40% better forecast accuracy
Q1-Q3 2026

 **Build nearshoring partnerships** High
Mexico, E. Europe, SE Asia presence.
Benefit: 25-35% shorter lead times
2026

 **Accelerate AI/ML integration** High
Autonomous supplier evaluation & risk monitoring.
Benefit: 25-40% efficiency gain
Q2-Q4 2026

 **Strengthen ESG compliance** Medium
Carbon tracking, supplier audits, circular economy.
Benefit: Compliance & differentiation
Ongoing

Primary Data Sources

- 1 Drewry WCI**
Ocean Freight
- 2 Freightos Baltic Index (FBX)**
Ocean Freight
- 3 IATA Cargo Analysis**
Air Freight
- 4 Clarksons Research**
Shipping Intelligence
- 5 S&P Global Platts**
Commodities
- 6 Maersk & MSC Intelligence**
Carrier Intelligence
- 7 USTR / European Commission**
Trade Policy

Methodology

Data is compiled and cross-referenced from listed sources. Analysis includes trend identification, correlation, and forward-looking projections based on market intelligence.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Collection
Real-time and historical data | 2 Validation
Cross-referencing for accuracy |
| 3 Analysis
Trend identification & forecasting | 4 Synthesis
Executive-level insights |

Important Notice

This report is for strategic planning only, not financial or legal advice. Consult professionals for specific decisions. Data accuracy depends on source reliability.

Data coverage: Feb 16-20, 2026
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Critical Insights from Issue #7

Strategic priorities for supply chain executives

1 

High

Ocean Freight

Rates declining; blank sailings show carrier discipline.

WCI: \$1,919 (-1% WoW) | 107 blank sailings

Action: Lock contracts before Q2-Q3 stabilization.

2 

Critical

Geopolitical Risk

US tariff landscape reshaping after recent policy changes.

New Section 122 tariff effective Feb 24.

Action: Reassess tariff exposure and sourcing strategy.

3 

Medium

Port Operations

Shanghai & Singapore face congestion; Rotterdam normal.

Shanghai: 2.1 days | Singapore: 2.0 days

Action: Implement flexible routing for Asian destinations.

4 

High

Commodities

Energy prices surging on geopolitical tensions. Metals rising.

Brent: \$71.61 (+9.76%) | Metals rising

Action: Hedge critical commodity exposure, especially energy.

5 

Strategic

Technology & Capabilities

AI, nearshoring, and ESG are key imperatives.

AI: 25-40% efficiency gains

Action: Accelerate digital & sustainability initiatives.

6 

Medium

Air Freight

Strong growth in volume and revenue; APAC leads market.

Volume: +2.4% YoY | Revenue: \$158B

Action: Diversify air cargo routing to optimize cost-speed.



Next Edition: Feb 23-27, 2026

Covering: Section 122 tariff impact, Q1 reviews, and Post-CNY demand patterns.

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