

From Supply Chain to Supply Stream: Creating Seamless Logistics

What are cost effective solutions to enhance supply chain connectivity and reliability in freight?

Wednesday, 2 May, 16:30-18:00

SESSION OUTLINE

Supply chains are increasingly complex and schedule-dependent, with shippers organising production and distribution around just-in-time delivery. Transport infrastructure and transport services have to perform to increasingly high levels of reliability to meet these demands. Logistics chains are built to reduce vulnerability to disruption but delays in individual consignments can still reverberate through the chain.

Governments recognise the strategic importance of effective supply chains to economic growth, which is reflected in transport infrastructure investment, even in times of severe financial stress. APEC ministers, for example, have endorsed a 10% improvement target in terms of time, cost and reliability of the supply chain by 2015.

Hinterland connections are increasingly central to the competitiveness of ports and the overall efficiency of the supply chain. High quality road, rail and inland shipping links greatly extend the reach of ports and high volume connections offer the possibility of locating key services – warehousing and even customs processing – away from constrained waterfronts. Effective competition and coordinated access to essential port facilities, particularly for rail operators, are critical to coping with increasing volumes of international trade. This session will explore key issues related to improving the performance of supply chains, addressing the following questions:

- What are the most cost-effective solutions to enhance supply chain connectivity and reliability and who – government, shippers, transport companies, others – is responsible for their implementation?
- Does increased intermodal integration require greater internalisation of transport service provision within single companies, thus providing less choices for customers?
- Are differences in technical standards the biggest hinderance to interoperability or do the biggest barriers lie within institutional structures?
- In times of financial constraint where do the priorities for investment in seamless supply chains lie – port capacity, customs service, data exchange, hinterland operations?

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