

CARAVAN

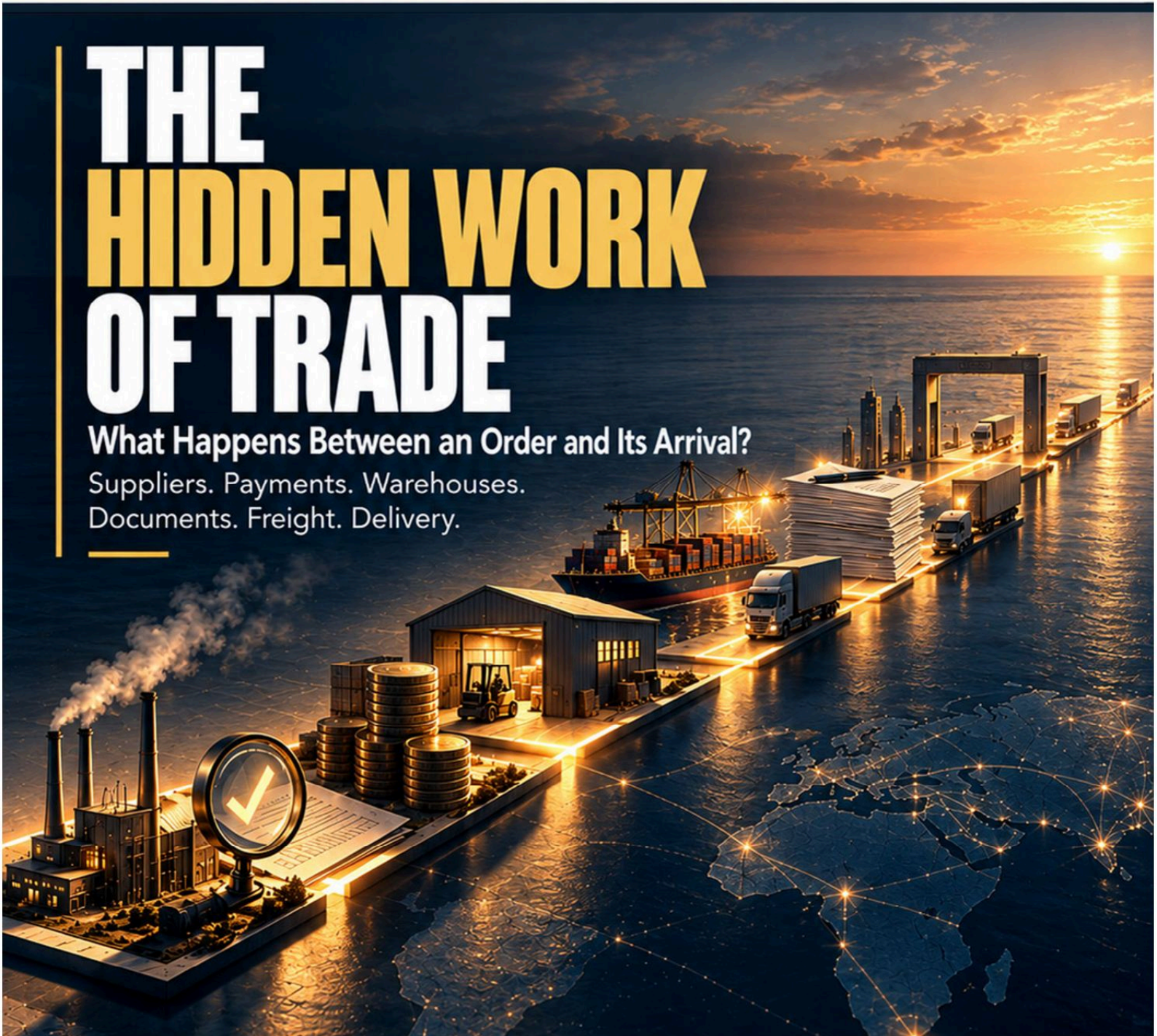
THE EXECUTIVE NEWSLETTER OF
QASR AL ANQAA GROUP OF COMPANIES

VOL. 1 | ISSUE 08 | October 2026 | Dubai

THE HIDDEN WORK OF TRADE

What Happens Between an Order and Its Arrival?

Suppliers. Payments. Warehouses.
Documents. Freight. Delivery.



IN THIS ISSUE:

02

A Deal Does Not Move by Itself

The agreement starts the transaction. Execution decides whether it survives.

Dr. Hossein Azarbajjani

03

The Order Is Only the Beginning

Ten questions between purchase and delivery.

Atefeh Hosseini

04

A Supplier Is Not a Supply Chain

Finding a factory is only the first test.

Rami Ahmed Hassan

05

One Order. Five Suppliers. One Shipment.

When consolidation saves money, and when waiting costs more.

Josephine Beaumont

06

Food Additives

The invisible ingredients behind global food trade.

Commodity Dossier

07

The Cargo Is Ready. The Shipment Is Not.

What can still stop an order after production ends.

Sara Sayyad

08

Who Owns the Journey?

When everyone does their job, who makes sure the trade works?

Ali Aghdam

A DEAL DOES NOT MOVE BY ITSELF

By Dr. Hossein Azarbaijani

Founder & CEO, Qasr Al Anqaa Group of Companies

A buyer has been found. So has the product. The price is agreed, the pro forma invoice has been issued, and both sides sound pleased with themselves. It looks like a deal.

But nothing has moved.

This is a familiar moment in international trade. The difficult part appears to be over, yet the transaction is sitting still. Shipping usually takes the blame. Sometimes fairly. But often the trouble began in the space between an agreement and the people expected to carry it out.

“

Each question sounds manageable. None belongs to quite the same person.

Consider what happens next. Is the factory ready to produce, or has the supplier merely confirmed that it can produce? Has the buyer approved the final specification, including packaging and tolerances? Is inspection required before loading, and has anyone booked an inspector? What must happen before the payment is released? Is vessel space available?

The factory knows its schedule. The inspector knows what it has been instructed to test. The bank examines documents under the agreed payment instrument. The freight company manages a booking. The customs broker handles the declarations it has been given. The buyer wants delivery. All may be doing their jobs perfectly well, while the transaction as a whole moves towards failure.

I have seen how easily people mistake activity for progress. An email has been answered, a document forwarded, a meeting held. Yet the crucial question remains: who checked whether the next step is possible?

Take something as ordinary as a packing list. A change in packaging may alter the number of containers needed. That affects freight costs, the inspection arrangement, perhaps the agreed delivery date. If the change reaches the logistics team late, the carrier may have to be rebooked. If the shipping documents no longer match the terms of a letter of credit, payment may be delayed too. A small decision becomes a commercial dispute. Everybody can explain why it was not their fault.

This is where I believe the real responsibility lies. A transaction needs someone who can see across the boundaries between the parties. Not someone who merely collects updates, but someone who understands what each decision does to the next one, and is prepared to ask uncomfortable questions before the costs appear.

A business person cannot make a factory produce faster or a bank waive its rules. Nor can every shipment be controlled from a desk. But responsibilities can be assigned, dependencies made visible and dates checked against reality. When an inspection slips, someone must speak to the buyer, warehouse and carrier—not simply report the delay after the vessel has sailed.

Working from Dubai has made this especially clear to me. The UAE occupies a useful position between manufacturers in China and India and buyers across Iran and Central Asia or vice versa. Its ports, trading networks, warehouses and professional services help commercial relationships cross borders, even when goods follow different routes. But geography is not a substitute for judgment. A convenient hub cannot fix unclear specifications, an unworkable payment arrangement or missing import approvals. It gives capable people more ways to solve those problems.

Companies invest heavily to reach agreement, but often give little thought to what happens next. Who signs the samples? Who checks the documents? Who approves changes? Who calls when a deadline is missed?

These details are part of the commercial bargain. A delivery term defines when risk passes from seller to buyer. It does not, by itself, ensure that the container is ready when the truck arrives.

The commercial agreement starts the transaction. Execution determines whether it survives.

A successful deal is not the cheapest price or the fastest handshake. It is what happens next, and the consequences of delay.

WHY THIS ISSUE MATTERS

Most trade coverage stops at the deal: the price, the partner, the signature. This issue starts where that coverage ends.

Between an agreed order and goods a buyer can actually sell sits a chain of handovers: supplier to inspector, inspector to warehouse, warehouse to carrier, carrier to customs. Each stage is owned by someone. The gaps between them are owned by no one.

Those gaps widen as buying spreads across origins. An importer sourcing from China and Türkiye, coordinating from Dubai and selling in Iran or Central Asia, is managing several supply chains at once, each with its own documents, deadlines and payment terms.

Over the next six pages we follow that journey stage by stage: choosing a supplier, consolidating cargo, matching documents, and deciding who watches the whole transaction.

The aim is not to show that trade is complicated. It is to show exactly where it breaks.



Dr. Hossein Azarbaijani
Founder & CEO,
Qasr Al Anqaa Group of Companies



THE ORDER IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

The Hidden Chain Between Purchase and Delivery



By Atefeh Hosseini
Business Development Manager,
Qasr Al Anqaa Group of Companies

Hypothetical Scenario

Imagine a distributor in Tashkent ordering household appliances from two Chinese factories and one Turkish manufacturer. Weeks of negotiations are finally over. Prices are agreed, samples approved, and deposits transferred.

Everyone seems relieved. The order is confirmed. But has the difficult part actually ended?

A trading team in Dubai coordinates contracts, payments, and communication. The goods travel directly from their countries of origin to Uzbekistan, without passing through Dubai.

What looks like one purchase is actually three separate supply chains, each with its own uncertainties.

And ten questions stand between that purchase and a successful delivery.

THE ORDER HANDOFF MAP

What happens between placing an order and receiving the goods?



01 ORDER



Supplier, specifications and terms confirmed

02 PRODUCTION



Capacity secured and schedule verified

03 INSPECTION



Quality checked against agreed standards

04 PAYMENT



Funds released against agreed milestones

05 WAREHOUSE



Goods received, counted and consolidated if needed

06 TRANSPORT



Cargo and shipping arrangements ready

07 DOCUMENTS



Commercial and shipping records aligned

08 CUSTOMS



Import requirements and clearance completed

09 DELIVERY



Goods received and available for sale



WHAT MUST BE TRUE?

Is the next stage genuinely ready?



WHO VERIFIES IT?

Who confirms the requirements are met?



WHAT IF IT ISN'T?

Who resolves the issue before it spreads?

1. Is the supplier really ready?

A confirmed quotation doesn't necessarily mean reserved production capacity. Can the factory meet the promised deadline? Are quantities, packaging, and technical specifications final?

There is a difference between a manufacturer willing to accept an order and one genuinely prepared to fulfil it.

2. Will the delivered product match the approved sample?

The sample looks perfect. But what if the production run arrives with different plugs, labels, or components?

A small factory adjustment can create a significant problem in the destination market. Written specifications matter because memories of approval are rarely precise enough.

3. Have we actually agreed on everything?

Three suppliers may mean three payment schedules, delivery terms, and approaches to order changes.

What happens if the buyer changes a model halfway through production? Who absorbs the additional cost?

Commercial misunderstandings often begin with details nobody thought necessary to discuss.

4. What happens when production falls behind?

One Chinese factory finishes on time. The second encounters a component shortage. The Turkish manufacturer postpones completion.

Should the distributor ship the available products immediately or wait?

The decision affects freight costs, inventory planning, and promises already made to retailers.

5. What does inspection really guarantee?

An inspection report can confirm that sampled products meet agreed requirements.

It cannot guarantee that every appliance is flawless. What matters is defining the inspection scope beforehand and establishing what happens if defects are discovered.

6. When should the money move?

One supplier expects payment before dispatch. Another requests settlement after inspection. Their invoices use different currencies.

Paying too early can weaken the buyer's position. Paying too late can delay shipment.

The financial schedule must work alongside the production schedule.

7. Should everything travel together?

The two Chinese orders might be consolidated at an origin warehouse. The Turkish shipment may follow a completely different route.

Consolidation is useful when it reduces costs or improves efficiency, not simply because multiple suppliers are involved.

Sometimes separate routes produce a better commercial outcome.

8. Does production completed mean shipment ready?

Not necessarily.

Goods may be packed while collection arrangements, carrier bookings, or export formalities remain unfinished.

A factory's completion date is not automatically a departure date. That distinction becomes painfully important when customers are already expecting delivery.

9. Do all the documents tell the same story?

An incorrect model number or inconsistent quantity between the invoice, packing list, and transport documents may delay clearance.

Sometimes the physical shipment is perfectly fine, but its paperwork tells a different story.

10. Has the transaction finished when the goods arrive?

Arrival in Uzbekistan is not the final milestone. Customs clearance, applicable conformity requirements, and delivery arrangements still determine whether the distributor can place those appliances on the market.

A shipment has little commercial value while it remains inaccessible to the customer.

The question behind the questions

Not every order requires intensive supervision. Repeat purchases from reliable suppliers are usually more predictable.

But unfamiliar manufacturers, multiple origins, different payment arrangements, and new destination requirements change the equation.

In business development, much of our attention naturally goes toward finding opportunities: new buyers, competitive prices, and promising suppliers. Execution receives less attention, even though it often determines whether the commercial opportunity becomes a completed transaction. The ten questions in this article are not a guarantee against problems. They are a way to see where they are likely to appear.

A purchase order starts the process. Careful attention to each handoff is what turns it into delivery.

Because the order is only the beginning.



A SUPPLIER IS NOT A SUPPLY CHAIN

Finding a Factory Is Only the First Test



By Rami Ahmed Hassan
CARAVAN Editorial Team

The most useful reply to a sourcing inquiry is not always a price. Sometimes it is a question: "Which specification do you need, and when must the order be ready?"

It may sound less impressive than a glossy catalogue and a quotation arriving ten minutes later. But it tells the buyer something important. The company at the other end understands that being able to manufacture a product and being able to fulfil a particular order are two different things.

Consider a hypothetical buyer looking for 800 industrial valves. Three companies respond. One is cheapest, one promises the fastest delivery, and a third asks for drawings, operating conditions and the required test records before quoting.

It would be tempting to rank them by price and move on.

That is where supplier selection often goes wrong: the buyer has compared answers to questions that were never quite the same.

The first question is about identity. Who, exactly, is offering the goods?

The legal entity sending the pro forma invoice may be a manufacturer, a trading company or an export agent. There is nothing inherently wrong with an intermediary; a good one may provide access to several factories and handle smaller orders with care.

But the buyer should know who will make the product, who will sign the contract and who receives the money.

A business licence is a starting point, not proof that the business has the machinery, financial resources or authority it claims.

Then comes capability.

A website full of valve photographs does not establish whether the factory can produce this pressure rating, material grade or quantity.



Ask for relevant production evidence, appropriate test records and, where the stakes justify it, an independent inspection or site visit. References help, although a reference chosen by the seller is not the same as independent verification.

Specifications expose a quieter kind of risk.

Two people can use the same product name and mean different things. A drawing revision, a tolerance, a surface treatment or a label may separate a usable item from one the buyer cannot install.

I would rather see a supplier identify an ambiguity before quotation than confidently promise a product nobody has fully defined.

Capacity is another word worth challenging.

"We produce 20,000 units a month" might describe the entire facility, several product lines or an exceptional month. How much capacity is actually available for this order during the required window? Are critical inputs on hand? What happens if another customer has priority?

Published capacity is interesting. Allocated capacity is what the buyer needs.

Only after those questions does the commercial offer become genuinely comparable.

Minimum order quantity, payment stages, quotation validity, quantity tolerance, lead time and the named delivery points all affect the real cost of purchasing.

Two prices are not competitors if one assumes standard packaging and the other includes customised packing, testing and documentation. Even a familiar Incoterms abbreviation needs a precise named place.

SUPPLIER COMPARISON REPORT | SAMPLE / ILLUSTRATIVE DATA

A side-by-side sourcing review of three hypothetical suppliers – Not a real verification or inspection report.

REQUEST REFERENCE	PRODUCT / SPECIFICATION	DESTINATION / INCOTERM	REPORT DATE
TS-SAMPLE-001	Stainless steel kitchen sink - Grade 304 - 1.0 mm	Tehran - CFR Bandar Abbas	Sample

SIDE-BY-SIDE ASSESSMENT

WHAT IS COMPARED	SUPPLIER A	SUPPLIER B	SUPPLIER C
Country / region	China (Zhejiang)	China (Guangdong)	Türkiye (Istanbul)
Registration check	Licence matches manufacturer	Licence matches trading company in front	Licence matches manufacturer
Specification match	Full	Partial - 0.8 mm offered vs 1.0 mm	Full
MOQ	300 pcs	500 pcs	150 pcs
Price basis	FOB Ningbo	FOB Shenzhen	EXW Istanbul
Lead time	30 days	25 days	20 days
Payment terms	30% deposit / 70% before shipment	30% / 70%	50% / 50%
Samples	Available, 7 days	Available, paid	Available, 10 days
Certificates	Claimed, not yet verified	None provided	Provided
Main risk	Certificate to be verified	Thickness below spec	Higher unit cost



PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATION
Supplier A for price and full specification match, subject to re-verification. Supplier C as backup (e.g. if lead time is critical).



DOCUMENTED NEXT STEPS
Confirm samples and negotiation points; assign responsibilities for inspection before shipment.



LIMITS OF THE REPORT
This is a comparison of hypothetical information only. It does not verify any supplier or guarantee performance. Quality, delivery, negotiation and contract terms are separate steps.

CHINA OR TURKIYE?

What Changes in Supplier Verification?



COMPANY REGISTRATION

China: Check the company's legal identity through the National Enterprise Credit Information Publicity System. The Chinese registered name and Unified Social Credit Code are particularly useful.

Türkiye: Review company information through MERSIS and the Turkish Trade Registry Gazette, including registered names and published changes.



DOCUMENT LANGUAGE

Chinese and Turkish registration documents may require translation before the buyer can evaluate them accurately.



MINIMUM ORDER QUANTITY

Neither country has a universal minimum order quantity. Batch size, customisation and the manufacturer's production model matter more than nationality.



LEAD TIME

Do not assume that one country is always faster. Compare confirmed production slots, material availability, testing requirements and export readiness.



THE KEY DIFFERENCE

Verification follows the local registration system. Supplier suitability follows the individual company.

The next test is less visible: documentation.

A supplier may manufacture an excellent product yet be unable to produce the documents a particular destination requires.

Origin evidence, test certificates, conformity documents and export records are not interchangeable.

Requirements depend on the product and the importing market. They should be checked with the importer before anyone promises that a shipment will clear customs.

Finally, there is working behaviour.

Does the supplier answer the question asked, or simply send another catalogue?

Will it state what remains unconfirmed? Does it record changes to quantity, specification and delivery date in writing?

Slow but candid communication can be easier to work with than instant reassurance.

The point is not to reward polished English or constant availability. It is to find out whether uncomfortable information will surface while there is still time to act on it.

None of this means that larger factories are automatically safer.

A smaller producer may offer better access to decision-makers, greater flexibility and more attention to an order that a major plant considers insignificant.

Size is a fact about the supplier, not a verdict on its suitability.

“A factory may be capable of making the product and still be the wrong supplier for the order.”

What makes the right supplier, then?

Not the lowest quotation or the longest list of certifications.

It is a combination of verified identity, proven capability, clear understanding of the required specification, realistic and allocated capacity, a fully comparable commercial offer, the ability to provide the necessary documentation and a working style that surfaces problems early.

A supplier is not a supply chain. It is one part of a longer process that includes payment, production, inspection, documentation, transport and customs clearance.

Finding a factory may be the first test. The real question is whether this supplier can meet the specific requirements of this order.

A credible answer to that second question is the beginning of sourcing.

SUPPLIER ASSESSMENT & INSPECTION

Supplier checks • Factory visits • Goods inspection
Documented findings against agreed requirements.



Scan to request
this service



ONE ORDER. FIVE SUPPLIERS. ONE SHIPMENT.

When Consolidation Becomes
a Commercial Decision



By Josephine Beaumont
CARAVAN Editorial Team

HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO

An importer in Iran has just finished purchasing five different products from five suppliers in China. None of the orders is particularly large. The prices are agreed, the payments arranged, and everyone is preparing to ship.

Then someone makes a perfectly reasonable suggestion.

Why send five separate shipments when everything could travel together?

The proposal is straightforward: collect the goods at a warehouse in China, inspect and count the cartons, repack where necessary, and load everything into one container travelling through the UAE to Iran.

Five suppliers. One shipment. Potentially lower freight costs.

It sounds almost too sensible to question.

But suppose four suppliers are ready and the fifth isn't.

Suddenly, the calculation changes.

TWO WAYS TO MOVE THE SAME ORDER

With five separate shipments, each supplier's goods can leave when ready. There are multiple collections, freight bookings, arrival dates and sets of shipping documents. The importer faces repeated handling and administrative costs, but one late supplier doesn't necessarily delay the others.

Consolidation offers something different.

Goods arrive at a shared warehouse, where staff record deliveries, check quantities, inspect packaging and prepare the combined load. Container space can be used more efficiently, potentially reducing duplicated transport charges.

Yet the warehouse introduces its own expenses: receiving, storage, handling and sometimes repacking.

More importantly, the earliest deliveries may have to wait for the latest.

And waiting is rarely free.

THE COST NOBODY PUTS ON THE FREIGHT QUOTE

Consider a hypothetical order worth \$120,000.

Four suppliers have goods worth \$85,000 ready by Day 6. The fifth, supplying the remaining \$35,000, cannot deliver until Day 18.

Shipping the first four separately or in a smaller consolidated batch might allow departure on Day 7.

Waiting for all five pushes departure to Day 20.

That's thirteen additional days with \$85,000 in inventory standing still.

At an illustrative annual cost of capital of 15%, those thirteen days represent approximately \$454 in financing costs alone.

It doesn't sound enormous.

But what about warehouse charges? Additional handling? The risk of damage? Or the sales lost because a popular product arrives nearly two weeks later?

The cheapest freight quotation may no longer represent the cheapest commercial decision.

WHY EXPERIENCED OPERATORS SET DEADLINES

This problem isn't theoretical.

TE Connectivity's published consolidation guidelines establish specific collection windows rather than allowing shipments to wait indefinitely.

In another documented case, Yamato Transport described bringing goods from ten Chinese suppliers into a Shanghai consolidation centre within a defined five-day window before shipping to Singapore.

Different businesses, different routes, but the same underlying principle: consolidation needs a deadline.

THERE ARE OTHER COMPLICATIONS, TOO.

Five purchases inside one container may still require separate commercial invoices, origin records and product-specific documentation.

Moving through the UAE doesn't remove the need to comply with applicable trade regulations, customs requirements or restrictions.

And although a consolidated container may reduce handling later in the journey, poor warehouse practices can introduce damage risks of their own.

WHEN ONE SHIPMENT IS ONE TOO MANY

What if the fifth supplier is consistently late?

Perhaps the commercially sensible answer is to send the first four together and let the fifth follow separately.

Yes, freight may cost more.

But the earlier arrival of inventory could protect sales, improve cash flow and prevent shortages.

Sometimes two shipments are better than one. Sometimes five independent movements are entirely justified.

“Consolidation reduces movements.
It does not automatically reduce
complexity.”

The appeal of one container is easy to understand. It looks efficient, organised and economical.

But importers don't make money from having fewer shipping documents or perfectly filled containers.

They make money when products reach the market at a cost and time that make commercial sense.

The question, therefore, isn't whether five orders can fit into one shipment.

It's whether bringing them together saves more than it costs to wait.

FOOD ADDITIVES

THE INVISIBLE INGREDIENTS BEHIND GLOBAL FOOD TRADE

Small ingredients. A global impact.
Food additives help make modern food safer,
tastier, more consistent and longer lasting.
They are used in almost every food category,
yet their markets, sources and regulations are different.

01 WHAT ARE FOOD ADDITIVES?

Food additives include several functional categories, not a single product.



PRESERVATIVES
Help control deterioration



SWEETENERS
Provide sweetness



EMULSIFIERS
Bring ingredients together



STABILISERS
Maintain texture



THICKENERS
Increase viscosity



ACIDITY REGULATORS
Control pH and taste



ANTIOXIDANTS
Limit oxidation



COLOURS
Provide or restore colour



FLAVOURINGS
Add or enhance flavour

02 WHERE ARE THEY USED?

Food additives are used in a wide range of food products.



BAKERY PRODUCTS



BEVERAGES



DAIRY PRODUCTS



CONFECTIONERY & CHOCOLATE



PROCESSED MEAT



SAUCES



SNACKS



READY MEALS

03 SELECTED 2024 EXPORTS

Examples of food-additive categories by exporting country (2024 exports).

CHINA

Citric acid

1,245,820
metric tonnes
HS 291814

GERMANY

Pectic substances

13,231
metric tonnes
HS 130220

TÜRKİYE

Gelatin and related products

19,789
metric tonnes
HS 350300

INDONESIA

Agar-agar

1,608
metric tonnes
HS 130231

SOURCE: WORLD BANK WITS / UN COMTRADE, 2024; HS 291814, 130220, 350300, 130231.
Trade classifications may include non-food-grade material; exports are not production.

04 SUPPLY CHAIN

From raw materials to the food manufacturer.



05 WHAT BUYERS LOOK FOR

Buyers need a clearly defined specification and complete documentation.



06 PRICE DRIVERS

Food-additive prices are influenced by several factors.



07 REGULATIONS & MARKET ENTRY

Food additives are regulated, and the requirements vary by country and application.



CODEX ALIMENTARIUS (CXs 192-1995)

International reference for permitted uses, food categories and maximum levels.



EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION (TR CU 029/2012)

Applies across EAEU member states, including Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; covers food-safety and labelling provisions.



UZBEKISTAN

Check current national requirements and effective dates.



IRAN

Food and Drug Administration requirements and applicable national standards.



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Applicable national food-additive standards and product registration requirements.



The legality of an additive depends on the specific substance, its intended use, the food category, the permitted level and the destination country.

08 KEY RISKS

Common risks in the international trade of food additives.



“An additive may represent a small part of the finished product. The wrong specification can stop the entire production line.”



MORE ON FOOD INGREDIENTS

Market analysis, sourcing origins and buyer guidance.



Buying food additives?

QAA FOOD INGREDIENTS

qasralanqaa.com/commodity-sourcing/ingredients/



Have your own supplier?

QAA TRADE SERVICES

qasralanqaa.com/supply-chain/trade-services/

THE CARGO IS READY. THE SHIPMENT IS NOT.

What Can Still Stop an Order
After Production Ends?



By Sara Sayyad

Senior Financial Analyst - Business Consultant -
Writer & Editorial Contributor

The photograph arrives at 9:12 a.m.: sealed cartons, stacked pallets, a message from the factory in China.

"Cargo ready."

For the buyer in Iran, it sounds like the end of a long process. Production has finished. The goods exist. Surely the shipment is next.

Not necessarily.

A deal can stall in four different places: the money is ready but the cargo is not; the cargo is ready but transport space has not been booked; the shipment is packed but the documents are incomplete; or the documents appear correct while the consignee's requirements remain unclear.

None of these problems is visible in a photograph.

THE SIX GATES AFTER PRODUCTION

Before departure, someone must reconcile six things.

Has the contractual payment condition been met? Do the commercial invoice and packing list agree? Does the description accurately identify the goods? Are certificates of origin and any required permits valid? Does the freight booking reflect the actual cargo? And has the consignee confirmed the destination's customs and delivery requirements?

These questions sound administrative until one answer is wrong.

Consider a hypothetical shipment from China to Iran via the UAE.

The warehouse counts 418 cartons; the packing list says 420. The forwarder booked space using an earlier weight and package count. The supplier corrects the invoice, but the certificate of origin still carries the previous description.

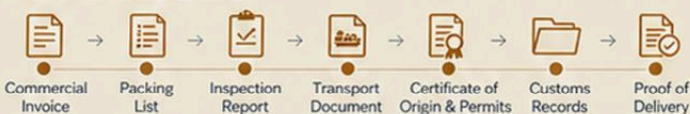
No single error looks dramatic. Together, they create conflicting versions of the same shipment.

TWO PARALLEL JOURNEYS

PHYSICAL CARGO



DOCUMENTARY CARGO



→ Both journeys must tell the same story.

QAA TRADE SERVICES

DOCUMENTATION & CUSTOMS COORDINATION

One shipment. Multiple documents. No conflicting details.

A booking may need amendment. Documentation may need reissue. Customs preparations may have to restart. And the planned departure may pass while everyone exchanges revised PDFs.

For packed containers carried by sea, verified gross mass is not a formality: under SOLAS rules, the weight must be verified and provided in time for loading. An unverified packed container may be refused loading.

THE DOCUMENTS MOVE WITH THE GOODS

There are really two shipments here.

One is physical: cartons leave the factory, enter a warehouse, reach a terminal, cross borders and eventually reach the buyer.

The other is documentary: invoice, packing list, inspection report where required, transport document, certificate of origin, permits, customs entries and proof of delivery.

Each tells part of the same story.

Product names, quantities, weights, package marks and the identities of the trading parties must be checked wherever the relevant fields appear. Not every document has identical fields, but contradictory information can stop clearance or undermine a claim.

At the receiving end, the last signature matters as much as the first.

Warehouse receipts, dated photographs, inspection findings and delivery acknowledgments help establish what was handed over, when, and in what condition.

Insurance does not magically repair a broken chain of evidence.

Coverage is subject to policy terms, limits and exclusions; damaged-cargo claims generally need records linking loss to the insured transit.

So the question is not simply whether the goods are insured.

It is whether the shipment can be reconstructed from reliable evidence if something goes wrong.

THE LAST MILE BEGINS BEFORE DEPARTURE

For the exporter, the shipment feels finished when the truck leaves.

For the importer, the test is whether the goods can be released, received and used.

That requires agreement before loading on who handles declarations, which documents are required for the route, who is authorised to receive the cargo, and how exceptions will be reported.

Transit through the UAE does not by itself settle customs or trade-compliance obligations.

**"A shipment can be physically ready
and commercially unable to move."**

The strongest operators do not celebrate "cargo ready" as the finish line.

They treat it as the moment to prove that every other part of the movement is ready too.

We check that invoices, packing lists, certificates and transport documents describe the same shipment before it moves. Scan to request this service.



WHO OWNS THE JOURNEY?

When Everyone Does Their Job, Who Makes Sure the Trade Actually Works?



By Ali Aghdam |

Chief Executive Officer, Ali Aghdam General Trading LLC
Chief Executive Officer, Malik Al Khatam Logistics Services

There is a particular kind of frustration in international trade that rarely appears in contracts.

A supplier says the goods are ready. The freight forwarder says the booking is confirmed. The warehouse says everything has been received. The customs broker says the documents are under review.

Everyone appears to be doing their job.

And somehow, the shipment is still going nowhere.

I think this is one of the most misunderstood problems in our industry.

We spend a great deal of time choosing the right companies to work with. We compare suppliers, negotiate freight rates, appoint customs brokers and arrange warehouses. We expect that putting capable people together will produce a successful transaction.

Sometimes it does.

But having good service providers is not the same as having a well-managed process.

The difference is what happens between them.

THE SPACE BETWEEN RESPONSIBILITIES

Consider a simple situation.

A manufacturer finishes production and tells the buyer the goods are ready. The shipping company is waiting for final cargo details. The warehouse has received the cartons but recorded a different weight. Meanwhile, the customs broker needs a revised document before preparing the declaration.

Each participant understands their own responsibility.

But who is responsible for making sure the information reaches the next person?

Who notices that the weight has changed?

Who checks whether the revised document has reached everyone who needs it?

And who decides what should happen if the planned sailing can no longer be met?

These questions are not particularly glamorous. They rarely make it into commercial presentations.

Yet they are often the questions that determine whether an order moves or waits.

OWNERSHIP IS NOT THE SAME AS CONTROL

There is a temptation to believe that the solution is to place everything under one company.

One supplier. One logistics provider. One organisation responsible for the entire journey.

Sometimes that is the right arrangement. It can simplify communication and create a clearer line of accountability.

But it is not the only workable model.

A specialist freight forwarder may be excellent at transportation. An independent inspection company may offer stronger technical expertise. A local customs broker may understand destination requirements better than anyone coordinating the transaction from abroad.

There is nothing inherently wrong with using several independent specialists.

The problem begins when nobody is responsible for connecting their work.

For me, managing a shipment does not mean making every decision personally or performing every task in-house.

It means knowing who owns each decision, what information they need, when responsibility changes hands and how completion is demonstrated. A shipment should never depend on someone assuming that somebody else has taken care of it.

SOMEONE MUST STILL SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE

The most useful question in a complicated transaction is often surprisingly simple:

What are we waiting for, and who is responsible for the next step?

If the answer is unclear, the process is already becoming difficult to manage.

Good coordination does not eliminate delays, mistakes or unexpected changes.

What it does is make those problems visible early enough for people to respond.

And that is what I believe professional trade operations should deliver.

Not the illusion that nothing will ever go wrong.

But the confidence that when something does, the responsibility for dealing with it will not disappear between two companies.

Because the real measure of a transaction is not how many capable businesses participated.

It is whether their work came together to deliver what the buyer was promised.

Between the Order and the Arrival

We began this issue with a question:

What happens between placing an order and receiving the goods?

After examining supplier selection, cargo consolidation, product specifications, shipping documents and the decisions connecting them, the answer becomes clearer. Almost everything that determines whether the trade actually works.

The product is visible. The price is negotiable. The contract can be signed.

But successful execution is built elsewhere: in careful verification, realistic timing, reliable information, coordinated responsibilities and the countless small decisions that link one step to the next.

Trade is not just about who does each job. It is about who makes sure the jobs connect.

In the end, that is what turns a group of services into a working shipment.

QAA TRADE SERVICES

Where is your order right now?



01 — I need a supplier

Find and assess the right source for your requirements.



02 — I already have a supplier

Get help coordinating your existing order.



03 — I need one stage handled

Choose the specific part of the process you want to delegate.



Sourcing in China. Coordination from Dubai. Other routes assessed per request.

Scope and cost agreed before work begins.

Or talk to us on WhatsApp: [+971 55 718 8109](https://wa.me/971557188109)

qasralanqaa.com/supply-chain/trade-services/

