

The Continuity Checklist

7 Controls That Keep Freight Moving in a Volatile Market

We need only look to the news in recent months to see how fast situations can change. These seven items are operational controls—what must exist for freight to move reliably when situations change.

Use this checklist as a diagnostic framework, ensuring you're covered across the points where many freight programs fail.

01 Lane Flexibility



What It Is

The ability to shift freight between carriers, ports, or routing options without rebuilding the logistics plan.



Why It Matters

When freight is locked into one lane structure, disruptions immediately stall shipments. Flexibility allows volume to move even when conditions change.



What Failure Looks Like

- Freight tied to a single routing option
- Limited alternatives when conditions shift
- Volume stranded when a lane degrades



A First Corrective Action

Maintain pre-approved alternate routing options for core lanes.

02 Customs Readiness



What It Is

Controls that ensure classifications, documentation, and duty exposure are validated before freight reaches the border.



Why It Matters

Customs issues discovered late can halt shipments unexpectedly.



What Failure Looks Like

- Documentation gaps discovered after arrival
- Repeated customs holds
- Unexpected duty exposure



A First Corrective Action

Validate classifications and documentation before freight departs origin.

03 Drayage and Appointment Discipline



What It Is

Coordination that keeps terminal pickup, trucking capacity, and receiving schedules aligned.



Why It Matters

Misaligned handoffs between port, trucking, and warehouse operations quickly create delays and extra costs.



What Failure Looks Like

- Containers waiting at terminals
- Missed pickup windows
- Receiving facilities unprepared for inbound freight



A First Corrective Action

Link vessel arrival updates with drayage scheduling and receiving appointments.

04 Warehouse Contingency



What It Is

Operational flexibility that allows facilities to absorb uneven inbound freight.



Why It Matters

Inbound shipments rarely arrive evenly. Without contingency planning, facilities quickly become congested.



What Failure Looks Like

- Backlogs at receiving docks
- Containers waiting to be unloaded
- Facilities unable to adjust to volume spikes



A First Corrective Action

Establish overflow receiving plans and flexible scheduling.

05 Milestone Alerts



What It Is

Alerts that detect when shipments deviate from plan and signal the need for action.



Why It Matters

Tracking data is only useful when it highlights exceptions that require intervention.



What Failure Looks Like

- Delays discovered after they escalate
- Notifications that do not trigger action
- Teams reacting too late



A First Corrective Action

Define key milestones and create alerts tied to operational response.

06 Escalation Ownership



What It Is

Clear responsibility for resolving shipment disruptions.



Why It Matters

When multiple providers are involved, issues can stall while responsibility shifts between parties.



What Failure Looks Like

- Vendors deferring responsibility
- Slow responses to disruptions
- Repeated unresolved issues



A First Corrective Action

Assign one accountable owner for managing shipment exceptions.

07 Cost-to-Serve Reporting



What It Is

Reporting that captures the full operational cost of moving freight.



Why It Matters

Freight rates alone rarely reflect the true cost of logistics.



What Failure Looks Like

- Decisions based only on headline rates
- Hidden accessorial charges
- Limited cost visibility



A First Corrective Action

Track operational costs alongside transportation rates.

Evaluate Your Supply Chain Continuity

If these controls exist in your supply chain, disruptions get absorbed. If they don't, disruptions turn into bigger problems that start with delays, demurrage, and missed appointments.

The fact is, these controls are difficult to maintain when freight is fragmented across logistics providers.

Mallory Alexander brings freight forwarding, customs brokerage, warehousing, domestic transportation, and visibility together through one coordinated team. This structure gives you a unified team working for you, ready to adapt quickly when your supply chain encounters volatility.



Request a Continuity Review from Mallory Alexander

We'll take a look at your current setup and discuss your risks or pain points you may be experiencing. We're here to help you be agile in any and every situation.

Request a Review

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