

Lufthansa Cargo and DB Schenker to operate first CO₂-neutral freighter flights

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By Rachelle Harry



Left to right: Peter Gerber, chief executive of Lufthansa Cargo and Jochen Thewes, chief executive of DB Schenker

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Lufthansa Cargo and DB Schenker have teamed up to carry out the first ever CO₂-neutral freighter flights, powered by sustainable aviation fuel (SAF).

The first of these flights will take place on November 29 and will operate from Frankfurt to Shanghai utilising a Boeing 777 freighter aircraft.

Goods from Siemens Healthineers and other companies will be transported on the flight.

The move follows Lufthansa Cargo and DB Schenker announcing earlier this month that they have agreed to exchange views on environmental issues and to

jointly promote them — including the move away from fossil fuels in airfreight transport.

Peter Gerber, chief executive at Lufthansa Cargo, commented: “With this flight we are committed to the increased research and use of SAF so that sufficient quantities of the alternative fuel will be available in the future.

“In addition to investments in a modern freighter fleet, our commitment to this CO2-neutral flight also contributes to the **United Nations’ ‘Climate Action’ sustainability goal**.

“Because Lufthansa Cargo takes its corporate responsibility very seriously and is actively taking measures to meet this responsibility and relieve the environment.”

- [Lufthansa Cargo commits to UN sustainability programme](#)
- [Peter Gerber to leave Lufthansa Cargo top job](#)
- [DB Schenker adds charter flights while high-tech firms turn to airfreight](#)

Jochen Thewes, chief executive at DB Schenker, added: “We are already further ahead than many think when it comes to climate protection in air freight. We can demonstrate this with the first CO2-neutral freight flight in history.

“With the start of the 2021 summer flight schedule, DB Schenker will offer greenhouse gas-neutral air freight as a regular product.

“As a logistics provider, DB Schenker is the link between the loading industry and the airlines in order to actually implement climate protection in air freight. I am convinced that there is a great demand for this type of green transport and I am looking forward to seeing who will follow suit.”

German Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Andreas Scheuer, said: “Even in the most severe crisis that has ever hit aviation, Lufthansa Cargo and DB Schenker are facing up to their responsibility for climate protection and are operating their first freight flight from Frankfurt to Shanghai entirely with sustainable alternative fuel. This is an important signal right now that the companies are looking to the future despite all the concerns and are taking important steps to make aviation more sustainable.”

SAF refers to sustainable, synthetic kerosene. It is currently produced mainly from biomass, for example from sustainable or recyclable vegetable and cooking oils. In the future, non-plant-based renewable fuels will also be available.

By using SAF, the fossil CO2 emissions of a flight with conventional kerosene are avoided. During combustion in the engine, only CO2 is released that was previously removed from the atmosphere, for example during plant growth.

SAF, the companies said, is thus “the first real alternative to fossil aviation fuel and the key to climate-friendly, CO2-neutral air traffic”.