

MEDIA RELEASE

SWISSPORT DOUBLES CAPACITY AT MANCHESTER AIRPORT WITH NEW CARGO HUB

Swissport announces the opening of a new state-of-the-art cargo facility at Manchester Airport, doubling its annual handling capacity to 110,000 tons. The development marks a major investment in the UK's growing air freight sector and forms part of Swissport's broader strategy to enhance its global cargo network through innovation, sustainability, and operational excellence.

Swissport International, the global leader in aviation services, has opened its new state-of-the-art cargo facility – Box 4 – at Manchester Airport. This major development expands Swissport's cargo handling capabilities at this key UK hub, doubling annual capacity to 110,000 tons and reinforcing the company's ongoing commitment to operational excellence and innovation. The new facility increases Swissport's operational footprint by 67% compared to the previous site and will begin full operations on 27 October, following an inauguration event on 23 October attended by representatives from airlines, airport and logistics partners, and the regional freight community.

"Manchester is a critical hub for the UK's air cargo network, and this new facility reflects Swissport's commitment to investing in infrastructure and technology to meet the evolving needs of our customers," said Joe Bellfield, Swissport's Chief Operating Officer Cargo UK&I. "This expansion strengthens our ability to handle a diverse range of goods – from e-commerce shipments and perishables to pharmaceuticals and high-value products – with the highest standards of safety, security, and efficiency."

Stephen Turner, Chief Commercial Officer at Manchester Airport, said: "We're proud to connect the North, and that doesn't just mean flying our passengers to the places they want to travel to, it also means fulfilling an important role as a hub for international trade. This new facility will allow our airlines to transport higher volumes of cargo, which will not only help businesses in our region to source the products they need and sell their own products abroad but will also create jobs and incentivise airlines to grow their schedules from Manchester."

EXPANDED CAPACITY AND ENHANCED CAPABILITIES

The facility integrates advanced cargo handling systems designed for the seamless transfer of Unit Load Devices (ULDs), improving operational speed, reducing manual handling, and increasing efficiency.

A dedicated Pharma Centre with cold rooms and temperature-controlled environments ensures precise handling of pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and perishables. Specialized racking systems, dock levellers, and an open-plan layout optimize operational flow, while enhanced facilities for airline tenants and expanded pallet handling areas support efficient management of high-value, time-critical, and temperature-sensitive cargo.

COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

The new hub demonstrates Swissport's commitment to environmental responsibility and resource efficiency. The facility has achieved an 'A' Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating, with intelligent energy-saving lighting and building systems throughout.

Infrastructure has also been installed to enable a full transition to electric-powered ground service equipment (eGSE), supporting Swissport's target to operate a fully electric fleet at the site within two years. This initiative contributes to the company's global sustainability strategy, which aims to electrify 55% of its GSE fleet by 2032 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050, reinforcing Swissport's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable operations across its worldwide network.

SUPPORTING LOCAL JOBS AND REGIONAL GROWTH

Manchester is a key logistics gateway connecting global trade flows. Swissport's investment strengthens regional supply chain resilience, supports economic growth, and enhances the airport's ability to serve evolving cargo needs — from e-commerce to complex freight solutions.

The new facility in Manchester is part of Swissport's wider UK expansion strategy, with several new cargo hubs planned across the country. This investment underscores the company's commitment to supporting regional economic growth, strengthening supply chain resilience, and meeting the increasing demands of global trade.

The facility also provides improved working environments for employees, including upgraded welfare areas, spacious offices, and modernized equipment. The site will initially employ 95 team members, all transferred from the previous location, with further recruitment planned as volumes grow.

A STRATEGIC STEP IN SWISSPORT'S GLOBAL GROWTH PLAN

This investment is part of Swissport's global cargo growth strategy, building on recent expansions across Europe and Asia. It follows the company's landmark partnership to manage the Digital & Intelligent International Cargo Terminal at Shanghai Pudong International Airport — a flagship operation in Asia and a key milestone in its digitalization and innovation strategy.

Together, these developments reinforce Swissport's position as a trusted, reliable partner for airlines and freight forwarders seeking high-performance, future-ready cargo handling solutions worldwide.

About Manchester Airport:

Manchester Airport is the largest UK airport outside London, with around 200 destinations served by more than 50 airlines. More than 30 million passengers travelled through the airport last year.

The airport's long-haul catchment area places around 22 million people within a two-hour drive time; it extends north through the Lake District into Scotland, east across Yorkshire and the North East, south to Birmingham and the Midlands, and west into Merseyside and Wales.

Manchester Airport is owned and operated by MAG, the UK's largest independent airport operator, which also owns and operates London Stansted and East Midlands airports.

About Swissport

In 2024, Swissport International AG provided best-in-class aviation services for some 247 million airline passengers (2023: 232 million), welcomed 5.9 million lounge guests (2023: 5.7 million), and handled roughly 5 million tons of air freight (2023: 4.7 million) at 117 air cargo centers worldwide. Several of its warehouses have been certified for pharmaceutical logistics by IATA's CEIV Pharma and by the British MHRA. At the end of December 2024, the world's leader in airport ground services and air cargo handling, with currently around 65,000 employees, was active at 279 airports in 45 countries on six continents.

Media contacts

Swissport International AG, Group Communications, Silvia Garrido P.O. Box, 8058 Zurich Airport, Switzerland
media@swissport.com