

FreightDesk Technologies

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A principal issue over the next year will be whether we can achieve a balance between economic growth and the need of governments to protect their citizenry from the threat of global terrorism. Few companies, lip-service notwithstanding, actually believe they are at risk. The government, caught in the political handcuffs imposed by a “pro-business” outlook, is frequently unwilling, often unable, to distinguish between those things that need to be mandatory and those that are the natural provenance of the market. And while everyone in their gut believes that securing the supply chain will

have an efficiency return to add to the national security benefit, few have the money or motivation to invest in the changes these goals necessitate. There has been no Tylenol event in which individual company risk has become apparent, to impel a paradigm shift in the structure and processes of international trade.

Despite the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, the Container Security Initiative, myriad trade, bioterrorism and facilities rules and regulations, the risk remains unabated because the paradigm continues unchanged. Too much continues to be focused on borders, compliance and point solutions, when the real threat is dynamic and fluid. So the big questions for the next several years are these: Are we and they doing — can we do — what we need to do to address the new threats and problems we need to fix? Will the cure be worse than the disease (or is the cure a placebo)? Is this CYA (cover your you-know-what) or is this because it's right? Are we dealing with yesterday's problems with yesterday's tools, or will we be able checkmate our opponents in this global game of terrorist chess? While we won't know the answers this year or next, I have no doubt that the coming year will be instructive and tumultuous as the U.S. government finally decides that it's in charge of the problem.