

INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM, INCLUDING INDUSTRY & TECHNICAL EXPERTS, ACHIEVES FIRST FULLY DIGITALISED CROSS-BORDER GOODS MOVEMENT POST UK'S ETDA

Using advanced distributed ledger technology, the consortium revolutionizes trade transactions in compliance with the UK's new Electronic Trade Documents Act.

Monday, September 25, 2023: In a ground-breaking stride, an international consortium, comprised of key industry and technical leaders, and bolstered by the support of government, business and other major organisations, has announced the **successful execution of the world's first entirely digitalised cross-border movement of goods**. This monumental step, geared towards transforming global trade to be more cost-effective, efficient, resilient and environmentally conscious, is built on the foundation set by the UK Electronic Trade Documents Act (ETDA) which came into force on 20 September 2023.

Facilitated by the [British Chamber of Commerce in Singapore \(Britcham\)](#) representing British businesses in Singapore, this pilot initiative stands as a testament to the ambitions of the UK-Southeast Asia Trade Digitalisation Pilot's through a collaboration of organisations in both countries. What made this shipment remarkable was the utilisation of electronic trade documents and fully digital logistics documents, all of which were captured on an enterprise-grade permissioned distributed ledger technology (DLT) platform, across both jurisdictions.

Taking the baton at different stages of this historic transfer were [Singapore Airlines](#), [NG Transport](#), [Woodland Group](#), [BT Rune](#) and [EES Freight Services](#). The entire process was paperless, leveraging the robust capabilities of the [LogChain](#) platform. Notably, LogChain's platform, aligned with the UNCITRAL's Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR) that enabled a flawless transition, indorsement, and verification of document, transfers across the diverse digital platforms employed by the involved parties. This promotes policy coherence and harmonising digital trading standards without causing hindrance to other parties involved in the transaction.

At the origin of the shipment was [Fort Vale](#), a frontrunner in the design and production of valves and fittings essential for the chemical logistics domain. These components play a pivotal role in enhancing the [esteemed manufacturing industry of Singapore](#).

Until this remarkable endeavour, only specific facets of supply chains enjoyed the benefits of digitalisation. However, with the UK's ETDA endorsement, the notion of complete digitalisation in the movement of goods has transformed from a mere aspiration to reality. This act, which was instituted via the Law Commission Special Procedure, has ushered in a new era by offering electronic trade documents the same legal recognition as traditional paper documents, all without enforcing a complete shift.

Such advancements hold notable significance as trade documents under English jurisdiction dominate global trade. The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has reported that approximately 80% of worldwide trade documents are anchored in English law.¹

The demonstrable advantages of this moment are considerable with the following efficiencies delivered in this shipment:

- Reduction in paperwork >85%²
- Reduction in logistics processing time >89%

These efforts from the private sector were made possible by, and delivered upon, the progressive trade agreements recently made between the UK and Singapore governments for the betterment of both countries including; [UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement](#), [UK-Singapore Free Trade Agreement](#), and the [Green Economy Framework](#).

Statements from participating organisations:

Kara Owen, British High Commissioner to Singapore: “Fully digitalised supply chains and shipments will be absolutely revolutionary in terms of efficiency, sustainability and reduction of waste. So I’m delighted to celebrate this first-of-its kind shipment on the back of the UK Electronic Trade Documents Act. But I’m not surprised. The UK- Singapore Digital Economy Agreement has acted as a catalyst for innovation since signature, prompting UK and Singapore companies to work together on ground-breaking, practical digital trade solutions. This achievement exemplifies how the Agreement has enabled our companies to be at the forefront of digital innovation, and paves the way for further successes that unlock the full potential of trade digitalisation.”

Martin Kent, His Majesty's Trade Commissioner for Asia Pacific: "This is the first fully digitalised movement of goods under the UK’s new Electronic Trade Documents Act (ETDA), which will transform and simplify the process of exporting from the UK to the world. We are already working to expand this pilot across Southeast Asia and we will work with all partners to realise the benefits of paperless trade, which is great for both business efficiency and the environment.”

David Kelly, Executive Director, British Chamber of Commerce Singapore: “Following the launch of the UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement (UKSDEA) which was signed in 2022 and the UK Electronic Trade Documents Act (UK ETDA) which came into force on 20 September 2023, it is exciting to see the world's first entirely digitalised cross-border shipment. We look forward to working with the consortium to support more companies to digitalise their supply chains.”

Chris Southworth, Secretary General, ICC United Kingdom: “The Electronic Trade Documents Act is a game changer in our efforts to bring trade into the 21st century. From 20 September 2023, every company using English law worldwide can remove paper from the transaction process and all the associated red tape and bureaucracy which we know is a

¹ “UK Economy to Receive £1 Billion Boost through [Innovative Trade Digitalisation Act](#),” GOV.UK, 2023, accessed 11 August 2023.

² Reduction in total process paperwork. Total reduction in the logistics paperwork was 100%

major barrier to trade for SMEs. This project is an excellent demonstration of what can be achieved with the smarter use of technology and acts as a really positive sign of things to come across the trade system.”

Graham Blanchard, Global Sales & Marketing Director, Fort Vale: “Fort Vale are extremely enthusiastic and excited by the prospect of successful digital trade transactions. As an organisation, Fort Vale exports around 90% of its products worldwide. A significant number of our key accounts are based in Singapore and as such, the opportunity to be part of this historic moment was something not to miss. Fort Vale see the benefits of security, efficiency, cost savings and reduced risk of delays as real positives not only for our organisation, but as a contribution to frictionless trade between the UK and Singapore as a whole.”

Andrew McKeown, CEO, LogChain: “This is a historic moment, not only for LogChain but for the global trade as a whole. Our successful digitalised shipment from the UK to Singapore marks a significant step towards a new era, one where efficiency, transparency and security are at the forefront. We are proud to be part of this transformation and will continue to work diligently to innovate and lead in this space. This achievement underscores the power of collaboration and ecosystem thinking, not only between private companies but countries as well.”

Alexander Cornelius, Vice President of Cargo Operations and Services, Singapore Airlines: “The successful execution of the world’s first entirely digitalised cross-border shipment marks a significant step forward in ensuring a fully digitised process across the entire cargo supply chain. This achievement not only showcases the potential of digitalisation to make global trade more efficient and secure, but it also underscores SIA’s commitment to innovation and sustainability.”

Rodney Kinchington, Managing Director, BT Asia Pacific: “We are proud to leverage our expertise to help usher in the landmark UK Electronic Trade Documents Act. Further, the combined efforts of the various companies in this consortium through LogChain’s platform highlights our joint commitment to enhance standards (for transparency, efficiency and security) in global supply chains, and support for the transformative journey into the future of logistics.”

Gavin Hogg, UK Air Export Product Manager, Woodland Group commented: “We are delighted to be part of this project, as part of our commitment to continued collaboration with key industry stakeholders, to innovate and adopt new processes and lead digital development that will create opportunity and deliver optimised and sustainable supply chain management.”

Heru Winata, Operations Director, EES Freight Services: “As a traditional freight forwarder, we are looking forward to the first ever digitalised cross-border shipment from the UK to Singapore. The evolution of technology is changing how the world conducts business. Improved technology will revolutionise age-old processes in freight forwarding, increase productivity across the supply chain, and most importantly, reduce costly mistakes and human errors. EES Freight Services is proud to contribute and be part of this milestone.”

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Note to the Editor:

The UK's Electronic Trade Documents Act marks a pioneering step in the realm of trade documentation. By positioning electronic trade documents on equal legal standing as their paper equivalents, the Act fosters flexibility without enforcing an obligatory switch. Designed as permissive legislation, its primary objective is to eliminate hindrances as opposed to introducing new constraints. Such a transformative approach offers the potential to revolutionise global trade in several impactful ways:

- **Efficiency:** Transitioning to electronic documents, supported by the ETD Bill, slashes time overheads associated with the manual handling of paper documents. This augments operational efficiency for logistics stakeholders.
- **Cost Savings:** Traditional methods of managing, archiving, and dispatching paper documents rack up expenses. Embracing electronic document practices presents substantial fiscal advantages.
- **Reduced Risk of Delays:** Bottlenecks in logistics, often paper document-linked, can escalate costs due to demurrage and detention. E-documents diminish these delays, thus curtailing related expenditures.
- **Enhanced Security:** With a digital approach, there's a marked reduction in vulnerabilities such as loss, theft, or forgery that are associated with paper documents, fortifying transactional security and curbing fraud chances.
- **Environmental Benefits:** The move towards electronic documentation lessens the dependence on paper, advancing the cause of environmental sustainability.

About the British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham):

The British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham) is an independent not-for-profit membership organisation supporting approximately 3,500 members from 300 member organisations, part of the British Chambers of Commerce Global Network and a leading member of the Britain in South East Asia network (BiSEA). Our members vary from startups and SMEs to global MNCs, spanning all sectors and industries. Approximately two-thirds of the network in Singapore are British nationals or those employed by an organisation headquartered in the UK.

The Chamber is a registered Society, led by an Executive Team, overseen by an elected Board of members and operating under a published Constitution. Our mission is to drive British business growth in Singapore, create opportunities for our members, facilitate industry knowledge sharing, and support exporters from the UK. This is achieved by working alongside Government, our partners and our engaged members to deliver services, committee participation, activities and opportunities throughout the year. For more information on the Chamber, our advocacy and our areas of focus, visit www.britcham.org.sg.

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About LogChain:

LogChain is a digital platform that is revolutionising the way businesses manage their supply chains, with unparalleled efficiency, robustness and trust. Their comprehensive solutions streamline workflows, including customs clearance and logistics management, making them an ideal partner for businesses of all sizes.

LogChain's commitment to serving their clients sets them apart from their competitors. Their platform is designed to integrate seamlessly with existing systems, and their true OPEX SaaS model empowers businesses, including microbusinesses, SMEs and multinationals, to achieve optimal performance.

Through the incorporation of blockchain technology with the highest international standards, LogChain delivers unprecedented transparency and security to supply chains. Their dedication to optimising supply chains enables businesses to serve their customers better, by streamlining their operations and increasing their bottom line.

Experience a new era of supply chain management with LogChain. For more information, visit thelogchain.com.

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