



FRANCE: Logistics companies form auto industry 'alliance'

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A new alliance of logistics companies has set up a global network of trouble-shooters for the auto industry.

The Autolog Global Alliance (AGA) will specialise in solving time critical problems - getting delayed parts or tooling to the factory in an emergency to ensure the assembly line doesn't come to a halt.

"We're specialising in the time critical deliveries - parts which if they are late will close down a whole production line," says Joel Glusman, president and CEO of Paris-based QualitAir & Sea and one of the driving forces of AGA.

Glusman, whose company has specialised in the aviation industry for more than 15 years, has also been working in the auto industry for several years. He formed Autolog with his Turkish partner PAN Logistics in 2000 when they were helping French car maker [Renault](#) move time-critical parts to its factory in Bursa, Turkey.

"Our target is the parts that are very, very time critical - we're talking hours not days," said Glusman.

Experience has taught him that these time-critical crisis crop up almost daily - he calls them 'road accidents.'

He gave an example of what Autolog can do: "The schedule for trucking parts to Renault's factory in Turkey is seven days and there's a delay somewhere. Renault needs one 200 kilo case out of the 20 that are on that truck to keep the Bursa production line going.

"Renault call us, we find the truck - it's in Italy - arrange to offload just that one case and fly it to Bursa."

He added: "We are very good at the impossible and it happens every day."

The alliance operates under the umbrella of WCA Family, the world's leading freight forwarding and logistics network with more than 2,200 members.

"We provide local experts with a level of local knowledge that doesn't exist in big multi-national companies," said David Yokeum, the Bangkok-based president of WCA Family who founded the company in 1999 and who has more than 20 years experience in global networking.

"We're going after the really difficult problems - use us when everything else fails," said Yokeum. "If we can demonstrate that we can do the most difficult tasks, the rest should follow," he said.

Autolog will work not just with car makers but also their [Tier 1](#) and Tier 2 suppliers - global companies like [Faurecia](#), [Delphi](#), Federal-Mogul - to keep the production lines moving.

For Yokeum, AGA is a natural extension to the WCA Family. Only companies which have a substantial part of their business already within the automotive arena will be allowed to join. Less than one-third of applicants actually qualify to join.

"There is no other organisation like ours in the world. Our level of credibility is very high and we monitor members constantly," said Yokeum.

WCA Family has a staff of more than 80 based in six markets worldwide. "We can step in when there's a problem and keep that problem small and we also guarantee payments between clients."

To qualify, partners in AGA have to show that a significant part of their business for the last five years has been in the automotive industry and must be able to demonstrate their professionalism, experience and financial strength.

The global automotive industry spends an estimated USD50bn a year on its supply chain and is increasingly reliant not only on just-in-time deliveries but also sequenced just in time deliveries when the right parts, such as seats, [wheels](#) or right-hand drive and left-hand drive dashboards are delivered line-side at exactly the right moment.

"There is so much that can and frequently does go wrong that there is enormous demand from within the industry for solutions which can enable them to keep - or regain - control of their production lines even when efficiency has been threatened by supply interruptions," said Yokeum.

With significant vehicle production or assembly in more than 40 countries and serious component sourcing in more than 100 nations, the automotive industry is truly global and WCA Family's resources can match it, with members in more than 500 ports in 150 countries.

Every Autolog Global Alliance partner is covered by the full WCA Family benefits package, including financial protection for any transaction involving fellow members, an industry-leading track-and-trace programme and AAA-class insurance for freight services liability and legal liability as well as cargo cover.

Every Autolog Global Alliance partner is individually examined to ensure it has the expertise to handle automotive products securely and on time, no matter what the content, and every partner is constantly monitored to ensure its offices maintain the high standards set by the alliance, said Yokeum.

Chris Wright