DIGITAL TRADE IN ACTION

The UK-New Zealand TradeTech Opportunity

EXAMINING HOW TRADETECH SOLUTIONS CAN REDUCE ADMINISTRATIVE FRICTION, IMPROVE EFFICIENCY, AND SUPPORT SMES IN SCALING EXPORTS ACROSS THE UK-NEW ZEALAND CORRIDOR.

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Executive Summary

Trade between the United Kingdom and New Zealand is strategically significant, spanning high-value, compliance-intensive sectors and long-distance supply chains. The world-leading UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement provides businesses with preferential access and reduced tariffs. However, operational friction, such as manual documentation, sequential approvals, remains a challenge for efficient trade, particularly for SMEs.

TradeTech, the integration of digital technology into trade processes, offers a pathway to transform these bottlenecks into measurable efficiency gains. Legal reforms, including the UK's Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 and alignment with international frameworks such as UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records create the foundation for paperless, auditable trade.[1] However, legal enablement alone is insufficient; measurable impact requires interoperable platforms, standardised data flows, and integrated workflows across exporters, logistics providers, regulators, and financial institutions.

High-friction sectors such as advanced manufacturing, automotive, pharmaceuticals, specialised machinery, and road vehicles present clear opportunities for TradeTech deployment. Evidence from UK-New Zealand live TradeTech case studies of leading solutions like **Boex** shows that structured digital workflows can reduce document volumes, cut preparation time, shorten processing, and improve traceability, particularly for SMEs.

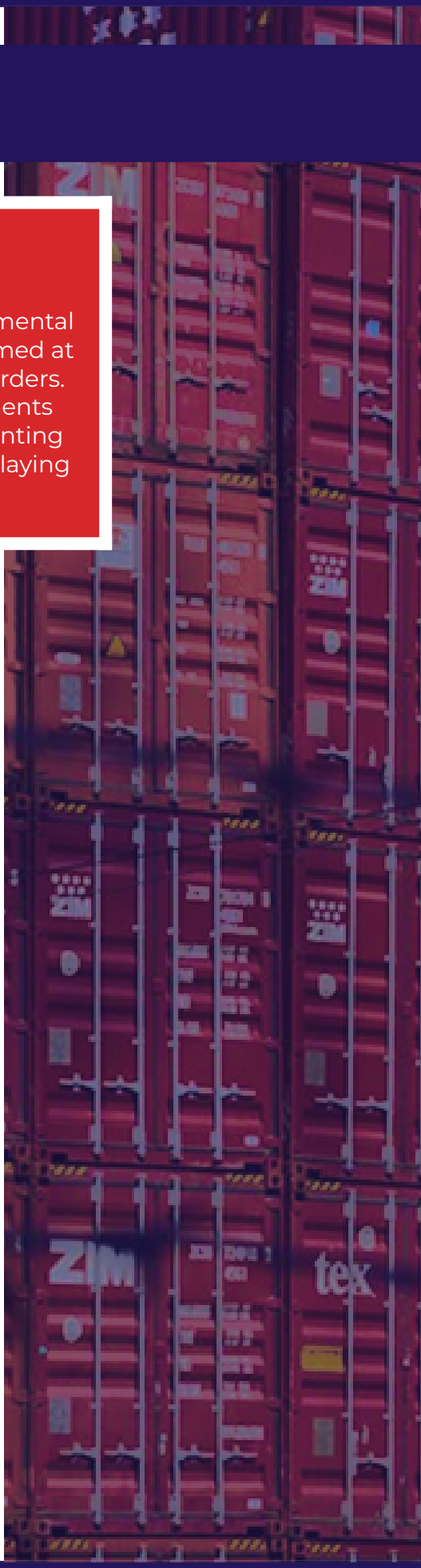
By adopting interoperable, end-to-end digital trade solutions, the UK-New Zealand corridor can transform administrative complexity into operational efficiency, creating faster, more reliable, and scalable trade processes.

[1] The **UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR)** is a model legal framework that allows key trade documents to exist and be transferred electronically with the same legal effect as paper versions, enabling paperless trade across borders.

Introduction

TradeTech

The fusion of trade and technology - has evolved from incremental digitisation of paperwork into a structural reform agenda aimed at modernising how goods, services, and data move across borders. Early efforts focused on scanning and transmitting documents electronically. More recent reforms have moved further, granting electronic trade documents legal equivalence to paper and laying the groundwork for interoperable digital ecosystems.



In the United Kingdom, the **Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA)** marked a significant milestone by granting electronic trade documents the same legal status as their paper equivalents. Internationally, the **UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR)** has provided a harmonised framework for recognising electronic bills of lading and other key instruments across jurisdictions. New Zealand has undertaken parallel reforms and digital trade facilitation initiatives - for example, as a party to the **Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA)**, which promotes paperless trading and cross-border data flows.

Building on this legal recognition, further operational transformation can unlock even greater efficiency and trade benefits. In practice, many trade processes remain document-centric, reliant on PDFs, email exchanges, and fragmented data systems. Interoperability gaps, inconsistent standards, integration barriers, and cautious commercial uptake continue to constrain system-wide adoption. The result is a corridor where **digital capability exists**, but full-scale implementation remains uneven.

This report focuses on bridging that gap. Rather than restating the theoretical promise of digital trade, it examines how TradeTech can translate legal enablement into measurable operational impact within the UK-New Zealand corridor.

Importance of TradeTech in UK-New Zealand Relations

The **UK and New Zealand are strongly positioned to advance TradeTech collaboration.** Shared legal traditions, aligned regulatory approaches, and longstanding economic ties create favourable conditions for coordinated digital trade reform. Compared with other APAC economies, New Zealand benefits from English as a primary language and cultural alignment with the UK, which can make cross-border trade smoother.

The **UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement** reinforces this alignment by supporting cross-border data flows, recognising electronic contracts and signatures, and promoting cooperation on digital trade and emerging technologies. These provisions provide an enabling environment for TradeTech solutions and exporters to operate with greater certainty and reduced administrative friction.

New Zealand complements this framework through national trade facilitation initiatives and digital trade leadership. Programmes aimed at streamlining border processes and improving digital interoperability across trade documentation systems are supported by agencies such as New Zealand Customs Service and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. At the legal level, New Zealand has adopted reforms aligned with the UNCITRAL MLETR, supporting the transition toward digital transferable instruments and paperless trade documentation.

Taken together, these initiatives create fertile ground for TradeTech deployment. However, enabling regulation must be matched by operational adoption if corridor-wide transformation is to be achieved.

The UK-New Zealand Trade Corridor

The UK-New Zealand trade corridor is a high-value and strategically aligned bilateral partnership.

Although New Zealand accounts for a relatively modest share of overall UK trade, its importance lies in the corridor's strategic characteristics rather than sheer volume. Shared language, compatible legal frameworks, and regulatory alignment reduce market entry barriers compared with many other international markets, enabling innovative digital trade solutions to be tested and refined before wider deployment.

Trade between the two countries continues to grow across a range of sectors, including food and agricultural products, pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing, machinery, and services. According to recent UK government trade statistics, bilateral trade between the UK and New Zealand was valued at approximately **£3.5 billion in 2024.**

Many of these sectors are documentation-intensive and compliance-heavy, particularly in areas such as agricultural exports, regulated food products, and advanced manufactured goods. This makes them particularly suitable for TradeTech deployment.

Taken together, the corridor combines regulatory alignment, commercial significance, and operational complexity - **characteristics that make it an effective proving ground for digital trade modernisation**.

By piloting solutions here, stakeholders can test technical, legal, and operational models in a relatively controlled environment, generating lessons and confidence before scaling across other markets.

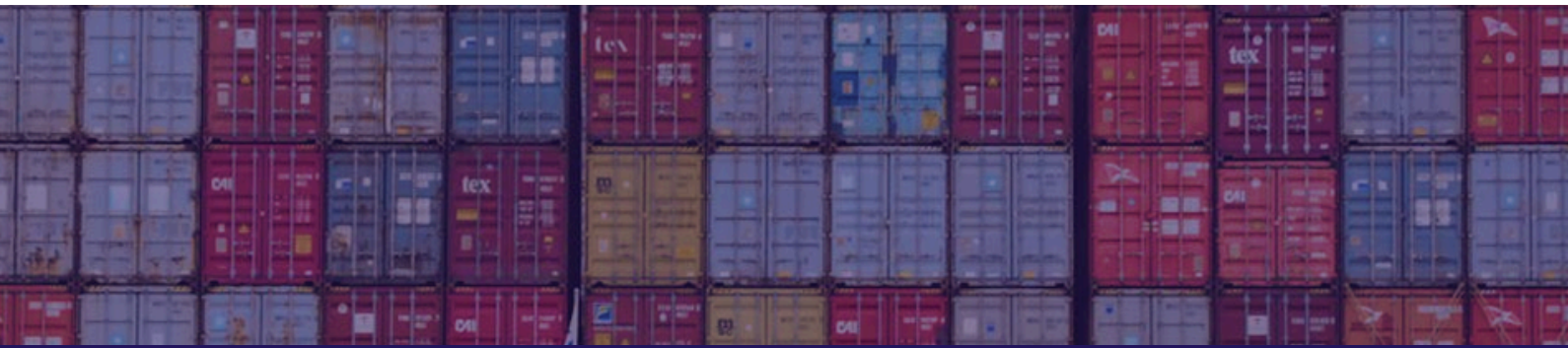
Scope of This Report

This report provides a structured evidence base to support the **development and scaling of TradeTech solutions** between the UK and New Zealand. It focuses on converting enabling policy into measurable operational impact.

The key objectives guiding this work are to:

Analyse	Analyse market dynamics and sector potential
Highlight	Highlight high-impact use cases across product verticals
Showcase	Showcase successful TradeTech solutions
Recommend	Recommend measures* to create the conditions necessary for growth

* *These measures include regulatory alignment, investment mobilisation, innovation partnerships, standards development, and collaborative frameworks - the "fertile soil" in which TradeTech can deliver sustained economic and operational impact. The emphasis is not on identifying what is missing in the corridor, but on identifying what more can be done to scale demonstrable success.*



Our Findings: Measurable Impact Requires Ecosystem Coordination

Our analysis identifies four overarching findings that frame the future of TradeTech adoption in the **UK-New Zealand** corridor.

1. TradeTech adoption is a shared priority across the UK-New Zealand corridor

Our research shows that both New Zealand stakeholders and engaged UK exporters see TradeTech as a **critical enabler for efficient, predictable, and competitive trade.** Interviews with exporters, logistics providers, and SMEs, alongside direct challenge definition exercises, reveal strong interest in digital solutions that reduce administrative burden, streamline compliance, and improve cross-border visibility.

These findings indicate that the corridor is not only receptive to innovation but that adoption is driven by a shared recognition of operational challenges. Digital solutions are therefore well positioned to support growth, strengthen the UK-New Zealand trade relationship, and provide a **testing ground** for broader international deployment.

2. Long-distance supply chains increase the value of trade process efficiency.

The geographic distance between the UK and New Zealand means shipments already involve long transit times and complex logistics coordination. Most goods move via sea freight due to the **size, weight, or volume of products** - particularly agricultural exports, machinery, and manufactured goods - while air freight is used selectively for high-value, time-sensitive items.

In this context, delays caused by documentation errors, administrative bottlenecks, or sequential verification processes can have disproportionate operational impacts. While TradeTech cannot reduce the physical travel time of goods, it can **streamline documentation, compliance, and coordination across the supply chain**, minimising delays before shipment and at port handovers.

3. Some sectors remain highly documentation-intensive despite streamlined imports.

While imports into New Zealand can be operationally straightforward in sectors with well-established processes, certain **industries remain highly documentation-intensive.** Examples include regulated food products, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and advanced manufactured components. These sectors require extensive certifications, safety documentation, or sector-specific approvals. TradeTech solutions can deliver immediate value in these areas by reducing manual processing, improving data accuracy, and supporting compliance with sector-specific regulatory requirements.

4. Policy alignment provides a strong foundation, but operational adoption is key.

The **UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement** provides a strong policy framework for digital trade, with provisions supporting cross-border data flows, electronic authentication, and paperless trade.

However, regulatory alignment alone is not sufficient to produce system-wide transformation. To realise the full benefits of digital trade, customs authorities, logistics providers, financial institutions, and exporters must be able to exchange structured trade data across systems and borders. Without **interoperable standards** and coordinated implementation, digital processes risk becoming fragmented. Continued collaboration between governments, industry stakeholders, and technology providers will therefore be essential to ensure TradeTech solutions can scale effectively across the corridor.

Together, these findings reinforce that the **UK-New Zealand corridor** provides a practical environment for testing TradeTech solutions, while offering insights that can support the wider modernisation of digitally enabled trade.

What is TradeTech?

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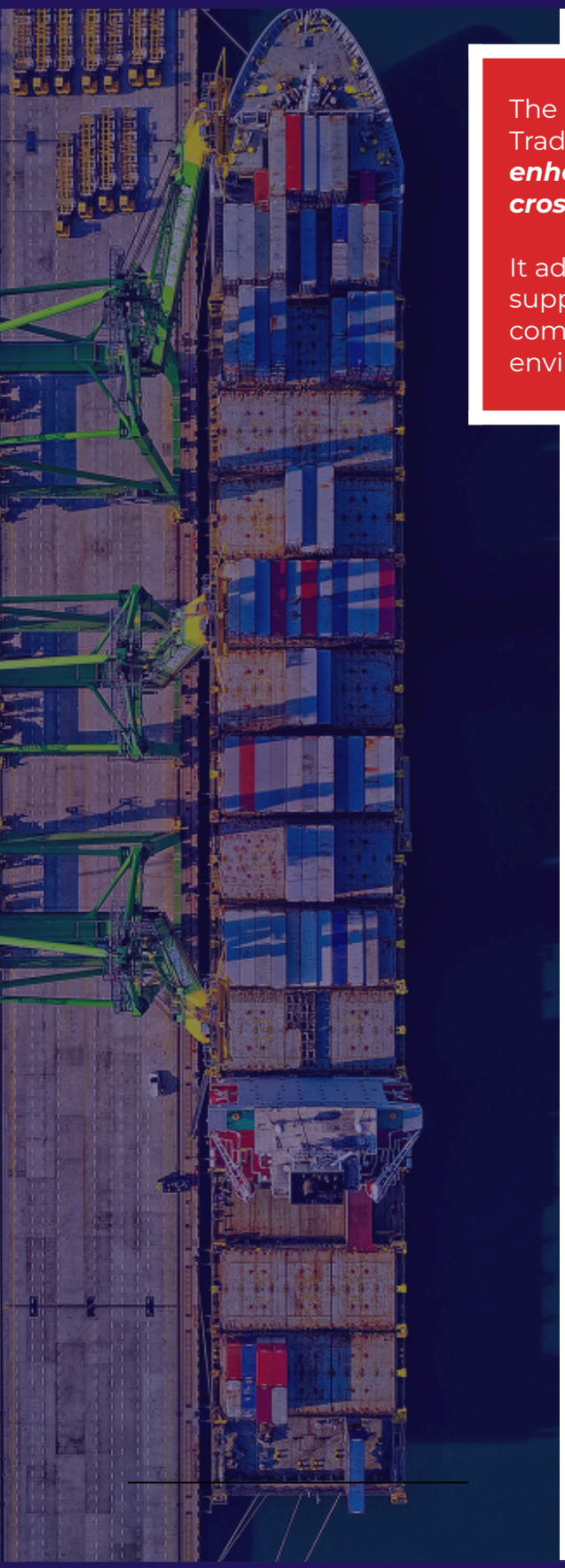
What is TradeTech?



The UK-Australia TradeTech Sector Lookbook defines TradeTech as ***any technology, product, or service that enhances the efficiency, security, and sustainability of cross-border trade.***[2]

It addresses real-world operational frictions while supporting government priorities, from customs compliance and logistics optimisation to trade finance and environmental sustainability.

The UK's TradeTech sector has evolved alongside a history of legal and digital reforms that enable electronic recognition of trade documents. The ETDA, together with alignment to international frameworks such as the UNCITRAL MLETR, has provided legal certainty for key electronic trade documentation. These reforms laid the foundation for interoperable digital trade systems and paved the way for the emergence of innovative solutions that automate documentation, enhance supply chain visibility, and reduce administrative burden.

Previous work by our team developed a TradeTech taxonomy by mapping the supply of solutions against validated demand signals from governments, trade bodies, exporters, and importers. This approach highlights where innovation directly addresses trade challenges, including paperless documentation, customs automation, supply chain management, and sustainable logistics. Across these areas, TradeTech aims to make trade faster, more transparent, and more resilient, but its impact is maximised only within a supportive ecosystem of interoperable standards, regulatory clarity, and commercial adoption.

[2] UK-Australia TradeTech Sector Lookbook (2025)

Taxonomy of Key Solution Areas

Sustainable Trade *

Paperless Trading	Electronic transferable records	Automated trade documentation	Digital trade platform		
	Identity verification	Compliance reporting			
Trade Finance	Electronic authentications	Cross-border payments	Electronic invoicing	Electronic Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes	
Logistics and Operations	Port management	Fleet analytics & optimisation	Smart freight transportation		
	Automation and robotics in logistics	Cargo management	Warehouse management and sustainability		
Customs and Borders	e-Customs / Single Trade Window	Automated customs clearance	Trade compliance	Customs tariff classification	
Supply Chain	Supply chain planning	Product authentication and provenance solutions	Supply chain visibility & management		
	Supply chain finance	Supply chain traceability			
Security & Risk Management	Cybersecurity monitoring & analytics	Fraud prevention	Insurance	AML/KYC Solutions	

** Sustainable trade solutions reduce carbon emissions in global trade by improving fuel efficiency and decarbonisation, cutting carbon emissions, and lowering operational costs. This category intersects with all other taxonomies*

The UK TradeTech Sector Is Expanding but Remains Uneven in Scale and Integration

The UK TradeTech sector comprises an estimated **297 organisations** delivering products and services across the trade lifecycle. TThis growing network of firms reflects steady momentum in digital trade innovation, driven by demand for greater efficiency, resilience, and transparency in cross-border processes.

Analysis of these organisations shows a concentration in:

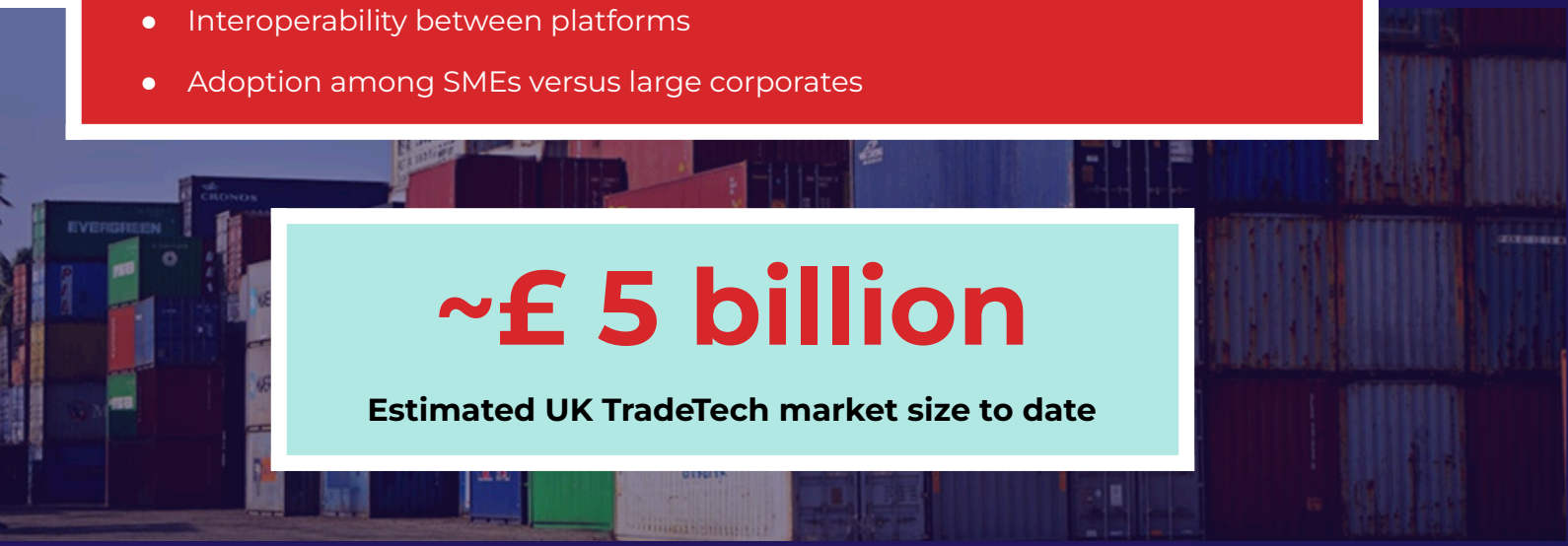
- **Logistics and operations solutions** - optimising transport, warehousing, and shipment coordination
- **Supply chain management solutions** - improving visibility and collaboration across trading partners
- **Paperless trading solutions** - digitising documents and compliance processes

This distribution highlights where trade friction is most acute and where digital interventions can deliver immediate impact.

The sector's estimated value stands at approximately **£5 billion,** signalling both commercial maturity and growth potential.

However, despite this momentum, scale and integration remain uneven across the ecosystem, particularly in:

- Geographic reach of solutions
- Interoperability between platforms
- Adoption among SMEs versus large corporates



~£ 5 billion

Estimated UK TradeTech market size to date

Distribution of companies:
Among 297 TradeTech providers[1]:

Paperless Trading	24	Trade Finance	10	Logistics & Operations	131
Customs & Borders	5	Supply Chain	109	Security & Risk Management	18

[1] Many organisations offer products and services across multiple categories. They are classified based on the best-fit category of their primary offerings.

Venture Investment Is Growing but Remains Concentrated in Early-Stage TradeTech Solutions

Solutions such as **Boex** and **LogChain** have leveraged public-private partnerships and early-stage funding to pilot automated trade documentation and other solutions. Trade finance providers, logistics technology startups, and supply chain visibility solutions have also attracted early investment, supported by initiatives such as the Digital Catapult and Digital Trade Testbed. While these developments show the venture ecosystem is growing, broader adoption will require stronger public-private buy-in and additional dedicated TradeTech funding to scale solutions across the sector.

Deploying TradeTech Across the UK-New Zealand Corridor: From Friction to Flow

In 2024-25, total trade in goods and services between the UK and New Zealand reached approximately **£3.9 billion**, with UK exports to New Zealand valued at around **£2.2 billion** and imports from New Zealand at approximately **£1.7 billion**.[3] Over the year to Q3 2025, this represented a growing bilateral trading relationship, with two-way trade increasing by around 8 % compared to the previous year.

[3] UK-New Zealand Trade and Investment Factsheet (2026)

While New Zealand accounts for a relatively small share of total UK trade (around 0.2 %), the corridor is strategically significant. It benefits from a modern, comprehensive UK-New Zealand FTA that entered into force in May 2023 and operates alongside the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). These frameworks provide preferential market access, elimination of most tariffs, and more flexible rules of origin, offering potential advantages for exporters on both sides of the corridor.[4]

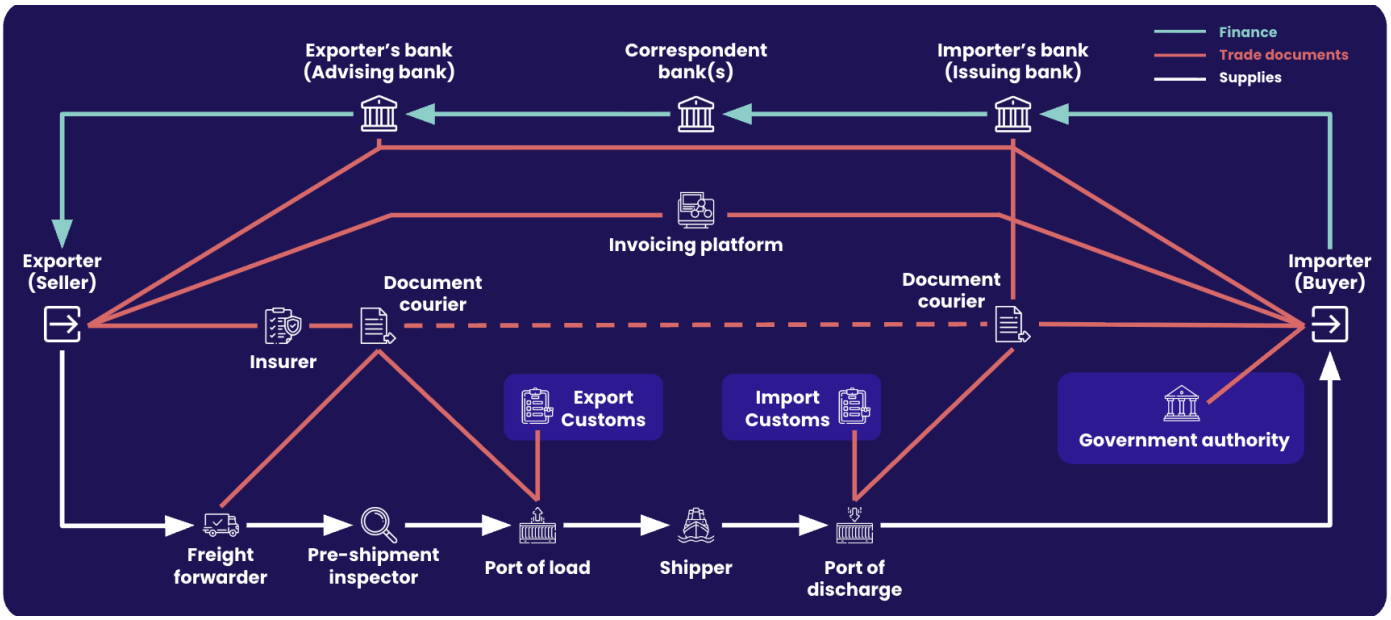
Trade between the UK and New Zealand involves a dense network of actors, including:

- **Exporters** - preparing goods and documentation for shipment
- **Freight forwarders** - coordinating multimodal logistics
- **Insurers** - providing coverage for goods in transit
- **Customs brokers** - managing declarations and regulatory compliance
- **Inspection agencies** - verifying quality, safety and biosecurity requirements
- **Banks** - facilitating trade finance and payment mechanisms
- **Port authorities** - overseeing handling and port operations
- **Government regulators** - enforcing rules, issuing permits, and performing compliance checks

The primary mode of transport for UK-New Zealand goods trade is sea freight, **over 96% of exports and 97% of imports** by weight travel by ocean due to its cost-effectiveness and capacity for large, bulk shipments, while air freight is typically reserved for high-value or time-sensitive consignments because of its speed despite substantially higher costs.[5]

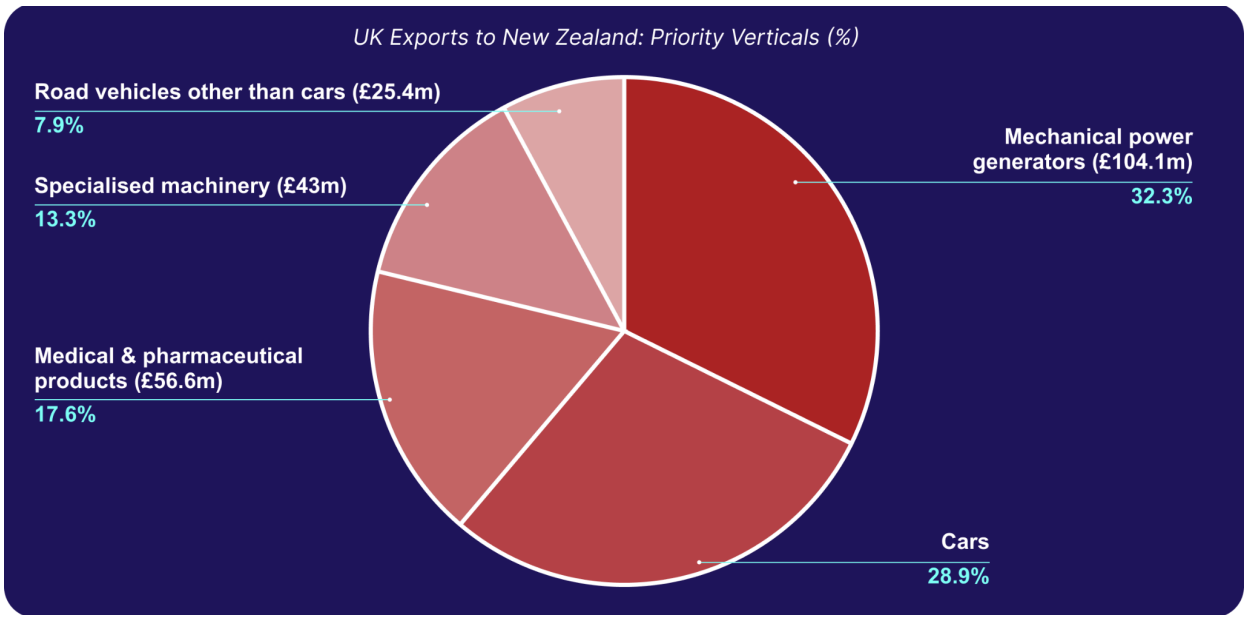
- **Data re-entry:** Information is repeatedly entered into separate systems across actors, increasing the risk of errors and delays.
- **Staged approvals:** Authorisations are issued in sequence by freight forwarders, inspectors, ports of load, shippers, customs authorities, and ports, creating a multi-step approval chain.
- **Compliance checks at multiple nodes:** Regulatory and compliance verifications occur at several points in the journey, adding further time and administrative burden.

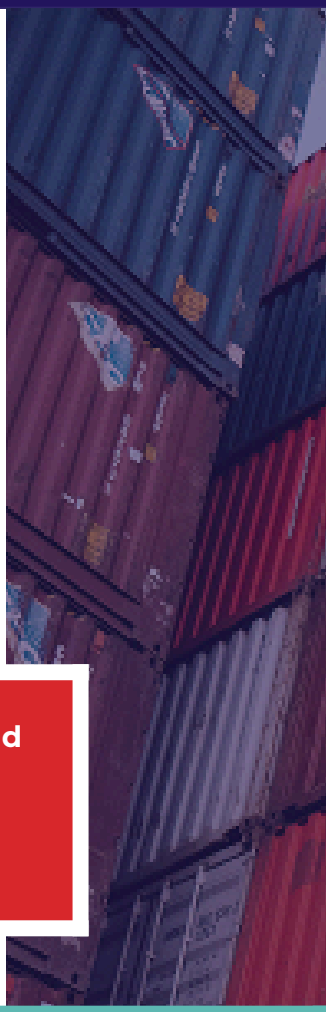
[4] UK-New Zealand Trade and Investment Factsheet (2026)
[5] UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement: The UK's Strategic Approach (2019)



This structural complexity creates measurable friction - particularly in high-value, highly regulated verticals. These layers of complexity demonstrate why **digital trade solutions are critical**: by enabling secure data sharing, automating documentation, and coordinating approvals, they can reduce manual re-entry, accelerate approvals, and streamline compliance checks across the corridor.

To understand the nature of trade along this corridor, it is useful to note that UK exports to New Zealand are primarily concentrated in specific sectors, which highlights where TradeTech solutions could have the greatest impact:





The above sectors are compliance-intensive, documentation-heavy, and operationally sensitive. Our stakeholder interviews indicate that while large corporates like Nestlé often deploy in-house systems to manage this complexity, **SMEs typically operate with limited resources and digital capabilities.** They often lack dedicated compliance teams, rely on manual processes such as spreadsheet tracking and email-based approvals, and use disconnected or minimally integrated software systems. This fragmentation leads to repeated data entry, slower or sequential approvals, higher error rates, and limited visibility across the trade journey. As a result, **SMEs experience disproportionately high administrative burdens compared with larger firms,** making them prime beneficiaries of scalable TradeTech solutions that can automate documentation, streamline approvals, and provide end-to-end visibility.[6]

TradeTech is most effective when deployed where friction is highest and where there is a clear opportunity to solve real operational pain points. For the UK-New Zealand corridor, we have identified priority verticals where targeted intervention can generate measurable impact.

TradeTech Delivers Measurable Economic and Operational Efficiencies Across Trade Ecosystems

SMEs are a dominant force in both the UK and New Zealand economies, representing around **99% of private sector businesses in the UK** and **97% of enterprises in New Zealand**.[7] For these firms, TradeTech can significantly improve engagement with international markets by making **trade faster, cheaper, and more reliable.**

By lowering entry costs, TradeTech enables smaller firms to access global markets, while smarter logistics and digital documentation reduce errors, administrative burden, and environmental waste. Evidence increasingly suggests that digital trade facilitation can generate economic gains that exceed those delivered by tariff reductions alone. These benefits, however, materialise only when solutions are tailored to corridor-specific challenges and integrated within a supportive regulatory and commercial ecosystem.

[6] Strengthening SMEs and Entrepreneurship for Productivity and Inclusive Growth (2018)
[7] Department for Business and Trade (2025); New Zealand Parliament (2025)

Measuring Impact Across TradeTech

Framework to monitor TradeTech impact on documents, time, communication, and process efficiency

To assess the operational impact of TradeTech solutions like Boex, we explored and monitored key areas of trade execution, focusing on **document handling, staff time, communication, and overall process efficiency.**

Metric	Description
Trade Documents	The number, type, and handling method of documents were recorded, including paper, email/PDF, and digital workflows. We also captured where administrative burden is greatest.
Time and communication	Staff time spent on document preparation, checking, sharing, and rework was measured. Typical communication channels, such as email, phone, messaging apps, and digital solutions, were tracked alongside interaction frequency.
End-to-end timelines	Estimates of total trade processing time, border waiting time, and operational cost impacts of administrative delays were collected to understand efficiency and predictability.

This framework provides a consistent and comparable approach to quantify the operational, financial, and sustainability impacts of TradeTech solutions, capturing how they reduce administrative burden, improve process accuracy, streamline communication, and enhance overall trade efficiency. It enables robust measurement across different use cases and trade corridors, supporting evidence-based insights for governments, regulators, and businesses considering digital trade adoption.

Product-Vertical Use Cases

As highlighted above, UK-New Zealand trade is concentrated in high-value, **compliance-intensive** sectors where documentation, regulatory oversight, and logistics complexity intersect. These characteristics create **structural friction - but also clear entry points for TradeTech deployment.**

Mechanical power generators

Challenge

High documentation intensity and regulatory alignment requirements create customs friction and compliance risk.

Exporters must prepare multiple certificates of origin, technical specifications, and compliance documentation for New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries and the New Zealand Customs Service. For complex goods such as industrial machinery, shipments are often split into multiple consignments, with individual components requiring separate tariff classification and supporting documentation, increasing the volume and complexity of compliance.

Opportunity

Digital customs automation, pre-validation of origin documentation, and electronic filing aligned with the UK-New Zealand FTA provisions can materially reduce administrative burden and clearance times.

TradeTech solutions enable automated tariff classification, integrated workflows with freight forwarders, and electronic submission to regulators, reducing errors and speeding customs processing.

Cars

Challenge

Automotive exports must meet strict compliance and certification requirements under New Zealand's Land Transport rules. Digital workflows, pre-validation of vehicle documentation, and automated rules-of-origin verification can reduce administrative burden and clearance times.

UK car exports to New Zealand (approximately £93.1 million in 2025)[8] require compliance with **New Zealand Transport Agency** (NZTA)[9] import approval procedures, safety standards, and registration documentation. Multi-part shipments and increasing electric vehicle exports further add to documentation volume and classification complexity. TradeTech solutions that integrate automated tariff classification, electronic filing, and verification of origin can generate measurable efficiency gains and reduce delays.

Opportunity

Automated digital workflows, e-certification of compliance, and rules-of-origin verification can reduce administrative burden and accelerate clearance.

Integration with freight forwarders and customs systems allows data entered once to flow across all relevant documents, reducing errors and improving predictability for exporters.

Specialised machinery

Challenge

Complex classification, safety, and origin documentation requirements increase administrative burden and inspection risk.

UK exports of specialised machinery to New Zealand (approximately £33.4 million in 2025) require accurate product classification, certificates of origin, and regulatory paperwork.[10] When machinery is shipped in multiple parts, exporters must also provide detailed specifications and meet New Zealand standards.

Opportunity

Digital certification, pre-arrival compliance validation, and structured electronic workflows reduce errors, streamline communication, and improve clearance times.

Automation and structured TradeTech workflows enhance accuracy, reduce rework, and provide predictable shipment outcomes for high-value equipment.

[8] UK-New Zealand Trade and Investment Factsheet (2026)
[9] Government agency responsible for the land transport system (roads and vehicle regulation).
[10] UK-New Zealand Trade and Investment Factsheet (2026)

Medicinal and pharmaceutical products

Challenge

High regulatory intensity, cold-chain requirements, and compliance.

New Zealand Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Authority (Medsafe) standards make exports sensitive to errors and delays. UK pharmaceutical exports to New Zealand (approximately £40.3 million in 2025)[11] must meet Medsafe registration, sponsor requirements, and Good Distribution Practice (GDP) compliance. Batch traceability, temperature control, and accurate documentation are critical for border clearance and regulatory approval.

Opportunity

End-to-end digital traceability, automated documentation validation, and real-time monitoring can reduce compliance risk and improve shipment integrity.

TradeTech solutions that integrate provenance tracking, document validation, and electronic submission can materially improve audit readiness, speed, and reliability of exports.

Road vehicles other than cars

Challenge

Import approvals, compliance with NZTA standards, and biosecurity checks create administrative friction and potential border delays.

UK exports of road vehicles other than cars to New Zealand (approximately £54.5 million in 2025) must satisfy NZTA import standards, safety approvals, and origin documentation. Documentation errors can trigger inspections or rejections.[12]

Opportunity

Digital documentation, pre-arrival validation, and automated compliance checks can reduce inspection frequency and clearance uncertainty.

TradeTech solutions that centralise, automate, and share structured vehicle data improve border efficiency, reduce errors, and accelerate shipment processing.

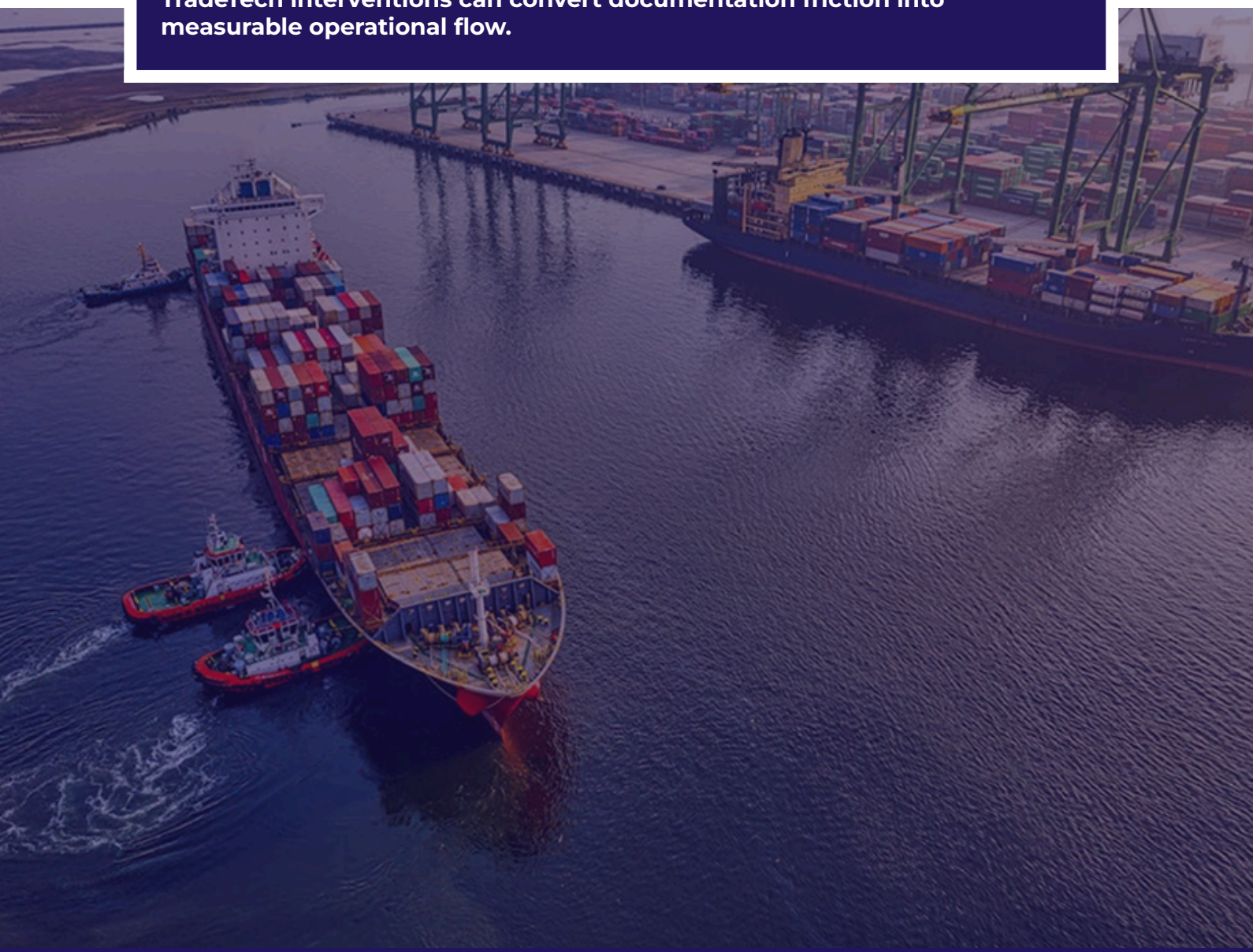
[11] UK-New Zealand Trade and Investment Factsheet (2026)
[12] Ibid.

While trade volumes are often driven by large corporates, stakeholder consultations indicate that SMEs are affected by documentation friction, time-zone differences, and long shipping durations. Larger firms may absorb delays through in-house compliance infrastructure; smaller exporters often cannot.

To illustrate this dynamic clearly, the case study that follows focuses on a niche advanced manufacturing product - gasket paper, an industrial sealing material used in energy, automotive, and heavy industry supply chains.

Gasket paper sits within complex classification categories and requires precise documentation. A minor error can result in clearance delays that disrupt downstream industrial operations in New Zealand. The extended transit time between the UK and New Zealand magnifies the cost of such mistakes.

This example provides a practical lens through which to demonstrate how TradeTech interventions can convert documentation friction into measurable operational flow.



Stakeholder Engagement

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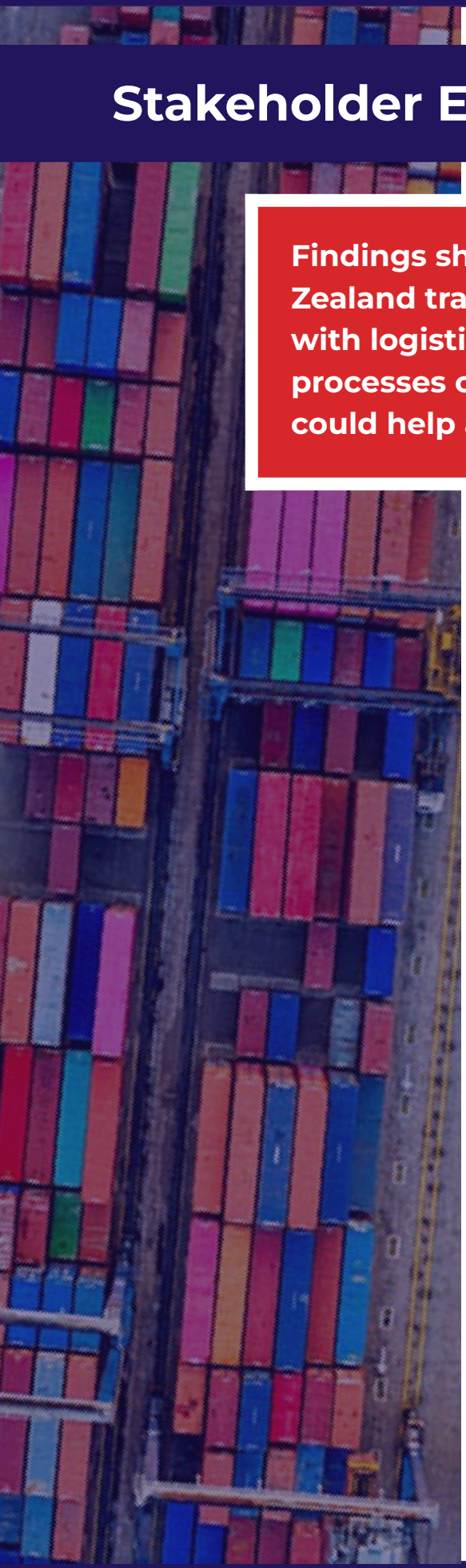
Stakeholder Engagement



Findings show that the main barriers to UK-New Zealand trade are operational rather than policy-based, with logistics, compliance, and documentation processes creating friction that digital trade solutions could help address.

As part of this study, **10+ interviews** were conducted with **logistics providers, importers, distributors, and food businesses** involved in trade between the UK and New Zealand. These stakeholders represent different points along the trade journey, from freight forwarding and logistics coordination to product distribution and retail market entry.

The engagement aimed to understand how businesses experience trade across the UK-New Zealand corridor, including the impact of the UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, the operational barriers they face, and the potential role of digital trade and TradeTech solutions in improving trade efficiency.

Across interviews, businesses highlighted that while trade agreements can improve market access, the largest operational challenges arise in the practical execution of trade, including logistics coordination, compliance requirements, shipment consolidation, and regulatory documentation.

Impact of the UK-New Zealand FTA

Stakeholders generally viewed the UK-New Zealand FTA as a positive development, but most reported limited practical impact on their operations. **Several businesses noted that the agreement primarily delivers modest duty savings, typically in the range of 2-5%** depending on product category. While this can improve margins, it does not significantly alter the underlying costs associated with transporting goods between the two markets.

For SMEs in particular, the operational challenges of cross-border trade remain significant. These smaller businesses are often less equipped to fully leverage the FTA's benefits, making them **prime beneficiaries** of TradeTech solutions. By simplifying documentation, automating compliance, and centralising trade data, TradeTech can help SMEs maximise the value of the FTA, turning preferential access into tangible efficiency gains.

Historical Barriers to UK-New Zealand Trade

Businesses consistently identified distance and supply chain complexity as defining features of the UK-New Zealand trade corridor. Shipping times of **six to ten weeks** create operational challenges, particularly in:

- managing product shelf life for food items
- forecasting demand over long lead times
- coordinating shipment consolidation
- maintaining reliable supply chains

For logistics providers, one of the main challenges is the trade lane itself - the route cargo takes between origin and destination.Shipments to New Zealand often pass through multiple transshipment hubs, including ports in the Middle East, Singapore, or Hong Kong, before reaching the final destination. These hubs can experience **periodic congestion or delays, as well as ongoing disruptions in Middle Eastern trade lanes**, which, combined with the long distances involved, create variability in transit times and complicate planning for logistics providers and exporters alike.

Businesses therefore emphasised that logistics constraints, rather than tariffs or market demand, remain the primary barrier to expanding trade between the two countries.

Key Pain Points Along the Journey

While challenges vary by sector, several recurring pain points were identified across the stakeholder interviews.

Documentation and Compliance Requirements

Regulatory compliance was frequently highlighted as a source of operational complexity, particularly for food and agricultural exports. For example, **meat exporters must adhere to strict labelling and traceability requirements**, while **dairy products require veterinary and hygiene certifications**. Differences in nutritional labelling standards between the UK and New Zealand often mean products must be relabelled before shipment or upon arrival.

This process can be costly and time-consuming, as cartons must be opened and relabelled individually. In a high-wage economy such as New Zealand, this adds **significant cost to imported goods.**

Businesses also noted that documentation requirements for certain product categories, such as **veterinary certification for dairy products**, can be strict. Incorrect or incomplete documentation may result in shipments being delayed or even destroyed at the importer's expense. These risks make regulatory compliance a critical component of trade operations.

Logistics and Shipment Consolidation

Achieving enough shipment volume to fill a container is a major challenge for exporters to New Zealand. In 2023, New Zealand's ports handled around **3.2 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units)** of container traffic, compared with over **39 million TEUs** at the Port of Singapore, a major global hub. This highlights the relatively small scale of the New Zealand market and why direct shipments from the UK often need to pass through transshipment ports.[13]

To manage this, businesses frequently consolidate shipments from multiple suppliers into a single container. However, this approach requires careful coordination, as all goods must arrive at a warehouse before the container can be shipped. Delays from one supplier can therefore **delay the entire shipment.**

For chilled or frozen goods, consolidation is even more complex because maintaining temperature-controlled logistics requires **sufficient product volumes to justify**

[13] CEIC Data: New Zealand Container Port Throughput (2023)

refrigerated containers. Several businesses noted that this volume constraint can limit their ability to import products from the UK at a regular frequency.

Retail Market Dynamics

Importers supplying supermarket chains described additional challenges associated with the structure of the New Zealand retail market. Supermarkets conduct annual range reviews during which products can be removed from shelves if sales performance does not meet expectations.

In addition, since shipments from the **UK can take several months** to arrive, products may be removed from supermarket listings before the shipment reaches the market. This risk was highlighted by a small New Zealand supermarket interviewed during this research.

As TradeTech solutions increasingly integrate across **exporters, customs, and logistics providers,** stakeholders noted emerging concerns around **data security and system reliability.** Ensuring platforms are secure and resilient is essential to protect trade data and maintain operational continuity.

Potential Role of TradeTech solutions

Many of the challenges identified by stakeholders relate to **coordination, documentation, and supply chain visibility,** suggesting potential opportunities for digital trade solutions. Stakeholders highlighted several areas where TradeTech tools could improve trade efficiency.

1. **Digital documentation systems** could reduce errors in export paperwork and improve compliance with regulatory requirements. Automated documentation generation could help ensure that exporters provide the correct information before shipments depart.

2. **Improved supply chain visibility tools** could help businesses track shipments and anticipate delays more effectively. This is particularly valuable for long-distance trade corridors where transit times are unpredictable.

3. **Communication with regulatory authorities** could benefit from more structured digital platforms, as suggested by several stakeholders. Currently, much regulatory communication occurs via email, which can make it difficult to track documentation and maintain records over time. Digital systems that centralise regulatory communication could improve transparency and reduce administrative burden.

Stakeholder experience with TradeTech

Experience with TradeTech solutions varied across the businesses interviewed. Logistics providers reported experimenting with digital tools for **route optimisation** and **logistics planning**. However, several noted that existing solutions struggle to account for the complexity of global shipping networks.

Shipping decisions must consider numerous variables simultaneously, including **vessel schedules, port congestion, cargo weight, and cost constraints**. Current digital solutions often lack the real-time data needed to optimise these decisions effectively. As a result, route planning remains largely manual, relying on experience and industry knowledge.

Importers and distributors reported using some digital tools through freight forwarders, particularly for documentation and shipment tracking. However, adoption of more advanced supply chain planning tools is limited, particularly among medium-sized businesses.

Stakeholders suggested that many available platforms are designed for very large companies, leaving a gap in the market for solutions tailored to smaller importers and exporters.

Cross-cutting insights

The largest barriers to trade are not tariffs or market access restrictions, but operational inefficiencies in how trade is executed.

These inefficiencies include fragmented documentation processes, limited supply chain visibility, and the logistical challenges associated with **long-distance shipping.** Digital trade technologies have the potential to address several of these challenges, particularly in areas such as **documentation automation, regulatory communication, and shipment tracking.** However, adoption remains uneven, and many businesses, particularly SMEs, lack access to solutions designed for their scale of operations.

Stakeholder engagement across the UK-New Zealand trade corridor demonstrates that while trade agreements provide an important framework for market access, the practical challenges of cross-border trade remain significant.

Distance, logistics complexity, and regulatory requirements continue to shape how businesses experience international trade. Addressing these challenges will require a combination of policy support, improved trade infrastructure, and greater adoption of digital trade solutions.

By facilitating collaboration between businesses, governments, and the TradeTech ecosystem, there is an opportunity to reduce operational friction and enable more efficient and resilient trade between the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

Boex: A UK-New Zealand Digital Trade Case Study

DIGITAL TRADE IN ACTION: The UK-New Zealand TradeTech Opportunity

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Boex: A UK-New Zealand Digital Trade Case Study

How Boex is Delivering Measurable Impact for SMEs

Boex is a digital trade platform designed to support SME trade by turning commercial agreements into enforceable, digital transactions. It replaces email- and paper-based workflows with secure, legally enforceable processes, enabling automatic updates across the trade lifecycle. By reducing manual errors and operational delays, Boex lowers costs and improves the efficiency and accessibility of cross-border trade.

For SMEs, exporting larger volumes is often limited more by administrative complexity than by demand. Even routine shipments require multiple documents and repeated data entry across disconnected systems.

Boex was deployed to assess whether structured digital documentation could reduce this burden without altering compliance requirements. Developed in line with the UK's **Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023**, the platform enables legally enforceable digital trade documents, identity verification, and secure, auditable workflows.

This case study demonstrates Boex's impact on a live shipment between **Jointine Products** (UK) and **ABD Group** (New Zealand). A similar pilot was previously conducted on a UK-Australia trade route, where structured digital documentation reduced administrative processing time and improved data accuracy across the transaction lifecycle. **The results helped inform the deployment of Boex in the UK-New Zealand corridor.**

Paperless Trade in Advanced Manufacturing

The Jointine-Klinger shipment involved **gasket paper** used in high-performance sealing components for energy, renewables, mining, and industrial processing. This represents a compliance-sensitive **advanced manufacturing** use case aligned with UK-New Zealand priority sectors under the FTA.

Challenges Faced by the Business

Prior to working with Boex, Jointine faced growing administrative and compliance complexity, a challenge that disproportionately affects SME exporters.

The manual burden was described as ***"high and unnecessarily complicated."***
- Jane Cullen, Managing Director, Jointine

1. Fragmented Data Across Systems

Export processes involve multiple actors and systems, including compliance, customs, and trade documentation platforms. While frameworks like the UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement provide clear rules, their benefits rely on consistent, aligned data across all documents. In practice, **mismatched information between systems and participants causes delays, higher costs, and can limit the full advantage of preferential trade provisions.**

2. Repeated Manual Data Entry

Trade information is often entered **multiple times across emails, internal platforms, and documents.** Even when internal systems are digitised, communication with external partners remains largely document-based, creating duplicated work. This adds inefficiencies, increases errors, and slows down processing.

3. Static, Document-Based Workflows

Documents currently act as static records rather than structured data. Information must be rekeyed and passed between freight forwarders, customs brokers, and buyers, **leading to version control challenges, reconciliation overhead, and corrections that are often only identified late in the shipment process.**

Case Study Findings

Boex supported a 55% reduction in documents per shipment

Using Boex, Jointine reduced the number of physical documents handled by 55% per shipment. While the total number of documents required for compliance remained unchanged, the platform digitised core documents and enabled structured workflows, replacing fragmented email and PDF-based processes.

Beyond reducing paper, this shift created a single source of truth: data entered once now populates multiple documents, eliminating repeated corrections and reducing reconciliation effort. For SMEs, this change frees capacity for higher-value work such as customer engagement, compliance monitoring, and operational optimisation.

All core documents were digitised by the end of the trade, removing the need for physical document handling and aligning with international standards toward achieving paperless trade. In practice, this shows how TradeTech solutions can lower administrative barriers across SMEs, enabling smaller exporters to participate in cross-border trade without requiring additional staff resources.

Boex supported a 60% reduction in document preparation time

Document preparation time fell by 60% per shipment.[14] Staff no longer re-enter data across disconnected systems, and manual data entries per shipment dropped by 75%.[15] Email exchanges were reduced by 89%, reflecting the elimination of repeated coordination and asynchronous delays.[16]

The reduction in document preparation time and communication overhead directly lowers administrative burden, enabling staff to complete shipments faster and with fewer errors. Fewer emails and automated workflows improve traceability, version control, and operational reliability. For SMEs, this supports the potential to manage higher trade volumes with existing resources, while the TradeTech ecosystem illustrates how structured digital processes can enhance trade operations.

[14] Document preparation time fell from 149.5 minutes to 60 minutes.
[15] Manual data fields re-entry reduced from 120 to 30.
[16] Email exchanges were cut from 9 to 1 per shipment.

Boex supported a 83% improvement in processing time per shipment.

Boex reduced processing time per shipment by 83%.[17] This acceleration was driven by automated document generation and validation, reducing manual handling and enabling faster completion of operational tasks.

By digitising and centralising document workflows, Boex provided a single platform for all stakeholders, ensuring accurate information and reducing delays from errors or conflicting paperwork. The introduction of structured, auditable processes further streamlined coordination, eliminating the need for repeated confirmations and shortening operational cycles.

Taken together, these results demonstrate how improving end-to-end processing time through structured digital processes can act as a central lever for trade efficiency. SMEs benefit from faster, more reliable shipments and lower administrative burden, while the wider TradeTech startup ecosystem gains evidence that digitisation can deliver measurable operational, financial, and sustainability outcomes at scale, supporting resilient and transparent cross-border trade corridors.

The primary source of inefficiency in Jointine's export process was data fragmentation, not regulatory burden.

The main inefficiency in Jointine's export process stemmed from fragmented data across multiple systems and stakeholders. Information was repeatedly entered across emails, PDFs, internal platforms, and external partners, causing errors, delays, and extra work. By centralising these previously disconnected systems into a structured digital environment, Boex eliminated duplicated data entry, reduced reconciliation needs, and improved end-to-end shipment visibility.

For SMEs, this represents a step-change: moving from manual, fragmented coordination to auditable, interoperable digital trade processes. The most meaningful gains came from redesigning how trade data is created, shared, and validated - not from lowering compliance requirements or bypassing regulations. Digital TradeTech solutions enable smaller exporters to operate more efficiently and reliably in international markets while meeting existing compliance obligations. Ultimately, the efficiency gains arise from reorganising data and processes.

[17] Processing time reduced from 30 minutes to 5 minutes.

Projections of TradeTech Benefits

DIGITAL TRADE IN ACTION: The UK-New Zealand TradeTech Opportunity

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Projections of TradeTech Benefits

Based on Jointine's experience with Boex, structured digital workflows can reduce trade processing time by approximately **60% per shipment**.[18] This efficiency gain eliminates repeated data entry, centralises document handling, and reduces handovers, rework, and verification delays, streamlining the entire export process.

In 2024, approximately **11,500** UK VAT-registered businesses exported goods to New Zealand, most of which were SMEs.[19] While shipment frequency varies, modelling three representative SME profiles illustrates the potential impact of TradeTech adoption:

- **Low-frequency exporters** - ~80 shipments/year
- **Mid-frequency exporters** - ~250 shipments/year
- **High-frequency exporters** - ~450 shipments/year

For Jointine, executing 450-500 shipments per year, this translates into approximately £12,800 in operational cost reductions. **Specifically, Boex's solution delivered £40,535 in annual cost savings, driven by reduced operational time** (£13,325), eliminated software costs (£1,550), lower customs entry costs (£7,000), reduced training costs (£3,000), removal of courier costs (£2,160), reduced printing costs (£500), and fewer errors and omissions (£13,000). These savings demonstrate the tangible financial impact of TradeTech adoption, particularly for SMEs managing high volumes of documentation-intensive trade.

The corridor-wide implications are significant. **If similar efficiency gains were realised across all UK SMEs exporting to New Zealand, the cumulative impact in terms of reduced administrative costs, fewer errors, and faster trade processing would be considerable.**[20] Beyond the direct financial benefits, these savings allow SMEs to focus on higher-value activities such as compliance oversight, logistics optimisation, and market expansion. More predictable, reliable shipment processing further strengthens the UK-New Zealand trade corridor, showing that structured digital workflows can reduce administrative burden and accelerate trade execution without altering compliance frameworks.

[18] Equivalent to approximately 90 minutes saved per shipment
[19] New Zealand Trade and Investment Factsheet (2026)
[20] See Annex: *Scaling and Projections*.

Recommendations & Conclusions

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Recommendations

Trade between the UK and New Zealand presents clear opportunities to enhance efficiency and competitiveness through TradeTech adoption. Both countries offer complementary strengths: **the UK with its growing TradeTech ecosystem, focused investment, and innovative startups, and New Zealand with its strong digital trade agenda and well-connected logistics networks.** While the UK-New Zealand FTA provides tariff and market access benefits, there is further potential to streamline operations and reduce friction. Lessons from other corridors, including UK-Australia and UK-Singapore Trade Digitalisation Pilots, show that collaboration, interoperable standards, and targeted support can accelerate adoption and unlock operational efficiencies. The recommendations below suggest practical approaches to create a more digitised, efficient, and resilient trade ecosystem.

1. Government Actors - Turning Legal Foundations into Operational Reality

New Zealand has implemented initiatives such as the Trade Single Window and alignment with international standards. Despite these foundations, SMEs and corridor participants report friction in operational processes: complex compliance requirements (biosecurity, nutritional labelling), fragmented trade lanes, and manual multi-party documentation. Comparative lessons from UK-Australia show that single-window platforms, interoperable standards, and practical guidance can accelerate adoption, but SMEs benefit most when supported with targeted operational tools.

Recommendations:

- **Encourage stability in digital trade standards:** Maintaining consistency in interoperable data standards over time could support SME investment in TradeTech and reduce risks associated with frequent changes.
- **Consider deployment incentives:** Targeted co-investment, grants, or matched funding could encourage SME participation in pilots and demonstrate efficiency gains while managing operational risks.
- **Provide practical FTA guidance and sector-specific resources:** Offering clear, actionable guidance - such as step-by-step instructions, illustrative case studies, or digital calculators for high-value sectors like dairy, wine, seafood, and advanced manufacturing - could help SMEs understand operational benefits.

- **Integrate cybersecurity into adoption frameworks:** Promoting secure digital workflows from the outset could help protect sensitive trade data, maintain trust among SMEs, logistics partners, and regulators, and reduce operational risk.

2. Trade & Logistics Partners - Integrating Across the Value Chain

Operational delays remain a key source of friction along the UK-New Zealand corridor. Fragmented logistics, multi-port shipments, and consolidation challenges often require SMEs to rely on manual planning. Even where digital platforms exist, complex shipments and sector-specific compliance frequently involve emails, PDFs, and spreadsheets. Lessons from comparable corridors indicate that shared platforms, interoperable standards, and structured workflows can reduce delays and improve predictability for SMEs.

Comparative insights from the UK-Australia corridor demonstrate the value of collaboration: Shared consortia and interoperable platforms reduced delays, improved predictability, and allowed SMEs to participate more effectively in corridor-wide workflows. These corridors share characteristics with the UK-New Zealand route: long distances, multi-port shipments, small SME export volumes, and complex compliance requirements.

Recommendations:

- **Explore interoperable trade data standards:** Enabling forwarders, brokers, and terminals to share structured, machine-readable data could reduce duplication, improve visibility, and make shipment planning more predictable.
- **Pilot standardised compliance modules:** Automating verification for biosecurity certificates, nutritional labelling, and other sector-specific requirements could lower manual effort and improve reliability.
- **Implement digital document verification at ports:** Real-time validation of trade documents could minimise hold-ups and improve certainty for SMEs and high-value shipments.
- **Consider collaborative traceability consortia:** Shared ledgers or interoperable APIs could allow multiple actors to monitor shipments, trace compliance, and make coordinated operational decisions.
- **Promote strong cybersecurity standards:** Encouraging secure practices across interconnected platforms and vessel communications could help maintain trust and continuity as processes become more automated.

3. Commercial Adopters - SMEs and Exporters

SMEs face the highest barriers to TradeTech adoption but also stand to gain the most. Manual workflows, repeated document handling, and limited visibility into compliance processes reduce efficiency. UK-Australia experience indicates that structured digital workflows can reduce errors, accelerate processing, and improve communication between exporters, intermediaries, and regulators.

Recommendations:

- **Adopt structured, end-to-end digital workflows:** Integrating compliance, logistics, and financial reporting could replace emails and PDFs with interoperable, machine-readable data. Sector-specific pilots-such as chilled goods or biosecurity certificates-could help SMEs learn practical applications and realise efficiency gains.
- **Leverage digital identity and transferable records:** Secure digital identities and trade registries could accelerate trade finance, reduce risk, and strengthen data integrity across stakeholders.
- **Prioritise cybersecurity and technical standards:** Choosing platforms aligned with international protocols could build trust when connecting to brokers, terminals, and government systems.
- **Engage in structured adoption programmes:** Participation in pilots and collaborative initiatives could help SMEs transition from manual processes to data-driven workflows, turning compliance management into an operational advantage.

4. Venture and Investment Landscape - Funding Scale, Not Just Innovation

The UK TradeTech venture ecosystem is active, but integration-heavy solutions connecting government systems, corridor data flows, and commercial platforms require sustained funding. The UK-Singapore pilot shows that interoperability is achievable, but scaling solutions beyond proof-of-concept benefits from targeted investment.

Recommendations:

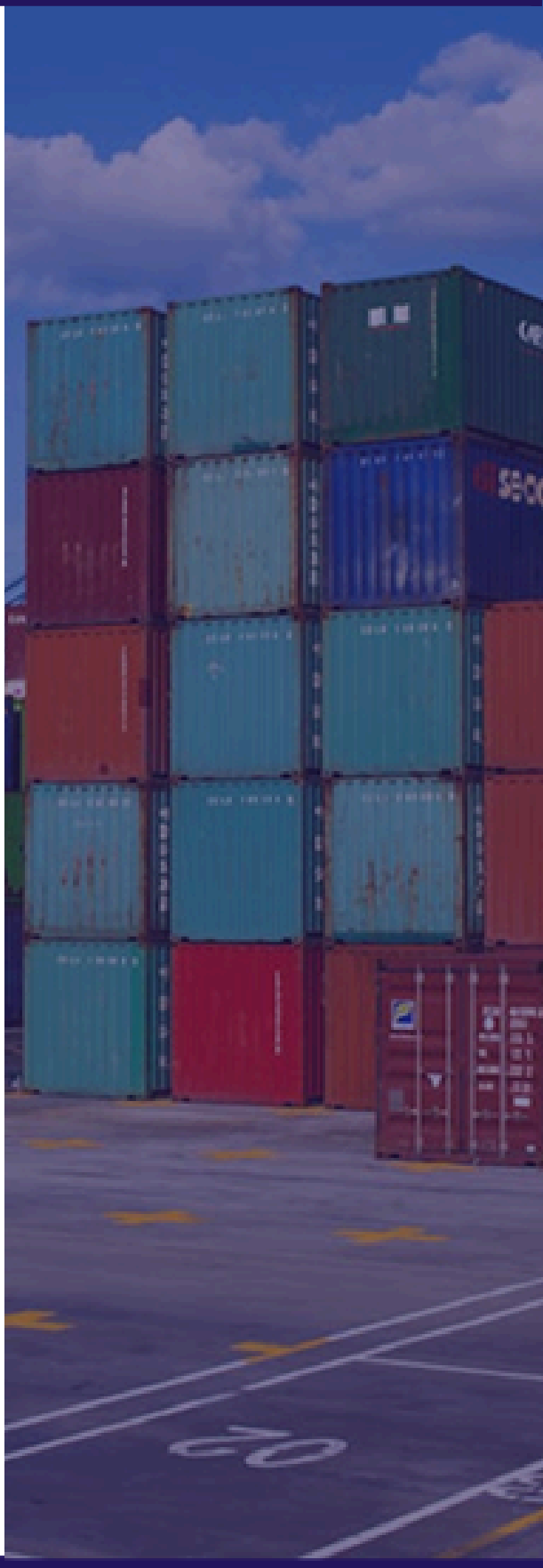
- **Align investment with operational outcomes:** Focusing funding on sectors and corridors with measurable efficiency potential, such as dairy, seafood, and

advanced manufacturing, could maximise impact.

- **Support ecosystem building through accelerators and clusters:** Co-developing interoperable solutions with startups, corporates, and regulators could help move pilots toward scalable adoption.

- **Tie capital to adoption milestones:** Structuring investment around demonstrable uptake, integration, and operational impact could bridge the gap between innovation and real-world deployment.

Conclusion



Trade between the UK and New Zealand presents opportunities to improve operational efficiency and competitiveness.

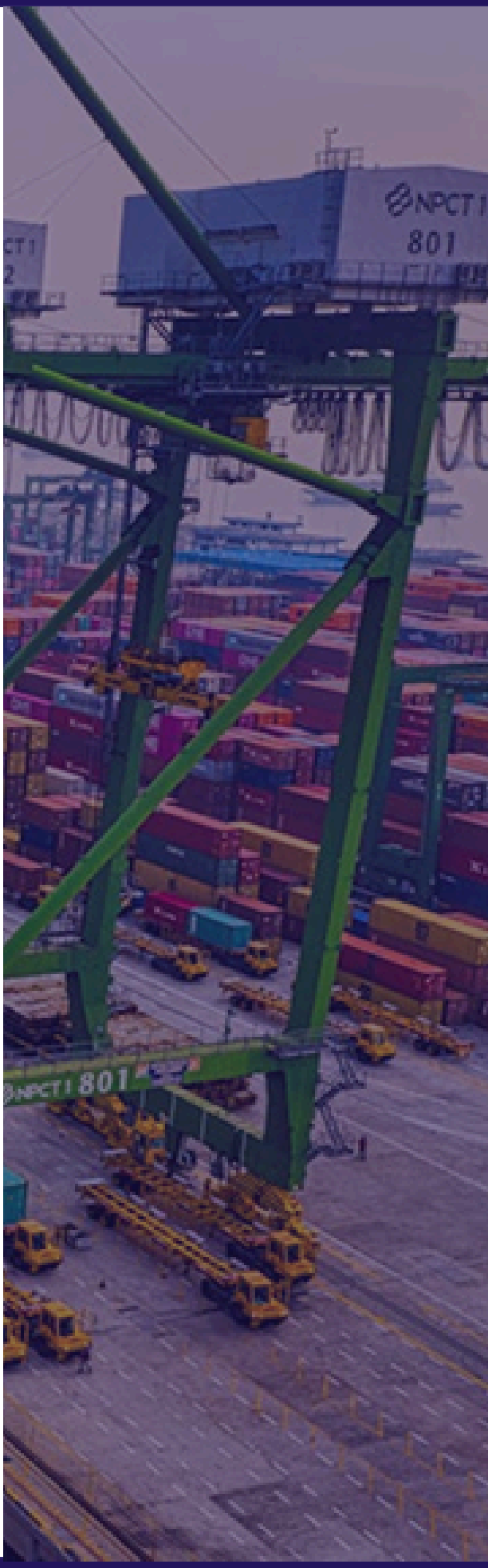
With supportive digital infrastructure and FTAs in place, SMEs and corridor participants have a strong foundation to unlock the full potential of trade through targeted operational improvements. Stakeholder engagement suggests that while New Zealand's digital systems provide a solid backbone, there are opportunities for SMEs to further enhance efficiency by streamlining multi-party coordination, simplifying sector-specific documentation, and better leveraging trade data. Addressing these areas could accelerate processes and maximise the practical benefits of FTAs.

SMEs are particularly affected by administrative burdens, often relying on spreadsheets, emails, or PDFs to reconcile data, manage compliance, and track shipments. These processes create repeated effort, risk of errors, and additional costs-barriers that digital infrastructure alone cannot fully address. Evidence from comparable corridors such as UK-Australia shows that operational frictions, rather than tariffs or demand limitations, are the main constraints on SME competitiveness. **Structured TradeTech adoption can reduce these inefficiencies, streamline processing, and strengthen corridor reliability.**

Addressing these challenges is most effective when stakeholders act collaboratively. Tailored interventions-such as co-investment, pilot programmes, and accessible digital tools-can support SMEs in adopting structured workflows. Lessons from comparable corridors suggest that

combining technology readiness, shared standards, and coordinated operational processes can transform fragmented, paper-heavy operations into auditable, efficient pipelines.

Ultimately, **the opportunity for the UK-New Zealand corridor lies in operational coordination.** With regulatory alignment, technology adoption, and stakeholder momentum, SMEs could leverage TradeTech to improve visibility, reduce manual effort, and accelerate end-to-end trade processes. By aligning policy, logistics, SME adoption, and investment, the corridor can transform from sequential, paper-based operations into seamless, real-time trade execution - **unlocking tangible efficiency gains and driving measurable business growth**



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Methodology and Use-Case Mapping for TradeTech Interventions

TradeTech solutions deliver the greatest value where trade processes are complex, high-volume, and data-intensive. Our methodology was deliberately **TradeTech-forward,** focusing on the real operational challenges faced by UK exporters in long-distance corridors rather than predefining adoption factors such as digital readiness or operational intensity. This ensures interventions are grounded in **real-world needs** and target opportunities for measurable automation, efficiency, and compliance improvements.

Challenge Mapping and Corridor Selection

We began by mapping operational bottlenecks through direct engagement with exporters, logistics partners, and regulatory authorities. This challenge-based approach identified priority friction points including documentation errors, multi-part shipments, regulatory compliance, and transit delays.

Insights from the UK-Australia corridor were particularly relevant. Many exporters sending shipments to Australia also trade with New Zealand - **Jointine Products, for example, frequently ships to both markets.** Leveraging this, we collaborated with Boex, which had implemented digital workflows along the Australia corridor, **to trial and adapt the same solutions for New Zealand.** This allowed us to **benchmark** metrics across both corridors and apply lessons on process standardisation, digital documentation, and compliance automation.

Trade Flow and Vertical Analysis

Using ONS trade data to Q2 2025 and UK-New Zealand trade statistics, we focused on the following high-value, documentation-intensive product verticals:

- Mechanical Power Generators
- Cars
- Medical & pharmaceutical products
- Specialised Machinery
- Road vehicles

For each vertical, we mapped key challenges - such as complex classification, regulatory compliance, multi-part shipments, and origin documentation - and identified where TradeTech could reduce administrative burden. This vertical-specific approach ensures interventions target sectors with the greatest potential for measurable operational impact.

Open Call and TradeTech Engagement

Following vertical analysis, we engaged UK TradeTech providers to demonstrate solutions addressing these challenge areas. By working with Boex, we were able to capture **baseline and post-implementation** metrics from their Australia corridor operations and apply learnings to New Zealand shipments.

Evaluation captured three key dimensions:

- **Trade Documents** - Number, type, and handling method of documents (paper, email/PDF, digital workflows), and identification of administrative bottlenecks.
- **Time and Communication** - Staff time spent preparing, checking, sharing, and reworking documents; frequency and type of communication channels (email, phone, messaging apps, digital solutions).
- **End-to-End Timelines** - Total trade processing time, border waiting times, and operational cost impacts of administrative delays, providing insight into efficiency and predictability.

Methodology for Measuring TradeTech Impact

To ensure comparability and consistency, the UK-New Zealand pilot applied the same standardised metrics framework used in the UK-Australia case study. This framework evaluates three core areas: (1) efficiency and productivity, (2) reduction in paper and communication overhead, and (3) business and financial outcomes. Given the similar use case and technology deployment, results from Australia were used as a benchmark to inform expectations for the New Zealand corridor.

Data Collection

Data was gathered through direct engagement with Jointine Products and ABD Group, combining:

- Observed workflow mapping of baseline (traditional) and endpoint (digital) processes
- Quantitative inputs on time spent across key administrative tasks
- Counts of documents, communication exchanges, and manual data entry steps
- Business-reported cost data, including staff time, operational expenses, and error-related costs

Where precise system logs were unavailable, estimates were validated with operational staff to reflect typical shipment processes.

Baseline vs Endpoint Comparison

All impact metrics were calculated using a baseline vs endpoint approach:

- **Baseline:** Traditional processes, including paper-based documentation, email communication, and manual data entry

- **Endpoint:** Digitally enabled workflows using structured, interoperable data

Percentage improvements were calculated using the standard formula:

Percentage reduction = Baseline − Endpoint / Baseline

This approach ensures comparability across case studies and validates that observed benefits are consistent with prior UK-Australia results.

Time and Efficiency Metrics

Time savings were calculated across:

- **Document preparation time**: Time spent creating, reviewing, and sharing trade documents
- **Administrative processing time**: Time spent on operational tasks, including coordination, validation, and handling

Total processing time = document preparation time + administrative processing time

Additional efficiency metrics included:

- **Document handling**: Number of physical documents replaced by digital equivalents
- **Manual data entry**: Reduction in repeated data entry across systems
- **Communication overhead**: Reduction in email exchanges and manual interactions per shipment

Cost Savings

Operational savings were estimated using:

- Staff and administrative time savings (converted to monetary value using reported salary data)
- Reduction in software or third-party service costs
- Lower customs, training, and courier costs
- Reduced printing and error-related correction costs

All figures were validated with the business and annualised based on typical shipment volumes.

Scaling and Projections

The projections in this report estimate potential efficiency gains achievable through TradeTech adoption along the UK-New Zealand corridor. They are based on **observed operational impacts** from Jointine, a UK SME exporting gasket paper, and informed by lessons from other corridors, including UK-Australia.

Data Sources

- **SME case studies:** Primary data from Jointine provided insight into administrative workflows, shipment volumes, and time spent on documentation and compliance.
- **Operational benchmarks:** Structured digital workflow pilots, notably Boex, informed assumptions on time savings, reduced handovers, and improved workflow efficiency.
- **SME population statistics:** UK government data on VAT-registered SMEs was used to estimate the number of exporters to New Zealand (~11,500), most of which are SMEs.

Approach

- **Profiled SME activity:** Three shipment frequency profiles reflect operational diversity:
    - Low-frequency: ~80 shipments/year
    - Mid-frequency: ~250 shipments/year
    - High-frequency: ~450 shipments/year
- **Workflow efficiency gains:** Case study insights were applied per shipment. Jointine's adoption of Boex reduced administrative processing by ~1.5 hours per shipment, centralising document handling, minimising handovers, and eliminating repeated data entry.
- **Scaling to corridor-level:** Average savings per shipment were applied across SME profiles to illustrate potential annual efficiency gains. This provides an indicative view of operational benefits achievable through structured digital workflows.
- **Operational assumptions:**
    - Time savings scale linearly with shipment volume.
    - Administrative gains do not alter regulatory compliance requirements.
    - Benefits are measured in staff hours saved, reduced coordination effort, and improved predictability, rather than purely financial terms.

Limitations

- Inputs are based on SME self-reported estimates rather than automated system logs.
- Shipment complexity, sector requirements, and trade volumes vary, affecting realised gains.

- Results are indicative of typical SME operations and may differ for large corporates or specialised exporters/importers.

By combining challenge mapping, corridor-specific trade flow analysis, and targeted TradeTech engagement, this methodology ensures interventions are concentrated on **sectors** and **processes** most likely to deliver tangible operational and economic benefits. The resulting case studies demonstrate that TradeTech solutions can significantly improve the efficiency and reliability of cross-border trade. By streamlining documentation and accelerating clearance, these case studies provide a clear **evidence base** for scaling TradeTech across the UK-New Zealand corridor.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT
FRAZER.MACDIARMID@FCDO.GOV.UK

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