

Press Release

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China National Salt Industry Group Expands Rail Infrastructure, Upgrading Bulk Chemical Logistics

On August 28, 2026, China National Salt Industry Group (China Salt) signed a Strategic Cooperation Framework Agreement with China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC). According to official disclosures, the partnership encompasses salt cavern utilization, dedicated railway line construction and operation, green mining retrofits, new energy and materials R&D, and overseas business expansion. China Salt will construct a dedicated factory railway branch line directly connecting to the national trunk rail network. Upon completion, products can be dispatched directly from the facility via trunk lines, eliminating multiple short-haul transfers. This streamlines outbound logistics, ensuring greater operational stability tailored to high-volume, regular salt chemical feedstock delivery requirements.

This rail partnership significantly optimizes export and transit efficiency for the salt chemical sector. Currently, most domestic production hubs rely on short-haul trucking followed by rail transshipment, resulting in multiple handling stages that are vulnerable to capacity bottlenecks and delivery delays during peak seasons. The dedicated line establishes a stable, cross-provincial and cross-border overland distribution process with mitigated freight rate volatility and predictable annual logistics costs. For overseas chemical enterprises and traders with long-term procurement frameworks, stable integrated logistics expenditure outweighs short-term spot discounts in facilitating annual production and supply chain planning.

By unlocking export logistics efficiencies and establishing a direct origin-to-destination model integrated with the national rail grid, this initiative further leverages the strategic impact of the China-Europe Railway Express (CR Express). Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) remains a core export market for China's salt chemical portfolio, with bilateral trade registering steady growth for ten consecutive years. Total bilateral trade volume exceeded RMB 680 billion from January to July 2026, representing a year-on-year increase of 10.9%. With robust manufacturing sectors in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, regional demand for consistent imports of Chinese soda ash,



caustic soda, and other raw materials spans the building materials, water treatment, personal care, and fine chemical industries.

Sources:

Strategic Cooperation Signing Disclosure, China National Salt Industry Group Official Website, August 28, 2026

Annual and Semi-Annual Cross-Border Freight Operation Statistics, China State Railway Group Co., Ltd.

Bilateral Trade Statistical Reports between China and Central and Eastern Europe, General Administration of Customs

Industry Benchmark Data on Eurasian Overland Logistics Transit Times

Disclaimer: This document does not constitute any procurement or investment advisory reference.

FAQ:

What is the China-Europe Railway Express?

The China-Europe Railway Express (CR Express) is an international containerized rail freight transport system organized by China State Railway Group Co., Ltd. Operating on fixed schedules, routes, train numbers, and transit timetables, it runs between China, Europe, and countries along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

What is the annual train volume of the China-Europe Railway Express?



Annual volumes include 12,406 trains in 2020; 15,183 in 2021; approximately 16,000 in 2022; approximately 17,000 in 2023; approximately 19,000 in 2024; and 20,022 in 2025. Growth continued to accelerate in 2026, registering 5,460 trips in Q1 (a 29% year-on-year increase) and surpassing the 10,000-train milestone by June 10, setting a new historical record for the period.

How to book cargo on the China-Europe Railway Express?

Booking can be streamlined into a 5-step procedure: Submit Requirements → Secure Space → Prepare Cargo & Customs Clearance → Load & Dispatch → Destination Pickup & Delivery.

Submit Requirements: Specify origin and destination cities, cargo description, weight and volume, and FCL/LCL requirements, then submit a booking application via a railway platform or freight forwarder.

Secure Space: The operator matches routes and schedules, finalizes the logistics plan, executes the contract, secures cargo space, and issues the Shipping Order (SO) and cargo closing time.

Prepare Cargo & Customs Clearance: Load and secure cargo in accordance with railway standards, compile customs documentation (packing list, commercial invoice, contract), and complete customs clearance 1 to 2 business days prior to departure.

Load & Dispatch: Following customs release, containers are hoisted onto rail cars for scheduled departure, cross-border transit, border port transfer, and track gauge conversion.

Destination Pickup & Delivery: Upon arrival at the destination station, complete import customs clearance, present the delivery order to claim the cargo, or arrange for final-mile distribution.

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