2M crowned most reliable container alliance over eight years
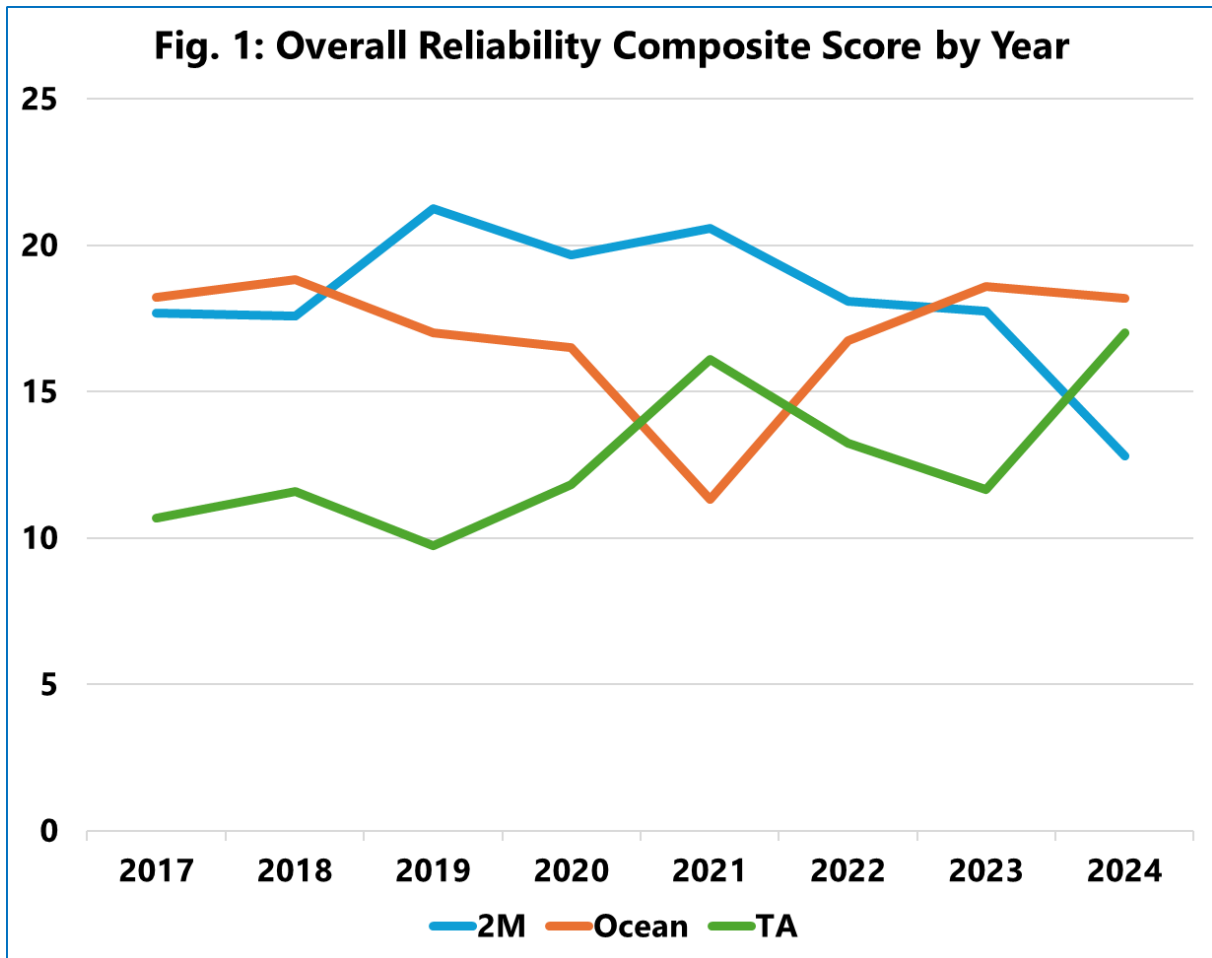
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Since April 2017, the container shipping industry has operated under a three-alliance structure comprising the Ocean Alliance, THE Alliance, and 2M Alliance.

This structure, which will be reshaped in February 2025, has significantly influenced trends in schedule reliability over nearly eight years. To better contextualize these trends, Danish maritime data analysis firm Sea-Intelligence developed the following graph to evaluate each alliance's annual performance.

The Danish analysts explained: "The way this score was calculated was as follows: for each trade lane that the alliances were operational in, we calculated how many months each alliance ranked 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in terms of schedule reliability. These numbers were then multiplied by 3, 2, and 1, for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, respectively."

Fig. 1: Overall Reliability Composite Score by Year

Legend: 2M, Ocean, TA

In 2017 and 2018, Ocean Alliance consistently led in schedule reliability, followed closely by 2M, while THE Alliance trailed significantly. However, 2019 and 2020 saw a shift, with 2M overtaking Ocean Alliance. By 2021, Ocean Alliance had dropped behind both 2M and THE Alliance.

In 2024, Ocean Alliance reclaimed the top spot, while THE Alliance showed a remarkable improvement, rising to second place. In contrast, 2M was the least consistent alliance in schedule reliability that year.

Alan Murphy, CEO, of Sea-Intelligence, commented: "Overall, across the entire alliance life cycle of the current alliance structure so far (2017-2024), 2M was the most consistent in terms of schedule reliability, with the highest composite score. They were ranked 1st in 49% of the instances, and 2nd in 31% of the instances. Ocean Alliance was the next most-reliable carrier alliance, having been 1st in 36% of the instances, and 2nd in 39% of the instances. THE Alliance only managed to come out on top in 15% of the instances and was 2nd in 31% of the instances."