Preface

... enlisting the right consumer with the right product, in the right quantity, in
the right condition, at the right place, at the right time, at the right cost to service
the right customer.

We have gone beyond the time-honoured 7Rs of logistics by adding an
eighth R: 'enlisting the right consumer’. Drawing upon the consumer’s
assistance presages a fifth great logistics wave to add to the preceding
four — physical distribution management, business logistics, supply chain
management and global logistics — that have been reactions to industriali-
zation, mass consumption, informatization and globalization respectively.
The new wave is a response to digitization.

We draw upon the analogy of logistics practitioners being akin to surfers
responding to great waves, although neither of us possesses any surfboard
skills in that equally challenging arena. One of us began academic life as
a human geographer and the other commenced as a development planner,
and we have both become increasingly engrossed in the logistics field. Our
paths first crossed in the mid-2000s when we were engaged in developing a
course for the Masters of Global Logistics Management (MGLM) at Inha
University, Incheon, in the Republic of Korea. A stint as consultants on
the ‘Transport Efficiency through Logistics Development Policy Study’ in
the People’s Republic of China followed, which spiralled into regular meet-
ings in Melbourne.

One early meeting led to a discussion on developing a new conceptual
framework for analysing global logistics. The outcome featured interac-
tions between the three key players involved in distribution — supplier,
producer and consumer — and the factors impinging on each of them
within the context of governance and developments in information and
communications technology. At subsequent meetings we recognized the
need for a book that discussed how digitization challenges global logistics
and requires a new conceptual framework.

Initial priority was focused on the likely effects of the technological trends
of 3D Printing and the Internet of Things upon global logistics practices.
As time progressed during alternating meetings on the book in Canberra
and Melbourne, the social and business trend of Omnichannel Retailing
came to the fore and the emerging power of the consumer was recognized.
This recognition led to the concept of ‘Consumer Logistics’ being coined and defined to match descriptions of past waves in logistics stretching over the past sixty years. Also the notion of ‘consumer ubiquity’ was invoked and used to distil the essence of Consumer Logistics in self-service and sharing economies. Subsequently the discussion of the concept was split into two: Consumer Logistics 1.0, to monitor how logistics service providers have responded to the rise of Omnichannel Retailing; and Consumer Logistics 2.0, to gauge how the changes triggered by the Internet of Things and 3D Printing are likely to affect logistics and supply chain operations. Finally, attention was paid to the theoretical implications by seeking an analogy that interprets both past practices and the current visible reshaping of the logistics business landscape.

In completing this book our thanks are due to the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, the Australian National University, Canberra, and the School of Business IT and Logistics at RMIT University, Melbourne, for hosting our regular meetings. Professor Caroline Chan, Head of the School of Business IT and Supply Chain Management, is acknowledged for granting the necessary permission for us to hold alternate meetings in Canberra and Melbourne. One of these meetings in Canberra was held in the Asian Collections at the Australian National Library through the good offices of its supervisor, Di Ouyang, who also advised us on Chinese reference material. Our Melbourne meetings were sustained by the kind hospitality of Professor Kosmas Smyrnios.

Also we are grateful to those authors and organizations that provided us with permission and advice on using illustrations. Assistance in this regard has been afforded by Professor Brigitte Andersen, CEO and Co-Creator Big Innovation Centre Ltd; Brand Team, Australia Post; Professor Helmut Baumgarten, Institut für Technologie und Management, Bereich Logistik, Technische Universität Berlin; Ian Brocklebank, Last Mile Delivery Ltd; Jeffrey Dachis, One Drop; Sumie Davies, Japanese Embassy, Canberra; Kei Maekawa, Hitachi Transport Systems, Melbourne; Christy Petley, Gartner, Inc.; Phil Reeves of Stratasys Expert Services, The 3D Printing Solutions Company; Frank Stockhausen, Deutsche Post DHL Group; Emily Veach, CB Insights; Pam Vetter, Open Text Corporation; and Takashi Yokoyama, Japanese Embassy, Canberra.

In producing this book our appreciation is due to Dr Sue Rimmer for editing the text and reflections as a consumer; Noreen Kam for enlightening conversations on contemporary logistics practices; Professor Matthew Rimmer for information on the legal aspects of 3D Printing; Kay Dancey, Karina Pelling and Jennifer Sheehan, Cartographic Section, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, Canberra, for their advice on maps and diagrams; Joseph Rimmer and Rachel Rimmer for assistance with illustrations;
Preface

Sandie Walters, Service Desk, CAP IT, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, Canberra, for help with computing; and Alex Pettifer, Editorial Director, Alex O’Connell, Senior Supervising Editor, Barbara Pretty, Desk Editor, all at Edward Elgar Publishing, and Sarah Cook, Copy Editor.

On a more personal note, we would like to thank our respective families for their encouragement: the Rimmer’s Joseph, Matthew and Rachel and their partners Belle, Sue and Arunas plus grandchildren Marina, Joshua, Imogen, Jethro, Griffin and Silas; and the Kam’s Tritia, Noreen, Nicholas and partner Jocelyn, and Christopher. Above all, we would like to express our gratitude to our wives, Sue and Shirley, for their unconditional love and enduring support stretching over many decades, and to whom this book is dedicated.

Peter J. Rimmer
Canberra
May 2017

Booi H. Kam
Melbourne
May 2017