THE COMMERCIALISATION OF POLICY

How Geopolitical and Regulatory Change Become Competitive Sales Tools

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Public Interest Briefing (PIB) 004

Prepared by

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Star-Insight™

Better Insight. Better Decisions. Better Outcomes.

Executive Summary

Government policy is often evaluated through the lenses of economics, taxation, diplomacy and regulation.

Yet there may be another dimension that receives far less attention.

Its commercial impact.

Markets rarely wait for legislation to settle. They adapt.

Competitors adapt faster still.

Recent discussion surrounding UK steel tariffs has highlighted how quickly overseas suppliers can incorporate policy developments into their sales narrative. Within days of announcements, reports emerged of foreign manufacturers using future UK cost pressures and uncertainty as part of their commercial positioning.

The issue had already moved beyond politics.

It had entered commercial reality.

This raises an important question.

Perhaps industrial strategy should not only consider its intended outcomes, but also how those decisions may be interpreted, amplified and ultimately weaponised by competitors operating in the marketplace.

The market itself may be providing an important source of policy feedback.

Policy Does Not End In Parliament

Governments naturally focus on legislation.

Businesses focus on customers.

Competitors focus on opportunity.

Every policy announcement begins a commercial chain reaction.

Policy may begin in government, but its ultimate success or failure is often determined at the point where it reaches the customer.

Evidence From The Market

The commercialisation of policy is not merely a theoretical concept.

Recent public discussion across manufacturing, defence, logistics and international trade suggests that organisations are already adapting their behaviour in response to changing geopolitical and regulatory conditions.

In the UK steel sector, concerns have been raised that overseas suppliers are actively incorporating forthcoming tariff changes into their sales messaging, using uncertainty itself as a competitive advantage.

Across global supply chains, British businesses operating in China continue to demonstrate that resilience is not simply about reducing exposure, but about understanding dependencies and managing them intelligently.

Within defence, SME leaders have increasingly warned that uncertainty around future procurement and investment can itself erode national capability, as specialist skills and industrial capacity become harder to sustain.

Meanwhile, the logistics sector has repeatedly highlighted that supply chains should increasingly be viewed as strategic infrastructure rather than simply transportation networks.

Taken together, these observations suggest that policy decisions may create second and third-order commercial effects that extend well beyond their original intent.

The UK Steel Example

Recent public discussion at SUBCON 2026 suggested that overseas manufacturers were actively using forthcoming UK steel tariff changes as part of their sales conversations.

The message was rarely:

"Buy from us."

Instead it appeared to be:

"Are you certain your current UK supply chain will remain competitive over the next few years?"

This distinction matters.

The objective is not necessarily immediate conversion.

The objective is uncertainty.

Once doubt enters the customer's mind, procurement behaviour begins to change.

Policy has become sales collateral.

Perhaps this is one of the earliest signals available to policymakers. When competitors begin incorporating legislation into their sales messaging, the market itself may already be evaluating the downstream commercial consequences of that policy.

The Three Competitive Battles

Many discussions focus exclusively on economics.

The commercial reality appears broader.

Economic

- Tariffs.
- Quotas.
- Margins.
- Energy costs.

Operational

- Supply chains.
- Alternative sourcing.
- Lead times.
- Inventory strategies.

Psychological

- Confidence.
- Perceived future competitiveness.
- Supplier stability.
- Long-term certainty.

The Recession Market Share Cycle™

Many long-serving industrial professionals will recognise a recurring pattern.

Economic uncertainty creates customer hesitation.

Investment slows.

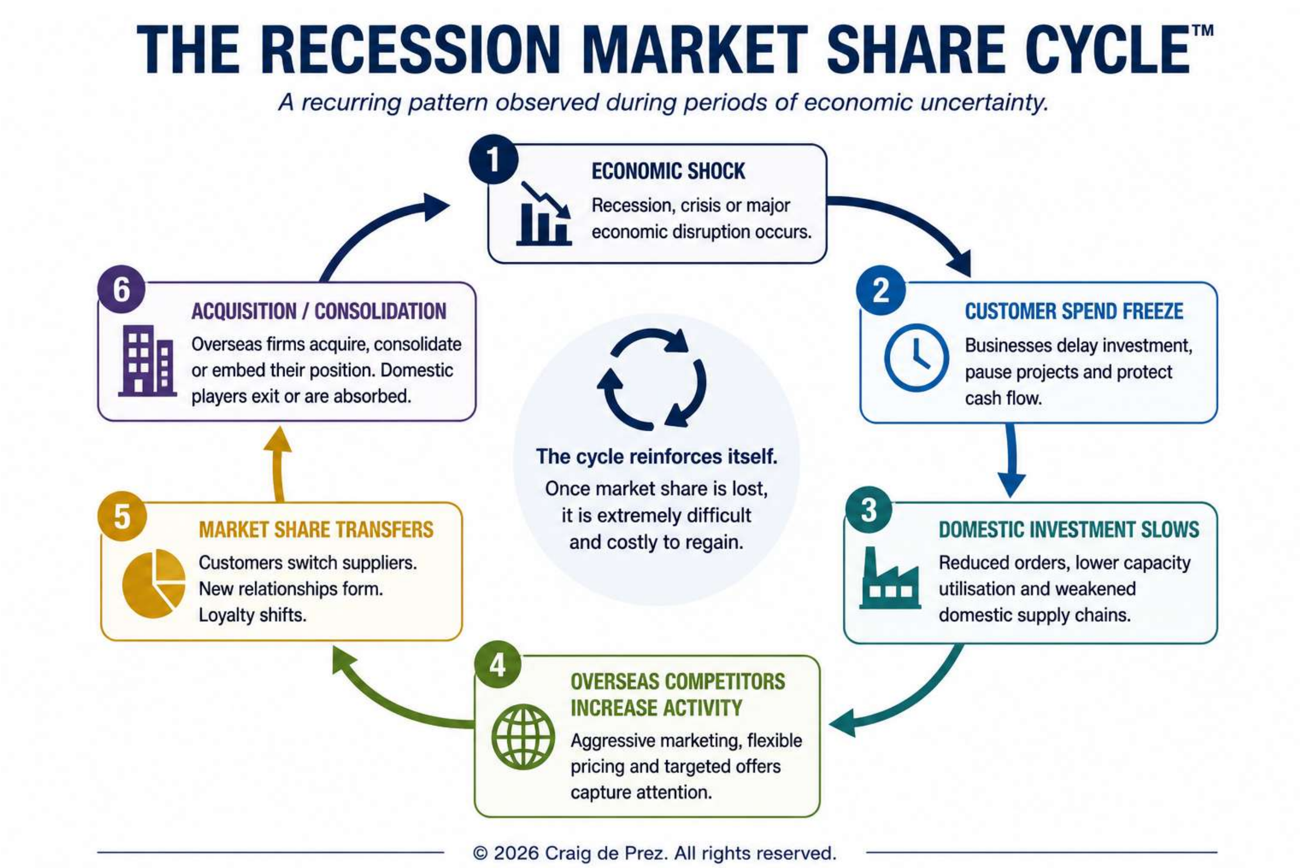
Capital projects are delayed.

Hiring pauses.

Customers wait.

Competitors often do not.

Overseas organisations may see periods of UK weakness as opportunities to accelerate sales activity.



Star-Insight Observation

Markets rarely stand still during recessions.

While domestic buyers wait for certainty, competitors may use that same period to reshape the competitive landscape.

Beyond Price

The lowest purchase price is not always the lowest-cost decision.

Many procurement exercises focus heavily on unit cost.

The wider supply chain often receives less attention.

A customer buying imported material may also be buying exposure to:

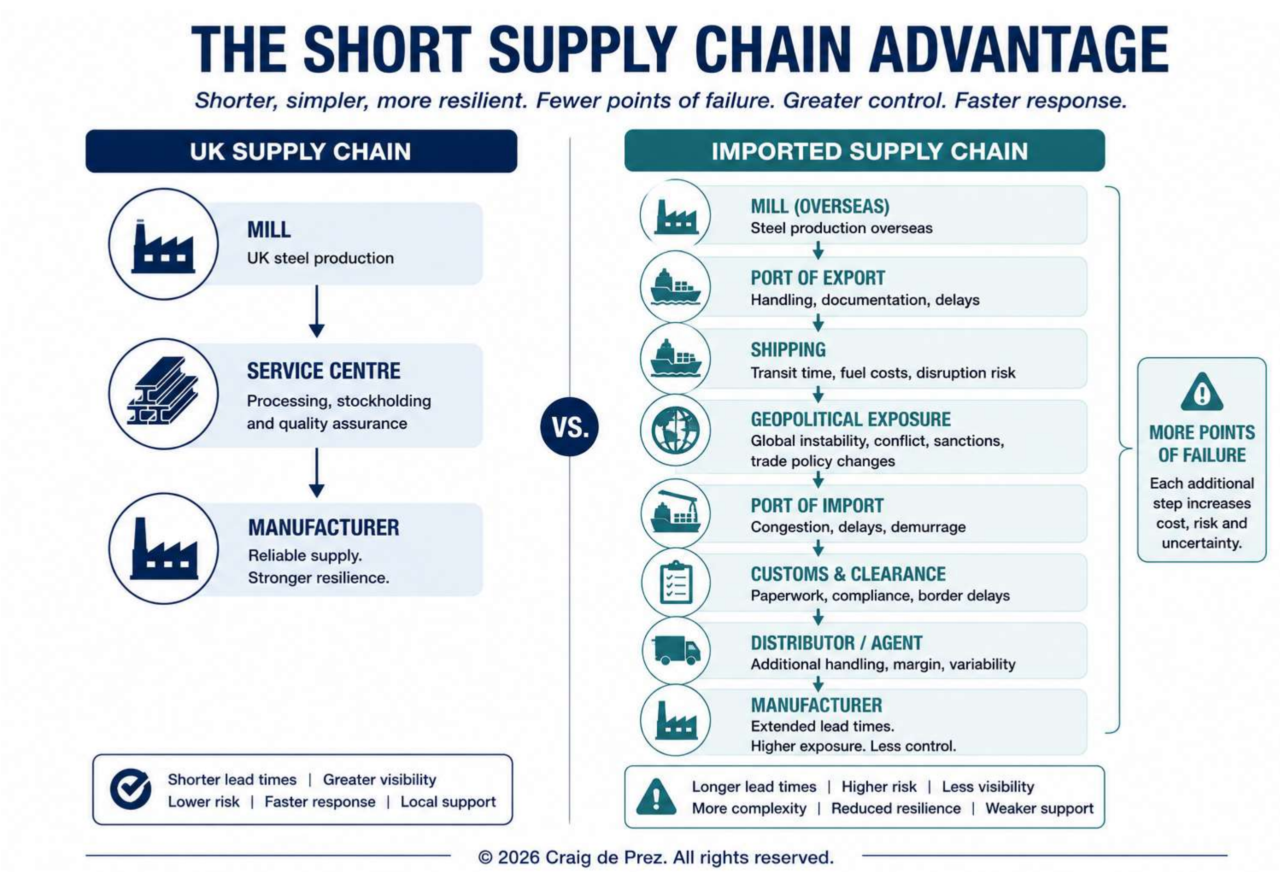
- shipping disruption;
- insurance increases;
- geopolitical instability;
- customs delays;
- replacement lead times;
- reduced technical support.

The recent instability around the Strait of Hormuz serves as a reminder that global supply chains are rarely static.

The Short Supply Chain Advantage

Long supply chains create dependencies.

Shorter supply chains may provide advantages that do not immediately appear on a quotation.



Total Supply Assurance™

Perhaps procurement should increasingly evaluate resilience as well as price.

Executive Question

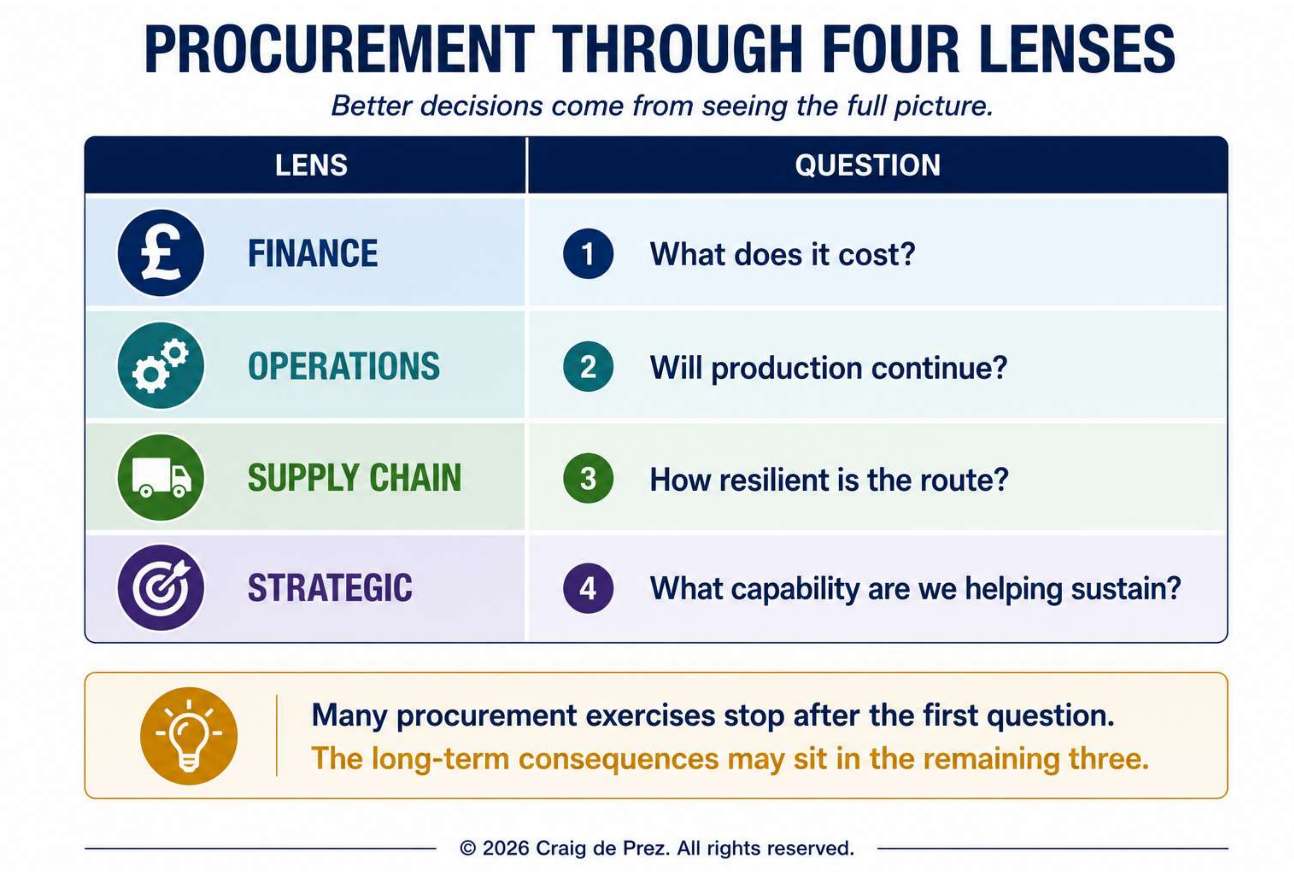
Are you buying the cheapest product or the most resilient supply chain?

Five Board Questions

Before major procurement or strategic sourcing decisions, leadership teams may wish to consider:

1. Could current policy changes alter customer buying behaviour?
2. Could competitors use those changes as part of their sales narrative?
3. How exposed is our organisation to supply chain disruption?
4. Are we selling products - or supply assurance?
5. Are we actively defending market share, or simply reacting to events?

The answers to these questions may reveal risks that traditional procurement evaluations often overlook.



The Capability Question

Every purchasing decision supports more than a product.

It also supports:

- engineering skills;
- apprenticeships;
- SMEs;
- local investment;
- tax receipts;
- future industrial capacity.

When domestic suppliers weaken or disappear, those capabilities become harder to rebuild.

Capability often takes decades to create.

It can be lost much more quickly.

Defence, Manufacturing and Logistics

Recent public discussion around defence readiness has highlighted that military capability cannot simply be switched on when required.

The same may be true for industrial capability.

Factories.

Engineering talent.

Specialist SMEs.

Logistics providers.

Trusted supply chains.

These form part of the nation's strategic infrastructure.

Perhaps resilience should be measured not simply by the number of assets a nation owns, but by the strength of the ecosystem that supports them.

The Commercialisation of Policy

How government decisions can evolve into competitive market advantage.

Perhaps this is one of the earliest signals available to policymakers.

When competitors begin incorporating legislation into their sales messaging, the market itself may already be evaluating the downstream commercial consequences of that policy.

This does not necessarily imply that the policy is wrong.

Rather, it suggests that commercial responses may provide an additional source of feedback when assessing the practical effects of strategic decisions.

Markets provide immediate feedback.

If a policy decision rapidly becomes part of a competitor's sales narrative, the market itself may be signalling downstream consequences that deserve attention.

This does not necessarily mean the policy is wrong.

It may simply mean that policy evaluation should extend beyond economics and include commercial behaviour.

Governments create policy.

Businesses interpret policy.

Competitors commercialise policy.

Customers ultimately decide its practical consequences.

THE COMMERCIALISATION OF POLICY

How government decisions can evolve into competitive market advantage.

1 GOVERNMENT POLICY
Legislation, regulation or geopolitical decision is announced.

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2 ECONOMIC CHANGE
Costs, risks and market dynamics shift as a result of the policy.

↓

3 COMPETITOR NARRATIVE
Competitors interpret the change and shape the narrative to their advantage.

↓

4 CUSTOMER UNCERTAINTY
Customers question future costs, supply security and risk exposure.

↓

5 PROCUREMENT BEHAVIOUR
Buying decisions change. Suppliers are re-evaluated. Risk mitigation becomes a priority.

↓

6 MARKET SHARE TRANSFER
Competitors gain share. Incumbents lose volume, margin and influence.

↓

7 NATIONAL CAPABILITY IMPACT
Domestic capability erodes. Skills, capacity and industrial resilience become harder and more costly to rebuild.

A Different Conversation

Perhaps the debate should not simply be:

How do we protect domestic industry?

Perhaps the better question is:

How do we help domestic industry remain commercially competitive when policy itself becomes part of the sales environment?

This may require organisations to communicate differently.

To explain resilience differently.

To defend market share proactively rather than reactively.

This may also require a shift in how organisations position themselves.

Rather than competing solely on price, successful businesses may increasingly need to communicate:

- resilience;
- trusted supply chains;
- engineering capability;
- technical support;
- shorter routes to resolution;
- long-term partnership.

In periods of uncertainty, confidence itself can become a competitive advantage.

Final Observation

Markets do not wait for policy to settle.

They respond immediately to changes in perceived risk and opportunity.

Customers adjust their behaviour.

Competitors adjust their messaging.

Supply chains adjust their priorities.

If legislation becomes part of a competitor's sales presentation, then industrial strategy has already entered the marketplace.

Perhaps resilience should ultimately be measured not simply by what a nation produces, but by the strength of the industrial ecosystem that supports it.

Understanding those interactions may become one of the defining competitive advantages of the decade ahead.

Evidence Base & Further Reading

This publication has been informed by ongoing discussion concerning:

- British Chamber South China Supply Chain Resilience Report.
- Logistics UK Annual Report 2026.
- UK Steel / SUBCON discussions.
- Defence SME commentary.
- CBI and Make UK publications.
- Relevant government policy papers.

Together with the independent observations and practical experience underpinning the Star-Insight™ framework.

About Star-Insight™

Star-Insight™ is a strategic systems-intelligence methodology designed to help leaders understand how hidden dependencies, bottlenecks, sequencing, resilience and pressure-transfer dynamics shape real-world outcomes across interconnected systems.

Rather than analysing sectors in isolation, Star-Insight™ examines how infrastructure, energy, supply chains, labour, technology, logistics and operational capability interact across the wider economic ecosystem and explores the wider systems, dependencies and second-order effects that often remain hidden until they begin affecting outcomes.

The methodology focuses on identifying the structural constraints, coordination gaps and second-order effects that increasingly determine industrial resilience, strategic competitiveness and long-term national capability.

The Star-Insight™ Constellation was created to help business leaders, policymakers and decision-makers better understand the interconnected systems shaping economic performance, industrial capability and long-term resilience.

Better insight. Better decisions. Better outcomes.

Star-Insight™ publications are intended to stimulate discussion, improve visibility of interconnected risks and opportunities, and support better-informed decision-making.

Strategic Systems Modelling Capability

Star-Insight™ can extend beyond strategic observation into deeper evidence-layer modelling and systems analysis, including:

- industrial dependency mapping
- quantified scenario modelling
- infrastructure and capability timelines
- energy and capacity competition analysis
- labour and workforce pipeline modelling
- supply-chain concentration analysis
- resilience and recovery modelling
- strategic bottleneck identification
- cross-sector pressure transfer analysis
- operational and decision-latency assessment

This allows organisations, industries and policymakers to move from:

understanding systems pressure

to:

modelling strategic consequences before they escalate.

Companion Resources

Asset 001 - UK Steel Strategic Exposure Assessment Workbook

A practical framework to help organisations identify and reduce commercial exposure.

Asset 002 – Business Transformation Readiness (Coming Soon)

New Public Interest Briefings and Workbooks will be added periodically as new strategic challenges emerge.

Additional Resources

PIB 004 forms part of a growing series of Star-Insight™ publications exploring capability, resilience, institutional memory and industrial competitiveness.

Additional tools, scorecards, workbooks and assessments referenced within this publication are currently being refined and may become available in due course.

Readers interested in related publications and future developments are invited to visit:

https://www.reflexitmarketing.com/star-insight

STAR-INSIGHT™ PUBLIC INTEREST BRIEF CONSTELLATION

The Star-Insight™ Public Interest Brief (PIB) Constellation is a growing library of assets that explore the strategic, operational and systemic pressures shaping organisations, industries, communities and national resilience.

Published Titles

PIB 001 - The UK Steel Challenge
Why steel remains a strategic capability rather than simply a commodity.

PIB 002 - Europe's Bottleneck
How shared industrial dependencies are reshaping resilience and competitiveness.

PIB 003 - The UK Construction Challenge
Understanding the foundations, constraints and opportunities within Britain's construction ecosystem.

PIB 004 – The Commercialisation of Policy
How Geopolitical and Regulatory Change Become Competitive Sales Tools

PIB 005 - The Defence Layer
The capability missing from many industrial strategy discussions.

PIB 006 - The Dependency Chain
Why the most important parts of a strategy are often the parts nobody talks about.

PIB 007 - The Power Gap
Why Electricity May Become Britain's Most Important Strategic Resource

PIB 008 - The Semiconductor Challenge
Semiconductors, sovereignty and strategic dependence in an increasingly uncertain world.

PIB 009 - The Memory Gap
Why nations that fail to retain institutional memory risk repeating the same mistakes.

PIB 010 - The Cyber-Security Challenge
Protecting critical systems in an interconnected economy.

PIB 011 - The Communications Challenge
Why information movement has become critical infrastructure.

PIB 012 - The Silicon Glen Question
What happens when a nation loses an ecosystem?

Each publication forms part of the wider Star-Insight™ mission to improve visibility, understanding and decision clarity within increasingly complex operating environments.

About the Author

Craig de Prez is the creator of Star-Insight™, an independent strategic systems intelligence initiative focused on helping organisations, industries and policymakers improve decision quality in complex environments.

Drawing upon more than three decades of experience spanning sales, marketing, business development, enterprise software, industrial ecosystems and capability mapping, Craig's work explores the interdependencies that influence economic resilience, institutional memory, industrial competitiveness and long-term national prosperity.

Through Public Interest Briefings (PIBs), Strategic Observation Briefs (SOBs), Executive Assessments and related publications, Star-Insight™ seeks to identify overlooked dependencies, surface "unknown unknowns" and stimulate informed discussion about the choices facing organisations, sectors and nations.

The objective is not simply to highlight problems, but to explore practical mechanisms that help restore, repair and retain valuable capabilities before they are lost.

Star-Insight™
Clarity in the Complexity.

Helping organisations create better decision clarity in increasingly complex environments.