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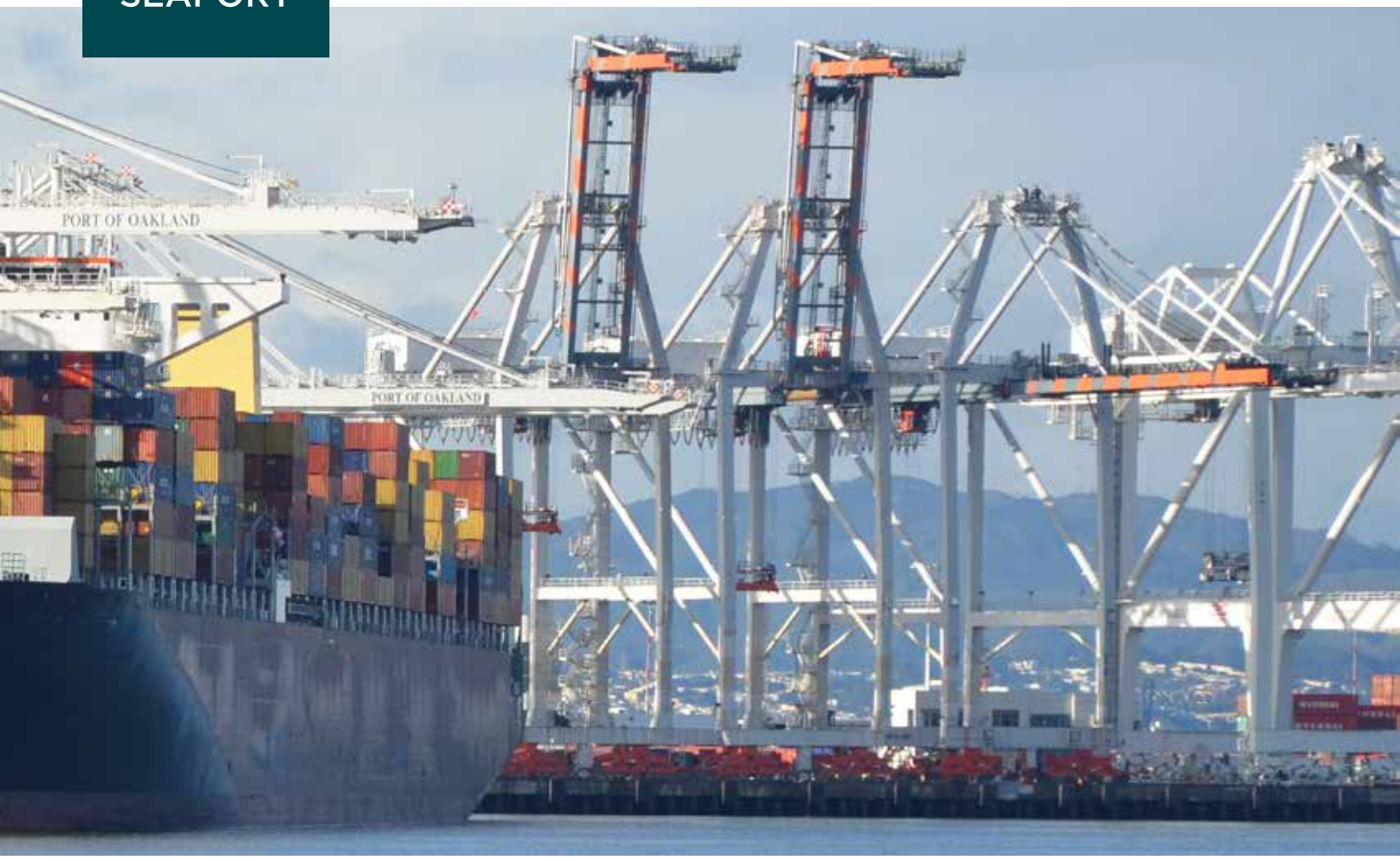

Port of Oakland night gates expand to TraPac

Second-largest marine terminal goes to second shift starting Oct. 15

Another Port of Oakland marine terminal operator says that it's opening night gates to accelerate containerized cargo flow. TraPac, Oakland's second-largest terminal, plans to add a second shift for harbor truckers beginning Oct. 15.

The move will enable thousands of drivers to pick up or drop off Oakland containerized cargo from 6 p.m. to 3 a.m., Monday-through-Thursday. That would give freight haulers access to the terminal outside busier daytime hours. Port officials said night operations should accelerate cargo flow while reducing truck queues that sometimes build outside terminal gates.

"This is a big step forward for TraPac and the Port's customers," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "We want cargo to move as quickly as possible through the Port and we're grateful that our terminal operators share that conviction."

TraPac becomes the second major marine terminal in Oakland to open at night for harbor truckers. Oakland International Container Terminal, the Port's largest terminal, introduced night gates at the Port two years ago. Together the terminals process about 80 percent of all containerized cargo in Oakland.

The Port said night operations would provide benefits across the supply chain, including:

- Faster cargo delivery to customers;
- Less downtime for drivers; and
- An end to marine terminal congestion.

TraPac said harbor drivers would be allowed to perform the full range of cargo transactions at night. Those include picking up import containers or dropping off exports.

The terminal said it will assess a $30 fee on all loaded containers moving in or out of TraPac beginning October 29. The fee will cover night gate costs, principally for additional labor, the terminal explained.

TraPac is in the midst of a two-year project to double the size of its Oakland operations. The terminal expects to conclude construction by year-end.

Diesel emissions down 81 percent

Diesel particulate emissions from Port of Oakland maritime operations are down 81 percent since 2005, according to just-released data. As a result, the Port expressed confidence in reaching a self-imposed target: 85 percent emissions reduction by 2020.

"We continue to make progress toward the goal we have set," said Port of Oakland Environmental Programs and Planning Director Richard Sinkoff. "With cooperation from our partners in the cargo-moving business we firmly believe we'll fulfill our commitment to cleaner air in Oakland and in our region."

San Francisco Bay Area environmental consultancy Ramboll reported Oakland's improvement in a 100-page emissions inventory of 2017 Port activity. The results show a 5 percent drop in seaport emissions in the past two years. The results are significant for Oakland workers, harbor truckers and residents near the Port who benefit from cleaner air.

Oakland's Board of Port Commissioners adopted an 85-percent diesel emissions reduction target in 2008. The Board set 2005 as its measurement baseline.

According to the Ramboll report, Oakland diesel emissions have plummeted since 2005 despite a 6 percent cargo volume increase. It attributed the improvement to a series of developments, including:

- A Port program that purged older, exhaust-belching big rigs from the fleet of trucks hauling containers in Oakland;
- Regulations that require container ships to use cleaner-burning low sulfur fuel and switch off engines and plug into landside power while at berth; and
- Fewer vessel and truck visits to the Port.

Ramboll reported that vessel traffic in Oakland has declined 15 percent since 2005, even though cargo volume is up. That's the result of cost-conscious ocean carriers loading more containers onto fewer but larger ships. The report also stated that truck traffic is down by more than 500,000 trips a year. It attributed the reduction to efficiency improvements at the Port. Efficiencies include night gates and appointment systems that make it easier for harbor drivers to transact business.

In June, the Port publicly previewed the draft of a new clean air plan intended to extend its emissions reduction program for decades. The air quality blueprint reiterates Oakland's 2020 commitment and proposes new emissions control measures for diesel and greenhouse gases. The plan is undergoing community review. It's expected to be finalized by year end.

Shore power use at all-time high

Seventy-eight percent of container vessels visiting Oakland in July cut engines and plugged into landside electrical power. It was the highest plug-in rate ever recorded at the Port of Oakland. The Port said the performance demonstrates progress in its effort to curb diesel emissions from ships.

According to Port data, 105 of 135 vessels visiting Oakland in July connected to shoreside electricity at berth. The ships then switched off auxiliary diesel engines that typically power onboard systems during port stays. The result: tons of diesel particulate exhaust kept out of the skies over the city.

"We've been working with shipping lines for a long time to accelerate the rate of shore power adoption," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "On behalf of all of us who breathe the air in Oakland, it's gratifying to see this level of cooperation."

State regulators require that container shipping lines frequently calling California ports plug in at least 70 percent of their vessels. The bar gets raised to 80 percent in 2020. Until last month, the Port's best plug-in rate had been 76 percent of all vessels in July 2017.

Oakland has been working to boost shore power use since 2012. The Port attributed its progress to:

- Shipowners who spend about $1 million per vessel to retrofit vessels for shoreside plug-ins;
- Port technicians who commission ships for shore power;
- Harbor pilots who align 1,200-foot-long ships with shoreside electrical vaults while berthing; and
- Longshore workers who connect ships to the grid via heavy cables.

Container ships are the biggest source of diesel exhaust at the Port. Diesel vessel emissions have declined 80 percent since 2005, thanks in large part to shore power and the use of cleaner-burning low sulfur fuel in ships. The Port said it's seeking more plug-ins to reach an 85 percent overall reduction in diesel emissions by 2020.

Crane raising project is done

Four ship-to-shore cranes at Oakland International Container Terminal (OICT), the busiest terminal at the Port of Oakland, are 27 feet taller following completion in August of a year-long, crane-raising project. The fourth and final raised crane is back in service to manage larger ships with containers stacked high above vessel decks. Oakland already works the biggest containerships that call North America.

"Taller cranes are critical for loading and unloading massive container ships that arrive at our marine terminal," said SSA President Ed DeNike. "These huge cranes will help us move cargo more efficiently through the Oakland Seaport and support our operations for years to come."

Raising four gantry cranes increased their lifting height from 115 feet to 142 feet above the dock. The work began May 8, 2017. The giant cranes can soar up to 393 feet, the height of a 39-story building, with the booms in the highest position.

"Raising cranes is part of our infrastructure investment strategy to increase the Port of Oakland's competitive edge on the US West Coast," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "We're confident that this will help us move more imports and exports through Oakland." The crane-raising project cost approximately $14 million.

These higher gantry cranes can reach over an additional three levels of stacked containers on a big ship's deck. This improves the process and speed of cargo operations, saving time and money for Port customers. Here's how a container crane is raised:

- A massive jack is constructed—this jack required fifty trucks to transport sections of the jack to Oakland; an expert crew assembled the jack.
- A rubber-tired trailer system is used to move the 3-million-pound crane off the tracks and reposition the crane to the work area.
- Engineers require at least two months to brace one crane on supports, cut away its lower legs, raise the crane, insert the longer extensions and weld everything back together.
- The taller crane is tested and placed back in operation.

Total container volume in Oakland was up 2.3 percent for the first half of 2018. The Port, in partnership with its terminal operators, anticipates heightening more cranes and adding new ones over the next few years.

Stevedoring Services of America (SSA) operates OICT and managed the crane-raising project in partnership with the Port of Oakland.

Crane is lifted with giant jack equipment (yellow) so that new, longer legs can be attached.

Security grant

FEMA, The Federal Emergency Management Agency, has awarded $1.35 million to the Port of Oakland to strengthen maritime security. The grants were announced by FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security. They're part of the government's Port Security Grant Program.

The Port said it would use the grants to help staff a round-the-clock Security Operations Center. The money would also be used to strengthen a security surveillance system, the Port said.

Oakland has received $3.17 million in federal grants for maritime security over the last two years.

Benefits of the Seventh Street project

A Port of Oakland infrastructure project could boost economic output by $1 billion while improving agricultural export flow. That's the conclusion of Washington State University economists studying a proposed $515 million fix for a major Port gateway.

Researchers from WSU's Freight Policy Transportation Institute said that upgrading the Port's Seventh Street entrance would provide myriad benefits. Among them:

- A $1.1 billion boost in economic output for Oakland and surrounding counties;
- 375 new jobs; and
- An improved supply chain for U.S. exporters, especially those shipping farm goods overseas.

WSU Associate Prof. Eric Jessup presented his findings last month to tree nut exporters at a U.S. Department of Agriculture-sponsored symposium. The university and USDA are hosting four workshops around the country to advance the process of prioritizing infrastructure projects. The focus is on projects that improve agricultural export supply chains.

The Port is working with Alameda County's Transportation Commission to eliminate cargo-hauling bottlenecks at Seventh Street. The thoroughfare is a major gateway on the Port's westside.

Seventh Street fixes would include separating freight rails from the street, heightening and widening underpass clearance and introducing technology to ease traffic congestion. Design work is underway on the project. The Port and county are seeking federal grants to finance the work that could go on until 2023.

Prof. Jessup said improving Seventh Street would help tree nut producers—and other exporters—move shipments more efficiently to overseas markets. "In the past five years, the Port of Oakland is the No. 1 U.S. port for containerized edible nut exports," he said. "But landside access inefficiencies constrain growth."

Oakland handles 59 percent of all U.S. edible nut exports, Prof. Jessup said. The Port is adjacent to the Central and San Joaquin valleys where most of the nation's $7.6 billion worth of nut exports are produced. The crop includes almonds, walnuts and pistachios.

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Nuts are the third-largest U.S. agricultural export. Nuts and dried fruits are the Port of Oakland's second-largest export category.

"These are high-value exports produced almost in our back yard," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "It's important that we do a good job with the shipments because the industry depends on us to access foreign markets."

Oakland is considered a leading agricultural export gateway because of its proximity to California's fertile growing regions. According to the Port, growers also choose Oakland because of its position on the Pacific Rim. Oakland is the last U.S. stop for many container ships before they return to Asian markets. That means exports loaded in Oakland spend less time on the ocean, thereby extending shelf life.

Prof. Jessup said construction spending would provide the biggest economic benefit from fixing Seventh Street at the Port. Job gains would be felt primarily in the construction and services sectors, he said.

Maritime Engineer promoted

Thanh Vuong

The Port of Oakland has promoted Thanh Vuong to Principal Engineer in the Maritime Project Design and Delivery Department. The department manages more than $50 million worth of seaport capital projects each year and provides upkeep of more than $1 billion worth of infrastructure.

Mr. Vuong will be responsible for managing the Port's maritime capital improvement and maintenance programs. He'll oversee dredging and crane-related work as well as construction, maintenance and compliance activities.

"Thanh Vuong brings strong technical skills and successful project management experience to this position," said Port of Oakland Director of Engineering Chris Chan. "His experience working with our maritime stakeholders will be critical as we continue to develop and enhance our seaport area in the years ahead."

Mr. Vuong has worked at the Port for eight years, previously holding the position of Supervising Engineer. Prior to the Port, he worked for Caltrans and the City of Fairfield.

Mr. Vuong began his career at the Port in 1994 as a high school summer intern. He received his B.S. in Civil Engineering at the University of California, at Davis.

Port of Oakland imports up 9.2 percent from a year ago

Best August in Port's 91-year history

Peak season is off to a record start at the Port of Oakland. The Port said today that it handled the equivalent of 85,166 loaded 20-foot import containers last month. It was the busiest August in the Port's 91-year history.

The Port's record performance signaled a strong start to the peak shipping season. The August-through-October period is traditionally the highwater mark for container shipping. It's the time of year when U.S. retailers stock shelves for holiday merchandising.

"We're encouraged by the solid start to peak season, but there's still uncertainty in the trade environment," said Port of Oakland Maritime Director John Driscoll. "Let's see what the next few months bring."

Oakland's August import volume was up 9.2 percent over August 2017. The previous record for August imports was set in 2015 with 82,492 TEUs. The Port attributed the gains to strong U.S. consumer spending at the beginning of peak season.

For the first eight months of 2018, Oakland's total cargo volume – which includes imports, exports, and empty containers, is up 3.3 percent. If the trend holds, the Port would break its all-time cargo volume record for the third consecutive year.