



# **PORT OF OAKLAND**

## **Port of Oakland cargo volume off due to crowded ports**

## **Greater volume likely in coming months when logjam breaks**

### **Press Releases, Seaport**

*February 23rd, 2021*

*Oakland, Calif. – Feb. 23, 2021 –* Containerized cargo volume declined at the Port of Oakland in January, the result of spreading supply chain congestion. The Port said today that import volume dropped 11.9 percent last month compared to January 2020. Exports were down 11.3 percent.

The Port attributed cargo declines to factors that included:

Late-arriving ships from Southern California where up to 60 vessels are at anchor awaiting berth space;  
Temporary loss of berth capacity at Oakland's largest marine terminal where new cranes are being assembled;  
and  
Dwindling vessel space for Oakland exports as ships carry more empty cargo containers back to Asia.

The Port labelled declining cargo an anomaly at a time when U.S. importers face increasing consumer demand. It expects container volume to increase in coming months as vessel logjams ease.

“There’s a lot of cargo trapped on ships just waiting to get to here after departing Southern California,” said Port of Oakland Maritime Director Bryan Brandes. “Our concern is getting shipments to our customers as quickly as we can.”

U.S. containerized import volume from Asia is expected to remain strong at least through June. That puts pressure on ports in Los Angeles and Long Beach, where ships stop first before visiting Oakland.

Congestion in Southern California is causing delays of up to a week for Oakland vessel arrivals. As a result, ships reach the Port off-schedule and sometimes miss berthing appointments.

French shipping line CMA CGM remedied the problem this month by introducing a first-call service in Oakland. The ships in CMA's weekly service make Oakland their first U.S call, bypassing Southern California. The Port said other ocean carriers are contemplating Oakland first-calls by mid-year.

Though Oakland imports and exports declined by double digits in January, overall container volume was off just 5.8 percent. That's because the Port had a 15.6 percent increase in the shipment of empty containers. Empties are in high demand at Asian ports where they're needed to transport U.S. import cargo.

### **About the Port of Oakland**

The Port of Oakland oversees the Oakland Seaport, Oakland International Airport, and nearly 20 miles of waterfront including Jack London Square. The Port's 5-year strategic plan - Growth with Care - pairs business expansion with community benefits, envisioning more jobs and economic stimulus as the Port grows. Together with its business partners, the Port supports more than 84,000 jobs. Connect with the [Port of Oakland](#) and [Oakland International Airport](#) through Facebook, or with the Port on Twitter, YouTube, and at [www.portofoakland.com](http://www.portofoakland.com).

### **Media Contacts**

Robert Bernardo  
Port of Oakland  
Acting Communications Director  
(510) 627-1401  
[rbernardo@portoakland.com](mailto:rbernardo@portoakland.com)  
Marilyn Sandifur  
Port of Oakland  
Port Spokesperson  
(510) 627-1193  
[msandifur@portoakland.com](mailto:msandifur@portoakland.com)

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