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## SC Ports sees further rebound in August ahead of big ship arrival



August marked the second highest month ever for imports to the Port of Charleston, a positive cargo trend for SC Ports. (Photo/SCPA/English Purcell)

CHARLESTON, SC - SEPT. 14, 2020 - [South Carolina Ports Authority](#) saw some positive cargo trends in August, pointing to a slow but emerging recovery during the ongoing global pandemic.

SC Ports handled 208,837 twenty-foot equivalent container units (TEUs) at the [Wando Welch](#) and [North Charleston](#) container terminals in August, down about 10% year-over-year. When compared to recent months however, volumes are trending positively, with TEUs up 18% since July and up 33% since June.

SC Ports moved 116,248 pier containers, which measures boxes of any size, in August. This is down 12% year-over-year, but up 17% from July and up 31% from June.

“Our August volumes surpassed expectations, reflecting the best year-over-year month since the pandemic began impacting global supply chains in March,” SC Ports President and

CEO Jim Newsome said. “We are encouraged by a steady rebound in containers, vehicles and inland port rail moves.”

SC Ports handled 26,214 vehicles at Columbus Street Terminal in August, a 38% increase from a year ago. Vehicle volumes are up 42% fiscal-year-to-date, with 51,342 vehicles handled in July and August. The Port handled 73,811 pier tons in August, up 25% year-over-year.

Inland Port Greer continues to rebound with 13,422 rail moves in August, while Inland Port Dillon had its best month in its history with 3,527 rail moves in August.

August also marked the second highest month ever for imports to the Port of Charleston.

“Our imports are returning to – and at times surpassing – pre-pandemic levels as consumers invest in more goods for their homes and families,” Newsome said. “SC Ports is well-known for expertly moving goods just-in-time for global companies. Our efficient operations and big-ship capabilities perfectly suit the needs of global retailers who require reliability and adaptability in their supply chains.”

SC Ports recently celebrated a big win in the retailer and e-commerce space with Walmart investing in a 3-million-square-foot distribution center in Dorchester County, S.C. The facility, set to break ground in March 2021, will eventually boost port volumes by 5%.

### **Big ships on the horizon**

SC Ports is preparing to welcome the largest ship to ever visit the East Coast and the Port of Charleston – the 15,072-TEU CMA CGM Brazil is set to sail into Charleston Harbor on Sept. 20.

SC Ports’ modern ship-to-shore cranes, efficient terminal operations and deep harbor enables the port to accommodate a container ship of this size.

Investments are ongoing to further equip SC Ports to handle massive container ships in the future. The fully funded Charleston Harbor Deepening Project remains on schedule to achieve a 52-foot depth in 2021, with the full project completion slated for mid-2022. Work continues to further enhance Wando Welch Terminal to handle more cargo and bigger ships.

Construction of the Hugh K. Leatherman Terminal is making great strides toward a March opening. Five new ship-to-shore cranes with 169 feet of lift height above the wharf deck are slated to arrive in October, outfitting the container terminal with some of the tallest ship-to-shore cranes on the East Coast. Phase One of the Leatherman Terminal will add 700,000 TEUs of annual throughput capacity to SC Ports.

“SC Ports has planned and invested to ensure the right infrastructure is coming online at the right time,” Newsome said. “A deeper harbor, new ship-to-shore cranes, a new container terminal and enhancements to existing terminals will enable us to handle four 14,000-TEU vessels simultaneously next year.”



The Hugh K. Leatherman Terminal will open in March. (Photo/SCPA/Walter Lagarenne)

### **About South Carolina Ports Authority**

South Carolina Ports Authority (SCPA), established by the state's General Assembly in 1942, owns and operates public seaport and intermodal facilities in Charleston, Dillon, Georgetown and Greer. As an economic development engine for the state, Port operations facilitate 225,000 statewide jobs and generate nearly \$63.4 billion in annual economic activity. SCPA is soon to be home to the deepest harbor on the U.S. East Coast at 52 feet, and the Port is an industry leader in delivering speed-to-market, seamless processes and flexibility to ensure reliable operations, big ship handling, efficient market reach and environmental responsibility. For more information on SCPA, please visit [www.scspa.com](http://www.scspa.com).

### **S.C. Ports Media Contacts:**

#### **BROADCAST MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

Kelsi Brewer  
Manager, Public and Community Relations  
SC Ports Authority  
843-577-8676  
kbrewer@scspa.com

#### **PRINT MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

Liz Crumley  
Manager, Corporate Communications  
SC Ports Authority  
843-577-8121  
lcrumley@scspa.com

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