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Port moves up one spot in U.S. cargo rankings

Value of shipments rises 37%; Baltimore goes from 12th to 11th

By Michael Dresser, The Baltimore Sun

The port of Baltimore moved up one spot in the national rankings in cargo handling last year on the strength of a 37 percent jump from 2009 in the value of shipments over its docks, according to the U.S. Census.

Gov. Martin O'Malley said Tuesday that the port had climbed to 11th place from 12th in the value of the cargo it handles and advanced two places, to 13th from 15th, in tonnage.

The port grabbed the No. 1 spot among the nation's 360 ports in handling of three cargo categories: trucks, imported salt and imported iron ore. Previously, the port had held the No. 2 rankings in trucks and ore, and sixth place in salt.

According to the census, the value of the cargo moving through Baltimore's port reached \$41.5 billion, a 37 percent gain, as commerce rebounded from recession-racked 2009.

The gain was stronger in tonnage, with the port posting a 47 percent increase to 33 million tons — a reflection of Baltimore's strong position in such heavy commodities as coal, forest products and ore.

In addition to its new No. 1 rankings, the port held onto its top positions in farm and construction machinery — known as roll-on/roll-off, or ro/ro, cargo — imported forest products such as paper, imported gypsum and imported sugar.

Baltimore moved up to No. 2 in auto and aluminum imports and cola exports, up from third in each in 2009.

Richard Scher, a spokesman for the Maryland Port Administration, said the state did not drop in the rankings in any category of commodities. He said Baltimore ranked 14th in handling of containerized cargo.

Baltimore's traffic in containers is expected to pick up after next August, when a 50-foot-deep berth is scheduled to open at Seagirt Marine Terminal. That berth, now under construction by Ports America under a public-private partnership with the state, will enable larger container ships to call at the port. The port agency said the gains at its publicly owned terminals have continued through the first six months of this year, though not at as torrid a pace as in 2010. The agency said general cargo is up 14 percent, ro/ro up 51 percent, autos 10 percent, containers 9 percent and paper 6 percent.

James J. White, the port's executive director, said an improved worldwide economic climate in 2010 contributed to the increased business. He also credited high productivity, good labor relations and the port's status as the closest to the industrial Midwest as factors in gaining market share.

## **Port moves up to 11th in U.S. in value of goods shipped**

Maryland Daily Record/ Nicholas Sohr

The Port of Baltimore ranked 11th nationally in terms of the value of cargo shipped through its public and private terminals in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The \$41.5 billion in cargo last year was a 39 percent jump over the year before and enough to nudge Maryland's port up from the 12th spot among the 360 nationwide.

Foreign cargo was up 47 percent in 2010, to 33 million tons.

"While a more favorable worldwide economic climate is a contributing factor, the Port of Baltimore has also been able to rebound because of its high productivity, outstanding labor and geographic advantage placing us closer to the Midwest than other Eastern ports," said Jim White, executive director of the Maryland Port Administration.

Port traffic increased through the first six months of 2011 as well. General cargo at the public terminals was up 14 percent; roll on/roll off, 51 percent; autos, 10 percent; containers, 9 percent; and paper, 6 percent.

Seagirt Marine Terminal is undergoing an upgrade headed by Ports America, the operator that holds a 50-year lease on the terminal. Its 50-foot berth is scheduled to open next summer and will be able to accommodate larger cargo ships heading to and from Asia. The widened Panama Canal channel to open in 2014 will bring ships from China and port officials hope Baltimore will be an attractive destination for goods produced in growing economies in Southeast Asia.

"We are pleased that the port continues to move up in rankings as companies around the world realize that Baltimore provides a quality gateway for doing business," Gov. Martin O'Malley said in a written statement.

## **Port of Baltimore improves in national rankings**

Baltimore Business Journal / Scott Dance

Baltimore has moved up in national port rankings, up one spot for cargo tonnage and two spots for cargo value.

The port moved 32.8 million tons of cargo worth \$41.5 billion in 2010. That was good for the 13th heaviest and 11th most valuable cargo among the nation's 360 ports.

Those numbers will help the port when it seeks federal funding for shipping channel improvements,

Executive Director James J. White said in an interview.

"This will help us this year when we're talking to the Army Corps of Engineers about dredging issues," White said.

Some of the boom in cargo can be attributed to strong coal exports from two Baltimore terminals owned by CSX and CNX. The port moved up from second nationally to third for exported coal in 2010.

Other cargoes ranked first nationally, including:

- Trucks, up from No. 2 in 2009;
- Imported salt, up from No. 6;
- Imported iron ore, up from No. 2;
- Roll-on/roll-off cargo, such as farm and construction equipment;
- Imported forest products;
- Imported gypsum; and,
- Imported sugar.

The port also moved up from No. 3 to No. 2 for autos and imported aluminum.

Business is up in 2011 so far. For the first six months of the year, general cargo tonnage is up 14 percent over the first six months of 2010.

The U.S. Census Bureau compiles the cargo data.

## **Baltimore Moves up US Port Rankings**

Journal of Commerce/Peter T. Leach

### *Port rises one spot to be 12th largest port in cargo value handling*

The Port of Baltimore moved up the rankings of U.S. ports in 2010 in terms of the dollar value and the tonnage of the cargo it handled, Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley said Tuesday.

Baltimore now ranks 11th nationally (up from 12th) in the total dollar value of cargo and 13th (up from 15th) in the tonnage of cargo handled, according to recent statistics released by the U.S. Census.

The dollar value of cargo moving through Baltimore totaled \$41.5 billion in 2010, a jump of 37 percent from 2009. The tonnage of foreign trade handled by the port's public and private terminals was 33 million tons, a 47 percent increase from the previous year.

Among individual commodities, the Baltimore move into the No. 1 rank for trucks (from second place in 2009), for imported salt (sixth in 2009), and imported iron ore (second in 2009).

Baltimore remained the number one port in the nation for handling roll-on, roll-off cargo (farm and construction machinery), imported forest products, imported gypsum and imported sugar. The port moved up from third to second for autos, exported coal and imported aluminum handling.

“While a more favorable worldwide economic climate is a contributing factor, the Port of Baltimore has also been able to rebound because of its high productivity, outstanding labor, and geographic advantage placing us closer to the Midwest than other eastern ports,” said Maryland Port Administration Executive Director James J. White. “Throughout the economic downturn, we were able to maintain and grow market share in several key categories. That too is a significant reason for these positive results.”

In the first six months of 2011, general cargo through the port’s public marine terminals increased 14 percent year-over-year. Among cargos, ro-ro cargo was up 51 percent, autos up 10 percent, containers up 9 percent, and paper up 6 percent.