



The Maryland Port Administration PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Richard Scher (rscher@marylandports.com)
Jillian Ball (jball@marylandports.com)
410-446-1204

PORT OF BALTIMORE OPENS NEW YEAR WITH CONTINUED REBOUND FROM IMPACT OF COVID-19

Autos, Roll On/Roll Off Equipment Post 20% Year-Over-Year Gains for January

(BALTIMORE, MD) – The Helen Delich Bentley Port of Baltimore’s state-owned, public marine terminals opened 2021 in impressive fashion, with all categories posting significant increases over 2020 lows during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, two categories – cars/light trucks and roll on/roll off farm and construction equipment – showed year-over-year gains of more than 20% in January 2021 compared to pre-pandemic numbers in January 2020.

“The Port of Baltimore continues to surpass pre-pandemic numbers from early 2020, demonstrating the resiliency of our state’s economy and the impact of consumer demand,” said Governor Larry Hogan. “As we continue the fight against COVID-19, the Port remains a strong example of the optimistic view of Maryland’s economic recovery.”

CARS, TRUCKS LEAD REBOUND WITH 153.3% GAIN FROM COVID-19 LOWS

January saw continued increases for cars/light trucks, general cargo, containers and roll on/roll off machinery compared to the COVID-19 low points in May and June. The cars and light truck category saw 44,697 units in January, an increase of 153.3% over a low point in May 2020 and a triple-digit percentage increase for the sixth consecutive month.

Roll on/roll off equipment, with 62,967 tons, was up in January by 27.5% over its low point in June 2020, while general cargo, at 879,256 tons, was up 19.8% compared to its June 2020 low – both of those represent the seventh consecutive month for double-digit percentage gains. The container category, with 50,674 boxes, was up 6.9% against its June low.

Compared to January 2020, the January 2021 figures in the roll on/roll off category were up 20.8%, while cars/light trucks were up 20.2% year-over-year. Containers were down 7.3% compared to January 2020 due to inclement weather delays that pushed some scheduled January arrivals into February.

“Starting off 2021, we are very encouraged with how our key cargos are performing,” said Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) Executive Director William P. Doyle. “New car purchases are up and the agriculture equipment market is improving which has helped our roll on/roll off business. The Port of Baltimore’s location near so many distribution, fulfillment and sorting centers makes it an ideal port to handle the rise in e-commerce purchasing we’ve seen during the pandemic. Though COVID-19 still impacts our industry, we have a lot of good signs showing this year.”

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Governor Larry Hogan | MDOT Secretary Gregory Slater | MDOT MPA Executive Director William P. Doyle

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“Maryland’s supply chain has been critical in the battle against COVID-19, and I’m extremely proud of the role the Port of Baltimore has played in moving medical supplies, food, clothing and other goods across the state and the region,” said MDOT Secretary Greg Slater. “Our entire team at the Port – from the men and women on the docks to our public and private-sector partners – have worked tirelessly to keep Maryland moving forward.”

Even during this extremely challenging time, the Port of Baltimore continues to gain new business, as well as increased business from existing customers. The Port’s recent volume includes 14 “ad hoc” ship calls from mid-July 2020 through early March totaling nearly 18,000 Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) containers. Ad hoc ships are vessels that were diverted to Baltimore that were not on a regularly scheduled service.

Last week, the first ship under the Port’s new contract with the Metsa Group of Finland and Logistec Corporation arrived. The multi-year pact is consolidating Metsa’s Mid-Atlantic volumes through Baltimore, with carriers Spliethoff Group and Royal Wagenborg servicing this business. The contract will generate hundreds of jobs and increase Metsa’s footprint at the Port, utilizing warehousing structures that have been underused or vacant for years. Metsa is bringing more than 370,000 tons of rolled paper to Maryland, used to produce materials such as corrugated cardboard boxes and other e-commerce packaging.

As part of the Port’s continuing public-private partnership (P3) with Ports America Chesapeake, construction for a second, 50-foot-deep berth at the Seagirt Marine Terminal is moving forward. The additional berth will allow the Port to handle two ultra-large ships simultaneously. Four additional Neo-Panamax cranes are scheduled to arrive in July and will be operational later this year. The growing container business accentuates the need for the Howard Street Tunnel expansion project in Baltimore, which will accommodate double-stacked rail cars to move cargo to and from the Port. That project is benefiting from public-private investment between the federal government, Maryland, CSX and others.

The Port of Baltimore generates about 15,300 direct jobs, with nearly 140,000 jobs overall linked to Port activities. The Port ranks first among the nation’s ports for volume of autos and light trucks, roll on/roll off heavy farm and construction machinery, and imported gypsum. It ranks 11th among major U.S. ports for foreign cargo handled and 10th for total foreign cargo value.

The health and safety of the Port of Baltimore workforce is paramount, and the public marine terminals have maintained stringent CDC-recommended health and safety measures to ensure safety of its labor force, tenants and partners. MDOT MPA encourages the use of face coverings and social distancing measures for individuals working at the marine terminals, and encourages teleworking for those able to do so. Temperature screenings and other preventative procedures are also continuing

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