

PORT OF VIRGINIA

Updated: June 23, 2011

PORT VOLUMES

The Port of Virginia handled 1.9 million twenty-foot equivalent (TEU) containers in 2010. In addition to its role in container freight, the Port of Virginia handles more bulk freight than it does container freight. The port handled more than 49 million metric tons of total freight in 2010, of which containers made up almost 13.7 million tons.

WHAT IS IT?

The Port of Virginia is the third-busiest container port on the East Coast of the United States and the seventh busiest in the United States by total cargo. The Port of Virginia encompasses the maritime port facilities in the Hampton Roads region as well as the Virginia Inland Port in Northern Virginia. The maritime facilities consist of the Newport News Marine Terminal, the Norfolk International Terminal, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, and the A.P. Moller-Maersk Terminal in Portsmouth. The Maersk terminal is unique in that it was developed privately by the Maersk Group, as opposed to the traditional public ownership of port facilities. However, recently Maersk leased the facility to the Virginia Port Authority.



INCREASING IMPORTANCE

The increasingly important role of the Port of Virginia has been necessitated by the success of other ports in the United States, especially the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. As these ports on the West Coast reach capacity, it will become more economical to ship cargo from Asia directly to East Coast Ports, such as the Port of Virginia. This will be further facilitated by the Panama Canal Expansion, allowing larger container ships access to the canal and shortening their journeys to the East Coast from Asia. These factors should increase

shipping to the East Coast from Asia as the additional time spent to travel through the Panama Canal instead of to the West Coast will cost less than unloading on the West Coast and shipping overland across the United States. In anticipation of the increases at the Port of Virginia, the Port has installed the largest container cranes in the world, capable of reaching 250 feet from shore, as well as dredged the berths to more than fifty feet, both in excess of the largest container ships currently built.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR CENTRAL OHIO?

The Port of Virginia is a main terminal for National Gateway and Heartland Corridor rail corridors. These projects expanded rail from East Coast ports to the Midwest to allow for double-stack containers to travel more efficiently. The National Gateway will have a terminal in

Columbus. The Heartland Corridor travels directly from the Port of Virginia to the Rickenbacker Intermodal Yard in Pickaway County. These links ensure Central Ohio's position as a freight hub help East Coast ports to distribute their cargo more efficiently.