Container Volumes Edge Higher in March in Long Beach
Exports rise nearly 8 percent to five-year high

April 15, 2013

Overall cargo volumes rose 5.4 percent at the Port of Long Beach in March, thanks to a five-year high for exports, which were up 7.9 percent compared to the same month in 2012.

A total of 486,699 TEUs (or twenty-foot equivalent container units) were moved in March. Exports increased to 156,212 TEUs, the highest volume since June 2008. Imports, meanwhile, were down 0.5 percent to 224,913 TEUs.

Empties were up 16.5 percent to 105,574 TEUs. With imports exceeding exports, empty containers are sent overseas to be refilled with goods.

Imports slowed in March due to the Lunar New Year holiday, which affects production in many Asian countries that export to the United States. Compared to 2012, the holiday celebration started later this year and the effects were pushed to March, while last year's holiday slowed trade in February 2012.

For the first three months of 2013, cargo container volume is up 18.9 percent – including 20.3 percent higher imports, 10.9 percent higher exports and 26.8 percent more empties. This strong first quarter is in part due to the larger ships calling at the Port more frequently and the addition of service lines in recent months.

For the latest monthly cargo numbers, click here.

For more details on the cargo numbers, visit www.polb.com/stats.

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