

 **THE PORT OF  
LONG BEACH** NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION \* 925 HARBOR PLAZA \* P.O. BOX 570 \* LONG BEACH CA 90801

**CONTAINER CARGO UP 3.2% IN MARCH**  
**Imports Boosted By Post-Chinese New Year Shipments****April 16, 2003**

Shipping terminals at the Port of Long Beach handled the equivalent of 354,530 twenty-foot-long container cargo units in March, an increase of 3.2 percent over March 2002, based on preliminary figures.

This March's numbers were boosted by post-Chinese New Year's shipments, while last March's numbers were slowed by the Chinese New Year. This year's Chinese New Year's Day was on Feb. 1, shutting down much of the Chinese-speaking world for a week or more. With a two-week lag between the time ships leave Asia and when they arrive in Long Beach, this year's Chinese New Year slowed the port's trade in February. Last year's Chinese New Year was on Feb. 13, slowing the port's trade in March.

This March, inbound container shipments rose 4.6 percent to the equivalent of 179,800 twenty-foot-long container units – the first time that monthly imports were higher than last year's monthly imports since August 2002. Last August, one of the port's leading shipping lines stopped calling at the port. Other shipping lines have moved into the vacated terminals, and are beginning to make up the difference in cargo traffic.

Exports remain weak with outbound container cargo falling 7.2 percent to 81,542 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), compared with March 2002. The number of empty containers shipped through the port climbed 11.1 percent to 93,188 TEUs. Most of the empties were headed overseas.

The Port of Long Beach is one of the world's busiest container cargo seaports, a leading gateway between the U.S. and Asia. In 2002, \$88.8 billion in trade moved through the port. General cargo is shipped in steel containers of various sizes. The standard measure for container cargo is the twenty-foot-long container or the twenty-foot-equivalent unit (TEU). More information is available at [www.polb.com](http://www.polb.com).

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