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IMPORTS AND EXPORTS DECLINE IN JULY

Cargo container volume at the Port of Long Beach fell to the equivalent of 347,963 20-foot-long container units in July, a 8.1 percent decrease from the same period a year ago. July 1998, however, was the best month for all of last year. Long Beach remains the nation's busiest container port. This July's drop was the first year-to-year decline since May 1996's 0.1 percent decrease and the steepest decline since January 1993's decrease of 8.6 percent.

"A number of factors have affected our normal trade pattern – a shipping rate increase in May and the longshore union's negotiations, which extended in July – have impacted our numbers and resulted in a very up and down year for us," said Don Wylie, Long Beach's managing director of maritime services.

Traditionally, the port's peak months have been in the late summer or fall, when Christmas holiday cargoes are shipped. Last year, the peak month was July. This year, May's total of 394,467 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) was the highest ever. (TEUs are a standard measure for the commonly used, 20-foot-long steel cargo containers.) In July, the number of imported containers shipped through Long Beach was 188,588 TEU, a decline of 5.3 percent. The number of exported containers fell 8.3 percent to 74,156 TEUs. The number of empty containers, most of them headed to Asia, dropped 13.6 percent to 85,220 TEUs.

In the first seven months of 1999, Long Beach's container trade rose 6.4 percent, led by a more than 10.4 percent gain in imports. Exports slipped 1.6 percent.

Port of Long Beach					
Container Traffic (TEUs*)					
LOADED					
	Inbound	Outbound	TOTAL LOADED	EMPTIES	TOTAL CONTAINERS
Jul-99	188,586	74,155	262,741	85,220	347,961

Jul-99	199,138	80,950	280,088	98,626	378,714
% change	-5.3%	-8.4%	-6.2%	-13.6%	-8.1%
Jan-99	169,397	77,676	247,073	72,239	319,312
Feb-99	172,482	80,000	252,482	71,647	324,129
Mar-99	171,913	88,699	260,612	87,362	347,974
Apr-99	181,575	77,040	258,615	81,071	339,686
May-99	205,640	87,553	293,193	101,274	394,467
Jun-99	194,410	78,962	273,372	100,603	373,975
Jul-99	188,586	74,155	262,741	85,220	347,961
Year-to-date	1,284,003	564,085	1,848,088	599,416	2,447,504
98-to-date	1,162,631	573,458	1,736,089	563,988	2,300,077
% change	10.4%	-1.6%	6.5%	6.3%	6.4%

***TEUs: 20-foot equivalent units or 20-foot-long cargo container**