



## News Release

### **Port Posts First Trade Increases Since '07 December imports up 13 percent, exports top 30 percent**

January 14, 2010

Reversing a precipitous, extended trade decline, the Port of Long Beach on Thursday reported the first increases in monthly container cargo numbers in two years.

In an unexpected surge, imported cargo increased by more than 13 percent in December 2009 from the same time period a year ago, and exports jumped by more than 30 percent.

"These numbers are far better than expected, and may very well be the first signs of an economic recovery," said Port of Long Beach Executive Director Richard D. Steinke. "That's great news for our region and the nation. We are cautiously optimistic that this marks the beginning of an ongoing, upward trend."



Imported cargo, generally consumer goods, rose to 232,586 twenty-foot equivalent container units, or TEUs, in December, a 13.4 percent gain compared to the same period a year ago. Exports, generally raw materials, jumped 30.9 percent to 123,084 TEUs. The number of empty containers, most sent overseas to be refilled with products, declined by 14.8 percent to 111,567 TEUs.

Overall, shipping terminals at the Port moved 467,237 TEUs in December compared to 429,946 TEUs a year ago, an 8.7 percent increase and the first gain since December 2007.

December is usually a weak month for trade, coming well after retailers have already stocked up for the holiday season, but December 2009 was an exception. It was the second highest month for imports during the year, behind only August. The uptick indicates that stores had stronger than expected sales through the fall and are now aggressively restocking their inventories.

In total for 2009, Port shipping terminals moved a total of 5.1 million TEUs, the weakest year since 2003 and a nearly 22 percent decline from 2008.

Port cargo numbers have a direct link to the economy and jobs, Steinke noted. About 30,000 jobs in Long Beach, 316,000 jobs in Southern California and 1.4 million

nationwide are connected to trade at the Port of Long Beach.

To view the December TEUs in detail, [click here](#). Or for more Port trade statistics, go to [www.polb.com/stats](http://www.polb.com/stats).

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