



News Release

Port Welcomes Largest Container Ship MSC Fabiola measures length of four football fields

March 16, 2012

The Port of Long Beach on Friday welcomed the largest container ship ever to call to North America, the MSC Fabiola. The vessel, measuring 1,200 feet in length and capable of carrying more than 12,000 container units, docked at Pier T on Terminal Island.



"This is the largest container vessel now serving the U.S.-Asia trade, and the fact that it is calling to the Port of Long Beach is significant," said Port Executive Director J. Christopher Lytle. "Few ports can handle these giant ships. Long Beach is big ship ready, and we continue to invest so we'll be ready for the next generation of larger, environmentally friendlier and more efficient cargo ships."

The MSC Fabiola is capable of carrying 12,500 TEUs, or twenty-foot equivalent units, a measurement of cargo containers. The ship, which previously served Asia-to-Europe trade routes, is making its maiden voyage in the trans-Pacific trade. It came from the Port of Yantian in China. After unloading and then loading cargo, the ship is scheduled to depart Long Beach on Monday evening, March 19.

It is the first of what is expected to be a string of larger container ships to be deployed by ocean carriers in Pacific Rim routes. Currently, the larger container ships typically serving Asia and North America have capacities of about 8,000 TEUs.

The MSC Fabiola was built in 2010 and is operated by Geneva-based Mediterranean Shipping Company S.A. The ship measures 1,200 feet long by 157 feet wide and can reach speeds of up to 24 knots. It's scheduled to return monthly to the Total Terminals International facility on Pier T.

Larger ships are more cost effective for ocean carriers and reduce impact on the environment by decreasing diesel consumption. However, few ports in the world have navigation channels deep enough to handle these massive ships. The Port of Long Beach's main channel is 76 feet deep, the deepest in North America.

The Port of Long Beach is investing \$4.5 billion over the next decade to modernize its facilities. Projects include the construction of the Middle Harbor terminal, the world's greenest and most technologically advanced container terminal, and the replacement of the Gerald Desmond Bridge with a higher span that will allow larger ships to reach

the back channels.

The Port of Long Beach is one of the world's premier seaports, a primary gateway for trans-Pacific trade and a trailblazer in innovative goods movement, safety and environmental stewardship. With 140 shipping lines connecting Long Beach to 217 seaports worldwide, the Port handles trade valued at \$155 billion each year and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in Southern California.

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