

# Port of Los Angeles ready for bountiful container volumes

Seroka says cargo shifting back to LA after ILWU contract ratification

Tuesday, October 24, 2023



The Port of Los Angeles handled 748,400 TEUs in September, a 5.4% increase year over year. (Photo: Port of LA)

Port of Los Angeles Executive Director Gene Seroka said a 55% year-over-year (y/y) increase in exports in September bodes well not only for the West Coast gateway but for the entire country.

“Exports are trending up and that’s good news because narrowing the trade gap boosts the U.S. economy. Additionally, export jobs on average pay more than work in other segments,” Seroka said during a media briefing on Monday.

Seroka reported that for the second consecutive month, the port's cargo volume increased compared to 2022. The Port of LA handled 748,400 twenty-foot equivalent units, a 5.4% increase from September 2022. In addition to the 55% increase in exports to 120,635 TEUs, imports were up 14% y/y to 392,608 TEUs. Empty containers handled totaled 235,197 TEUs, an 18.5% decline y/y.

"With a long-term dockworker contract in place, we're seeing more cargo shifting back to Los Angeles," Seroka said. "The table is set to scale up as demand increases."

Mario Cordero, CEO of the neighboring [Port of Long Beach](#), last week also credited the [International Longshore and Warehouse Union contract](#), which was ratified at the end of August, for a [return of positive cargo numbers](#) to San Pedro Bay.

Intermittent work stoppages this year during contract negotiations between the ILWU and Pacific Maritime Association negatively impacted both ports. From Jan. 1 through Sept. 30, the [Port of LA processed 6,398,126 TEUs](#), an 18.6% drop from the same period in 2022.

At Monday's [media briefing](#), Seroka hosted Matthew Shay, president and CEO of the National Retail Federation, who shared the port chief's optimism.

"Retailers have been hard at work getting holiday inventories in place to provide consumers with great products, competitive prices and convenience at every opportunity," Shay said. "As we gear up for the holiday season, we expect moderate growth to continue as consumers focus on value and household priorities."