

# Splash

247.com

## Baltimore port expected to open full main shipping channel this weekend

Sam Chambers

June 5, 2024



Screenshot

The full 213 m wide main shipping channel into Baltimore port will open this weekend some 75 days since the 9,962 teu Dali containership lost power, slammed into a bridge and cut off operations at most of America's ninth largest port.

Crews lifted the last large piece of the downed Francis Scott Key Bridge blocking the Patapsco River's main shipping channel yesterday morning.

Key Bridge Response Unified Command crews are now set to use dredging buckets and a large salvage grab to pull smaller chunks of debris out of the water before reopening the full channel this weekend.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in the US released a preliminary report last month into the *Dali's* fatal collision with Baltimore's largest bridge. The vessel, managed by Synergy Group and on charter to Maersk, experienced electrical blackouts about 10 hours before leaving the Port of Baltimore and again shortly before it slammed into the Francis Key Bridge, killing six construction workers.

The first power outage occurred after a crewmember mistakenly closed an exhaust damper while conducting maintenance, causing one of the ship's diesel engines to stall, investigators said. Shortly after leaving Baltimore, the ship crashed into one of the bridge's supporting columns because another power outage, clearly captured in video footage, caused it to lose steering and propulsion.

The board said the fatal outage came about four minutes before the crash when electrical breakers unexpectedly tripped causing a loss of power to all shipboard lighting and most equipment when it was 1 km from the bridge.

The *Dali* crew restored power, but another blackout occurred about 320 m from the bridge, which stopped all three steering pumps. The crew was unable to move the rudder to steer.

Plans are being drawn up to get a replacement bridge up and running by 2028, while insurers have warned the *Dali* accident could be one of the largest marine claims in history.