

Longshoremen reject further talks with US Maritime Alliance amid automation concerns

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Port of Mobile: Source:

Alabama Port Authority

The International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) announced plans to suspend labor negotiations with the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) amid union concerns over the use of automation.

Both parties had been negotiating local agreements related to a coast-wide master contract set to expire on 30 September 2024.

However, ILA said it is opting to cancel talks with USMX after learning that APM Terminals and Maersk Line are reportedly using an auto gate system at the Port of Mobile in Alabama and at other U.S. ports. The system autonomously processes trucks without ILA labor, the union said.

ILA argues that the use of this technology violates the current agreement that ILA has with USMX. The union also says it will not meet with USMX until the auto gate issue is resolved.

USMX did not return a request for comment by press time.

ILA also contends that APM Terminals and Maersk repeatedly try to introduce automation and semi-automation at U.S. facilities, including semi-automation at the Port of Hampton Roads in Virginia and full automation at Pier 400 in Los Angeles, California.