



The Port of Seattle

Celebrating a century of growth and economic achievement.

The Port of Seattle will celebrate its first centennial on September 5, 2011. It was organized as the first port district in the state of Washington after the passage of the Port District Act on March 14, 1911. Created as an independent governmental entity with the power to levy taxes with voter approval and to issue bonds, the Port of Seattle was the only entity of its type in the United States at that time. Despite the early challenges, the port began to flourish within the first 10 years of its operation. Over the past 100 years, the Port of Seattle has burgeoned into one of the 10 most successful ports in the United States.

The number of vessel calls at the Port of Seattle has increased more than 20 percent since 2001. In 2010, more than 1,244 commercial vessels carrying either cargo or passengers called at the Port of Seattle's eight terminal facilities. Of those vessels, 787 were container ships, 93 were grain vessels and 141 were barges. Last year, the three busiest of the eight terminal facilities of the Port of Seattle were Terminal 18 with 310 vessel calls, Terminal 5 with 228, and Terminal 46 with 188.

The Port of Seattle has emerged as a large containerized facility in which cargo is packaged and shipped in large metal boxes known as cargo containers. The containers are transported to the port by ship and then loaded onto trains and trucks for inland transportation. The combination of two or more modes of cargo transportation is known as intermodal transportation. The Port of Seattle has also evolved as the terminus for the trucking, ship and rail industries to transport containers domestically and internationally. It is estimated that the large influx of cargo handled at the Port of Seattle generates approximately \$2 billion in revenue for the region and supports 135,000 jobs related to the cargo industry.

The cargo capacity of a standard intermodal container 20 feet in length and 8 feet wide is known in the cargo industry as a twenty-foot equivalent unit, or TEU. The Port of Seattle was ranked 52nd in the world for the amount of cargo in TEUs transiting the port and the seventh largest North American port in terms of TEUs. In 2010, the Port of Seattle attained a record-breaking apex for its total cargo volume of 2.1 million TEUs. The contributing factors to the increase in cargo included the addition of several large container ships with an increased capacity. For example, on July 19, 2010, the 6,500-TEU *CMA CGM Rabelais* container ship first called at the Port of Seattle's Terminal 18. The cargo-handling record for Terminal 18 was achieved

that day with the loading and discharge of 4,300 containers.

The Port of Seattle has expanded its cruise facilities and sharply increased the influx of cruise passengers traveling to Alaska. Between 2004 and 2010, the number of cruise passengers departing on ships from Seattle nearly doubled from 563,000 passengers in 2004 to 931,698 passengers aboard 223 cruise ships in 2010. Today, the Port of Seattle is a formidable competitor with Canada, capturing a large segment of cruise passengers on weekly voyages to Alaska and providing a healthy influx of capital into the local economy.

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According to the U.S. Department of Commerce Census Bureau, the Port of Seattle is ranked ninth in the nation for total vessel trade by dollar value, outranking Baltimore, Oakland, Philadelphia, Corpus Christi and every other Washington port. The primary exports from the Port of Seattle include grain, seed and fruit. Listed according to size, the largest amounts of imports passing through the Port of Seattle in 2010 were from China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Vietnam.

With the expansion of trade from the Pacific Rim, the preeminence of the Port of Seattle in the global economy will undoubtedly increase. As the portal to the Pacific, the Port of Seattle may one day surpass competing West Coast ports in size and importance.

KATIE MATISON, a shareholder at Lane Powell and chair of the London Market Practice Group, is also a member of the firm's Admiralty and Maritime Practice. She focuses her practice on all aspects of marine litigation and transactions as well as insurance coverage matters for the London Insurance Market. Reach her at matisonk@lanepowell.com or 206.223.7029.