



MARITIME ON A MISSION

PUBLIC PORT AUTHORITIES ARE COLLABORATING WITH LAND-BASED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PARTNERS TO OVERCOME CONGESTION CHALLENGES CAUSED BY MOVING CARGO AND CONTAINERS.

>> For public port authorities, dramatic increases in international trade finds them reaching out to broader-based transportation partners and the business community in order to ensure the efficient movement of cargo.

The higher volumes of international trade require a concentrated infrastructure demand, which is placing more stress on the nation's surface and maritime transportation systems.

These stresses are affecting corporate America's ability to move its commodities and compete internationally. "I see the business community as an existing ally, and one that

can participate more directly in addressing issues that affect trade flow, both on the land and water sides," says Kurt Nagle, president and CEO, American Association of Port Authorities, which has 160 public port members representing the United States, Canada and a high percentage of principal ports located throughout Latin America.

Nagle says appropriate amounts of funding are challenges for public ports as there are limitations as to what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can do. The Corps is expected to improve navigation channels to handle larger vessels that are being built, but are struggling to maintain existing chan-

nels at their current depths due to lack of funding.

"This is becoming more of a problem and certainly something that the business community could assist in by making their concerns known to Congress and the administration," Nagle says.

In addition to the business community, the port community is reaching out to the broader freight community, including truckers, railroads, freight shippers such as the Wal-Marts and Targets of the world, and ocean carriers, in order to increase and improve the flow of cargo through the system. "What we have seen in a significant aspect of the congestion

issue is the land-side connections in and out of the ports, not necessarily the port facilities themselves," Nagle notes. "Ports recognize their roles are expanding beyond just their physical site. It doesn't end at the gates."

Innovative methods and programs to address the congestion surrounding cargo are being shared in the form of best practices, experiences gained and lessons learned in regard to how ports can look toward either modernizing their infrastructures or conducting maintenance to improve the productivity and efficiency of the existing infrastructure.

A program that is making a difference is the PierPass gate-hour extension program launched in July 2005 at port terminals in the severely congested Los Angeles and Long Beach area. "The program moved more of the traffic in and out of the port facility to off hours to use both terminals, which reduces congestion at the gates," Nagle says. "This also reduces the congestion in

and out of the facilities, which affects not only the port facilities but the general community as well."

The system appears to be working. A survey in May of 2006 found that most of the 480 truck drivers polled stated that the extended gate hours and the 24-hour pass that exempted the holders

of Everett, Seattle and Tacoma created the FAST Corridor program, where members cooperatively developed a \$354 million package of 15 road and rail crossing projects to be carried out during a six-year time frame. The effort has attracted \$30 million in federal funding to get the project started.

In Virginia, the Port of Virginia, which includes ports in Norfolk, Newport News and Portsmouth, implemented a chassis pull system, which enabled both ocean carriers and motor carriers to access and use chassis more efficiently, resulting in a 23 percent reduction in the equipment inventory, and a 27 percent increase in asset utilization. These efforts, carried out by the Virginia Terminals Inc. and Ocean Carriers Equipment Management Association, were awarded with the 2006 Intermodal Achievement Award from the Intermodal Association of North America.

A PROGRAM THAT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IS THE PIERPASS GATE-HOUR EXTENSION PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN JULY 2005 AT PORT TERMINALS IN THE SEVERELY CONGESTED LOS ANGELES AND LONG BEACH AREA.

from traffic mitigation fees resulted in reduced tariff on harbor area freeways and at the marine terminals.

What's more, the Alameda Corridor has improved the movement of containers by rail out of the facilities at Los Angeles and Long Beach.

In Washington state, the communities