

# Viewpoint

## GAINERS & LOSERS

Soon the athlete — and the fashion savvy — will be able to dress in Under Armour from head to toe.

**Foot fetish**  
Have you ever heard so much buzz over a shoe? All the talk is about Under Armour's new cross-trainer.

**Port of Baltimore**  
We were remiss in not giving credit where it's due. The port's record cargo export business in 2007 is good news for the region.

**Golf weather**  
Do your part to help the economy. Get out there and play.

**Allergies**  
Have you and your co-workers been sniffing your way through the day? Blame the record-high pollen counts.

## BALTIMORE SUN

### Port exports set record

## **80% increase in autos leads way**

By Laura McCandlish

Sun Reporter

April 23, 2008

Propelled by a weakening dollar, a surge of exports - especially autos - drove the value of cargo moving through the port of Baltimore last year to a record \$41.9 billion, though tonnage increased less than 1 percent, the Maryland Port Administration said yesterday.

The gain of more than 13 percent overall was a \$5 billion increase over 2006, according to the annual report released by the MPA.

An 80 percent increase in autos, to nearly 294,000, made Baltimore the top vehicle exporter in the nation, eclipsing Jacksonville, Fla., the MPA said.

Total tonnage was 30.8 million tons, with exports up 35 percent to 11.3 million tons. Imports, which have become more expensive as the value of the dollar has fallen against many currencies, fell 12 percent to 19.5 million tons.

Volume handled by the port's public marine terminals rose by 100,000 tons to 8.7 million tons, also a record.

Overall, the port ranked 12th nationally for total dollar value of cargo and 13th for cargo volume, up from 14th for freight volume in 2006.

The port directly employs about 16,500 people, MPA officials said.

"Last year was a very healthy year," said James J. White, director of the Maryland Port Administration. "But looking at the momentum we have right now, we do expect it to slow because the U.S. economy is strained. We're probably going to take a dip this year and into the following year."

Overall shipments of containers - the port's bread and butter - rose 6.4 percent, with imports unchanged at about 190,000 in the equivalent of 20-foot containers, while exports increased 14 percent, to 130,000 units.

"Containers are very important to us," White said. "It's still a major commodity and really what pays the bills. Without containers, our revenues would suffer tremendously."

The port's handling of automobiles and roll-on/roll-off, or ro-ro, cargo, which includes farm machinery and construction equipment, remains a bright spot, White said. The port handles more ro-ro, trucks and imported forest products than any other U.S. port. Lumber volume declined in 2007, however, as the housing market cooled, and White expects that

trend to continue this year.

The number of automobiles handled by the port rose 26 percent last year, to 597,817. Imports were down 7,000, to 304,258 autos, but that was more than offset by the surge in exports. Chrysler LLC, in particular, expanded its export business in Europe, shipping Dodge cars in addition to trucks there for the first time, according to Amports, which runs four auto-processing terminals in Baltimore. Chrysler ships about 98 percent of its exports - which include Jeep and Dodge vehicles - through Baltimore, White said.

"Chrysler has pinpointed Baltimore as the best place for their distribution," said Richard Kilbride, Amport's senior vice president for business development.

"Other car companies have also found out it's an exceptional import location for the Mid-Atlantic. With the economy down, that just shows how good this location is, because in a down market they did fantastic."

Many foreign companies, such as Toyota, Honda and Hyundai, manufacture vehicles in the United States, which could be another reason that import volume is down, Kilbride said.

But Baltimore has cemented its reputation within the industry as "the premier port" for exports of "basically anything with wheels on it," said Paul Bingham, a principal with Global Insights Inc. who monitors the port sector.

"Exporters like using Baltimore because they trust the port collectively to handle those goods efficiently and with minimal damage," Bingham said.

## **BALTIMORE EXAMINER**

### **Business**

Port of Baltimore sets cargo record

Aaron Cahall, The Examiner

**BALTIMORE -**

It was a record-setting year for the Helen Delich Bentley Port of Baltimore.

The total value of cargo moving through the Port of Baltimore reached an all-time high in 2007 as \$41.9 billion in goods passed through, breaking the previous record set a year before.

Baltimore also knocked Jacksonville, Fla., out of the top slot to become the nation's leading auto export port, and also took the top slot for sugar imports. The port ranked 12th nationally for total dollar value of cargo and rose one

spot to 13th for total foreign cargo handled.

Port officials attributed the jumps to a weakened dollar boosting exports and high fuel prices giving Baltimore a geographical advantage as the closest East Coast port to the Midwest.

“We’re the further inland port, we’re able to get to our customers quicker and more efficiently and in many cases less expensively than many of our competing ports,” said port spokesman Richard Scher. “With fuel prices the way they are, a quicker, shorter drive from point A to point B is going to be valued in today’s economy.”

General cargo through the public marine terminals set a record for the sixth straight year with 8.7 million tons, up from 8.6 million tons in 2006, according to port information.

Exports overall reached 11.3 million tons last year, 35 percent higher than 2006 and the highest level since 1996. Auto exports from both private and public terminals increased 80 percent to 293,559 units from 162,784, forest products rose 33 percent to 446,447 tons, and steel saw the largest increase, up 118 percent to 117,596 tons from 53,856 tons.

The port’s increase in sugar imports may come from increases in ethanol production, said Peter Morici, a professor at the University of Maryland’s Robert H. Smith School of Business and former chief economist at the U.S. International Trade Commission. Based on corn, rising ethanol production has made corn products including corn sweetener more expensive, causing a jump in sugar imports. A weak dollar also boosts exports, he said.

“The cheap dollar against the euro has been helping American exports a lot, and it’s been helping in the auto sector,” Morici said. “You’re starting to see it pay off in Baltimore for that reason.”

## **DAILY RECORD**

### **Imports fall, but MPA says overall numbers are up for port**

ANDY ROSEN  
Daily Record Business Writer  
April 22, 2008

A weak dollar helped to boost exports at the Port of Baltimore last year, and though imports fell for the same reason, the port handled more cargo in 2007 than it did in 2006.

According to U.S. Census figures compiled by the Maryland Port Administration, 2007 saw a 35 percent increase in exports by weight as the total amount shipped rose to 11.3 million tons. MPA spokesman Richard Scher said imports fell by about 12 percent to 19.5 million tons.

The total amount of foreign cargo shipped through the port rose slightly to 30.8 million tons, and the total value of the cargo was \$41.9 billion — up from \$36.7 billion in 2006. The MPA reported that the port's national ranking for total cargo rose to 13th from 14th in 2007, while Baltimore's ranking for total dollar value held steady at 12th.

"We are very happy to be where we are right now," Scher said. He acknowledged that imports fell as well, but said "that's a national trend that is being repeated in many other ports as well."

Baltimore remained the top U.S. importer of forest products, though it saw a 6 percent overall decrease in the amount brought in.

Doug Sanford, an associate professor of management at Towson University who has studied the Port of Baltimore's economic effect on the region, said the results show that the port is playing to its strengths, such as its ability to handle "roll on/roll off" cargo, which is generally wheeled machinery that can be driven on and off ships.

"The facilities that the Port of Baltimore has not only are up and running, but they are working quite smoothly," Sanford said.

He said the weak American dollar was likely a factor in the growth of exports. The Port of Baltimore became the country's top-ranked automotive exporter in 2007, according to the MPA report. The port also became the top U.S. importer of sugar.

Walter Mitchell, principal of Mitchell Consulting Group Inc., a Brooklandville company that specializes in marine transportation, said Baltimore exports were helped by the weak dollar. He said they were also boosted by a strong European market for coal.

Overall, he said 2007 showed that the port is "on a roll." He said officials there have done a good job marketing Baltimore as more convenient than other locations to Midwestern markets. He also noted that the port has done well integrating new, more strict national security controls.

"I think where Baltimore has done particularly well is it's leveraged its location as an inland port to shippers who are as far west as Chicago ... and as far south as Memphis and into the Carolinas," he said.

## **WBAL RADIO**

Port Reports Cargo Records

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

WBAL Radio as reported by Robert Lang

The Port of Baltimore reports that 2007 was the second year in a row the Port broke records for the amount of cargo handled.

Based on U.S. Census Bureau figures, \$41.9-billion worth of cargo moved through the Port last year.

That figure represents a \$5.2-billion increase over 2006, which was a record year.

General cargo moving through the Port totals 8.7-million tons last year, a 100-thousand-ton increase over 2006.

General cargo includes containers, automobiles, steel, paper and other wood products, and farm and construction equipment.

Exports reached 11.3-million tons last year, a 35% increase over the previous year.

Maryland Port Administration spokesman Richard Scher says the export increase is due to the weak value of the dollar, making American made goods cheaper for other countries.

He also says the Port of Baltimore is the closest to the Midwest, and so it is used by auto makers and other Midwestern based companies to ship their product.

## **JOURNAL OF COMMERCE**

### **Baltimore sets cargo records**

William Armbruster/Shipping Digest

The Port of Baltimore enjoyed another record-breaking year in 2007, according to the Maryland Port Administration.

Citing foreign trade data compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau, the total value of cargo that moved through the port last year was a record \$41.9 billion, a \$5 billion hike over 2006's then-record \$36.7 billion. Imports were valued at \$27.9 billion, while exports totaled \$13.9 billion.

Export tonnage reached 11.3 million tons, up 35 percent over 2006, while imports totaled 19.4 million tons, down from 22.2 million tons in 2006.

Autos, steel, paper and wood products, and roll-on, roll-off cargo -- basically farm and construction equipment -- all showed gains.

Auto exports from both the public and private terminals increased 80 percent, from 162,784 to 293,559 units, catapulting Baltimore from second in the nation to first place for total auto business. Total volume last year was 597,817 units, up 26 percent from the 474,136 units driving through the port in 2006.

Forest product exports jumped 33 percent, from 335,454 tons to 446,447 tons, while steel saw the largest percentage increase in exports, vaulting 118 percent from 53,856 tons to 117,596 tons; ro-ro units from the public terminals rose 53 percent, from 306,498 tons to 469,827 tons. The public terminals also registered a 10 percent leap in export containers, from 191,887 TEUs in 2006 to 211,343 TEUs last year.