



## **UPDATE ON WEST COAST PORT OPERATIONS**

**June 9, 2023**

After a series of coordinated and disruptive work actions led by the ILWU at the West Coast's largest ports between June 2 and June 7, operations have generally improved at the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Oakland. However, the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma continue to suffer significant slowdowns as a result of targeted ILWU work actions.

Over this period, the ILWU at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach refused to dispatch lashers who secure cargo for trans-Pacific voyages and unfasten cargo after ships arrive. Without this vital function, ships sit idle and cannot be loaded or unloaded, leaving American exports sitting at the docks unable to reach their destination.

The ILWU's refusal to dispatch lashers had been part of a broader effort to withhold necessary labor from the docks. Wednesday morning, for example, the Union failed to fill 260 of the 900 jobs ordered at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. In total, 559 registered longshore workers who came to the dispatch hall were denied work opportunities by the Union.

Each shift without lashers working resulted in more ships sitting idle, occupying berths and causing a backup of incoming vessels. With the ILWU's decision to stop withholding labor, terminals at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach have for now averted the domino effect that would have resulted in backups not seen since last year's supply chain meltdown.

Even though some port operations have improved, the ILWU's repeated disruptive work actions at strategic ports along the West Coast are increasingly causing companies to divert cargo to more customer-friendly and reliable locations along the Gulf and East Coasts. It is difficult to win back cargo once it's diverted.

PMA will continue to provide updates on West Coast port operations, which are critical to our national supply chain and the country's economic well-being. West Coast ports account for roughly 12% of the nation's GDP.

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