

## **Port St. Maarten reports a Positive Increase in Cargo Imports**

PORT ST. MAARTEN – Port St. Maarten Cargo Division has seen growth of two per cent from January 2017 to June 2017 in full imports versus the same period of 2016. This shows a positive temperature and can be associated to some positive movements within the economy of the country.

Port St. Maarten transshipment cargo continues to show robust double-digit growth numbers showing an increase of 17% compared to same period last year.

Overall total cargo throughput stands at eight per cent increase from January 2017 to June 2017 of 53,609 containers compared to same period last year of 49,420.

Predictions are that further growth is expected on the import full and steady very robust double-digit growth as it relates to transshipment in closing the year 2017 if trends remain the same.

The port was represented in May at the Caribbean Shipping Association (CSA) 16th CSA Executives Conference (CSEC) conference hosted by the Curacao Ports Authority in Curacao.

The conference featured some key presentations on the latest developments and plans affecting shipping and logistics in the Caribbean. Key topics such as cybersecurity, maritime security, and logistics were discussed.

Topics ranged from: Cyber security; Latest development on Maritime Security at the International Maritime Organization (IMO); Ocean shipping – asking the very sought out question is there finally some growth out there? Inspections and Compliance, Marine Transportation systems and commercial regulations; Shipping alliances; and US trade policies.

“From most reports, discussions after each event, it can be stated without a doubt that the CSA conference was an outstanding success. Common denominator: security, competitive edge and proper analysis of port activities- processing the big data for better decision making. However, the key emphasis or focus points throughout the conference was regarding ‘Staying Competitive in a Brave New World’ as President of CSA Mr. David Jean Marie continued to emphasize.

“The brave new world as he put it – of Maritime trade, fueled by the growth of mega ships, is quickly coming to terms with significant issues related to competition, among shippers and supply chain efficiency. From the CSA president words, David Jean- Marie, it is imperative that we cultivate a deeper understanding of how mega ships, major lines and big network synergies will impact regional port and terminal operations developments and investments and activities in the wider shipping community.

“What stood out here for many, is fostering and maintaining key networks and synergies among our partners in the business for sustainable growth within the regions. But to take it a step further, as a Port we have continue to stay abreast and maintain a full and in-depth understanding of the full extent of the market, benchmarking and having clear and concise competitive analysis understanding; having in-depth knowledge of our cargo customers and their customers; their routing or logistical routes; and having an in-depth mapping analysis of their activities.

“Our port and the business development apparatus continues to maintain ultra-focus in this regard designing competi-

tive analysis dashboards illustrating the necessary details of our business. Knowing the full blueprint of our business is key to sustainable growth and find opportunities for more opportune endeavors.

“It is imperative to note that to continue to develop trade or develop traffic within the arenas of the Port it is necessary to keenly focus on each service and each product and how it competes with respective standards to bolster the target market.

“Portbase, a Port Community System, where companies can benefit from a multitude of intelligent services for simple and efficient information exchange, both between companies and between the public and private sector, will be rolled out in 2019 at Port St. Maarten.

“The Portbase Community system will also allow for increased efficiency where logistics and movement of containers is concerned, thereby increasing the competitiveness of the destination in the area of cargo and transshipment operations,” stated Port St. Maarten Cargo and Terminal Operations Manager Roger Lawrence.

CSA was established in 1971 to facilitate development of an efficient, viable Caribbean shipping industry. Since then, the Association has become the voice of the region’s shipping industry and a major regional forum in which matters relevant to the growth and development of Caribbean shipping are discussed.

The CSA represents its membership in relevant regional hemispheric groupings, associations and organizations - governmental, multilateral and private sector; and maintains Observer status with leading Caribbean multilateral bodies CARICOM and the Association of Caribbean States.

Caribbean Shipping Association represents private and public sector interests across the entire Caribbean area, including South, Central and North American ports; in all four major language groups - English, French, Spanish, and Dutch. The CSA uses English as its official language.

CSA membership includes 12 national shipping associations and over 100 individual member entities, including port authorities, terminal operators, shipping agents, shipping lines, tug and salvage companies, consultants, freight forwarders, leasing companies and others.



**Delegates at the Caribbean Shipping Association (CSA) 16th CSA Executives Conference in Willemstad, Curacao.**

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