

Industry News 業界新聞

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**Port congestion and vessel schedule delays at US west coast ports**

Members should be alerted that the current port congestion and vessel schedule delay at U.S. West Coast ports may not be resolved quickly. The contract renewal between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), started in July, has failed to yield progress and the workers resorted to industrial action. The LA/LB workers are supported by workers in other U.S. West Coast ports with similar actions. Attempts to shift sailings to ports in Mexico and Canada jammed these ports immediately.

While labor issue might have triggered the current congestion, there are other contributing factors. These factors include use of bigger container ships causing deterioration in crane productivity and query-side performance, insufficient investment in inter-modal facilities especially freight railroads, shipping lines' abandoning their chassis pools, environmental issues that hinder port development, etc. These factors may not disappear quickly even if the labor issue is resolved.

Members should also be alerted that the delay in sea shipments have already led to serious shortage in air freight capacity. Air freight cost surged shortly and delay could be serious too. Therefore, members are reminded to liaise with their U.S. counterparts and carriers closely. Please be advised to plan much further ahead and avoid urgent shipments.

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2014 年 11 月 20 日

**美國西岸碼頭裝卸貨櫃的延誤**

目前美國西岸碼頭裝卸貨櫃的延誤未必可於短時間內解決。國際碼頭與倉庫工會 (ILWU) 和太平洋海事協會 (PMA) 自本年 7 月開始商討合約續訂，但至今仍未能達成任何協議，工人繼續罷工。西岸其他碼頭的工人均支持有關工業行動。把貨物轉運至墨西哥及加拿大令該地的碼頭也出現延誤。

是次延誤除了因勞資糾紛外，也涉及其他因素。這包括僱用較大的貨櫃船令起重機的運作效率下降，與貨櫃相連的鐵路投資不足，船公司棄用車架作業法，以及環保因素影響碼頭發展。這些事件都不會因勞資糾紛結束而得以解決。



現時船運付貨的延誤將令空運容量出現緊張，空運費用短期將增加，亦同樣有可能出現延誤。會員請與美國買家及船公司保持密切聯繫，並作好預先準備，盡量避免付運緊急貨件。

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