

Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the first quarter of 2020

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (June 4) released the statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the first quarter of 2020.

In the first quarter of 2020, total port cargo throughput decreased by 3.2% compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 57.2 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 5.5% compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 39.0 million tonnes, while outward port cargo decreased by 17.8% compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 18.1 million tonnes.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput decreased by 7.3% in the first quarter of 2020. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 6.1% and 9.9% respectively compared with the preceding quarter. The seasonally adjusted series enables more meaningful shorter-term comparison to be made for discerning possible variations in trends.

Port cargo

Within port cargo, seaborne and river cargo decreased by 4.5% and 0.9% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 35.7 million tonnes and 21.5 million tonnes respectively.

Within inward port cargo, imports increased by 12.1% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 24.5 million tonnes, while inward transshipment decreased by 4.1% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 14.5 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports (including domestic exports and re-exports) and outward transshipment decreased by 40.0% and 7.2% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 4.3 million tonnes and 13.9 million tonnes respectively.

The detailed port cargo statistics are summarised in Table 1.

The main countries/territories of loading of inward port cargo and countries/territories of discharge of outward port cargo are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.

Comparing the first quarter of 2020 with the first quarter of 2019, triple-digit or double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (+181.3%), Malaysia (+18.7%), Vietnam (+15.0%) and the mainland of China (+10.9%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Indonesia

(-46.9%), Singapore (-46.2%), the United States of America (-26.7%), Thailand (-12.6%) and Korea (-10.3%). For outward port cargo, triple-digit or double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Macao (+153.2%) and Thailand (+11.6%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Malaysia (-26.7%), Vietnam (-25.8%), the United States of America (-24.8%), the mainland of China (-21.8%), Korea (-21.0%), Japan (-18.5%) and the Philippines (-13.9%).

The principal commodities of inward port cargo and outward port cargo are shown in Table 4 and Table 5 respectively.

Comparing the first quarter of 2020 with the first quarter of 2019, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "stone, sand and gravel" (+58.4%), "machinery" (-11.3%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-11.5%) and "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (-20.6%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "stone, sand and gravel" (-71.1%), "machinery" (-13.8%), "pulp and waste paper" (-12.7%), "metalliferous ores and metal scrap" (-11.9%) and "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-10.2%).

Containers

In the first quarter of 2020, the port of Hong Kong handled 4.10 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 7.3% compared with the first quarter of 2019. Within this total, laden containers decreased by 8.9% to 3.43 million TEUs, while empty containers increased by 1.9% to 0.67 million TEUs. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 7.6% and 10.4% to 1.80 million TEUs and 1.63 million TEUs respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 4.6% in the first quarter of 2020. Within this total, inward and outward laden containers decreased by 4.0% and 5.2% respectively.

In the first quarter of 2020, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 10.2% and 5.9% compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 2.38 million TEUs and 1.04 million TEUs respectively.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 11.0% and 6.1% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 0.52 million TEUs and 1.28 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 15.1% and 8.8% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with the first quarter of 2019 to 0.40 million TEUs and 1.22 million TEUs respectively.

The detailed container statistics are summarised in Table 6.

Port cargo and laden container statistics are compiled from a sample of consignments listed in the cargo manifests supplied by shipping companies and

agents to the C&SD.

Vessel arrivals

Comparing the first quarter of 2020 with the first quarter of 2019, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 2.1% to 6 165, with the total capacity also increasing by 3.5% to 99.1 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 42.5% to 19 794, with the total capacity also decreasing by 13.3% to 23.8 million net tons.

The statistics on vessel arrivals in Hong Kong are given in Table 7.

Vessel statistics are compiled by the Marine Department primarily from general declarations submitted by ship masters and authorised shipping agents. Pleasure vessels and fishing vessels plying exclusively within the river trade limits are excluded.

Further information

More detailed statistics on port cargo, containers and vessels are published in the report "Hong Kong Shipping Statistics, First Quarter 2020". Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp130.jsp?productCode=B1020008).

For enquiries about port cargo and container statistics, please contact the Outward Processing and Shipping Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 2126 or email: shipping@censtatd.gov.hk). For enquiries about vessel statistics, readers may contact the Statistics Section under the Planning, Development and Port Security Branch of the Marine Department (Tel: 2852 3662 or email: st-sec@mardep.gov.hk).