

Each West Coast Terminal Has Its Own Specialties, Profitability

Ports Are as Varied as the Cargo Handled

By NANCY YOSHIHARA, Times Staff Writer

The major ports along the West Coast operate independently under separate quasi-governmental organizations. Their mandate is simple: to operate profitably while serving shippers and the region.

The ports either operate their own facilities or lease them out. Operating revenues are earned from ships using the port and from commercial development and leasing of port properties. A few ports, however, receive local subsidies and some, including Portland, Seattle, Oakland and San Diego, also receive money from airport operations.

Port authorities use various data such as tonnage, value of cargo and number of containers to document how well they are doing. However, these measures are not entirely comparable from port to port, officials say, and increases in one or all of the categories do not necessarily translate into comparable revenue and profit increases.

Generally, tonnage at all ports rose in 1985 from the year before, although the number of vessels visiting the ports was down slightly. The increase was possible because ships are larger and trade continues to rise.

Below are thumbnail sketches of eight major West Coast ports, including financial results. Only operating revenues from marine operations and properties are listed. Income from operations is before depreciation and interest and does not include airport operations, except Oakland and San Diego.

All results are for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1985, except for Tacoma and Seattle, which operate on a calendar year basis. Also, Seattle did not make available its results for the year ended last Dec. 31 so 1984's results are shown. Nonoperating and airport-related revenues and expenses for items such as interest are not given separately but are taken into account in net income figures.

Long Beach's port area is perhaps best known for the Queen Mary and Spruce Goose, two tourist attractions located on the port's recreational waterfront properties. The port's major import and its major export is petroleum—imports being crude oil and exports being primarily refined products such as jet fuel, gasoline and bunker oil used to fuel ships.

Other major imports include electrical machinery, steel and plastics. Other exports include coke, grain, cotton and wastepaper.

Operating revenues totaled \$63.75 million in fiscal 1985, up from \$61.89 million the year before. Income from operations was \$39.71 million, up from \$37.10 million. Net income was \$31.34 million, up from \$21.05 million.

Long Beach hosted 4,652 vessels, compared to 4,670 the year before.

Los Angeles, which had 413,387 cars pass through its port, claims to be the leading

import auto port in the United States and was one of two West Coast ports selected as a point of entry for the Hyundai car import from South Korea.

The port also lists itself as the No. 2 U.S. cruise port, after Miami, having had 409,096 passengers board cruise ships last year.

The Los Angeles port had operating revenues of \$91.8 million, up from \$80.59 million. Income from operations was \$55.26 million, compared to \$44.89 million the previous year.

Net income was \$48.75 million, compared to \$41.70 million the year before. A total of 3,444 ships visited the port in 1985, up from 3,146.

Oakland port's cargo is nearly 85% containerized. Exports, primarily agricultural products from the San Joaquin Valley, account for more than half of Oakland's total trade volume. The biggest volume of imports is in fruits and vegetables, beverages, meat and meat products, and iron and steel.

Operating revenues were \$35.88 million, compared to \$31.55 million. Operating income, including airport operations, was \$36.78 million, up from \$27.7 million. Net income was \$23.34 million, compared to \$11.89 million the year before. Ship visits totaled 1,582, compared to 1,586 in 1984.

Portland had been the No. 1 port of entry on West Coast for foreign cars until recently, when Los Angeles hosed it out of first place. Toyota, for example, distributes autos to 27 states from Portland and South Korea's new Hyundai is entering the West through Portland as well as Los Angeles. Portland exports grain, wheat, logs and lumber, hay and alfalfa.

Operating revenues, which include a ship repair yard and dredging operations, totaled \$63.62 million, compared to \$57.37 million the year before. Income from operations was \$5.54 million, up from \$3.63 million.

Portland had an operating loss in 1985 from port operations but ended the year with \$6.78 million in profits primarily because of revenues from property taxes. It had a net loss of \$921,000 in 1984. In 1985, 1,238 vessels visited Portland, down from 1,247 the year before.

San Diego's port has very limited facilities for handling container cargo and specializes instead in commodities such as cement, chemical fertilizers, lumber and fruits that are not shipped in containers.

Primarily a regional port, San Diego's business is split evenly between exports out of and imports into the Southwest. Cement from Japan and Mexico is the port's biggest volume import. Its biggest volume of exports is in copper concentrate from Arizona to Japan, followed by fertilizer from New Mexico to Japan and South Korea and local scrap metal, which is shipped to all over the Pacific.

In fiscal 1985, operating revenues totaled

\$5.99 million, compared to \$4.53 million. Income from operations, including the airport, was \$22.51 million, up from \$20.78 million. Net income was \$37.6 million, up from \$30.7 million in 1984. A total of 1,257 vessels visited the San Diego port in 1985, compared to 1,368 the year before.

San Francisco's port was California's leader until after World War II, when the state's population growth shifted south. Today, the port is no longer dominant in the state and less important than the Port of Oakland across the bay.

About 70% of all cargo passing through San Francisco goes to or comes from the port's immediate nine-county market area. Traditional exports are cotton and canned goods, chemicals and a variety of other items; the port's two major imports are coffee and newsprint.

Operating revenues were \$29.12 million in 1985, up from \$27.62 million. Income from operations was \$9.29 million, compared to \$12.37 million. Net income was \$5.8 million, down from \$8.7 million. The port hosted vessels 760 vessels, compared to 645 in 1984.

Seattle's largest volume of imports is made up of fertilizers, crude minerals, road vehicles and parts and electrical machinery. Also, all toys imported by Hasbro Industries enter North America through Seattle.

Cereals and grains, pulps and waste paper, wood and lumber and fruits and vegetables make up the largest categories of exports.

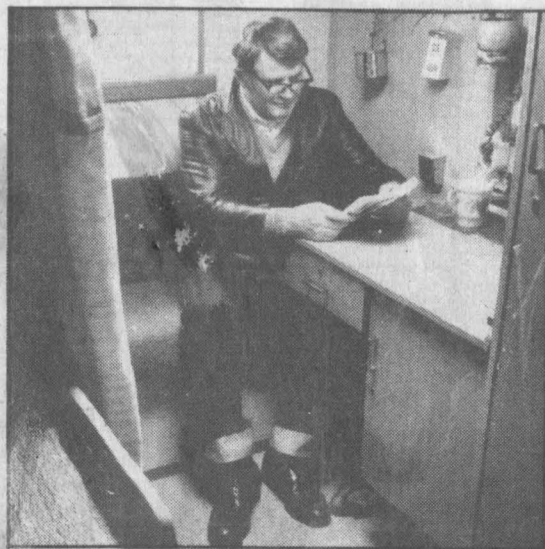
Operating revenues were \$41.69 million in the year ended Dec. 31, 1984, compared to \$37.22 million the year before. Income from operations was \$8.79 million, compared to \$7.84 million. Net income was \$13.04 million, up from \$10.17 million. A total of 1,230 vessels visited the Port of Seattle in 1985, down from 1,324 the previous year.

Tacoma was the first West Coast port to build an on-dock intermodal yard in 1981. About 80% of all containerized imports through Tacoma go to destinations in the Midwest and East. It also is a major import center for automobiles destined for points east. Its major exports are logs and lumber products.

Tacoma experienced a sharp increase in container business in 1985 because two major shipping lines, Sea-Land and Maersk moved to its port.

Operating revenues totaled \$34.15 million, compared to \$28.57 million. Income from operations before depreciation was \$13.3 million, compared to \$11.72 million. Net income dipped to \$10.12 million from \$11.54 million.

Vessel calls totaled 1,272, up from 947 in 1984.



Times photo by Al Grillo

Soviets docked in Anchorage

Alexi Serdukov, top left, chief fish master, and Sergay Yanshin, helmsman, of the Soviet stern trawler Gissar talk about the Anchorage sites they'll see on an informal tour today. Bottom left — Serdukov relaxes in his cabin. At right, the Gissar and its 75-member crew anchored about 7:50 a.m. Wednesday at the Port of An-

chorage. The vessel, conducting fishery research on plankton growth in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska, is here to get supplies for the remainder of its six-month cruise. The 3,146-ton ship is offering tours to residents today from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will leave port Friday.