

Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for first quarter of 2021

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (June 3) released the statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the first quarter of 2021.

In the first quarter of 2021, total port cargo throughput decreased by 14.0% compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 49.2 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 18.1% and 5.1% compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 31.9 million tonnes and 17.2 million tonnes respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput decreased by 9.4% in the first quarter of 2021. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 10.9% and 6.6% 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 4.1% and 30.3% in the first quarter of 2021 compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 34.2 million tonnes and 15.0 million tonnes respectively.

Within inward port cargo, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 26.3% and 4.3% in the first quarter of 2021 compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 18.0 million tonnes and 13.9 million tonnes respectively. For outward port cargo, exports (including domestic exports and re-exports) and outward transshipment decreased by 2.2% and 5.9% in the first quarter of 2021 compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 4.2 million tonnes and 13.1 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 2021 with the first quarter of 2020, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Indonesia (+89.3%), Vietnam (+19.0%) and Singapore (+12.1%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (-70.8%), Korea (-26.6%), the mainland of China (-24.8%) and the United States of America (-18.5%). For outward port cargo, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Korea (+44.3%), Macao (+33.7%), Taiwan (+13.8%) and Vietnam

(+10.3%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the mainland of China (-19.8%) and Thailand (-14.7%).

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 2021 with the first quarter of 2020, triple-digit or double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "coal, coke and briquettes" (+129.1%), "iron and steel" (+39.5%), "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (-28.3%) and "stone, sand and gravel" (-51.4%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-32.0%), "pulp and waste paper" (-24.9%) and "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-16.3%).

Containers

In the first quarter of 2021, the port of Hong Kong handled 4.11 million TEUs of containers, representing an increase of 0.3% compared with the first quarter of 2020. Within this total, laden containers decreased by 1.7% to 3.37 million TEUs, while empty containers increased by 10.6% to 0.75 million TEUs. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 1.3% and 2.1% to 1.77 million TEUs and 1.59 million TEUs respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 6.4% in the first quarter of 2021. Within this total, inward and outward laden containers decreased by 6.3% and 6.5% respectively.

In the first quarter of 2021, seaborne laden containers increased by 10.1% compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 2.62 million TEUs, while river laden containers decreased by 28.5% to 0.75 million TEUs.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 1.6% and 1.2% in the first quarter of 2021 compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 0.51 million TEUs and 1.26 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 3.5% and 1.6% in the first quarter of 2021 compared with the first quarter of 2020 to 0.39 million TEUs and 1.20 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 2021 with the first quarter of 2020, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 37.5% to 3 852, with the total

capacity also decreasing by 40.8% to 58.7 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 48.4% to 10 208, with the total capacity also decreasing by 49.7% to 12.0 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 2021". Users can download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020008&scode=230).

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).