

Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2019

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (March 10) released the statistics on port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2019.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, total port cargo throughput increased by 4.2% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 67.8 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 14.5% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 45.8 million tonnes, while outward port cargo decreased by 12.3% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 22.0 million tonnes.

For 2019 as a whole, total port cargo throughput increased by 1.8% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 263.3 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 7.2% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 170.9 million tonnes, while outward port cargo decreased by 6.7% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 92.4 million tonnes.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput decreased by 2.1% in the fourth quarter of 2019. Within this total, inward port cargo increased by 1.7% compared with the preceding quarter, while outward port cargo decreased by 9.1% 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 increased by 1.7% and 8.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 41.9 million tonnes and 25.9 million tonnes respectively.

Within inward port cargo, imports increased by 27.9% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 29.0 million tonnes, while inward transshipment decreased by 3.0% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 16.8 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports (including domestic exports and re-exports) and outward transshipment decreased by 24.0% and 6.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 6.3 million tonnes and 15.7 million tonnes respectively.

Within port cargo, seaborne cargo decreased by 2.0% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 161.3 million tonnes, while river cargo increased by 8.5% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 102.0 million tonnes.

Within inward port cargo, imports increased by 16.4% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 106.4 million tonnes, while inward transshipment decreased by 5.3% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 64.5 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 9.3% and 5.4% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 30.6 million tonnes and 61.8 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 fourth quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (+67.6%), Indonesia (+57.3%), Vietnam (+34.3%), the mainland of China (+23.2%) and Malaysia (+22.3%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Singapore (-27.9%), the United States of America (-24.4%), Japan (-12.5%) and Thailand (-10.1%). For outward port cargo, triple-digit or double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Macao (+224.9%) and Thailand (+23.1%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the United States of America (-31.1%), Vietnam (-25.1%), Japan (-21.0%), the mainland of China (-15.5%), Malaysia (-11.6%) and the Philippines (-10.6%).

Comparing the whole year of 2019 with the whole year of 2018, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (+48.7%), Malaysia (+17.3%), Vietnam (+13.4%) and the mainland of China (+13.2%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in the United States of America (-19.0%), Japan (-17.0%) and Indonesia (-14.3%). For outward port cargo, triple-digit increase was recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Macao (+119.0%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Vietnam (-21.3%), the United States of America (-16.7%) and Japan (-10.3%).

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

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "stone, sand and gravel" (+85.6%) and "coal, coke and briquettes" (+59.2%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "stone, sand and gravel" (-37.6%) and "pulp and waste paper" (-26.3%).

Comparing the whole year of 2019 with the whole year of 2018, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "stone, sand and gravel" (+74.3%), "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-13.6%)

and "coal, coke and briquettes" (-14.3%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of "pulp and waste paper" (-21.5%) and "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-11.5%).

Containers

In the fourth quarter of 2019, the port of Hong Kong handled 4.59 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 7.5% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 6.6% and 11.9% to 3.92 million TEUs and 0.67 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 4.6% and 8.9% to 2.06 million TEUs and 1.85 million TEUs respectively.

For 2019 as a whole, the port of Hong Kong handled 18.30 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 6.6% compared with the whole year of 2018. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 6.3% and 8.6% to 15.65 million TEUs and 2.65 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 5.4% and 7.1% to 8.16 million TEUs and 7.50 million TEUs respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 1.3% in the fourth quarter of 2019. Within this total, inward laden containers remained virtually unchanged, while outward laden containers decreased by 2.7%.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 7.0% and 5.9% compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 2.75 million TEUs and 1.17 million TEUs respectively.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 4.9% and 4.4% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 0.60 million TEUs and 1.46 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 14.4% and 6.7% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018 to 0.49 million TEUs and 1.36 million TEUs respectively.

In the whole year of 2019, seaborne and river laden containers decreased by 7.5% and 3.2% compared with the whole year of 2018 to 10.98 million TEUs and 4.67 million TEUs respectively.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 3.6% and 6.2% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 2.48 million TEUs and 5.68 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 9.4% and 6.3% in the whole year of 2019 compared with the whole year of 2018 to 2.04 million TEUs and 5.45 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 fourth quarter of 2019 with the fourth quarter of 2018, the number of ocean vessel arrivals increased by 3.4% to 6 643, with the total capacity also increasing by 3.9% to 104.0 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 11.7% to 32 679, while the total capacity increased by 4.0% to 29.8 million net tons.

Comparing the whole year of 2019 with the whole year of 2018, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 0.1% to 25 388, with the total capacity also decreasing by 0.1% to 398.4 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 8.9% to 135 864, while the total capacity increased by 4.4% to 115.5 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, Fourth Quarter 2019". 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).