

Hong Kong port container volume dropped 5% in H1

Container volumes handled by the Port of Hong Kong continued to fall in the first half of 2024.

[Katherine Si](#), China Correspondent

September 9, 2024



Credit: Pixabay -Steven Lu

At a Glance

- Hong Kong port container volumes fell at a time many major ports saw strong increases
- The port dropped out of the global top 10 last year pushed out by Dubai/Jebel Ali

The port handled a volume 6.77 million teu of containers for the first half of 2024, a decrease of 5% over a year earlier.

The decline is not as steep as the drop in volumes in 2023 when [Hong Kong](#) saw a 14.1% drop in volumes to handle 14.34 million teu. The sharp decrease saw the port being displaced from the global top 10 by Dubai/[Jebel Ali](#) dropping to number 11 according to analyst [Alphaliner](#).

Major alliances on the East – West trades are increasingly excluded Hong Kong from their networks. The Gemini Cooperation between [Hapag-Lloyd](#) and [Maersk](#) that starts operation in February 2025 will have no direct calls at the port as it focuses on key hubs.

The Ocean Alliance's updated 2024 network sees the number of direct calls in Hong Kong declined to just six from 11 previously. The Alliance's transpacific network for 2025 sees Hong Kong being served by just a single Asia – US East Coast service with calls from the Pacific Northwest and Southwest service dropped, according to analysts Sea-Intelligence.

Looking more closely as the first half figures for first half of 2024 laden and empty containers decreased by 4.1% and 8.3% to 5.40 million teu and 1.37 million teu respectively. Among laden

containers, both inward and outward containers decreased by 4.1% to 2.90 million teu and 2.50 million teu respectively.

Related: [Container alliances drop direct calls in Hong Kong](#)

For the first half of 2024, total port cargo throughput increased by 3.4% to 88.6 million tonnes over a year earlier. Inward and outward port cargo increased by 2.8% and 4.3% to 56.1 million tonnes and 32.5 million tonnes respectively.

During the period, double-digit increases of port cargo were recorded in the tonnage of inbound port cargo loaded in Singapore, Taiwan, the mainland of China and Korea. Double-digit decreases were also recorded in the USA, Malaysia, Vietnam and Japan. The impact of diversions via the Cape of Good Hope and increased demand from shippers worried over congestion has boosted volumes at many key ports.

For outward bound port cargo, double-digit increases were recorded in Australia, the mainland of China and Vietnam while the double-digit decreases were recorded in the outward port cargo discharged in the Philippines, Thailand, Korea, Japan and the USA.

Comparing the first half of 2024 with a year earlier, the number of ocean vessel arrived at Hong Kong port decreased by 2.1% to 9,120, with the total capacity also decreasing by 2.4% to 144.4 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals increased by 23.0% to 40,785, with the total capacity also increasing by 12.1% to 40.0 million net tons.