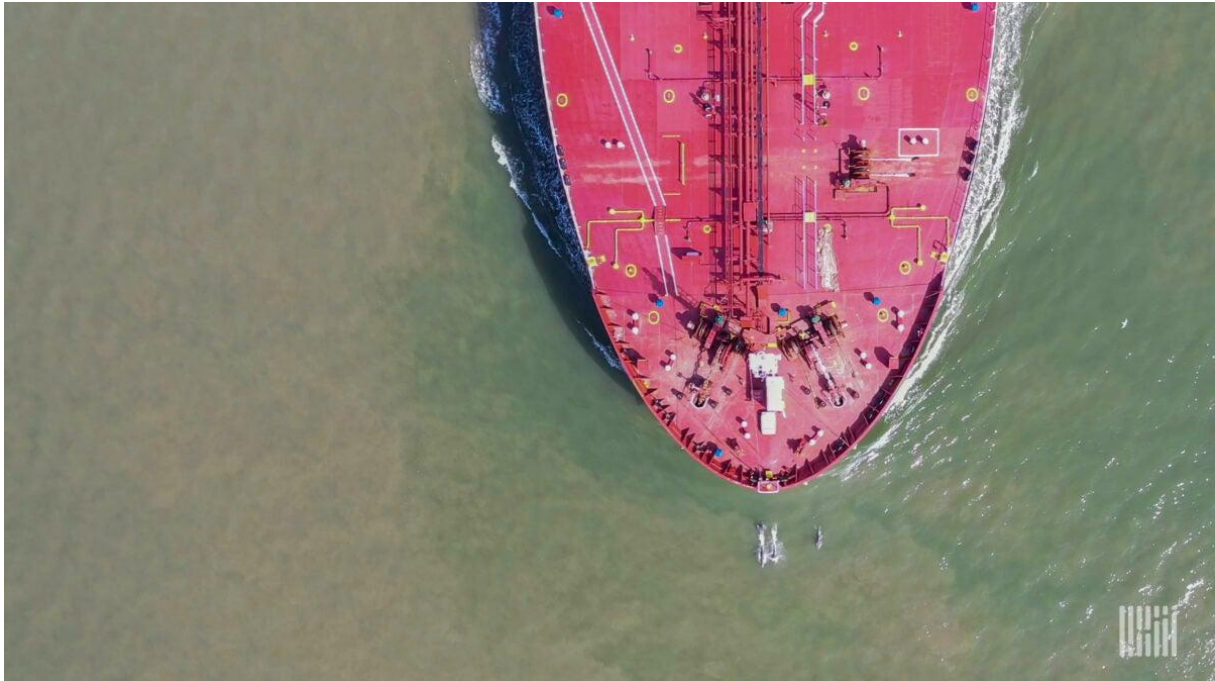


January freight volumes mixed at Gulf Coast ports

Cargo volumes up in Houston and Corpus Christi, Texas, mixed in New Orleans

[Noi Mahoney](#)

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Port Houston handled 356,407 twenty-foot equivalent units in January, a 7% year-over-year increase. (Photo: Jim Allen/FreightWaves)

Cargo flow was up at ports in Houston and Corpus Christi, Texas in January. Breakbulk cargo surged in New Orleans, but container movements slowed in the month.

Port Houston container shipments up 7% in January

Container movements started off the year on a high note at [Port Houston](#), with the port handling 356,407 twenty-foot equivalent units in January, a 7% year-over-year increase compared to 2024.

Total import tonnage was 2.52 million tons in January, up 13% year over year. Imports of steel increased 18% year over year to 330,664 tons during the month.

Container imports increased 13% year over year to 825,827 tons.

Total export tonnage decreased 5% year over year to 2.51 million tons in January.

Total revenue tonnage across all of Port Houston's terminals increased 3% year over year in January, totaling 5 million tons.

Full import container volume in January increased 10% year over year to 170,125 TEUs. Full export container volume decreased 1% year over year to 122,931 TEUs.

Movements of empty export containers increased 22% year over year in January to 47,165 TEUs.

Port Houston recorded 684 ship calls in January, a 6% year-over-year increase, while barge calls totaled 308, a 1% year-over-year decrease.

Port of Corpus Christi's cargo volume results mixed

[The Port of Corpus Christi](#) moved 16.9 million tons of cargo in January, a 5.6% year-over-year increase from the same year-ago period.

The port handled 11.4 million total tons of crude oil during the month, a 17.5% increase compared to the same month in 2024. Exports of crude oil for January were 8.9 million tons, a 1% decrease from last year.

Petroleum shipments decreased 8% year over year to 4.6 million tons, with exports declining 12% year over year to 3.6 million tons during the month.

Shipments of chemicals totaled 201,255 tons in January, an 8.3% year-over-year decline.

Dry bulk cargo totaled 558,401 tons during the month, a 12% year-over-year decrease.

The Port of Corpus Christi had 190 ship calls in January, compared to 192 in January 2024. The port handled 400 barges in January, an 8% year-over-year increase.

Port of New Orleans sees rise in breakbulk, decline in container volume

[Port of New Orleans'](#) (Port NOLA) breakbulk cargo recorded a 28% year-over-year increase in January to 110,626 short tons, buoyed by steel and rubber, with an increase in project cargo movements.

"Port NOLA has handled over 664,786 short tons of breakbulk cargo so far in fiscal year 2025, which represents a 17% increase compared to the same period in fiscal year 2024," Kimberly Curth, Port of New Orleans spokeswoman, told FreightWaves in an email. "This positive trend was mainly driven by increases in steel and natural rubber imports as well as a 50% growth in project cargo volumes."

The port handled 35,618 TEUs during January, a 22% year-over-year decline compared to 2024.

"Containerized cargo was down from the previous month, due in part to a historic and unprecedented snowstorm," Curth said. "We saw 17 breakbulk vessels in January, for a total of 103 in fiscal year-to-date and this represents a 5% increase over the same period last year."

Top container exports from New Orleans included plastic resins, various chemicals and paper products. Imports included coffee, wood products and chemicals.