



Port of Savannah achieves busiest February on record

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In its busiest February on record, the Georgia Ports Authority moved 479,850 twenty-foot equivalent container units, a 6 percent increase over the same month last year.

“This strong performance is a testament to the trust our customers place in the Port of Savannah as their gateway to the U.S. Southeast,” said GPA President and CEO Griff Lynch. “I would also like to congratulate the International Longshoremen’s Association and the US Maritime Alliance on signing a six-year contract in February, which will ensure labor stability and support the prosperity of our state and nation.”



The Port of Savannah achieved strong operational performances in February, in berth productivity, rail lifts and truck gate transactions. (Georgia Ports Authority)

Record rail, truck gate performance

GPA’s intermodal team set a new record for rail moves completed in a 24-hour period, with 2,246 rail lifts on Feb. 28. The Port of Savannah’s Mason Mega Rail Terminal handles six trains per day, or 42 per week. Dwell time at GPA between an import box offloading from a vessel and departing on rail is an industry-leading 19-24 hours.

Despite the high volumes, the container field remained fluid, with yard and gate teams coordinating to keep trucks moving. Garden City Terminal also set a new record for weekly truck gate moves, handling 78,950 transactions in the last week of February.

“We were able to accommodate the increased trade while maintaining excellent service for our motor carriers and customers,” said GPA Chief Operating Officer Ed McCarthy. “Single container moves averaged only 35 minutes for truckers on terminal, while dual container moves averaged just 54 minutes.”

Dual container moves, with drivers delivering an export and picking up an import container, accounted for 85 percent of the Port of Savannah’s container business in February, aiding overall efficiency.

Performance continued strong into March, with a single-day truck gate record of 16,430 transactions set on March 11 at Garden City Terminal.

“Our GPA employees and all the stakeholders at the port are to be commended for their hard work,” said GPA Board Chairman Kent Fountain. “Their dedication is what sets the ports of Savannah and Brunswick apart; it’s a big reason businesses continue to choose Georgia.”

Reducing vessel idle time at berth

Gateway Terminals and the local ILA have agreed to add three new start times to work vessels – at 6 a.m., 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.

“This will make a big difference in turning ships around faster,” Lynch said. “With a total of eight start times and our 24-hour vessel service, crane operators and crews from the ILA will start moving containers on and off ships more quickly, reducing vessel time at dock.”

The Port of Savannah, which currently averages 35 vessels per week, will also increase vessel capacity through the use of a new lay berth at Ocean Terminal starting in May.

Staging vessels at Ocean Terminal will drastically reduce the transition time between large ships departing and arriving. The time a berth is open and unused at Garden City Terminal will see up to a 75 percent improvement, from 12 hours down to 3 hours, when the lay berth is used. Lynch said this will allow the port to work approximately two more ships per week, or 100 more vessels per year.

A second lay berth at Ocean Terminal will come online in mid-2026, further increasing Savannah’s vessel capacity.

Port of Brunswick

In Roll-on/Roll-off trade, the Port of Brunswick moved 61,667 units of autos and heavy equipment in February, down 10 percent or 6,882 units compared to the same month a year ago. Colonel’s Island Terminal in Brunswick handled 42 vessel calls for the month, three fewer than February 2024.