

CANADA Daily News and Updates March 11th 2025

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Ocean Updates

Trump's Shipbuilding Plan Could Upend Ocean Cargo Industry, Companies Warn

President Donald Trump's plan to revitalize the U.S. shipping industry could heap massive costs on ocean transport operators and spawn a new round of supply chain chaos around the world, executives told Reuters.

Trump's administration aims to pay for an American shipbuilding comeback with help from potentially hefty port fees on Chinese-built vessels as well as ships from fleets with China-made vessels, according to a draft executive order.

The levies could hit virtually every ship calling at U.S. ports, foist up to \$30 billion of annual costs on American consumers and double the cost of shipping U.S. exports, according to the World Shipping Council (WSC), which represents the liner shipping industry.

While the stated goal of Trump's plan is to revive the moribund U.S. shipbuilding industry and weaken China's global shipping dominance, the dour outlook from industry executives shows how Trump's pro-U.S. policies can sometimes bring on unintended consequences that run counter to his stated goals.

Read more in an [article from Reuters](#).

Mariner Crisis Goes Unsolved In New Trump Executive Order

Last week, President Trump signed a huge deal with French shipping giant CMA to build approximately 20 new U.S.-flagged ships and announced in his State of the Union address that the White House would open a new shipbuilding office.

The CMA deal is fantastic news for the U.S. Merchant Marine, but where will it find the mariners? The United States is already facing a dire merchant mariner shortage that has forced the Navy's sealift fleet to scale back operations. Military Sealift Command plans to sideline as many as 19 naval support ships simply because there aren't enough qualified Americans to crew them.

This slow-motion disaster is not just a labour issue; it's a full-blown national security crisis. Will the new comprehensive executive order leaked from the National Security Council's maritime department fix the problem? No, and its aggressive focus on shipbuilding and signing deals to expand the fleet could deepen the crisis.

Read more in an [article from gCaptain](#).

Yemen's Houthis Warn Israel of Naval Attacks over Gaza Blockade

Yemen's Houthi fighters have given Israel a four-day deadline to lift its blockade on food, medicine and aid into Gaza, threatening to resume "naval operations" against the country otherwise. The ultimatum, issued late on Friday, signals a possible escalation from the rebel group after their assaults tailed off in January following a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

There was no immediate comment from Israel on the Houthi threat.

Read more in an [article from Al Jazeera](#).

Ocean Carriers Get Tough on Freight Rates – But Can They Hold the Line?

An endless series of crises roiling ocean shipping in the post-COVID 19 era is resulting in a change in "carrier DNA." So said a panel of experts at S&P Global's TPM 2025 conference in Long Beach, California.

Panelists said container lines today are undergoing a radical shift in their basic assumptions about how to service the oceangoing trades. For decades, they concentrated on securing freight and market share for their ever-larger ships, even if that meant slashing rates well below profitable levels. Now, there's a "top-down boardroom mindset that 'We can make money,'" said Bob Fredman, principal with logistics consultancy SF Global Insights, LLC.

Carriers are focusing now "on yield management, bottom-line cost containment and deployment of tools within their organization that they didn't think of before," Fredman said. That includes stricter enforcement of space allocations to shippers under annual service contracts.

Stephanie Loomis, an ocean product and logistics professional, said carriers are especially exercising greater oversight of non-vessel operating common carriers, who consolidate the business of multiple smaller shippers into one contract. "Carriers are much more in tune with how NVOs are doing business," she said, including forcing them to tender a certain portion of their freight under higher spot rates.

"It used to be not uncommon to see an importer who moved 1,000 TEUs capture a named-account rate close to what a large BCO would be paying," Loomis said. "Those days are gone, absolutely gone."

Read more in an [article from Supply Chain Brain](#).

Port of Vancouver Handled a Record 158 Million Tonnes in 2024

The Port of Vancouver has reported record volumes of Canadian trade in 2024. Annual statistics show a record 158 million metric tonnes (MMT) of cargo moved through the port in 2024, a 5% increase year-over-year that was led by strong performances in the auto, bulk and container sectors.

Almost as much cargo moved through the Port of Vancouver in 2024 as was handled by Canada's next five largest ports combined, and approximately 80% of the international trade it enabled was Canadian trade with countries other than the U.S.

Challenges faced by the port community in 2024 included impacts from climate change and extreme weather such as wildfires, increasing local and global geopolitical tensions, and labour disputes.

Read more in an [article from Maritime Magazine](#).