



FY17  
Annual  
Report



GEORGIA  
PORTS

## SUMMARY

The Georgia Ports Authority's FY2017 Annual Report offers a dynamic look at port operations and the powerful impact they have on the economic wellbeing of Georgians, as well as the competitive advantages of choosing Georgia as a supply chain hub. Crisp design, tight writing, and brilliant photography – including panoramic views of the ports of Savannah and Brunswick – invite the reader to explore our terminals and discover the positive role Georgia Ports play in their daily lives.

## 1) CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

The development and production of the GPA's FY2017 Annual Report afforded the opportunity to showcase achievements over the prior fiscal year in terms of cargo volumes at the Ports of Savannah and Brunswick, exciting new infrastructure investments, as well as overall GPA financial performance.

At a final volume of 3.85 million twenty-foot equivalent container units, FY2017 was the busiest fiscal year ever for the Port of Savannah in terms of containerized trade and total cargo, which reached a record 33.4 million tons.

In addition to the review of the previous year, the report celebrates important progress on development projects such as the Savannah Harbor deepening, an expanding crane fleet, additional space for automobile import/export and the largest intermodal rail facility for a port authority in North America.

Along with a snapshot of past and present activities, the Annual Report gives current and potential customers, lawmakers and other stakeholders a well-rounded look at GPA's plans to grow along with the demands of port users and the global marketplace.

## 2) GEORGIA PORTS MISSION

The mission of the Georgia Ports Authority is to empower entrepreneurs, strengthen industries, sustain communities and fortify families by relentlessly striving to accelerate global commerce. The Annual Report details the efforts GPA made in FY2017 to carry out those priorities.

The report includes letters from Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal, GPA Board Chairman Jimmy Allgood and GPA Executive Director Griff Lynch. Their letters cover the value Georgia places on logistics as an economic driver, the impact over the previous year in jobs and new announcements, and

how the Georgia logistics community came together to handle unprecedented growth without congestion.

Other sections include:

- Profiles on the Ports of Savannah and Brunswick
- An update on the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project
- A description of the market forces driving bigger ships and larger cargo exchanges to Savannah
- GPA's plans to grow its territorial reach and market share through intermodal rail
- The economic impact in jobs and private investment lured to the state by Georgia's ports
- Newly adopted mission, vision and values statements
- And financial performance numbers

### 3) PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

With its FY2017 Annual Report, the GPA aimed to foster and reinforce an industry view of its administration and services as proactive, capable, reliable and growing along with customers' needs.

OBJECTIVES:

- Report on GPA's FY2017 performance and provide useful resource information for GPA sales staff and port advocates outside the organization – presented in an easy-to-read, dynamic format with compelling photography.
- Make a PDF version of the FY2017 Annual Report available online.
- Distribute at least 3,000 copies to industry and legislative leaders

### 4) ACTIONS & OUTPUTS

## Timeline

- June 12: Initial content planning meeting. Photo library review, additional photo assignments made
- June 27: Annual Report design concept review
- Aug. 7: Status update meeting on Annual Report content development
- Aug. 7: Status update meeting on content and design
- Aug. 14: Initial design spreads delivered / Meeting with designer to refine look of publication
- Aug. 22: Additional pages and design revisions
- Sept. 6: Additions and edits to copy
- Oct. 4: Final design and text revisions. Book sent to press for initial run of 1,500
- Oct. 12, 19: Initial distribution at State of the Port events in Savannah and Brunswick
- Oct. 23: Secondary press run for remaining 7,500 copies for mailing and distribution throughout the year.

## Research

Internally, communications staff reached out to various departments, including Engineering, Trade Development and Strategic Operations to gather the background data that formed the foundation of the report.

Once the background information was gathered, GPA staff decided on the topics to be covered and the top-priority issues to be addressed in each article.

## Writing, Photography and Design

In June 2017, Communications staff met to discuss and decide on the major themes of the publication.

The over-arching messages of the FY2017 Annual Report were GPA's importance to the state and national economies, and that Georgia's ports are preparing for future through smart infrastructure investments.

Ideas that carry throughout the book include:

- Progress on the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP) — assuring customers the project will be completed in a timely manner.

- Regional/national impact of Georgia’s ports (included in part as a support for continued federal funding for SHEP).
- The link between the ports’ success and the economic prosperity of the state and local community.
- GPA as a proactive, growing entity that is prepared to handle the demands of an evolving global marketplace. (Expanding terminals and equipment, doubling rail capacity, deeper water, etc.)

We also decided to include GPA’s newly adopted mission, vision and values statements to share the Authority’s philosophy of purpose and service to customers and the community.

To illustrate the report, a freelance photographer was contracted to document major events throughout the fiscal year, as well as to supplement the GPA’s general library of images available to use in the publication. The images lend a sense of immediacy and action to each story, bringing the reader into the port environment. The photos help to communicate the size and majesty of the ships, the cranes and the sea of cars and containers that converge on GPA’s deepwater terminals.

Also in June, Communications staff held a first meeting with the contracted design firm.

The designers presented multiple choices for the look of the publication. In consultation with staff, the team settled on a design using a horizontal format, to better accommodate the photographic subject matter (vessels, containers, container yard, cranes, fields of automobiles awaiting processing). Facts highlighted in tones matching our new logo (logo appears on the front of the report) draw the eye to important information, give the reader additional entry points into the story and break up the body copy for a more pleasant reader experience.

The design uses a wealth of clean white space. Sans serif fonts add to the airy, readable feel of the publication. Inset photos are cropped to a squarish dimension — similar to Instagram images — while feature photos occupy broad sweeps of space, including two-page spreads at the major section breaks.

Final numbers for the budget and cargo throughput were derived after the end of the fiscal year, which runs through June 30. Work on the content began in earnest in July, with text revisions and photo choices preceding subsequent design drafts. The first designs were delivered in mid-August, and tweaks to the design occurred over the next two months.

The publication went to print at the first of October for initial distribution at the Savannah State of the Port event on Oct. 12.

## **Distribution**

The report saw wide distribution. A total of 9,000 copies were printed, with 1,600 distributed at the annual Savannah and Brunswick State of the Port events. Another 2,300 were mailed out to lawmakers, industry professionals, and in-state subscribers of other GPA publications. The remainder are used throughout the year in packets for port visitors, conferences and sales prospect meetings.

## 5) OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

In an effort to receive unbiased feedback, the Annual Report included a pre-paid business reply card with a short questionnaire and comment section.

Respondents indicated the report helped them to better understand what GPA does and why the ports matter to them individually. Feedback also indicated the report helped readers to see how the GPA is an important economic engine for the state.

Responses were overwhelmingly positive, including comments such as:

- Rusty Warner, executive director, Development Authority of Elbert County: Keep up the good work. This is a huge asset for the state and keeps us on top.
- Christy Carter, executive director, Wayne County Chamber of Commerce: Well done. I will refer back to this. Great talking points.
- Doel Maldonado, consumer safety inspector, U.S. FDA: I have worked for the FDA imports section for over 31 years, and have seen the positive growth and the benefits the city of Savannah will reap. Congratulations.
- Jason Rubenbauer, county manager in Pierce County: Pierce County is pleased to support GPA in all of your efforts. We are open for business and would love to better serve you and your customers.
- Jeff Goldman, an advisor at NAI Mopper Benton: Would there be a possibility of sending six more copies to me? We use them to promote GPA to our clients.
- Jeff Gagnon, senior director of logistics at BGL Ocean: Excellent annual report.

Anecdotally, GPA staff have also received comments in which readers noted the informative nature of the Annual Report, the quality of the photography and the ease of processing the information presented.

### **RESULTS:**



**OBJECTIVE:** Report on GPA's FY2017 performance and provide useful resource information for GPA sales staff and port advocates outside the organization – presented in an easy-to-read, dynamic format with compelling photography.

**RESULT:** The GPA Trade Development agents say the Annual Report is very useful when speaking to current and prospective customers because they describe the overall health of the GPA, and the investment the Authority is making in the future. GPA agents say the report helps to instill a sense of reliability into the future, making Savannah and Brunswick smart supply chain choices for cargo owners.

**OBJECTIVE:** Make a PDF version of the FY2017 Annual Report available online.

**RESULT:** A downloadable version of the report is available at <http://gaports.com/about/annual-report>

**OBJECTIVE:** Distribute at least 3,000 copies to industry and legislative leaders

**RESULT:** Between State of the Port and mail-out distribution, 3,900 copies were provided to lawmakers and economic development leaders across the state.