

Seaports Myths vs. Facts

For centuries, seaports have played an indispensable role in the global economy and have served as a vital economic lifeline by importing and exporting life's necessities and luxuries throughout the world. Today, seaports are not just focused on the movement of goods, but also on improving aging infrastructure, enhancing seaport security and mitigating environmental impact. However, many myths and inaccuracies exist about seaports. Let's set the record straight.

MYTH: With international trade declining, seaports are not an important economic driver.

FACT: Seaports are the vital economic link for delivering and transporting goods and services. As the volume of cargo shipped by water is expected to increase by 2020 and the number of cruise passengers traveling through our seaports will continue to grow, now more than ever, seaports must remain competitive, modern and navigable. Each year seaports throughout the Western Hemisphere generate \$9 trillion of economic activity, support the employment of tens of millions of people and import and export nearly 8 billion tons of cargo.

MYTH: Most seaports can accommodate increasingly larger vessels in the world fleet.

FACT: Like the volume of trade itself, the size of vessels in foreign trade is also rapidly increasing. Larger ships require deeper and wider channels. For seaports to stay competitive in today's global marketplace channels and facilities must be able to accommodate these increasingly larger vessels. Seaports continually invest capital in projects to not only enhance their infrastructure, but to support modern, efficient infrastructure that will facilitate a growth in trade, and as such, significant government support and funding is needed.

MYTH: Seaports are responsible for inspecting containers and protecting the borders.

FACT: Individual country governments oversee seaport security and are responsible for inspecting, scanning and approving international cargo and passengers, as well as oversight for facility, cargo and vessel security. Security is one of the highest priorities for AAPA and its member seaports and they work closely with government agencies, port authorities and private industry to enhance security.

MYTH: Seaports are not addressing their impact on the environment.

FACT: Seaports are working to identify solutions that enhance our coastal resources and reduce environmental impact. AAPA and its members are committed to delivering prosperity through environmentally sustainable seaports by improving the coastal environment, managing the environmental impact and engaging stakeholders and community members. AAPA also created a Task Force to promote sustainability as a business strategy among seaports and establish guiding principles for all members to follow and implement.

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