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Responding to Industry Demand, Marine Terminal Operators Suspend Decision to End Saturday OffPeak Shifts

LONG BEACH, Calif., Jan. 8, 2009 – In response to feedback from the goods movement industry, marine terminal operators at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach today announced that they have put on hold their plan to end Saturday OffPeak shifts after Jan. 10, 2009. In response to sharply declining cargo volumes, terminal operators will continue to evaluate the economic implications of ending the Saturday shifts versus other ways to better align operational costs with revenues.

“The OffPeak shifts run by PierPASS have clearly become a vital part of operations for many of our customers,” said PierPASS President and CEO Bruce Wargo. “Many in the industry have let us know that the impact of ending the Saturday shift will be significant to them, and as a result we will suspend the decision while we evaluate other alternatives.”

The OffPeak program was established in 2005 to reduce congestion and air pollution in and around the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports. Under the program, all international container terminals in the two ports established five new shifts per week (Monday through Thursday from 6 p.m. to 3 a.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.). As an incentive to use the OffPeak shifts and to cover the added cost of the shifts, a Traffic Mitigation Fee (“TMF”) is required for most cargo movement during peak hours (Monday through Friday, 3 a.m. to 6 p.m.).

Beyond cost-cutting measures that marine terminal operators are already taking individually, the terminal operators are analyzing potential methods of controlling the costs of the OffPeak program, which doubled the number of weekly shifts from five to 10.

“We will continue to work with our customers and other industry partners to find the best ways to cope with the economic downturn and prepare for better times ahead,” Wargo said.

For more information, please go to www.pierpass.org.

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