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PierPASS OffPeak Program Diverts More Than Nine Million Truck Trips from Daytime Traffic Over First Three Years of Operation

Independent Evaluation Concludes OffPeak is Meeting Objectives in Moving Los Angeles and Long Beach Port Traffic to Nights and Saturdays

LONG BEACH, Calif., July 23, 2008 – PierPASS Inc. today announced that its OffPeak program has diverted more than nine million truck trips from peak daytime traffic since the program's start three years ago today. The program, which created nighttime and Saturday shifts at the Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach, has eliminated costly bottlenecks in the ports, reduced gridlock on area freeways and curtailed air pollution from idling traffic. The nine millionth truck trip occurred during the week of June 23.

PierPASS today also made available an independent evaluation of the OffPeak program, which concluded that the program is meeting its objectives of shifting truck traffic out of peak daytime traffic and recommended that the program continue to operate.

OffPeak shifts handle an average of 68,000 truck trips in a typical week, or about 40 percent of all container moves at the two ports on days with both peak and OffPeak shifts. Without the OffPeak program, most of these trips would shift back into peak daytime traffic Monday through Friday, causing heavy congestion on highways approaching the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports and thus increasing local air pollution.

Why OffPeak Was Created

Rapid growth in container traffic at the two ports between 2000 and 2004 led to severe traffic congestion in and around the ports by 2004. Community and elected leaders demanded that the terminals in the ports begin operating night shifts for container pick-ups and drop-offs. The goods movement industry came together and proposed an industry-driven solution that provided a financial incentive to move cargo outside of peak hours and a funding mechanism for five new shifts per week. This solution became the OffPeak program, launched on July 23, 2005, and run by PierPASS Inc., a not-for-profit company created by marine terminal operators at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to address multi-terminal issues such as congestion, security and air quality.

Under the OffPeak program, all international container terminals in the two ports have 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 new OffPeak shifts and to cover the added cost of the shifts, a Traffic Mitigation Fee is required for most cargo movement during peak hours (Monday through Friday, 3 a.m. to 6 p.m.).



As OffPeak approached its third anniversary, terminals operators have reviewed it to determine whether it continues to meet its objectives. PierPASS retained an independent economic research and strategic planning firm, BST Associates, to conduct the review.

“The OffPeak program has caused a significant shift of port truck traffic from day to evening hours,” the BST report concluded. “Without the financial incentive of the OffPeak program it is likely that traffic would shift back to daytime peak hours. The OffPeak Program has met its objectives and should be continued.”

As part of its evaluation, BST reviewed Caltrans traffic data collected on freeways near the ports. “At the traffic counter closest to the ports (I-710 at Route 1), the share of truck traffic moving off-peak grew from 10% in 2004 (prior to the OffPeak program) to 32% in 2007,” the BST report said. The BST report is available at www.pierpass.org.

Another study, conducted by researchers at the University of Southern California and California State University, Long Beach, concluded that “the PierPASS program achieved its objective of shifting truck traffic out of peak periods. In doing so, it offset about two years of port growth.” (Source: Giuliano, G. and T. O’Brien. Impacts of Port Gate Operations on the Highway System: A Case Study. Presented at the Transportation Research Board 87th Annual Meeting, January 2008.)

OffPeak helps move cargo more efficiently by spreading existing traffic across more hours and making better use of valuable port assets. All terminals operate new shifts during the same days and hours, allowing cargo owners and their agents to deliver and receive containers at any of the terminals during the five shifts.

“At PierPASS, we are very proud of being a factor for positive change in the San Pedro Bay ports, and look forward to supporting port growth in the coming years,” said PierPASS President and CEO Bruce Wargo.

About PierPASS

PierPASS is a not-for-profit company created by marine terminal operators at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports to address multi-terminal issues such as congestion, security and air quality. For more information, please go to www.pierpass.org.

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