

# Port Klang container, cargo throughput down

By Kang Siew Li  
siewli@nstp.com.my

CONTAINER traffic through Port Klang, the country's busiest container port, fell by 8.3 per cent last year, as the global economic downturn continues to hurt the country's exports.

The port handled 7.3 million TEUs (20-foot equivalent units), the standard measurement for shipping containers, compared with 7.9 million TEUs in 2008.

In terms of tonnage handled, traffic through the port was 133.8 million tonnes, down 8.8 per cent over the previous year.

More than half, or 61 per cent of the container volume,

was from Westports, which generated 4.451 million TEUs. Northport accounted for the remaining 39 per cent or 2.858 million TEUs.

Transshipment cargo took the largest share of Port Klang's total throughput, contributing 58 per cent, with local boxes constituting the remaining 42 per cent.

However, transshipment volume also saw a 9 per cent drop to 4.3 million TEUs for the 12 months.

Port Klang Authority (PKA) general manager Kee Lian Yong said the decline in container and cargo throughput is in line with the global trend.

"Nevertheless, the port's container volume was better

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Kee Lian Yong, general manager of Port Klang Authority

than our earlier forecast of a 10 per cent drop. Overall Port Klang also fared better than other major ports in the world, which saw a 10-15 per cent drop in traffic," he told Business Times.

Kee said Port Klang is expected to post throughput growth in 2010, returning to

2008 volume of 8 million TEUs.

"We remain cautiously optimistic as the shipping community is predicting that 2010 will still be a tough year," he added.

According to Drewry Shipping Consultants Ltd's most recent projections, the mar-



ket will have to wait until 2012 before global container port volume exceeds 2008 levels again. It expects Far East and Southeast Asian container traffic to recover faster than that in

other regions.

"In 2010, the market should brace for another tough year," Shipping Association of Malaysia chairman Ooi Lean Hin had said in an earlier interview.