

Abstract

The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are no strangers to congestion, with or without the COVID-19 pandemic, but what are most common causes? These periods of congestion are caused by local, national and international problems. Some examples are the overflowing container terminals, the shortage of workers and the lockdown in China. By conducting an interview and a literature study an objective view is created on the situation developed before and after the COVID-19 crisis. This crisis exposed the causes of congestion once more and worsened some others, creating the perfect storm at the Westcoast. The competition has grown fiercer due to the loss of market share for the San Pedro Bay. Shipping companies opt to divert their vessels to Canada, Mexico, the Gulf coast and East coast to keep the container flow steady. Thanks to the economies of scale of the San Pedro Bay it stays an attractive competitor, unfortunately physical expansion is impossible. To keep up with the rising container volumes serious investments are essential. These will determine if the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach will remain on the map and if congestion can be handled.