

2001 Press Releases

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LOS ANGELES CUSTOMS DISTRICT TRADE VALUE SLOWS IN 2001

Value of International Trade through LA Customs District Slows in 2001 Reports Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation

LOS ANGELES (May 14, 2001) - The value of two-way international trade through the Los Angeles Customs District in 2001 will increase by a modest 2.8 percent to \$236.5 billion, after the year 2000's hearty 16.7 percent gain. The Los Angeles area's trade community will look back on the year 2000 with great fondness, since all the measures of international trade posted strong gains reports the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC).

The slow down for the coming year reflects a sluggish U.S. economy, problems in Asia, particularly Japan, the technology sector crash and a still strong U.S. dollar. This year imports at the Los Angeles Customs District will increase by 3.5 percent to \$157.7 billion, while exports will advance by 1.5 percent to \$78.7 billion.

Top on the agenda, according to the report, are the regions of Los Angeles County working together to overcome NIMBYism (not-in-my-back-yard thinking) and educating businesses about the free or low-cost business assistance resources available.

This year's expected slow down is by no means gloom and doom for the local economy. One of the major benefits of international trade for the region is job creation, and the LAEDC believes this to be a story that the international trade community has not told well. "Almost twice as many people are employed in jobs supporting international trade than are found in our entertainment industry", according to LAEDC chief economist, Jack Kyser. The LAEDC estimates that between 1990 and 2000, "direct" international trade activity in the Los Angeles five-county area generated 175,600 new jobs, pushing the 2000 average to 458,200. Over the same period, the area's signature motion picture/TV production industry created 112,000 new jobs, with the 2000 annual average placed at 261,300.

The international trade jobs are found in a variety of activities, including vessel operations, cargo handling, other marine transportation, surface transportation (trains and trucks), and air cargo, banking and insurance, importers/exporters, and government agencies.

The report urges the international trade "industry" in Southern California to work to dramatically increase public awareness of the importance and potential growth opportunities in international trade. The now fractured trade community needs to come together and organize around an effort to more vigorously promote the idea of exporting out of the region, and to develop visible spokespeople to communicate the importance of the activity.

International Trade Trends and Impacts, The Los Angeles Region, authored by the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) is an extensive overview of the international trade industry for the region. Comparisons of trade measures, surveys of the L.A. Customs district trading partners, statistical data by industry sector and further import and export information round out this thorough examination of one of this region's leading industries. For a complete report, contact the LAEDC at 888-4LAEDC-1, or visit laedc.org.

The LAEDC is a private non-profit organization. As the premier business leadership organization, the LAEDC's mission is to attract, retain and grow businesses and jobs in the regions of Los Angeles County, as well as identifying trends and affecting positive change for the local economy. Since 1995, the LAEDC has helped in the creation of 56,632 jobs from 278 projects. The economic impact of those jobs translates into \$1.9 billion in salaries and more than \$222 million in tax revenue generated to support schools and local government in the LA County region annually.

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