

NEWS IN BRIEF

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CBP Suspends Rail Crossing Service in Eagle Pass and El Paso TX

As of Monday, December 19, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has suspended service for international railway crossings at the bridges in Eagle Pass and El Paso Texas. This is due to a need to reassign personnel to adjust to a large influx of migrants trying to cross the border.

Truck service will continue to be open. However, the Texas Department of Safety is having its safety vehicle public inspections at the Ports of Eagle Pass and Del Rio, TX. All trucks will continue to be examined and this is causing truck crossings at these two ports to experience lengthy delays.

China 301 Duty Exclusions

We have received numerous questions about the China 301 duty exclusions that are due to expire on December 31. We have talked to some lobbyists for any feedback that they have heard. We are hearing the same answer. Nothing has been coming out of the USTR's office about any new extensions, and the expectations are that no extensions will be granted by the end of 2024.

The Drought in Panama Continues to Hinder the Movement of Cargo

The severe drought in Panama continues to create long queues and delays in moving ships through the canal. This is causing shipping disruptions for cargo to and from the East Coast of the United States. The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) has reduced the number of vessels crossing the canal from a maximum of (39) per day to about (31) per day. Also, they have put limits on the amount of cargo that the larger ships can carry in their passing due to a lower drought of the water levels in the Canal. This has caused delays of days for ships with appointments and ships without appointments have delays of sometimes up to weeks. We will continue to report on progress at the Canal.

Ship Disruptions in the Suez Canal

There have been attacks on ships traversing the Suez Canal by Houthi rebels in Yemen. On December 15, 2023, there was a missile attack on the container ship MSC Platinum III in the Red Sea. This has led to suspension of voyages through the Suez Canal and Carriers are rerouting ships which is increasing transit times.



By **Todd Boice**, President