



YOUR GATEWAY: Port of Halifax

Q&A with Paul MacIsaac

By Nicole Rollender



Paul MacIsaac, senior vice-president at the Port of Halifax, discusses the port's role in international trade and how it is redefining reliability, resilience and sustainability.

Q: What sets the Port of Halifax apart?

A: Halifax stands out because of our consistent service and collaboration with key partners. We have PSA, the world's leading container terminal operator, and CN, one of North America's top Class I railroads, plus a good relationship with local labor. It means the port provides safe, dependable and efficient service to customers.

Unlike many ports where ships often wait in harbor for a berth, our congestion-free berths allow us to service ships promptly upon arrival. Our container dwell time is among the lowest in North America.

Import boxes discharged in Halifax bound for inland destinations such as Toronto, Chicago and Detroit typically arrive three days earlier, leading to savings in transit inventory expenses for importers and quicker sales revenue.

Our newly established Port Operations Centre, managed by our team at the Halifax Port Authority, seamlessly coordinates ship movements from arrival in the harbor to terminal handling and further onward connections by truck or rail.

Q: How are the Port Operations Centre and Joint Operations Centre improving efficiency and coordination for shippers?

A: The Port Operations Centre (OPCEN) serves as our central hub overseeing all port activities, driving supply chain improvements by streamlining communication, providing real-time updates and ensuring a unified approach to problem-solving by the port's operating stakeholders. OPCEN coordinates with pilots and tugs to address marine-side issues promptly, minimizing disruptions.

The Joint Operations Centre (JOC) is a collaboration between the Halifax Port Authority, PSA and CN, targeting supply chain logistics improvements. By sharing data and forecasting information, the JOC helps with seamless decision-making. For example, if ships are forecasted to arrive off their schedule, the JOC can adjust resources to meet the unforecasted demand.

Q: What is the current state and future outlook of operations at the Port of Halifax?

A: We have the right infrastructure, a top terminal operator and railroad. We value the importance of labor stability and are actively enhancing customer visibility and real-time tracking.

We are in expansion mode, moving forward with projects to accommodate the expected increase in the larger, Ultra Class container ship calls. These projects will result in more efficient intermodal connections so goods can move faster through the supply chain.

Recent investments at Halifax include a new Marine Container Examination Facility opening later this year; mega ship-to-shore cranes 24 rows across to handle any size container ship including Ultra Class vessels upwards of 20,000 TEUs; and a larger, new on-dock intermodal facility increasing intermodal track to 14,000 feet, plus electric rail-mounted gantry cranes and rubber-tire gantry cranes. All will contribute to accelerating the supply chain and reducing emissions.

Looking ahead, we see positive prospects, especially with the potential resurgence of traffic from Asia to the Suez Canal and our unique capacity in Eastern Canada to accommodate the largest container vessels. The future is very bright. ■

PORT OF HALIFAX

PORT PERFORMANCE 2023 AT A GLANCE

829 Commercial cargo vessels	157 Countries served	17 Container lines on 18 fixed-day services
546,163 TEUs of containerized throughput	5,650,253 MT of non-containerized throughput	9,860,031 MT of total cargo tonnage

107
Ultra Class vessels called in 2023

Competitive access to Central Canada and the US Midwest

- 2 days to Central Canada by daily train
- 3 days to the US Midwest by daily train

Leading international trading partners (Containerized Cargo)



Port Operations Centre

A simple and convenient way to find information on the port's fluidity and efficiency with tools such as:

- Import rail dwell
- Days on dock
- Container tracking
- Vessel forecast summary (long-term)
- Transit time calculator



Learn more at www.porthalifax.ca/port-operations-centre

Sustainability

- Green Marine certified
- Envision Sustainable Infrastructure Award for best-in-class sustainable infrastructure
- Environmental Ship Index (ESI) incentive program to reduce emissions of visiting vessels

Financial health

A+

Credit Rating
S&P Global

Global reach, local impact

Halifax connects over 150 countries while fostering community growth, sustainability

By Nicole Rollender

Containerized marine cargo is the core business at the Port of Halifax, where the world's leading shipping lines converge to import and export goods supported by strong partnerships and data-driven technology.

Strategically located on the East Coast, Halifax serves as a global shipping hub and secure supply chain link, connecting over 150 countries. Halifax is the first inbound/last outbound port for cargo in Eastern North America, connecting the US Midwest and Central Canada with global markets in Asia, Europe and the Caribbean.

Powerful partnerships

In Halifax, powerful partnerships drive progress. The Halifax Port Authority (HPA), with key collaborators including PSA, CN, a dedicated labor force, pilots and tug operators, forms the backbone of this effort.

PSA oversees Atlantic Hub and Fairview Cove, the port's two container terminals, where shippers benefit from open berths and fast container handling. Halifax is a crucial node in east-west trade routes. The deep harbor and advanced infrastructure mean that Halifax is the only Eastern Canadian port capable of accommodating Ultra Class ships, and the largest container vessels to call on any port in Canada.

PSA's commitment to Halifax is clear with substantial investments — \$100 million already deployed and an additional \$200 million earmarked for future expansion. These investments focus on enhancing port infrastructure and boosting capacity to handle larger vessels while improving intermodal connections.

The strategic partnership with CN further enhances Halifax's capabilities. About 60% of the port's container

volumes head for markets in Central Canada and the US Midwest, serving more than 100 million people and reachable within days by train. The transportation network ensures a five-to-seven-day transit time quicker than other ports, due to streamlined operations and shorter rail haul times.

A future-focused, sustainable port

From a pioneering innovation hub to harnessing smart technologies, the Port of Halifax is embracing strategies and partnerships to enhance its operations and commitment to sustainability.

To address complex challenges in a real port city context, the HPA and founding partners established The PIER (Port Innovation, Engagement and Research), Canada's first collaborative hub dedicated to maritime transportation, supply chain and logistics. At The PIER, partners co-create, test and accelerate solutions benefiting port operations, supply chains, Canada's economy, the environment and the local community.

In addition, the innovation hubs at the ports of Halifax, Hamburg and Valencia created the Port Innovators Network (PIN). Aimed at becoming a global alliance to drive innovation adoption by connecting innovator communities worldwide, PIN shares best practices, offers test spaces and fosters international perspectives to enhance local and global innovation efforts.

Over the next two years, the port is implementing a data integration hub which includes a pilot project for high-value, time-sensitive cargoes. Integral to the pilot, the PortControl platform has a digital operating system which offers timely access to performance metrics, vessel information and develops the harbor's

"CN welcomes recent HPA and PSA infrastructure investments in Halifax to handle the largest container ships on the East Coast of North America. Combined with high vessel productivity, fast turnaround times and CN's best total transit times to Montreal, Toronto, and Chicago from the Port of Halifax, import containers are loaded from ship to train for direct service on CN's high-velocity rail network. That's the CN advantage."

Dan Bresolin, vice president,
intermodal sales and marketing, CN

"PSA Halifax is making great strides in our equipment upgrading plans. We received two brand new mega ship-to-shore cranes in November 2023, which will enhance our capabilities to handle Ultra Class vessels upwards of 20,000 TEUs in size. On the sustainability front, four brand new electric rubber-tire gantry cranes arrived at the PSA Halifax Atlantic Hub Terminal on May 3, with four more to come later this year. These investments, when completed, will increase the port's handling capacity from 1 million TEUs to 1.4 million TEUs and help us achieve our net-zero targets in the coming years."

Jan van Mossevelde, CEO, PSA Halifax

vessel schedule, contributing to better service for users.

At the Port of Halifax, sustainability is about balancing economics, community and the environment. Port initiatives are framed by the World Ports Sustainability Program, sharing a firm commitment to industry standards of sustainable practice.

More to come

The Port of Halifax is known for its efficient and dependable service, collaborative partnerships, innovative strategies and commitment to sustainability. Halifax is setting a new bar for resilience in global trade. As Halifax charts its course toward a lower carbon and more efficient future, the port connects with markets around the world. ■

First light, and rest easy.

**First inbound.
Last outbound.**

The Port of Halifax welcomes the largest container ships calling on Eastern North America.



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