

News Release

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PORT TO SHUT DOWN OLDEST CRANE

The Port Authority of Guam has decided to take the oldest and smallest of its three shore-side Gantry Cranes out of service. The Port had commissioned a study by the manufacturer of Gantry 1 to determine the structural stability of the 38-year-old crane. That report has determined that the crane is structurally unsound and unsafe. The report estimates that in order to keep the crane operational for possibly another year, it would cost approximately \$1.6 million.

Matson Navigation, who in 2003 undertook the responsibility for management services for repair and maintenance of Gantry 1, has stated they are no longer willing to be responsible for the maintenance of the crane. They have also stated that they are confident that the taking of Gantry 1 out of service will not impact the discharge and loading of primary vessels from the U.S.

Port operations personnel are working on scheduling of operations to ensure that there are no cargo delays as a result of taking the crane out of service. It should be noted that Gantry 1 has seen minimal use over the past couple of years due to its age and inadequate size.

In the meantime, the Port has stepped up efforts to gain approval for a US Department of Agriculture Rural Development Direct Loan for a new state-of-the-art Gantry Crane to replace Gantry 1. The cost of construction and delivery of a new crane is estimated at more than \$6 million. The Port has issued a contract for a consultant to help develop the specifications for the new crane and work is ongoing on that project.

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“It is unfortunate that we have to take Gantry 1 out of service, but this does not come as a surprise,” said Port General Manager Joseph Mesa. “In December 2003, an inspection determined that Gantry 1 had about 18 months of safe operation left. This crane has served the Port and its customers well, but it has far exceeded its useful life. It is to the credit of the Port’s maintenance personnel that the crane has survived this long in the highly corrosive atmosphere on Cabras Island.”

Mesa noted that the Port is exploring all options to see if Gantry 1 can be repaired enough to keep it in safe operation without exorbitant costs. He said the Port operations personnel have been instructed to work on scheduling of operations so the loss of the crane will not affect cargo deliveries. And, the Port is stepping up efforts to purchase a new crane.

The Port had been in the process of privatizing its equipment maintenance operations in 2003, when Public Law 27-60 required the Port to privatize all of its operations, delaying the equipment privatization. “If the Port had been allowed to proceed with its original plan of privatizing its equipment maintenance and acquisition program prior to the passage of the current privatization law, we would already have a new crane,” Mesa said.

For more information please contact the Port Marketing Communications Office.

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