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## Alaska and Hawaii Barge Service

By Bruce Johnson

Keen competition is a way of life on the West Coast. Alaskan economy is still weak and Sea-Land has brought on greater ship capacity. Hawaiian economy continues to grow, but competition is intense. Crowley's Hawaiian Marine Lines added a California service and strengthened Pacific Northwest ops and Sea-Land is expanding steamship service from California.

Mike Porter, for Crowley, said outlook in cargo from Puget Sound to the Alaska Rail Belt is for "no real change from '87, which was flat." Porter, who oversees the Alaska Hydro-Train offering weekly combo railcartrailer service, said "we may not yet be quite to the bottom" of the trough caused by the oil price decline, but indicated there may be a "slight upturn" later this year and in 1989. Sea-Land introduced three new container ships on the Anchorage run creating more over-capacity. Crowley's studies show waterborne cargo north to the Rail Belt region this year is expected to range from 1,300 to 1,600 TEU, compared with a current capacity of 2,500 to 2,600 per week. Despite increased Sea-Land capacity, "we see no significant deterioration" in rates as occurred earlier when Alaska's economy was in decline.

Business is expected to be so flat that Totem Ocean Trailer Express (TOTE), with two trailerships, anticipates keeping its Alaska Barge Lines service to Anchorage in mothballs this summer, said Everett Trout. ABL was dormant last year due to low cargo volume. "Unless something comes out of left field" no scheduled sailing of ABL are expected.

Conditions are "a little more stable because of timber and fish", reported Bill Troy, Alaska Marine Lines, a Lynden Inc. Company providing year-round weekly sailings. Southeast Alaska trade is tied to "a very slow growth economy but an economy that's not boom and bust."

Western Alaska, encompassing the Bristol Bay fishing area, "is somewhat soft", said Tom Martin, VP of Western Alaska Ops for Crowley, a position that includes Pacific Alaska Line West, which sails seasonally. With a reduction in freight during the past couple of years, Crowley integrated PAL-West movement with other towing, particularly APUTCO supply runs to the North Slope and other remote areas.

In the Hawaii market, Crowley restarted and upgraded Hawaiian Marine Lines, following a strike lasting nearly a year. HML now provided tandem service very 28 days from Long Beach and Oakland to Honolulu. The two flat-deck barges have a total capacity for about 1,200 TEU, but break-bulk and ro-ro can be accommodated. From the Northwest, HML operates tandem tows every 18 days to Honolulu, consisting of a flat-deck container barge from Seattle and a combo break-bulk house and flat-deck container ro-ro barge from Portland. The tandem tow,

with a capacity for 1,400 TEU, is made up at Astoria, OR. Porter, in charge of HML as well as AHT, said the addition of California service not only enable Crowley to "serve a growing market" but increased the frequency of Northwest sailings. The new schedule is for a total of 33 sailings per year, with 20 from the Northwest. Crowley is bullish regarding the growth-oriented Hawaii economy. "We feel construction will remain a strong for the foreseeable future. Even with substantial competition, we feel the market will remain strong for the next few years."

John Sweet of Sause Bros., Coos Bay, OR., with tandem tows every three weeks from Oregon and Washington, agreed "the building activity in Hawaii has been quite strong". He added, however, "we look for the business to be quite competitive." Sause operates a 6,000 and 4,000-ton barge in each tandem tow for break-bulk forest products primarily. Each barge is two-thirds covered.

A third service is furnished by Aloha Cargo Transport, division of Alaska Cargo Transport. Monthly service is provided to Honolulu from Seattle, to where cargo is trucked from Portland. Harlow said Hawaii's economy is "flourishing", but ocean carriers have expanded capacity. Steamship operators are going after lower revenue cargoes traditionally handled by barges. "We are small enough so that we do not need the volume the bigger barge carriers need."

Also active in Hawaii trade is Long Beach-based Transport Express Lines, which provides monthly service Long Beach to Honolulu. "The economy there is real strong", reported Tim Stetson. "There seems to be an abundance of cargo". But he noted competition has become more intense from both steamship and barge companies.

Following is a rundown of service to Alaska and Hawaii:

Alaska Cargo. Seattle to Seward. Every 3 weeks in winter; every 10 days starting April. Container, break-bulk, equipment freight by rail and truck to Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai Peninsula points. Service from Port of Seattle's Terminal 115 on Duwamish Waterway. Jore Corp., agent. (206) 762-3036 or 1-800-327-7739.

Alaska Hydro-Train (Crowley). Weekly tandem tows year-round Seattle to Whittier. Tows consists of a ro-ro 2-deck railcar and highway trailer barge (50 cars, 105 trailers) and ro-ro single-deck railcar barge (50 cars). Departs Friday from Seattle Pier 17 on Elliott Bay; arrives following Friday at Whittier for Alaska Railroad interchange. Monday cargo delivery Anchorage and Fairbanks (206) 443-8100 or 1-800-248-8632.

Alaska Marine Lines (Lynden). Weekly year-round Seattle to SE Alaska ports of Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Juneau, Haines, Skagway, Sitka. Departs Thursday from Duwamish; arrives early Monday at Juneau. Service beyond Sitka to Yakutat bi-weekly except weekly during July, August, September. (206) 763-4244 or 1-800-443-4343.

Alaska Outport Transportation Association. Non-profit association of shippers with break-bulk and equipment service Seattle to SE Alaska outports of Hydaburg, Craig, Klawock, Kate, Angoon, Tenakee Springs, Hoonah, Excursion Inlet, Gustavus, Pelican, plus others on inducement. Every 3 weeks April to November; monthly November through March. Departs north end Lake Union. (206) 632-7744 or 1-800-682-2682.

Boyer Alaska Barge Lines. Weekly year-round Seattle to SE Alaska ports of Ketchikan,

Wrangell, Petersburg (via transload from Wrangell), Metlakatla (via transload from Wrangell), Prince of Wales Island (via transload from Ketchikan). Container, break-bulk, equipment service. Departs Thursday from Duwamish; arrives Ketchikan for Monday morning delivery. (206) 763-8575.

Northland Services. Year-round weekly Seattle to SE Alaska ports of Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Juneau, Sitka. On to Yakutat monthly in winter; bi-weekly in spring and summer. Six sailings to West and Northern Alaska, including Naknek, Dillingham, Bethel, Nome. Container, break-bulk, equipment service. Departs from Duwamish. (206) 763-3000 or 1-800-426-3113.

Pacific Alaska Line-West (Crowley). Six voyages spring and summer from Seattle to West and Northern Alaska, including Naknek, Dillingham, Bethel, Nome, Kotzebue, Barrow (one trip to Barrow). Container, break-bulk, equipment service. Departs Pier 17. (206) 433-8100 or 1-800-248-8632.

Samson Tug & Barge. Every 10 days year-round Seattle to Sitka, Seward, Kodiak, Cordova, Valdez, Adak. Container, break-bulk, equipment service. Departs 115, Duwamish. (206)767-7820 or 1-800-331-3522.

The Barge Lines. Weekly year-round Seattle to Juneau and weekly shuttle to small SE Alaska communities such as Hoonah and Hawk Inlet. Container, break-bulk, equipment service. Departs Thursday from Duwamish; arrives Monday evening Juneau. (206) 763 2766 or (907)586-6886 in Juneau.

Aloha Cargo Transport. Monthly service Seattle to Honolulu, with Portland cargo received over road to Seattle. Container, break-bulk, ro-ro, lift-on service. Departs Terminal 115, Duwamish. (206) 762-3035 or 1-800-327-7739.

Hawaiian Marine Lines (Crowley). Two services: Seattle and Portland to Honolulu; Long Beach and Oakland to Honolulu. Pacific Northwest service every 18 days with tandem flat-deck barge from Seattle and house barge from Portland. In Seattle, departs Pier 17. California service every 28 days with tandem flat-deck barges. Container, break-bulk, ro-ro, lift-on service. (206) 443-8100 or 1-800-248-8632.

Sause Bros. Ocean Towing. Every 3 weeks from Coos Bay, Longview, Anacortes, and other on inducement to Honolulu, Hilo, Kahului, Nawiliwili direct or shuttle. Tandem tow of house barges for break-bulk service specializing in forest products. (503) 269-5841.

Transport Express Lines. Monthly service Long Beach to Honolulu. Container, break-bulk, vehicle service. (213) 515-1877 or (808) 847-3775 in Honolulu.

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Marcon International, Inc. P.O.Box 1170, 9 NW Front Street, Coupeville, WA 98239 USA  
Phone:360-678-8880 | Fax: 360-678-8890 | Telex: ITT 4931464MARCUI.  
email [info@marcon.com](mailto:info@marcon.com).