

TRADE NEWS WEEKLY

June 15-June 19, 2026

A summary of international business news prepared by the Hawaii Foreign-Trade Zone 9 with the collaboration of the Research and Economic Analysis Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, and based on research and information from various trade publications, which track news and events related to global trade. Other information sources may occasionally be included when appropriate.

Taiwan Agreement

On May 28, 2026, the U.S. International Trade Administration (ITA) published a Notice with amendments to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS) to give effect to certain trade and tariff elements of the January 15, 2026, memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the U.S and Taiwan. The HTSUS modifications went into effect on May 1, 2026, so importers may consider Post Summary Corrections (PSCs) to recover excess duties paid. 91 Fed. Reg. 31818 (May 28, 2026); CSMS #68762890 (May 27, 2026.)

Source: Miller & Company P.C.

Vietnam 301

The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) has initiated a Section 301 investigation into Vietnam's acts, policies, and practices related to intellectual property protection and enforcement. USTR proposes to identify Vietnam as a priority foreign country, which may lead to additional tariffs or other trade measures. Comments are due by July 2, 2026. 91 Fed. Reg. 33285 (June 3, 2026).

Source: Miller & Company P.C.

Low Speed Vehicles

On April 6, 2026, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced an investigation into several low-speed vehicle importers for conspiring to evade antidumping and countervailing duties (AD/CVD) on products of China by falsifying country of origin and incorrect tariff classifications. CBP has imposed interim restrictions, including requiring the payment of duties before release, the suspension or

extension of entry liquidation, and reviewing the bond sufficiency of the importers under investigation.

Source: Miller & Company P.C.

Original Section 301 Tariffs on Imports from China Will Stand

After years of litigation, the Supreme Court has officially closed the door on a challenge to President Trump's first-term imposition of Section 301 tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of imports from China.

This case, which opposed the expansion of the initial China Section 301 tariffs to so-called List 3 and 4A goods, was first filed in 2020 and subsequently joined by thousands of importers. After a March 2023 ruling by the Court of International Trade (CIT) it was taken up by the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (CAFC), which issued in September 2025 a decision that (1) deemed satisfactory the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative's (USTR) explanation of how its expansion of the tariffs complied with statutory notice and comment procedures (while affirming that this expansion was a reviewable agency action and not an unreviewable presidential act), (2) relied on a statutory provision allowing Section 301 tariffs to be modified (up or down) when the prior action is "no longer appropriate" (thereby declining to limit the circumstances or extent of such modifications), and (3) rejected the plaintiffs' major questions doctrine argument by concluding that Congress clearly delegated authority to USTR under the applicable law to impose and modify tariffs.



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The Supreme Court's decision not to review the CAFC ruling means the Section 301 tariffs on List 3 and 4A goods from China will continue to be imposed and there will be no refunds of such tariffs levied in the past.

In the meantime, the second Trump administration has announced plans to take a number of other Section 301 tariff actions against a broad range of products and countries. The finality of the China tariff litigation has no practical effect on those actions, but it could strengthen the administration's conviction that it has authority to modify any tariffs that may be imposed in those proceedings whenever and however much it wants in pursuit of its stated objectives. In that respect the Supreme Court's decision may have opened the door to even more tariff volatility in the months and years ahead.

Source: Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A.

Section 122 Tariff Remains in Place Following Appeals Court Ruling

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (CAFC) has granted the federal government's motion for a stay pending appeal in the litigation challenging the global 10 percent tariff imposed under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974

The Section 122 tariff took effect February 24, 2026. In a May 7, 2026, split decision the Court of International Trade (CIT) ruled that this tariff is unlawful. The Department of Justice (DOJ) appealed that decision to the CAFC, which has now stayed the effect of the decision during the appellate proceedings.

However, the stay will have little practical impact. The CIT's decision only enjoined the collection of the Section 122 tariff as to three importers. As a result, this tariff has continued to be collected on entries from all other importers, which will remain the case during the appellate proceedings that are likely to extend past the scheduled expiration of the tariff on July 24, 2026.

Further, the CAFC opined in issuing its stay that the DOJ has shown a likelihood of success on the merits, suggesting that the Section 122 tariff is more likely than not to be upheld on appeal.

Source: Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A.

New U.S. Tariffs on 60 Countries Fuel Early Trans-Pacific Peak Season Surge

Trans-Pacific peak season is "well underway," according to Freightos analyst Judah Levine, with Asia-U.S. West Coast rates jumping 51% in a single week to \$4,836 per Forty-foot Equivalent Unit (FEU) and East Coast rates climbing 25% to \$6,336 per FEU following carrier rate hikes that took effect June 1, 2026. The U.S. Trade Representative announced new tariffs on 60 countries that haven't done enough to combat forced-labor imports, adding to frontloading pressure already building ahead of an 80% bunker surcharge increase scheduled for July. The National Retail Federation moved its peak season projection to June from July, predicting June import volumes 5% higher than May. "The tariff wall around the U.S. keeps rising," said Deborah Elms of the Hinrich Foundation. "This may seem like old news, but the net effect will be to accelerate global supply chain shifts."

If cargo is coming from Asia, the window to ship before the July BAF increase is closing. A 51% rate spike in one week reflects real demand, not carrier posturing — shippers who haven't locked capacity for June are paying spot, and spot is moving fast in carriers' direction.

Source: FreightWaves

U.S.-Iran Peace Deal to Reopen Strait of Hormuz, but Shipping Recovery is Months Away

The United States and Iran reached agreement to end the war in the Arabian Gulf and lift restrictions on the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of the world's crude oil supply flows. A memorandum of understanding set for signing June 19, 2026, would suspend sanctions on Iranian oil, release \$24 billion in frozen Iranian assets, and give both countries



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60 days to negotiate a permanent settlement covering Tehran's nuclear program. The U.S. will lift its blockade of the strait within 30 days. The conflict also throttled fertilizer and chemical shipments, pushing bunker prices sharply higher ahead of peak shipping season and prompting President Trump to temporarily suspend the Jones Act for foreign ships carrying gas and fertilizer between Gulf Coast producers and northeast markets.

A ceasefire is not a supply chain. Analyst Lars Jensen put it directly: "A full return to pre-crisis normality will likely take two to three months" — vessel rotations need to be realigned, thousands of mines need to be cleared, and empty containers need to reposition. Rate normalization will lag the announcement. Plan for the disruption, not the headline.

Source: FreightWaves

Increased CBP Enforcement

On June 3, 2026, President Trump issued a sweeping Executive Order (E.O.) directing the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to strengthen enforcement of U.S. Customs laws, with a focus on importer accountability, increased supply chain scrutiny, increased penalty enforcement, reduced penalty mitigation, and increased data collection.

The E.O. directs enhanced requirements for Importers of Record (IORs), including increased disclosure and bonding, and stricter rules for foreign IORs, including a prohibition on Informal Entries. It also directs the prioritization of enforcement actions involving forced labor, misclassification, undervaluation, and transshipment.

The E.O. is expected to significantly increase compliance burdens across the import community. 91 Fed. Reg. 35125 (June 10, 2026).

Foreign-trade zone (FTZ) operators and other users of in-bond entries should watch for potential restrictions on in-bond movements.

Many changes are to be implemented through rulemaking over the next 90–180 days, so

clients should monitor the Federal Register for Proposed Rules.

Source: Miller & Company P.C.

Port of Long Beach Posts Third-Busiest May on Record

The Port of Long Beach handled 842,030 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in May, marking its third-busiest May on record and a sharp rebound from the tariff-driven slowdown that weighed on cargo volumes a year ago.

The Southern California gateway reported a 31.7% increase in overall cargo volumes compared to May 2025, driven by a surge in imports as retailers continued to front-load shipments amid ongoing trade policy uncertainty.

Imports climbed 40% year-over-year to 418,851 TEUs, while exports increased 32.9% to 109,168 TEUs. Empty container movements rose 21.8% to 314,012 TEUs.

The strong performance partly reflects favorable comparisons with last year's tariff-driven slowdown, when tariffs and trade uncertainty sharply reduced cargo volumes. In May 2025, Long Beach processed just 639,160 TEUs, an 8.2% decline from the previous year as importers pulled back shipments following the Trump administration's "Liberation Day" tariff announcements and subsequent disruptions to global trade flows.

ILWU Local 13 President Mario "Moe" Medina joined Port of Long Beach CEO Dr. Noel Hacegaba in announcing the latest cargo figures.

Year-to-date, the port has handled 4,050,247 TEUs through the first five months of 2026, essentially matching last year's pace and remaining on track with its busiest year on record. Volumes are up 0.2% compared to the same period in 2025.

The latest numbers align with forecasts from the National Retail Federation's Global Port Tracker, which projected stronger containerized imports during the first half of 2026 as retailers



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accelerate shipments ahead of potential tariff changes and rising transportation costs.

According to the June Global Port Tracker report, U.S. ports are benefiting from favorable comparisons to last year's tariff-related slowdown, while many importers continue pulling cargo forward to avoid possible cost increases later this year.

The report projects U.S. container imports to remain elevated through June before softening later in the summer as inflation concerns and economic uncertainty weigh on demand.

While Long Beach's May results suggest import activity remains resilient, industry forecasters continue to expect a more challenging environment in the second half of 2026. Global Port Tracker forecasts year-over-year declines in July, August, and September volumes at major U.S. ports as the effects of front-loading fade and retailers adjust inventories.

For Long Beach, the latest results mark a significant turnaround from the cargo declines experienced during the tariff disruptions of 2025 and reinforce expectations that the traditional peak shipping season may arrive earlier than usual this year.

Source: gCaptain

May Was a Boom Month for US Imports

U.S. seaborne imports rose 13.5% year-over-year in May 2026, with May volumes also 5.4% above April, suggesting peak-season shipping started earlier than usual ahead of June's Amazon.com Inc.'s Prime Day promotions, which themselves are being held a month earlier than normal.

Importers also appear to be front-loading inventory before broader Section 301 manufacturing tariffs begin by the end of July, with consumer durables imports up 44.0% in May; that points to stronger near-term arrivals but a higher risk of a slowdown once July-onward duties take effect.

Logistics conditions are likely to remain tight through the rest of peak season: North Asia-

U.S. East Coast spot rates climbed to U.S.\$6,100 per forty-foot equivalent unit (FEU) from U.S.\$2,700, increasing the chance of delayed contracted shipments and higher landed costs.

Source: Panjiva Data

New Chips and Higher Costs

New product releases of Nvidia Corporation's high-end, AI-focused RTX Spark chipset and Qualcomm's cost-conscious Snapdragon C demonstrate the bifurcation of personal computer supply chains as the industry struggles to deal with ongoing component shortages and higher costs.

Companies have become less positive about their supply networks, with the balance of positive and negative mentions on corporate earnings calls dropping to the lowest since the second quarter of 2023. Lenovo Group Limited and Dell Technologies Inc. have both acknowledged the shortages, while HP Inc. and Wiyynn Corporation see them continuing for at least 12 months.

The shortages, driven in part by AI datacenter demand, have led input prices for computing equipment manufacturers to accelerate, with the April S&P Global Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI®) for input costs reaching 77.1 in May 2026 from 70.9 in April, the highest since October 2021. Dell has stated that cost increases are at rates "we've never seen before," while HP has noted broader inflationary pressures including energy costs.

Firms are partly reacting via higher prices, though progress in the PMI for output prices has lagged input costs at a faster rate than the 10-year average for the past seven months. Lenovo has noted that higher prices will boost its overall group revenues, even as shipments of devices are likely to be lower year over year.

The resulting downturn in production can already be seen in global imports of laptop computers, which fell by 7.9% year-over-year in the first quarter of 2026, and will eventually trickle through to supply chains including power supplies, screens and peripherals.

Source: Panjiva Data



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