



Seaboard Marine — From start-up carrier to the leader in Latin trade transport

By **LORI MUSSER**

Over a 25-year period Seaboard Marine has evolved from a fledgling carrier sailing the South Florida-to-Central America trades to an international force with a fleet of more than 40 vessels blanketing Latin America.

Seaboard Marine is an ocean transportation company that provides direct, regular service between the U.S. and the Caribbean Basin, Central America and South America. It began operations in 1983 with two vessels, the Begonia and the Gardenia, and now serves nearly 40 ports in more than 20 countries.

Its equipment roster boasts nearly 50,000 dry, reefer and specialized containers (including high-cube, open-top, flat-rack and platform) as well as an accommodating assortment of chassis (including 20-foot, goose-necked 40-foot and goose-necked 45-foot). Continued investment in quality, modern and diversified equipment enables the assignment of optimal equipment to each customer's shipments.

With a goal of ensuring that each and every customer's cargo is delivered quickly, economically and safely, Seaboard coordinates the movements of its

containers using advanced computerized tracking systems, frequent sailings and a diverse selection of ports and inland transportation options. It relentlessly pursues additional fixed-day sailing schedules. From building materials to plastic goods to coffee, Seaboard Marine effectively and efficiently moves virtually any containerized cargo.

For perishable cargo such as chilled, frozen and humidity-controlled products Seaboard is equipped with 3,000 refrigerated containers, both 20-foot and 40-foot. These containers are monitored and maintained around the clock. The company has built a robust level of time-sensitivity into the processes and procedures that guide cargo journeys from start to finish. It has created special import departments at all offices that expedite the clearance of reefer freight and take great pride in being prepared to handle any variety of issues posed by Customs, the Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration and other agencies. It also works closely with importers and customs brokers prior to a vessel's arrival, so that advanced efforts can take place.

Seaboard Marine has developed considerable expertise in handling project cargo such as oversize

construction and agricultural machinery, power plants, heavy equipment and even circus items. Its roll-on, roll-off vessels are well-served by high-capacity ramps and high clearance, providing safety and ultimately less risk during movement. With an advanced, specialized equipment fleet that includes lowboys, roll trailers and single and double drop-deck flatbeds, Seaboard provides all the gear necessary to coddle this unique cargo.

The company has an exceptional Specialized Services division, otherwise known as the 807/9802 Department, dedicated to overseeing cargoes from the massive Latin American apparel and related component trades. With an innovative system that is based on an extensive network of offices and facilities throughout the U.S., Central America, South America and the Caribbean, Seaboard offers frequent and reliable service to these areas. Coordinating the details associated with 807 tariff structures, documentation and port operations are all part of this highly specialized team's daily activities.

At the Port of Miami, Seaboard operates a private terminal, open 365 days a year, on nearly 80 acres. Facilities include a 135,000-square-foot warehouse



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with rail bays and cross-loading docks for cargo consolidation and temporary storage. The design of the warehousing ensures expeditious handling of less-than-containerload cargo using wireless infrastructure and radio frequency devices to quickly and efficiently receive and track cargo. The extent of its infrastructure enables Seaboard Marine to carry more cargo than any other carrier at the Port of Miami.

With a 15 percent market share and more than a quarter-of-a-million TEUs annually, Seaboard Marine handles more international trade over Florida ports than any other carrier. Through gradual and incremental growth, it has risen to a position where it can justly claim its leadership role in the Latin trades. It offers more than 70 sailings per month from Miami alone. Its Miami routes include: the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, eastern Caribbean, Haiti, Jamaica, north Central America, south Central America, Venezuela and west coast South America. It also provides weekly service from Fernandina Beach, Fla. to: Colombia; Puerto Cabello, Venezuela; Jamaica, Haiti; and the Dominican Republic.

On July 1, 2008, Seaboard Marine announced a restructured weekly service schedule between Miami and Trinidad/Guyana and Suriname. It now offers the fastest transit time in the market — nine days to



Seaboard operates an extensive private terminal at the Port of Miami, allowing it to carry the most cargo of any carrier there.





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Paramaribo and 11 days to Georgetown. On August 30, 2008, the company initiated a third weekly sailing between the Port of Miami and Guatemala and El Salvador.

During the past few years, Seaboard Marine has geographically diversified its port operations. It operates its own around-the-clock, three-berth, 62-acre terminal in Houston, called Jacintoport, which serves Chile, Peru, Venezuela, Trinidad, Colombia and all of Central America on a weekly basis. It serves Central America twice per week from New Orleans and is scheduled to open a dedicated terminal in the Crescent City in the coming months.

Effective October 1, 2008, Seaboard moved its Northeast Service port operations from Philadelphia to Brooklyn, N.Y., and added a second delivery site at New Jersey's Port Newark. It appointed American Stevedoring, Inc. as its new terminal and continues to offer weekly service to Haiti, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

Seaboard Marine's network of offices and agents throughout the United States, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean Basin maximizes fleet utilization for both northbound and southbound cargo. U.S.-based customers with import or export cargo are offered full-service intermodal connections; many customers capitalize on this by synchronizing manufacturing schedules to maintain cost-efficient inventory levels. Seaboard Marine continually stretches to provide one of the most effective levels of service available in the industry.

Embedded in its customer service philosophy and reflected in its employees' performance is the drive to provide each client with constant communication, expert knowledge and unsurpassed service. To accomplish this the company stresses teamwork. It has made a great investment in cultivating detail-oriented experts who go to great lengths to ensure customer shipments arrive at their destination in excellent condition and on schedule, grouping its experts in focused teams and dedicating departments for each region served.

Seaboard supports its marketing efforts with an incredible array of infrastructure, including sophisticated security at both departure and destination ports and a commitment to careful equipment checks and expeditious clearance procedures. In key locations there are state-of-the-art security systems with high-mounted, motion-sensitive cameras that continuously monitor and permanently record to maximize surveillance coverage. It even offers real-time satellite communications between its vessels, Miami headquarters and overseas offices.

The company has vigilant action and contingency plans in place — coordinated with port, maritime and inland transportation industry partners — to deal with any possible emergency situation. For example, working in many tropical locations means that Seaboard is no stranger to occasional heavy weather, and it takes its role of safeguarding people and property very seriously. When heavy weather approaches, Seaboard activates plans that initiate a series of events. Some

are as simple as securing cargo and equipment, lowering stacks, or moving assets to higher ground. Others are complex and require speedy, but thoughtful and systematic, rearrangement of transportation routings and revision of documentation.

The corporate mission of being the leader in ocean transportation to all of the markets it serves is no small task. Seaboard Marine believes in continued growth in a planned and methodical manner. It stresses ongoing advancements in efficiency and productivity. It plans to acquire larger and more efficient vessels as compelling opportunities arise. It acknowledges that its existence, progress and success is, and has always been, dependent on its customers. Listening to customers as well as creating a positive environment where employees can work in partnership with those customers, large and small, enables the company to continue to provide the highest quality service.

During this 25th anniversary year, Seaboard Marine sees no better way of celebrating than by continuing to optimize the convenience of its schedules; by never losing sight of the necessity of outstanding customer service; by continuing to expand its fleet of ships and equipment and by continuing to manage the company in a dedicated, professional manner. That is the legacy that Seaboard Marine aspires to provide.

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Continued growth in ocean transportation relies on customer attention, efficiency and productivity advancements and methodical planning.