

## Virginia Port Authority

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### NEWS RELEASE

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## NIT Becomes All Straddle Carrier Operation; Transtainers Retired Early as Work Progresses Ahead of Schedule

**Richmond, VA** – Norfolk International Terminals (NIT), the largest of the Virginia Port Authority's (VPA) three marine terminals, set a milestone just before the end of 2006 when the last of its rubber-tire gantry cranes, or "transtainers," were retired.

"It is significant because all of NIT, except for the rail yard, is now a straddle carrier operation," said Joe Dorto, CEO and general manager of Virginia International Terminals Inc., which is the VPA's operating company. "There is an ongoing effort to increase our efficiency and this is another part of that effort.

"The strads give us the flexibility that the transtainers don't; they can work vessels, the [container] stacks and the transfer zones. The trucker really benefits because the strad operation combined with the chassis pool, allows drivers to get a good chassis, pick up a box and go."

NIT's south end was, until Dec. 29, 2006, an operation that used transtainers, yard hustlers and straddle carriers. (In August 2005, 30 straddle carriers went into service at NIT South.)

But as the seven-year, \$279 million renovation to that part of terminal continues ahead of schedule, the transtainers and yard hustlers were phased out earlier than planned.

“We are almost a year ahead of schedule,” said Jeff Florin, the VPA’s engineering director. “This project is designed to be completed in phases and the reconfiguration and repaving of the container area [for straddle carrier operations] has been smooth because of good weather, efficient contractors and a strict plan that we have adhered to -- and we’ve done all this without disrupting cargo operations.”

Presently there are 55 straddle carriers in use at NIT and in June six more are scheduled to go into service at the south wharf. NIT North has been a straddle carrier operation since 1998.

Dorto said six of the transtainers will remain at NIT where they will be used in the rail yard. Others will be sold and/or considered for use at Newport News Marine Terminal.

The work at NIT South is scheduled for completion in 2012

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**The Virginia Port Authority (VPA) is an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, reporting to the state Secretary of Transportation. The VPA owns and operates four general cargo facilities on behalf of the state: Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, Newport News Marine Terminal and the Virginia Inland Port in Warren County. The terminals are operated by Virginia International Terminals, Inc. (VIT) the non-stock, non-profit operating company. The VPA, through terminal earnings generated by VIT, is operationally self-sufficient. The VPA and correlating maritime industry is responsible for 165,000 jobs, \$762 million in business revenues and \$61 million in state and local taxes throughout the Commonwealth.**