

2007 U.S.-FLAG DRY-BULK CARGO CARRIAGE

The major U.S.-Flag carriers engaged in the dry-bulk trades on the Great Lakes carried 104 million net tons of cargo in 2007, a decrease of 5.2 percent from 2006, and 950,000 tons shy of the 5-year average.¹ Iron ore cargos decreased by 3.6 percent, but coal loadings were off by only 190,000 tons, or three cargos in a 1,000-footer.

The biggest plunge came in the limestone trade. Shipments totaled 26 million tons, a decrease of 12 percent. A slowdown in the construction industry accounted for a significant portion of the decline, but the trade was also affected by three U.S.-Flag lakers being idled by a labor dispute for several months.

Low water levels further reduced the float. Lake Superior fell to record lows in August and September. As a result, vessels that were already forced to shed cargo because the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has not maintained the Great Lakes Navigation System to project depth had to further lighten their loads. The largest iron ore cargo carried in 2007 – 65,186 tons – was more than 7,000 tons below the Lakes' record. The coal trade didn't fare much better. Its top load was nearly 6,400 tons below the Lakes' record. It must be noted that these record cargos were carried in 1997, a year when near record-high water levels largely offset the lack of adequate dredging.

U.S.-FLAG DRY-BULK CARGO CARRIAGE
CALENDAR YEARS 2002-2007 AND 5-YEAR AVERAGE
 (net tons)

COMMODITY	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	AVERAGE 2002-2006
IRON ORE							
Direct Shipments.....	45,861,075	41,343,509	48,265,018	43,884,572	45,850,298	45,049,721	45,040,894
Transshipments	2,334,252	1,672,776	2,936,493	2,687,547	3,121,814	2,156,662	2,550,576
TOTAL – IRON ORE	48,195,327	43,016,285	51,201,511	46,572,119	48,972,112	47,206,383	47,591,471
COAL (By Lake of Loading)							
Lake Superior.....	13,874,872	14,238,033	15,459,399	17,429,479	17,180,114	16,692,347	15,636,379
Lake Michigan.....	2,239,657	2,771,065	3,734,928	3,760,477	3,161,804	2,718,874	3,128,186
Lake Erie.....	5,629,302	4,870,328	5,222,022	6,017,394	5,018,195	5,759,408	5,351,448
TOTAL – COAL.....	21,743,831	21,879,426	24,416,349	27,207,350	25,360,113	25,170,629	24,116,013
LIMESTONE.....	26,554,243	24,239,110	29,861,141	27,935,513	29,489,410	25,966,057	27,615,883
CEMENT.....	3,817,911	3,851,487	3,965,401	3,892,822	3,997,703	3,602,488	3,910,465
SALT.....	587,090	945,355	1,032,109	1,187,777	1,126,862	1,241,297	975,839
SAND.....	230,950	500,456	489,355	461,813	429,411	449,474	422,397
GRAIN	329,471	312,316	367,785	403,055	356,143	404,923	353,954
TOTAL.....	101,458,823	94,744,435	111,333,651	107,660,449	109,731,754	104,041,251	104,986,022

¹ This survey represents the members of Lake Carriers' Association, Andrie Inc. (cement only) and Laken Shipping (limestone only).