

Promoting Efficient and Competitive Intra-ASEAN Shipping Services – *Cambodia Country Report*

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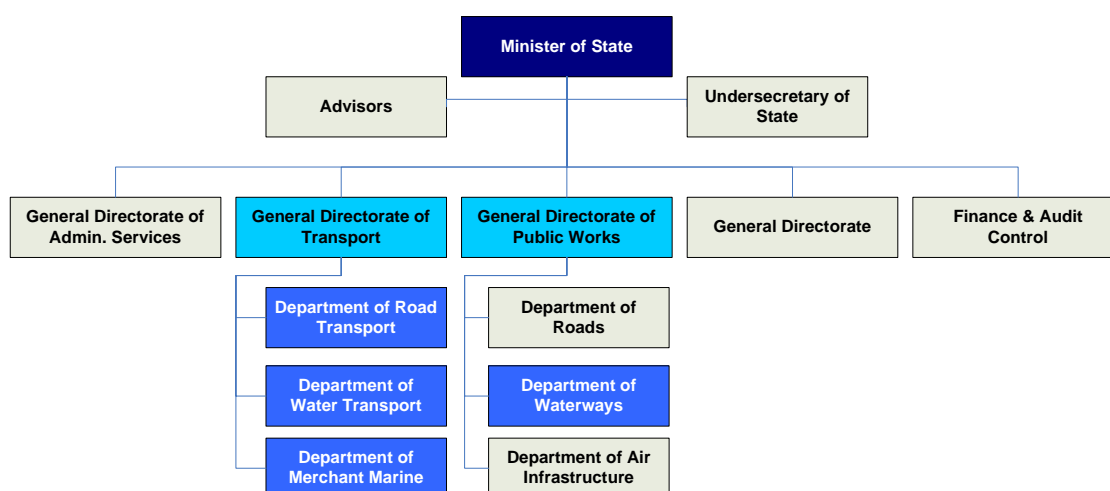
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I. NATIONAL SHIPPING POLICIES

Figure 1: Maritime Administration: Responsibilities within Government



A. DIRECTORATE OF TRANSPORT

The Directorate of Transport is responsible for management and control of transport by road, by waterway and by sea; and for all regulations to facilitate and guarantee safety. It is led by a Director General who is assisted by a Deputy Director General.

The Directorate of Transport is composed of three departments: the Department of Road Transport, the Department of Water Transport and the Department of Merchant Marine. The following are the departmental responsibilities for the two marine related departments, as set out in the government website¹.

1. Department of Water Transport

The Department of Water Transport is in charge:

- Manage the transport by river, channel, stream, lake.
- Elaborate and control the respect of regulations and disciplines of water transport.
- Control and follow-up the development policy of those transports.
- Deliver the driving – license, the ship certificate, the mechanic certificate and the exploitation authorization.
- Control all the local port area in the country.
- Control of the ship status in the country.

2. Department of Merchant Marine

The Department of Merchant Marine is in charge of:

- All general administrative affairs of the State's merchant ship and the public establishment:
 - Manage the regular maritime transport and control the regulations execution.
 - Control the ships, which are out of the agreement.

¹ www.mphwt.gov.kh

- Research in order to put the ships, which are out of the agreement into the movement technically lead.
- Study and evaluate the quality and the quantity of public merchant ship demands.
- Research on technology and technique concerning the ship concept.
- Advise the technical documents which help the ship traffic investment.
- Prepare the formality concerning the maritime ship status.
- Regional and international maritime cooperation:
 - Elaborate and propose the technical basis of regional and international maritime cooperation.
 - Manage the regional and international maritime cooperation.
 - Manage the bilateral agreement of maritime transport cooperation.
 - Negotiate internationally on the maritime transport sector.
 - Manage the professions following from the maritime transport.

B. POLICY

There is a general thrust towards deregulation. Much of this hinges on new legislation currently in draft.

A recent IMO report² reviewed the status of maritime regulations and conformity with international obligations, and led to recommendations to strengthen, through a series of courses and workshops, flag state rules, port state control (PSC) and security (ISPS). It also commented on the arrangements involving ISRC. Two years ago, an IMO/ASEAN mission also reported on measures needed to implement obligations under IMO conventions, and recommended accelerating passage of the new maritime law, but progress has since stalled. On the topic of seamen's certificates of competency, there has been a program of Belgian assistance in establishing/strengthening a Maritime Centre, with TA provided by the Port of Antwerp.

The task of the General Department of Transport (GDT) includes drafting these new laws and regulations. It is also involved with ASEAN coordination and other international agreements. Discussions are ongoing on ASEAN-China and ASEAN-Japan economic cooperation, as well as upcoming Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) meeting in Phnom Penh.

MPWT is in the process of drafting the new maritime law; this will deal with the issues raised by Cambodia's joining the WTO, the Secretary of State having already drafted a new sub-decree on port and ship security which he hopes will be approved by end-September. Deregulation seems to be proceeding, but slowly. Progress however, appears to become bogged down or diverted, with reports of direct involvement by the Council of Ministers.

There is an effort to reduce corruption and so anomalous agencies may be under the spotlight, but there is no clear indication assurance that all problem areas will be eliminated. Regulations governing customs are included in the draft new law. Government is facing pressure from the WTO timetable to address Customs shortcomings.

² Mission Report on Needs Assessment Mission on Maritime Legislation and Administration of Cambodia, March-April 2000.

C. SHIP REGISTRATION

Cambodia conducts an open registry, effectively open to any vessel. The International Shipping Registry of Cambodia (ISRC), has been effectively privatised, being contracted out between 1994 and 2001 to accompany overseas. It has the dubious distinction of being the first internet registration system. This led to a lack of control and apparent abrogation the obligations that go with registry, those of ensuring that vessels registered comply with international protocols. A procession of ship detentions followed, involving not only safety but illegality such as drug offences. This brought some international condemnation, the EU, for instance, banning several ships on the Cambodian registry after vessels were found repeatedly to be deficient.

In 2001, after the detention of a Cambodian ship for smuggling, the Minister wanted to end this contract and to improve the ships' classification system. But the issue was taken over by the Council of Ministers. For this reason, any reference to the ship registry has been omitted from the draft of the maritime law, even though its emphasis is on maritime safety and environmental protection; ships' registry was to be the subject of a separate law. It is not clear where this matter now rests.

It is interesting that an internet search for the Cambodian Shipping registry brings up the website of a company that appears primarily to be pushing the Mongolian register! No information on the Cambodian register could be found.

D. SHIPS' AGENCY

Technically there is only one organisation in Cambodia offering ships' agency, Kamuchea Shipping Agency & Brokers or KAMSAB. Initially established in 1979 it operates under a 1985 law and is defined by its management as a "government-owned private company" It has a monopoly, all ships calling being forced to use – or at least pay for - its services.

Ships apply to Kamsab for an entry permit; the application must include ship's particulars, arrival time, cargoes details etc. The application can be made by fax or email; Kamsab sends these to Merchant Marine Department, who formally issues the permit. In principle, they provide a one-day turnaround service but sometimes delays are caused by MMD. The process is more complicated for ships entering PP port because they have to transit through Vietnam on the Mekong.

Kamsab arranges for all pilotage services, berth reservation etc, acting on behalf of the ship owner. It can also arrange land transport, usually using trucking services through the Cambodian Trucking Company, a grouping of 16 trucking companies.

Kamsab's tariffs are set/approved by the Council of Ministers. It has a Board, on which sit representatives of the Ministries of Finance & National Planning (MFNP), Public Works & Transport (MPWT), Trade/Commerce, Security etc.

Cargo consignees arrange customs clearance for individual cargoes; Kamsab arranges clearance of the ship and overall cargo on a manifest basis. The shipping company does not issue the delivery order; Kamsab does. Kamsab contacts the cargo owner to notify them of discharging, then issues a delivery order depending on shipowner's instructions. The consignee arranges payment of duties, customs clearance, and presents shipping documents to Kamsab to obtain release (delivery order).

Kamsab does not do ISPS inspection/verification; it only assists the ship's master as agent of the shipowner; it doesn't provide any government or port functions. It can, if requested, supervise stevedoring (supplied by port), checking damage etc. It can represent both owner and charterer on voyage charters.

Kamsab don't have any statistics on flows through these private ports, but do for Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh ports -- see hand-outs provided.

There is a committee of port users; it has regular monthly meetings. There are also regular meetings with shipping lines and consignees to iron out difficulties. However, industry contacts were consistent in their view of Kamsab, considering it be an imposition which only cases extra cost. Although the list of services offered appears comprehensive, the ship operators all stated that they have to employ their own people to oversee all these activities. Thus they effectively pay twice to get the job done properly.

E. SECURITY PROTOCOLS

Port operators report they are awaiting a directive from the Government before completing work for compliance. At Sihanoukville Port, the port authority reports that it has completed most requirements for ISPS certification and is just awaiting government approval, which is slow in coming. There is a scanner in operation and all laden containers are scanned at the port, with a charge of US\$80. If congestion or malfunction affects the operation, manual inspection would be carried out by customs.

F. CUSTOMS REGULATION

Ship operators felt that customs regulation is outdated. For instance, empty containers are treated as cargo. With the major container shortage in Thailand, if a vessel is calling at Cambodia en route to Bangkok and the operator is maximising empty repositioning opportunities, the vessel may arrive with only 200 slots for exports of 250 teu. They would normally look to drop off 50 empties to make room, to be picked up by a subsequent vessel. However, customs in Cambodia treat the empties as imports, requiring full entry clearance, valuation etc. The lines feel that this is precluding any transshipment opportunities, apart for hindering exports.

G. RIVER TRAFFIC – MEKONG/TONTLE SAP RIVERS

Imports and exports through the river system to/from river ports (other than Phnom Penh) are subject to permit issued by the provincial governors. An agreement with the governor/s of the province/s along the border covers shipments on the Mekong to/from Vietnam.

River transport tariffs are issued by Prakas (sub-decree) of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning on the advice of IWTD and in consultation with other concerned ministries, but these are only for govern-provided services (e.g. ferry and port services); tariffs for private services are uncontrolled.

II. KEY TRADING RELATIONSHIPS

A. MAIN COMMODITIES SHIPPED IN INTRA-ASEAN TRADES

Garments and footwear are the only major export item. The main market is USA served via Singapore. Forecasts are for stable volumes, but business is seasonal – May/June is the slow time. There are over 200 factories.

Most imports into Sihanoukville are raw materials in containers coming from China, Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia. RCL is the biggest carrier. Some project cargo is handled and pipes are imported for gas production and mining and exploration in the north. Some cargo is coming through Phu My (Vung Tau), for instance electrical generator sets. Cement is being imported from Thailand, but now supply may be shifting to Philippines.

On the Mekong, the trade flows are reported to be all containerised. Most is to/from Vietnam and China via transshipment in HCMC (Vung Tao). Major imports comprise tiles and other roofing materials from China and Taiwan, empty cans for the breweries and raw materials for the garment factories steel plate and consumer goods. Some used clothing is also imported. Exports from Phnom Penh are predominantly footwear (particularly rubber boots) and garments

1. River Traffic

Other than the three container services serving Phnom Penh, river traffic is relatively small: everyday trade goods for personal consumption, food, tools, some sand and gravel by barge; oil/fuel is shipped in drums and small tankers (Sokimex, the state fuel distributor, has a fleet of 10 small oil tankers, other oil companies use private contractors); rubber used to move by river, but now only 30% does so, the rest going by road.

III. NATIONAL FLEET

Table 1: Cambodia Fleet Overview

Vessel type	Sub-category	Number of vessels
Container	Panamax and smaller	6
	Post Panamax	-
<u>Dry cargo</u> (non-container)	General	448
	General/pax	1
	Reefer	17
	Ro-ro cargo	9
	Ro-ro/pax	2
	Passenger (pax)	1
	Other	6
Total dry cargo incl container	Total	490
Tankers	Up to 100,000 gt	36
	>100,000 gt	-
Total tankers		36
Bulk carriers	Handysize	9
	Handymax	10
	Panamax	-
	Capesize	-
Total bulk carriers		19
Grand total		545

Figure 2: Tankers: Size and Age Distribution

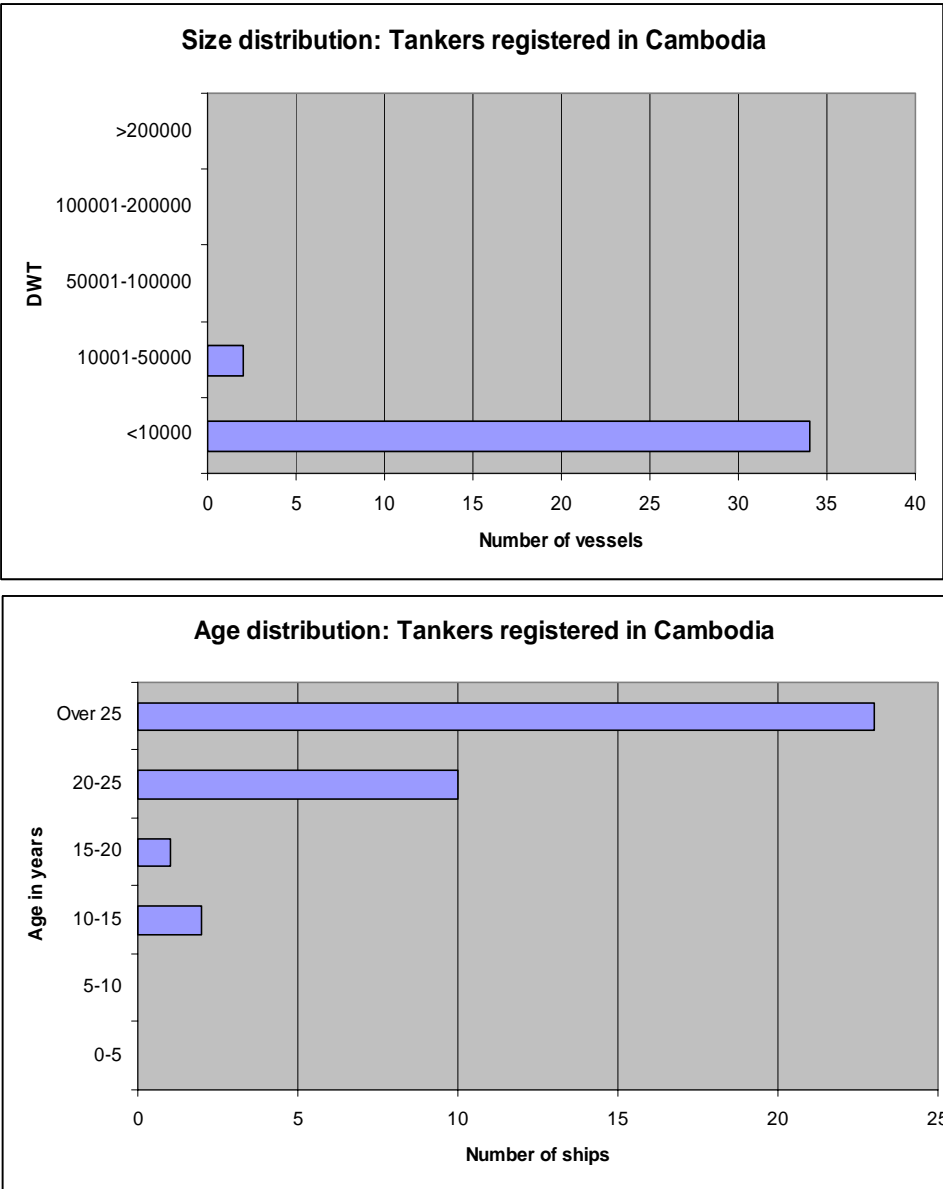


Figure 3: Container vessels: Size and Age Distribution

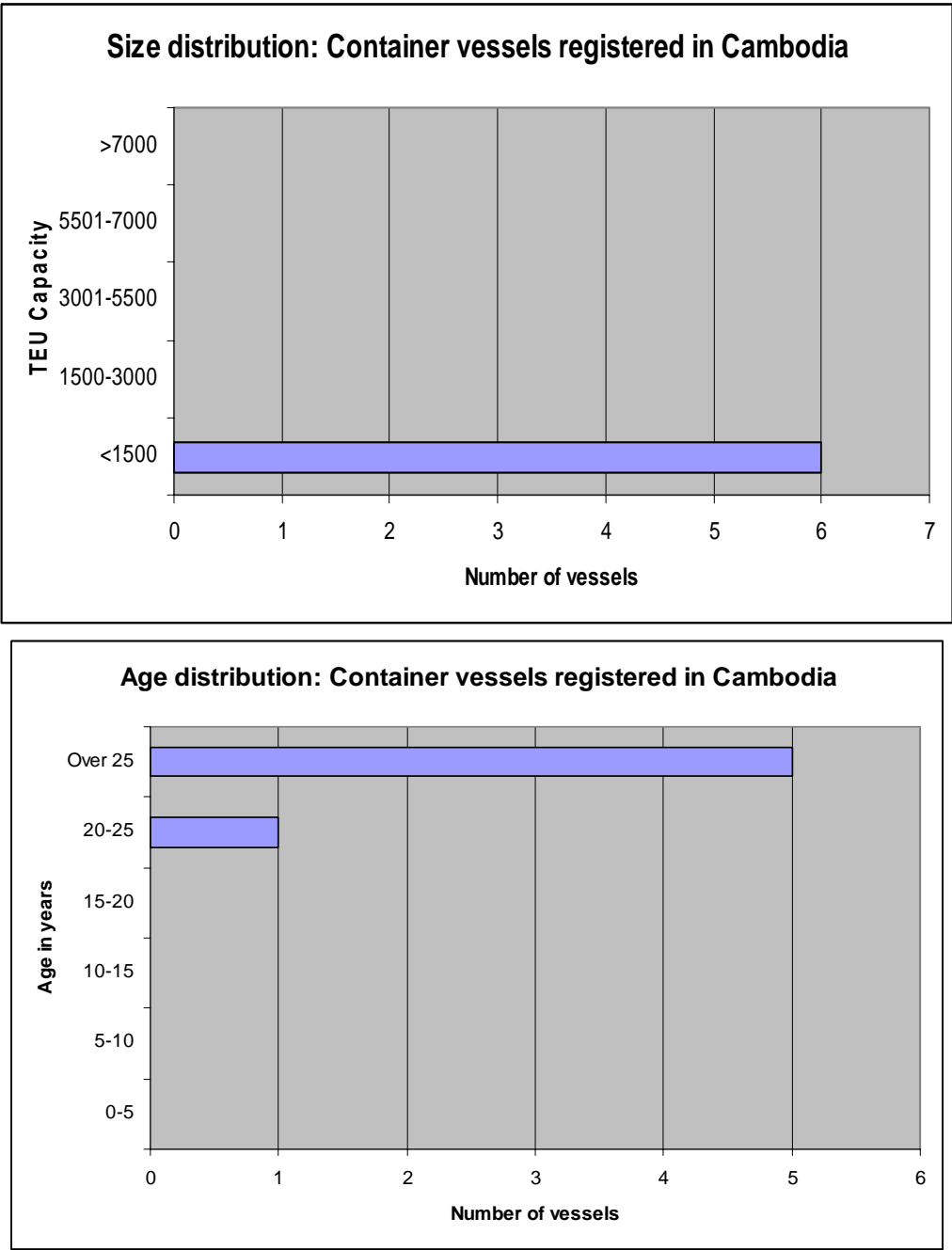


Figure 4: Bulk carriers: Size and Age Distribution

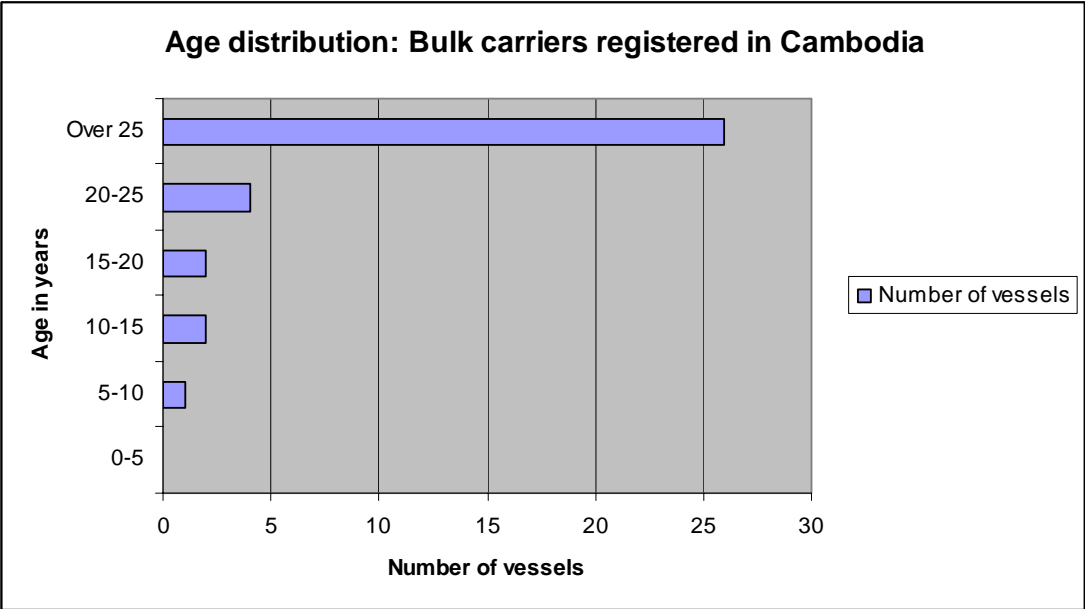
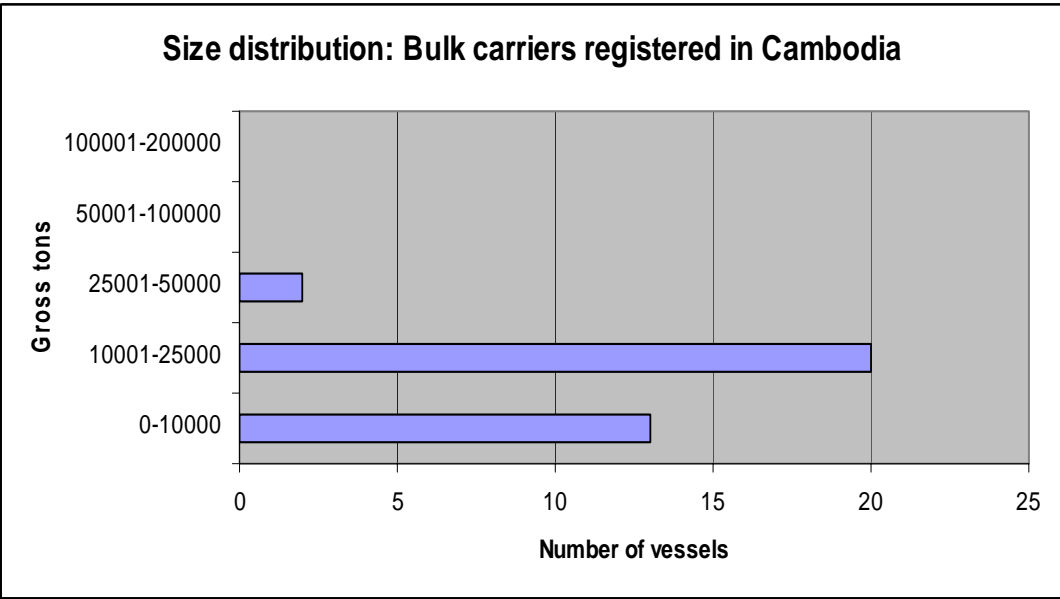
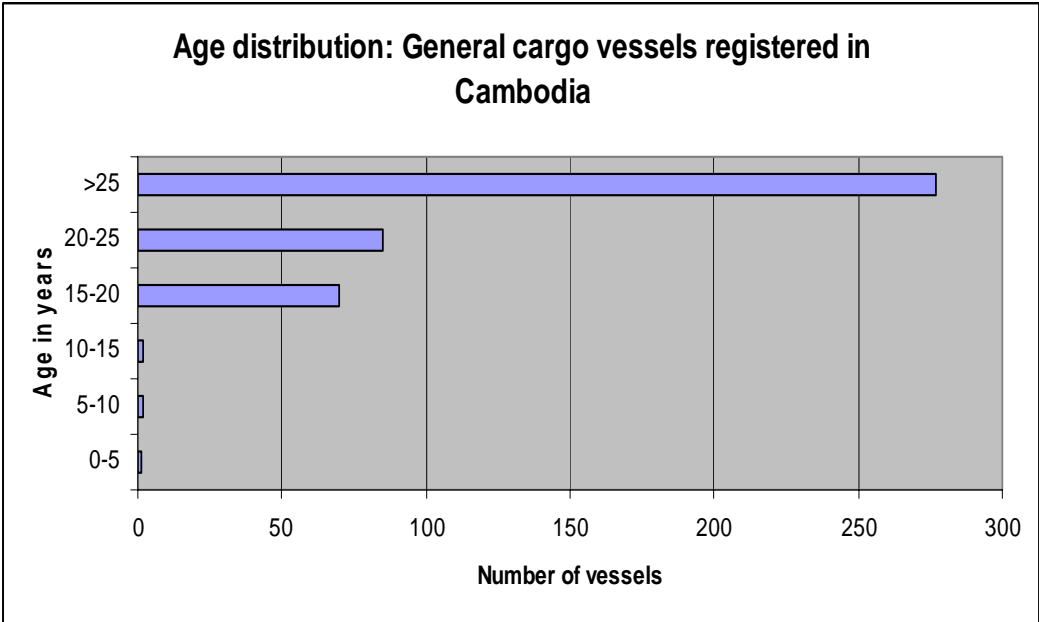
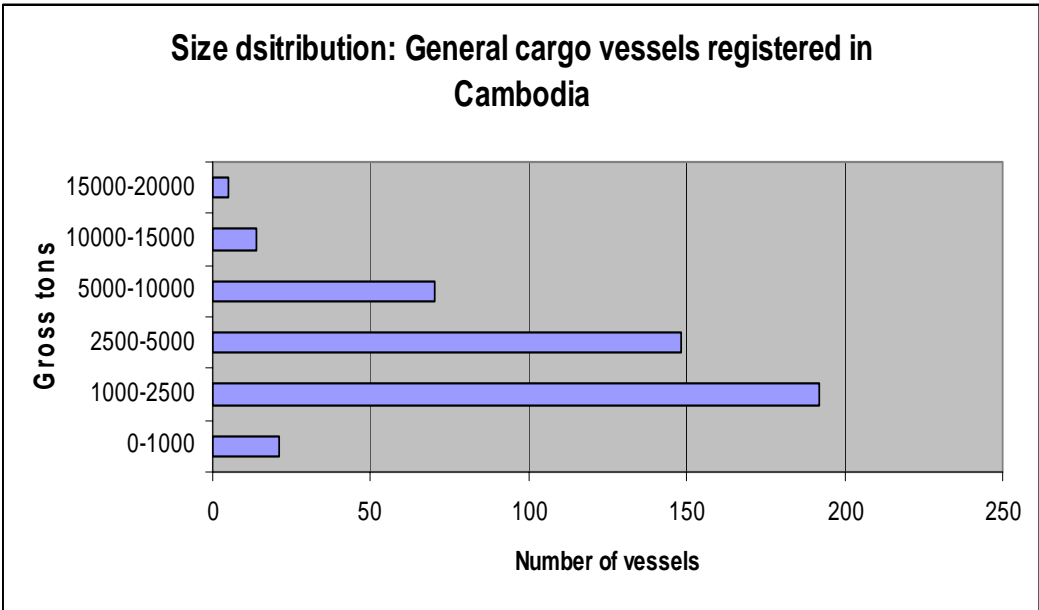


Figure 5: General Cargo Vessels: Size Distribution



IV. PORTS

A. OVERVIEW OF PORT ADMINISTRATION

Cambodia has an 'open seas' policy with open access to all ship and port operators. Thus, for instance, the private port development by Mong Reththy can proceed even though the Marine Department has no involvement with it and, according to the Harbour Master at Sihanoukville, it lacks shelter and thus has safety of navigation issues.

In fact there are several minor ports (e.g., Sri Ambol (barges only), Kampot and Krong Kaoh Kong) and some private ports, over which the government seems to have limited control.

1. Private Participation in Port Ownership and Operation

There are several private ports in Cambodia, notably the being developed by the Mong Reththy Group. Also Keo Phoh Port is listed as privately owned.

These developments are becoming a big issue. It is understood that the Minister wants to impose controls over navigation, safety, tariffs etc, but the private owners are well connected and it is proving difficult. Oknha Mong Port handles small vessels and barges from Thailand and Vietnam and will shortly be dredged to accommodate larger vessels. Customs operates there, but not Kamsab. Comments from marine staff at nearby Sihanoukville suggest that the operation does not comply with national standards of navigation safety but there appears little progress in asserting control over these operations.

2. Data on Port Performance

Industry is critical of ports, both productivity and cost. All commercial operators felt that charges are too high and bear no relation to costs. Delays are an issue, with end of week peaks aggravated by operational inefficiency. One major operator with a Singapore – Sihanoukville – Singapore service commented that it could add a call to Thailand to the schedule if the Cambodian operation was more efficient.

3. Tariffs and their Application

Port pricing changes are achieved by a proposal from the port authority to the Minister of Finance comparing charges with other ports in the region (Vietnam and Thailand). No changes have been implemented at Sihanoukville since 1992.

4. Handling Performance

All ports complained of the tendency for ships to bunch late in the week. This is apparently in response to manufacturers' production schedules. It causes significant problems for these smaller ports³.

³ This is widespread. Industry contacts elsewhere indicated that it is not for really valid reasons, but relates more to ship operators responding to the market's traditional ways of doing business. There may be an education issue here to address misalignment of operating hours.

B. DETAILS OF PORTS

1. ASEAN Network Ports

ASEAN network ports in Cambodia are identified as:⁴ Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh. Base cargo handling characteristics for these ports are shown in the table below, and the following table summarises marine characteristics such as channel details, depths alongside etc.

More detailed descriptions of the ports are in the text following the tables.

Table 2: Cambodia ASEAN Network Ports – Cargo Capability

Port	Owner	Cargo functions ⁽¹⁾					Trade		Remarks
		C	D B	L B	G C	P	Total vol t (yr)	Total teu(yr)	
Sihanoukville	Gov ⁽²⁾	*	*	*	*	*	1.7m t	170,000 teu (2002 - est)	Container trades are stable but may be losing out to Mekong direct into Phnom Penh. Some minor domestic passenger services.
Phnom Penh	Gov ⁽³⁾	*			*			12-15,000 teu (2003 est)	New services linking PP with Vung Tau/HCMC via the Mekong River. Cargo tiles, empty cans, raw materials for garments, consumer items. Exports garments and footwear.

Notes: 1. Cargo types – C=container; DB = dry bulk; LB=liquid bulk; GC = general or break-bulk cargo; P=passengers
2. Technically, the Autonomous Port of Sihanoukville 3. Technically, the Autonomous Port of Phnom Penh

Table 3: Cambodia ASEAN Network Ports – Physical Characteristics

Port	Access	Channel			Berths		Tugs
		Depth m	Width m	Length	Total length m	Depth m	Number & hp
Sihanoukville	Road, rail ⁽²⁾	9-10		1-2nm	920 ⁽¹⁾	7-8.5	5 <u>totalling</u> 4200hp
Phnom Penh	Road	4.2- 5.2		+/- 2.5 days	300	5-9	Nil

Notes: 1. A further container berth is being developed - ~200m, 8m depth plus stacking areas. Also plans for bulk terminal. 2. Rail is connected but all but disused. Has potential.

Sihanoukville

The Autonomous Port of Sihanoukville, located 250km south and west of Phnom Penh, is effectively Cambodia's main gateway, although the Port of Phnom Penh on the Mekong is set to regain some importance as a gateway for imports cargo coming from China and Vietnam by barge up the Mekong River. Apart from small ferry and barge jetties, the only other port of any substance is a new, privately owned facility at Mong Re Thy some 60km north of Sihanoukville, which is set to provide the port with some competition, at least for non-container cargoes.

⁴ ALMEC Corporation, 2002. ASEAN Maritime Sector Study: Final Report. ASEAN: Jakarta.

Sihanoukville port fronts the Gulf of Thailand and is well protected by offshore islands, is built close to relatively deep water (13m) and has short, easily navigated channel dredged to 9 to 10m. Depths alongside vary from 7 to 8.5 m, although there is currently a 7m operating limit.

Originally built in the 1960s the port now handles break-bulk, liquid and dry bulk and container cargoes. However, growth in container volumes has massively outstripped other dry cargo, with break-bulk falling dramatically. The port is losing bulk cargoes with cement in particular, previously landed at Sihanoukville from barges from Thailand (four in a string carrying 5,000 tonnes each), now being discharged at private ports up the coast.

The port currently comprises four components:

- the old port, with aging concrete finger jetties and a 265m long general cargo berth with transit sheds, the utilisation of which is now declining;
- a general cargo wharf serving as a container terminal with approximately 350m of wharf face;
- a further container berth and CY under construction, to be completed in 2005⁵, which is estimated to boost capacity to 300,000 teu pa; and
- a tanker berth servicing import vessels to 13,000dwt and local distribution tankers of 500 to 1,500dwt.

Within the same embayment, a new green fields bulk terminal is mooted⁶ to serve a planned industrial and free trading zone.

Current throughput is approximately 1.7m tonnes pa, including 170,000 teu containerised cargo, mainly in 40' units. There is a strong imbalance with export cargo, predominantly garments, heavily outweighing imports raw materials. There is strong seasonality, the peak being in June to October. There is also a weekly peak with most feeder vessel scheduled to call at the end of the week to suit the garment manufacturers' shipping program.

The port is rail served but little volume is carried by rail, with the line heading east almost to the border with Vietnam before heading north to Phnom Penh and, ultimately, to Thailand. Generally, most containers are trucked to Phnom Penh and to the factories abounding in the corridor the west of the city. The rail line is in a poor state of repair, with a 12kph speed limitation.

Road connection to Phnom Penh is good with easy gradients, although two lane throughout. Access to the port is reasonable although it is easy to see why congestion would occur as ship movements peak late in the week. Traffic to Phnom Penh is able to bypass the town and passes through several villages without hindrance although speeds are low with much bicycle and pedestrian load adjacent to villages. Sections of the road are toll but only heavy vehicles are charged. It was noted that public transport in the region is heavily weighted towards minibuses and station wagons. Thus the toll system is clearly targeting the truck and commercial traffic. While the benefits of this are clear, it may have unexpected results, such as the development of private port north of Sihanoukville (Oknha Mong Port) which allows cargo such as cement, imported in barges from Thailand, to avoid the US\$80 per load cost of the tolled section of highway.

⁵ Mid term plan 2005.

⁶ Long term plan – 2015.

Discussing the port of Phnom Penh as a competitor, they advised that some cargo ex S China is being discharged in Vietnam (Saigon) and barged up the Mekong River. However, they feel this to be an expensive option with the multiple handling.

Container handling is by two Liebherr mobile cranes. Containers are shifted to stack and loaded out by four RTGs, and there appeared to be at least two reachstackers and one or two other heavy FLT's. The container stacking area is currently divided from the wharf by transit sheds, which are scheduled for demolition, utilisation appearing to be limited to some small scale LCL operations.

Phnom Penh

The Autonomous Port of Phnom Penh is located on the Sonle Sap River at its confluence with the Mekong. It is central Phnom Penh with congested access from city streets. The first impression is of old godowns and containers parked in every gap along the waterfront. However, once through the gates, a different view presents. The main wharf is quite new (built 2002) and in excellent condition. The port converted to all-container operations in 2002 on completion of JICA-funded project. It comprises a concrete decked structure some 300m long by approximately 50m wide, built out into the stream with two broad concrete connecting bridges. River level limit draft to 5.2 m in rainy season, 4.2 m in dry with depths alongside varying from 6m to 9m. The approaches and river channel are all dredged. Although the port has some mobile cranes, they do not have the reach to lift loaded containers from ships' outer stacks and crane barges (Hong Kong style) are used between ship and wharf to work cargo.

The port is enjoying something of a resurgence. Before the autonomous port structure came into being, break bulk cargo was declining with Sihanoukville taking over as the prime gateway. However, since the new port was commissioned as a separate entity, volumes have risen from 1,000 containers p.a. initially, to 1,000 to 1,500 per month currently. Vessels calling are shallow draft open hatch style vessels, varying for 45 to 150 TEU capacity, offering effectively liner services with seven scheduled calls per week.

The port is approximately 150km from the Vietnam border, and a further 250 km from Vung Tau and Saigon Port (HCMC). The river transit takes approximately 2 days but varies with the state of the current. The channel down the river is fast flowing and varies with much at 3m or less at certain times of year, 5 to 5.5m in the wet season. There is compulsory pilotage with the port operator supplying pilots to the Vietnamese border.

Port facilities include:

- 2 crane barges (60 t and 85 t) for handling 40 ft containers alongside, owned by Sovereign Line
- 70 t and 50 t mobile cranes;
- 45 t reach-stacker and a Sky stacker for stacking empties;
- 6 port-owned 20 ft container trucks; supplemented by
- 8 Sovereign Line 40 ft container trucks

The Port usually delivers containers to Phnom Penh customers but consignees' own trucks can enter port on payment of US\$11. Various storage/office areas on narrow strip along riverside road, each with separate road access; no separate internal road system.

2. Other ports

Mong Reththy

The Oknha Port is being developed by the Mong Reththy Group, a diversified group engaged primarily in agribusiness and construction. The port is 16 km off Highway 4 about 130 km from Phnom Penh, and only 45km north of Sihanoukville. It started operations on 1st August 2004. It was initially intended to handle the Group's own products: rubber, livestock and palm oil, but is now used by domestic and international general cargo shippers. It serves vessels from Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia (cement, sugar and other break-bulk), mostly under 5,000 DWT (there's a 5 m draft limit at present, but plans to deepen to 7-8 m).

Phase I of the port has been completed - 300 m of berth x 28 m - with a further 600 m x 62.5 m planned to be completed by the end of 2005. Cargo facilities comprise a mobile crane and bonded warehouse. Customs provide full clearance services. At present, palm oil is shipped out in Flexibags and rubber in 1.3t units in containers through Sihanoukville but it is planned to use the Oknha Port to export these in due course. The port has pen and ramps for livestock, seeing about two shipments per month of 1,000 head. The rubber market is not good at present; although technology improvements are under way and the Group expects there to be a resumption of exports. In the meantime, efforts are concentrating on the industrial and port functions. A forecasting study is currently under way.

Sri Ambol

A river port on a tributary northwest of Sihanoukville, Sri Ambel (or Ambol) serves small vessels and barges only. It has taken most of the imported cement traffic that was previously handled by Sihanoukville, having the attraction of lower charges and avoids one of the two tolls on the Sihanoukville-Phnom Penh Highway 4 (as does Mong Reththy's Oknha Port which is no doubt be competing for the same business).

3. Port Development Projects

Sihanoukville port is being developed with a new berth and stacking area well advanced and plans for an industrial estate and possible bulk terminal nearby. However, with the new private port of Oknha Mong being developed by Mong Reththy Group a few kilometres north, utilisation maybe questionable.

Phnom Penh port has been constructed recently (2002) with Japanese aid funding. Although access is a little constricted and space constrained, the port being in a classic river port location sandwiched between the city and the river, it appears able to cope with the expected steady growth of trade from Vietnam.

The port of Oknha Mong is currently being developed, and is already handling significant international trade, although limited to small vessels and barges at this stage.

V. INTRA-ASEAN SHIPPING ROUTES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

A. CONTAINER

Container vessels calling at Sihanoukville are feeder vessels of 400 to 500 teu capacity, providing direct calls to Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and Hong Kong.

Feeder operators include:

- MCC – smaller vessels. Agents for Maersk who have 30 – 40% share of the Cambodian exports on its three sailings per week into Singapore and PTP
- RCL – larger vessels but limited space in season
- ACL – Advanced Cont Lines

On the Mekong, there are three companies offering container liner services between HCMC (Vung Tau) and Phnom Penh: Sovereign Shipping, Germatrans (Vietnamese) and China Shipping. Vessel capacity ranges from 45 to 150 teu, and rates are reported to be US\$200-300 lower than ocean carriers. Transit can be shorter but this depends on various factors – e.g., transshipment times in HCMC and/or Singapore, depths/current in the river etc.

Sovereign Shipping advised that it handles 800-900 teu per month in its 120 and 150 teu vessels. Most cargo is moving under major contracts. Its vessels serving Cambodia are all Cambodian-flagged with a mixture of Cambodian, Indonesian and Vietnamese crew. The Cambodian crew members are nominated by the government through a close working agreement with Phnom Penh port.

Shipping via the Mekong is cheaper than via Sihanoukville.

Imbalance/Empties

Most exports are in 40' containers, with heavy imbalance. Freight forwarders report that they predominantly bring all empties to Sihanoukville, trucking them to Phnom Penh to their own depot. However, ship operators on the Mekong report some empties being shipped from Vung Tau.

Surcharges

Table 4: Cambodia: Freight Surcharges (Nov 2004)

Surcharge	20'	40;	40' hicube
THC	US\$70	US\$100	US\$105
Lo-lo: Exp	US\$26	US\$21	
Imp	US\$77	US\$118	

Freight Rates

Table 5: Cambodia: Ocean Freight Rates

Ocean freight rate	US\$ per 20'
Cambodia to Philippines	800
Cambodia to Indonesia	600
Cambodia to Europe	1,800 to 2,000
Average to China (t/s: barge via Mekong)	1,000*
* cheaper than ocean rate by \$200-300	

Table 6: Cambodia: Mekong River Freight Rates

Freight rate via Mekong	US\$ per container	
	20'	40'
Phnom Penh to HCMC	250	
PP to HCMC (volume rate)	200	400
Handling included in above	70	100

B. BULK

Oil is imported in from Thailand, Singapore and some from Yemen. The terminal handles approximately 10 to 11 calls per month, vessels being mostly around 1,500dwt but one 13,000 dwt ship calls once a month from Singapore. Oil tankers also offload at a private oil terminal near Phnom Penh port (Total Petronas).

Four barges of 5,000 t operate from Thailand with cement which is now discharged away from the port (Sri Ambel – and now Oknha Mong).

C. GENERAL CARGO

Little break-bulk is now handled. However, there are small passenger/cargo ro-ro vessels operating on the coast but these are itinerant. No liner services call⁷.

D. ROLE OF CONTAINER V GENERAL CARGO SERVICES

The main seaport, Sihanoukville, reports that growth in container volumes has massively outstripped other dry cargo, with break-bulk falling dramatically. New technology in unitising rubber may impact, 1.3t bales elsewhere in ASEAN being shipped break-bulk (to USA particularly).

⁷ Note: There was one small vessel at Sihanoukville. However, photographs sighted of the new Mong Rethy port showed small wooden built vessels, probably Thai origin.