



# Position brief for the position of Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director Virginia Port Authority

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# About Virginia Port Authority

The Port of Virginia (Virginia Port Authority) moves cargo through world-class facilities and transports to and from markets around the globe, carrying the goods and supplies that manufacturers, corporations, and individual consumers use in their everyday lives.

The Virginia Port Authority (VPA) was established in 1952 as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and is one of four agencies in the Virginia State Government responsible for increasing jobs and the tax base in Virginia. The Authority is overseen by a Board appointed by the Governor. The goals of the Virginia Port Authority are to establish the Port as the leading ocean container terminal complex on the US East Coast and to promote economic development and job creation in the Commonwealth. Economic development results for FY19 delivered \$2 billion in investments, created 2,800 jobs, development of 2.9 million square feet, and 45 announcements.

The Authority is responsible for the operations and security of five marine terminals: Newport News Marine Terminal (NNMT); Norfolk International Terminals (NIT); Portsmouth Marine Terminal (PMT); Richmond Marine Terminal (RMT); Virginia International Gateway (VIG); as well as one inland intermodal facility, the Virginia Inland Port (VIP). A sixth marine terminal will be added in the future with the Craney Island Marine Terminal (container facility) project. These facilities primarily handle import and export containerized and break-bulk cargoes. They are operated by Virginia International Terminals, LLC (VIT), a sole purpose company reporting to the CEO of the Virginia Port Authority.

According to an economic impact study conducted by the Mason School of Business at the College of William & Mary, 397,000 Virginia jobs – nearly ten percent of the state's resident workforce – are linked to port activity across the six terminals. Those jobs generate \$23 billion in annual compensation and \$2.1 billion in state and local taxes.

The Port of Virginia is the third largest port on the East Coast and is located just 18 miles from the open sea on a year-round, ice-free harbor. As a hub port, nearly 30 international

shipping lines offer direct, dedicated service to and from Virginia, with connections to 200+ countries. Fifty-foot deep, unobstructed channels provide easy access and maneuvering room for the largest of today's container ships. Furthermore, the Port of Virginia is currently deepening and widening the channels to 56 feet and 1,400 feet wide in the Chesapeake Bay and 55 feet in the inner harbor. When complete in 2024, the Port of Virginia will be the deepest port on the East Coast.

The Port of Virginia is investing in infrastructure and has just completed a \$320 million project to double the capacity of VIG. NIT is completing a \$425 million project to modernize its facilities and add semi-automation - increasing capacity by 46 percent by Fall 2020. These two projects will increase the POV capacity by one million containers, add 86 rail-mounted gantry cranes (RMG), six ship-to-shore cranes (STS), four cantilever rail-mounted gantry cranes (CRMG), a modern on-dock rail facility, and 55 hybrid shuttle vehicles.

The Port of Virginia has invested in new gates, terminal operating system (TOS), truck reservation system (TRS), and new chassis for its Hampton Roads Chassis Pool II, LLC (HRCP II). Truck moves represent 62% of all moves and more than one million moves in FY19 in under 40 minutes turn-time. The Port is serviced by CSX and Norfolk Southern with strong intermodal service networks and moved 34% of all container moves (565,179) by rail in FY19.

The Port of Virginia operates a regular barge service to RMT and delivered 33,500 containers by barge in 2019. This very successful marine highway has been growing by double digits each year. Total barge volume was 54,503 moves in FY19.



The Port of Virginia places emphasis on sustainability by advancing the health of the environment, local communities, the Port, and its people. The Port received the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive River Star Business Award from the Elizabeth River Project; induced over 480 truck owners since 2006 to replace or retrofit their trucks to environmentally-friendly models; cut emissions by 90% with 33 hybrid shuttle carriers; and removed 31,500 trucks and their emissions from roadways.

For more information about the Port of Virginia, please visit:

- [Port of Virginia](#)
- [2019 Annual Report](#)
- [2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#)

- [2019 State of the Port](#)
- [2018 Sustainability Report](#)



# The Position

Our client the Virginia Port Authority (VPA) is seeking a dynamic individual for the role of Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director. This position is located in Norfolk, VA.

The CEO/Executive Director reports to the VPA Board of Commissioners and directs and manages the operation of the Port through Virginia International Terminals, LLC. The thirteen-member Board, appointed by the Governor to staggered five years terms, has sole responsibility for the election of the CEO/ED, sets the terms of his/her employment, and conducts his or her annual performance review. He/she will oversee chief officers for Administration, Finance, Government Affairs, Human Resources, Innovation, Legal, Marketing, Operations, and Sales.

The CEO/Executive Director will lead and direct the broad programmatic areas of business/relationship development and growth, infrastructure development, strategic marketing, finance, security, and operations of Virginia's seaports and the VPA-owned marine terminal facilities located in the Hampton Roads harbor region and inland terminal facilities located in Warren County and Richmond, Virginia. He/she will be responsible for a worldwide sales force and will coordinate with other state agencies with international facilities. The selected candidate will be expected to travel frequently to each operating location throughout North America and internationally and to provide leadership and share best practices to continuously improve equipment and maintenance & repair performance, safety, and financial results.

The key responsibility is to continue to develop The Port of Virginia as the leading deep-water port on the US East Coast and as a critical economic development engine for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

He/she will provide strategic vision and innovation in the physical development of facilities ensuring capacity for current and future growth; lead the Port in an efficient and financially sound manner; develop and nurture domestic and international relationships in the maritime and shipper communities; and create an atmosphere and unified culture of leadership, innovation, and empowerment amongst the staff located in VPA offices worldwide including Virginia, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Taiwan, and other locations as added.

## Duties & Responsibilities

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- Deliver the Economic Development and Growth as established by governing Laws of The Port of Virginia and the Mission as set forth by the Board of Commissioners
- Lead the overall growth efforts of the organization with a Global perspective by developing and enhancing the necessary commercial relationships with ship owners, shippers, railroads, 3PLs (third-party logistics), and other entities that can add value and promote the financial success of the Port and ensure that the brand of the Port is enhanced and protected
- Develop and enhance customers and customer relations around the world
- Develop short and long-range goals for cargo movement and port expansion to ensure Virginia's ports are the best and most efficient in the nation



- Direct the overall administration and operation of the Authority's staff of approximately 215 personnel and provide direction to the Port's operating company, Virginia International Terminals, LLC, and its staff of approximately 325 personnel
- Communicate clearly and effectively with the supervisory Board of Commissioners and manage via a "no surprises" philosophy
- Oversee annual budget preparations for Board approval and submission with appropriate State authorities
- Direct the negotiation, preparation, and execution of all contracts and agreements entered into by the Authority and any matters under review by various legislative or regulatory bodies, both state and federal
- Act as chief communicator to the Office of the Governor of Virginia, Secretary of Transportation, other state agencies, federal government and related maritime and development agencies, local governments, community organizations, and shippers
- Maintain liaison with these officials on matters pertaining to the maritime industry to support, preserve, and enhance the important contribution of the Port to the economic vitality of the State
- Serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and of GO Virginia as well as of appropriate regional bodies



# The Candidate

The CEO/Executive Director must have a demonstrated ability to be a visionary and outside-the-box thinker in growing a maritime or related organization of a similar size and complexity.

## Competencies & Areas of Expertise

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- Possesses an understanding of what it takes to succeed in a public sector/political environment and the ability to effectively develop relationships with both internal and external constituents
- Proven track record of strong leadership in making an organization's mission a success
- Be outward facing and have a strong commercial orientation along with operational and financial (fiscal management) leadership experience
- Strong business savvy with attention to detail
- Customer focused in providing solutions with impact
- Exposure to a broad variety of cargoes including Heavy Lift and Project Cargo
- Experienced with P3 initiatives
- Understands economic development and rail intermodal issues
- Understanding of how technology is a business enabler
- Experience in succeeding in a diverse, international environment and in partnering with a diverse Board
- Strength in team building and ability to train, mentor, and motivate colleagues as well as younger professionals
- Possesses an understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures
- Experience in leading in both up and down business cycles

## Essential Qualifications

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- Visionary, innovative, and having a strategic focus
- Results oriented
- Ability to see the big picture
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Outstanding communication, listening, and presentation skills
- Collegial
- Strong delegator
- Decisive and calm under pressure
- Transparent and accountability oriented
- In control of one's ego



- Possesses Emotional Intelligence
- Industry reputation for unquestioned ethics and integrity
- Having a healthy sense of humor

Candidates for this role must have a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university with a focus in business administration, economics, transportation, law, or an equally related discipline. Possessing an MBA or related advanced degree is a plus. Ideal candidates will have a minimum of 15 years' experience in a senior management role with broad functional and span-of-control responsibilities. Prior seaport/maritime experience, while highly desirable, is not an absolute requirement.

Candidates must be a US Citizen or have a Green Card and be able to obtain a TSA TWIC Card. He/she must have the ability to travel extensively domestically and internationally. Permanent residency in the greater Norfolk area is required.



# How to Apply

To apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a cover letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include the names and addresses of three references. References will not be approached until the final stage of the search and not without prior permission from a candidate.

The preferred method of application is by email to:  
[Linda.Kearschner@odgersberndtson.com](mailto:Linda.Kearschner@odgersberndtson.com)

## Contact Details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

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# About Odgers Berndtson



Odgers Berndtson Executive Search is a leading global executive search firm, assisting private and public sector organizations find the highest caliber people for senior management appointments across North America and internationally.

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Our reputation at the top of the executive search profession is over 50 years old. With offices in over 60 cities worldwide, our experienced executive search specialists operate with absolute discretion, integrity, and care, and are expert in finding exceptional individuals for challenging roles.

## WE ARE GLOBAL

We have the support of an excellent international network of offices on the ground.

## CANDIDATE CARE

We take great care in ensuring that the candidates with whom we engage on behalf of our clients receive a professional, positive, thoughtful, and candid experience. Whether we are contacting someone about a search or offering career guidance, we strive to always be professional, courteous, rigorous, and honest. We set out this commitment in our [Candidate Charter](#).





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