Tacoma Breakbulk & Ro-Ro (East Blair 1 / Terminal 7): Moving Non-Containerized Heavy Hardware

Pillar: The Corridors | **Basis:** Agency Record | **Primary Source:** Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) | **As Of:** 2026-11-16

Tacoma Harbor's East Blair 1 and Terminal 7 handle non-containerized, over-dimensional breakbulk and Ro-Ro project cargo—serving as Puget Sound's primary ocean gateway for oversized industrial and aerospace hardware.

Operational Continuity & Corridor Facts

• NWSA's Tacoma Harbor operates dedicated breakbulk and roll-on/roll-off (Ro-Ro) facilities at East Blair 1 and Terminal 7.

• These berths handle non-containerized, over-dimensional project cargo including factory components, large transformers, wind-turbine sections, and specialized aerospace/aviation equipment.

• Moving out-of-gauge cargo from Tacoma berths to Kent or Auburn requires WSDOT OSOW permits and, until SR 167 Stage 2b opens in 2029, navigation through I-5/Fife interchanges.

Tacoma Breakbulk vs. Containerized Freight

Mode	NWSA Facility	Cargo Profile	Inland Permit Need
Breakbulk / Ro-Ro	East Blair 1, Terminal 7 (Tacoma)	Out-of-gauge, heavy-lift, static	WSDOT OSOW + escorts
Containerized (TEU)	Seattle & Tacoma terminals	Standard 20'/40' ISO boxes	Standard weight-legal drayage

Corridor Exposure, Triggers & Facility Actions

• Large autoclaves, vacuum chambers, and ground-station pedestals imported by sea typically land via Tacoma breakbulk rather than container berths.

• Book WSDOT superload engineering reviews weeks ahead of vessel arrival when gross weights exceed 200,000 lbs.

• Verify overhead utility and bridge clearances between Terminal 7, I-5, and Kent/Auburn plant gates.

Cross-Cluster Links & Primary Sources

• **WA Space Cluster Hub (#1382):** https://bcesg.org/washington-space-cluster-census/

• **Kent WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/kent-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Auburn WA Space Cluster Profile:** https://bcesg.org/auburn-wa-space-cluster-profile/

• **Supply-Chain & Procurement Desk Brief:** https://bcesg.org/wa-space-role-procurement-lead-desk-brief/

• **Launch Segment Continuity Exposure:** https://bcesg.org/wa-space-launch-continuity-corridor-exposure/

• **NWSA Terminals & Breakbulk Operations:** https://www.nwseaportalliance.com/cargo-operations/terminals

• **WSDOT Puget Sound Gateway / SR 167:**
https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/puget-sound-gateway-program

• **WSDOT Commercial Vehicles & OSOW:** https://wsdot.wa.gov/travel/commercial-vehicles

Provenance Note: Breakbulk terminal capabilities per NWSA public terminal documentation.