



Port of Melbourne Stakeholder Update 13

Continued strong container volumes in December

December 2020 was another strong month for total container throughput (full and empty) with 260,925 TEU, 4% above December 2019. Volumes remain strong as a result of the Christmas/summer holiday retail rush and continued changes to consumer spending as a result of COVID-19.

Shipping schedules are still adjusting after interruptions in previous months with several vessels either bypassing Port Botany and unloading at Melbourne to avoid congestion, or changing rotation and calling at Melbourne first. Additional vessels have come to Melbourne to meet the seasonal demand for imports.

Overall December 2020 container trade results compared with December 2019 were as follows:

- Total container volumes (full and empty) up by 4%, with year to date volumes up by 7.6%;
- Full overseas container imports, including transhipments, up 14.8%, with year to date volumes up by 11.2%;
- Full overseas exports, including transhipments, down 14.3% but up 0.4% for the year to date;
- Tasmanian full container volumes, excluding transhipments, up by 13.6%, with year to date volumes up by 17.6%;
- Record empty container movements totalling 69,078 TEU, 1.8% above December 2019 and 11.2% up for the year to date;
- Full transhipment volumes were 2,500 TEU higher;
- Total motor vehicle volumes (by units) increased 8.2% overall (2,455 units) reflecting the strong automotive market sales nationally in December driven by the easing of COVID-19 domestic travel restrictions and consumer demand as a result of an inability to travel internationally;
- In the dry-bulk category, a 33% increase (revenue tonnes), with two export shipments of wheat totalling 94,600 tonnes compared to nil in December 2019; and
- Liquid bulk was down 15.9% overall.

Trade outlook

Container trade data for early January 2021 continues to follow recent monthly trends. Although the well-documented ban by China on Victorian timber is affecting export volumes, imports continue to trade strongly. Grain exports are expected to have a bigger and longer season than seen in recent years.





Supply chain

Some container truck operators are reporting concerns on landside congestion and PoM has made three new sites available for additional storage capacity.

PoM continues to proactively work with shipping lines, empty container parks, terminal operators and industry members to identify further suitable vacant PoM land, together with additional non-PoM land, for short-term overflow capacity storage.

Industrial relations

Throughout December no Protected Industrial Action (PIA) activities were undertaken at the international container terminals. PIA at national vessel towage operator Svitzer ended in January.

Please call your Port of Melbourne contact or email us at covid19@portofmelbourne.com if you have any queries.

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