



Port of Melbourne



17 April 2020

Port of Melbourne's Response to COVID-19 – Update 5

Collaborating across the supply chain to keep the economy moving

It has been pleasing that the port supply chain has continued to operate through the Stage 3 restrictions. Whilst further restrictions have not been applied, the Victorian Government has extended the State of Emergency until 11 May.

Port of Melbourne has continued to work with industry to ensure that the efficiency of our port freight and logistics systems is not overwhelmed by current impacts of COVID-19.

Trade

Container trade volumes for March 2020 showed an increase over last month (February 2020) reflecting the view that the processing of the cargo backlog out of China would start to flow through. The overall container volumes were consistent with the same month last year (March 2019), with full container imports being down 2.4% and exports up 5.1%. Empty container volumes finished at the same level as last year.

The trade outlook for the months ahead will be heavily influenced by demand and the extent of the economic slowdown which has received significant commentary in the media.

Supply Chain

Those who were around and have memories of the GFC may recall that there were pressures in the supply chain, including distribution centres and warehouses dealing with import inventory as retail sales slowed (e.g. furniture, whitegoods and other retail goods), as well as pressures in empty container parks. Recognising that similar dynamics could occur as a result of COVID-19 and to assist with the efficient flow of freight, the Port is in discussions with a number of industry players on options for sharing of information on existing sites and facilities that could be utilised if the need arises.

Our aim is to share information and industry insights and to anticipate potential constraints and disruptions so that together we can minimise their effects on individual businesses and keep freight moving.

We are continuing to work with key industry associations and Freight Victoria ([their latest weekly update here](#)) on a number of important matters, including availability of PPE for key maritime functions, national maritime protocols and trade information – with a focus on keeping the port supply chain moving.

Please don't hesitate to call your Port of Melbourne contact or email us at covid19@portofmelbourne.com if you have any queries.

Brendan Bourke
Chief Executive Officer

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