

Port of Melbourne's Response to COVID-19 – Update 6

Investing in Victoria's economy

Despite the significant impact of COVID-19 across the Australian economy, the port supply chain continues to operate efficiently.

Container trade

There has been a marked slowdown in trade in April 2020 compared with April 2019, with total monthly container volumes (full and empty) down by 11.3 per cent. Within this result:

- Full overseas container imports are down 9.2 per cent;
- Full overseas container exports are down 8.1 per cent; and
- Empty container throughput is down 21.1 per cent.

For a financial year to date comparison as at April:

- Total container throughput (full and empty) is down 5.3 per cent;
- Full overseas container imports are down 4.8 per cent;
- Full overseas container exports are down 3.2 per cent; and
- Empty container throughput is down 6.3%.

Of the 30 ship cancellations (vessel blankings) between January and April 2020, over two-thirds relate to shipping lines managing the COVID-19 volume impacts and a third to the annual Lunar New Year reductions. The result is significantly more than the 15 cancellations for the same period in 2019.

Trade data for the first two weeks of May suggests a continuation of the April trend. The outlook for the next few months is expected to be soft, with the extent dependent on industry response to forecasts of a slowing economy, noting that June and July are typically low season months for trade. Information on industry confidence levels regarding the trade outlook is reported in the State's [Weekly coronavirus update](#).

Investment and projects continue

Port of Melbourne is progressing its infrastructure investment program to ensure the Port's assets are meeting the needs of tenants today and supporting growth plans.

This year's investment program includes four major projects that are currently at different stages of the procurement process, from tendering through to construction:

- Commencement of procurement for the \$125 million Port Rail Transformation Project;
- Asset integrity upgrades at South Wharf 30/31 and Gellibrand Pier;
- A new maintenance facility at Short Road; and,
- Ongoing work to facilitate larger capacity container vessels calling at the port.



Port of Melbourne continues to work closely with key stakeholders to explore further opportunities for operational efficiencies through the supply chain – this is part of our commitment to meet the needs of the people of Victoria and strengthen our economy for years to come.

Return to the office planning

Like many Australian organisations, Port of Melbourne is preparing for staff returning to work in the office. The timing is dependent on State government announcements. We will continue to use the Safe Work Australia protocols to provide a safe workplace and minimise risks associated with COVID-19.

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

