



## Port of Melbourne Stakeholder Update 17

### Strong performing container volumes continue in April

April 2021 was another strong month for total container throughput (full and empty) with a total of 267,994 TEU, 22.4% above the previous year. Full overseas container imports were up 19.9% on April 2020 with furniture, domestic appliances, non-electrical machinery and textiles showing the largest month on month variances for international imports. This reflects COVID-19 restrictions on travel and tourism continuing to redirect consumer spending to homeware related commodities, plus weak year on year comparables, as international COVID-19 restrictions created supply chain disruptions this time last year. Full overseas container exports were up 3.6% on April 2020 with key movers being non-ferrous metals, pulp and waste paper and wheat.

Overall April 2021 container trade results compared with April 2020 were as follows:

- total container volumes (full and empty) up by 22.4%, with year to date volumes up by 13.7%;
- full overseas container imports 19.9% above April 2020 with year to date volumes up by 16.5%;
- full overseas container exports 3.6% above April 2020 with year to date volumes up by 3.9%;
- full container trade between Melbourne and Tasmania excluding transshipments increased 3.0% on April 2020 to total 20,867 TEU, up 6.0% for the year to date;
- empty container movements 57.2% above April 2020 with year to date volumes up by 19.6%;
- full container transshipments up 28.2% on April 2020 and up 34.2% year to date, with recent changes to MSC's Asia-Oceania network linking China, South-East Asia, New Zealand and Australia generating increased transshipments through Melbourne;
- motor vehicle imports up 74.0% and up 3% year to date with media reports of Victorian sales reaching all time high levels as demand continues to outstrip supply;
- motor vehicle exports up 191.7% and up 67.3% year to date, with improving demand in Tasmania and increased interstate transhipment;
- April dry bulk trade increased 61.0% over April 2020 to be up 19.5% for the year to date; and
- April liquid bulk trade decreased 19.9% over April 2020 to be down 12.3% for the year to date.





### **Trade outlook**

Container trade for early May 2021 continues to track well above the comparative month in 2020.

### **Supply chain**

As mentioned in last month's report, a Maersk sweeper vessel called at Port of Melbourne in early April to evacuate containers back to Asia. The Maersk Soroe came to VICT and loaded 4,148 empty containers. It has a total capacity of 9,640 TEU and, at 346.98 metres LOA, it is the longest vessel to call at Port of Melbourne.

Global shipping congestion remains an ongoing issue with vessels continuing to call off-window and changing rotation due to delays occurring throughout North East and South East Asia.

### **Industrial relations**

VICT experienced two 12 hour Protected Industrial Action (PIA) stoppages on 1 and 3 May. No further Protected Industrial Action has been announced by VICT.

### **Federal budget announcements for freight and infrastructure**

It was pleasing to see strong support for the freight supply chain in this year's federal budget. We welcomed the Commonwealth Government's announcement to commit \$2b to a new intermodal terminal in outer Melbourne. This facility will be crucial to link inland rail with the port gate.

We also welcomed infrastructure spending for Tasmania's highways which will improve safety and efficiency for transport operators.

We were delighted to host Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts the Hon. Paul Fletcher to discuss rail freight investment and to showcase our facilities. We outlined our growth plans, discussing our \$125m Port Rail Transformation Project and the need for rail connectivity to Webb Dock.

### **Industry engagement**

We have recently completed an extensive industry consultation and engagement program, meeting with more than 100 industry representatives across Victoria, Tasmania and Southern NSW to outline key issues including our investment pipeline, deferred depreciation and tariff rates. We also sought industry feedback at these sessions and through online surveys on how we can best engage with our stakeholders. We will publish a summary of the key feedback themes on our website.

Please call your Port of Melbourne contact or email us at [information@portofmelbourne.com](mailto:information@portofmelbourne.com) if you have any queries.

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