



## Port of Melbourne Stakeholder Update 18

### Strong container volumes continue in May

May 2021 was another strong month for total container throughput (full and empty) with a total of 288,417 TEU, 28.4% above May 2020. Full overseas container imports were up 27.7% on May 2020 with vehicle parts, clothing, non-electrical machinery and textiles showing the largest month on month variances for international imports. This continued strong trade reflects recent trends and also the weak volumes in May 2020 when weather along the east coast of Australia and COVID-19 impacted volumes and services ex-Asia. Full overseas container exports were up 10.1% on May 2020 despite the significant decrease in timber, with key commodities increasing including wool, pulp and waste paper.

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

- total container volumes (full and empty) up by 28.4%, with year to date volumes up by 15.0%;
- full overseas container imports 27.7% above May 2020 with year to date volumes up by 17.4%;
- full overseas container exports 10.1% above May 2020 with year to date volumes up by 4.5%;
- full container trade between Melbourne and Tasmania excluding transshipments increased 17.7% on May 2020 to total 18,603 TEU and was up 7.6% for the year to date;
- empty container movements were 48.4% above May 2020 and year to date volumes were up by 22.2%, with overseas empty exports up 78.5%, as shipping lines continue to evacuate the surplus empty containers generated by continued strong full overseas imports;
- full transshipments were 58.1% above May 2020 with year to date volumes up by 37.0%;
- motor vehicle imports up 127.8% (+16,406 units) on May 2020 to be up 6.5% year to date, with demand for new vehicles remaining strong, with Victorian sales for May up 65% year on year;
- May dry bulk trade increased 19.6% over May 2020 to be up 19.5% for the year to date; and
- May liquid bulk trade increased 37.1% over May 2020 to be down 8.8% for the year to date.





### **Trade outlook**

Container trade for early June 2021 is tracking at levels consistent with the comparative month in 2020.

### **Supply chain**

Congestion at container shipping ports in Southern China, including Yantian, Shekou and Nansha, has worsened in late May due to media reports of increases in COVID-19 cases, with the ports implementing strict quarantine measures, impacting both wharf side and landside logistics movements.

Global shipping congestion remains an ongoing issue with vessels continuing to call off-window and changing rotation due to delays occurring globally.

### **Industrial relations**

Further stoppages at VICT planned for mid-June were subsequently called off. Industrial action at other Australian ports continues to cause some vessel delays.

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

Brendan Bourke  
Chief Executive Officer

