

Port of Melbourne Stakeholder Update 23

Weaker container volumes seen in October

October 2021 was a weaker month for total container throughput (full and empty) with a total of 255,332 TEU, 10.8% below the previous year.

Total container imports decreased 10.1% on October 2020. Imports of furniture, domestic appliances, textiles and miscellaneous manufacturers were all down on October 2020 volumes.

Total container exports decreased 11.5% on October 2020. Exports of timber, non-ferrous metals, pulp and waste paper and meat were all down on October 2020 volumes.

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

- full overseas container imports 12.6% below October 2020 with year to date volumes down 4.8%;
- full overseas container exports 17.8% below October 2020 with year to date volumes down 8.8%;
- full container transshipments were 32.3% below October 2020 with year to date volumes down 8.4%;
- full container trade between Melbourne and Tasmania (excluding transshipments) declined 2.6% on October 2020 with year to date volumes down 0.3%; and
- total empty container movements were 3.5% above October 2020 totalling 61,470 TEU with year to date volumes up 14.1%.
- motor vehicle imports were up 12.8% (+3,201 units) on October 2020, with year to date volumes up 22.7%
- dry bulk trade was up 14.1% over October 2020, with year to date volumes up 32.7%.
- break bulk trade was up 149.9% over October 2020, with year to date volumes up 63.1%.
- liquid bulk trade was down 2.0% over October 2020, with year to date volumes down 3.0%.





Trade outlook

Container trade for early November 2021 is tracking similar to the comparative month in 2020 with vessel congestion and delays resulting in some port omissions for Melbourne.

Supply chain

Moving into the traditional peak season, demand globally remains very strong with shipping congestion in Asia and Oceania ports continuing to place pressure on vessel schedules and capacity, resulting in further port omissions and rotations.

Across several Australian ports shipping lines have advised of port omissions in an attempt to recover time in their schedules. Throughout October and early November Melbourne has been impacted by congestion and delays due to previous COVID-19 cases, in addition to protected industrial action affecting terminal labour availability, which has seen subcontracting of some vessels between terminals.

Industrial relations

On November 8th Patrick Terminals lodged an application with the Fair Work Commission (FWC) seeking to terminate industrial action being undertaken by the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA).

Patrick Terminals and the MUA attended a conciliation session on November 10th at the Fair Work Commission in an attempt to find a resolution before the hearing date, with the outcome being that the MUA have agreed to withdraw ongoing industrial action effective from 10th November, with no further action to be notified before 10th December 2021.

Sustainability Report

Port of Melbourne has released its 2021 Sustainability Report, highlighting the progress achieved in the 2021 financial year and reinforcing our ongoing commitment to operating sustainably. The report can be viewed [here](#).

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

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