

Port of Melbourne Stakeholder Update 28

Softer container volumes seen in March

March 2022 saw total container throughput (full and empty) decline 6.9% over March 2021 with a total of 270,564 TEU. Year to date container volumes are down 1.3%.

Total container imports decreased 6.3% on March 2021. Containerised imports of miscellaneous manufactures, furniture and metal manufactures were all down on March 2021 volumes.

Total container exports decreased 7.5% on March 2021. Containerised exports of fresh fruit, scrap metal and wheat were all down on March 2021 volumes.

Overall March 2022 container trade results compared with March 2021 were as follows:

- full overseas container imports 2.3% below March 2021 with year to date volumes down 2.4%;
- full overseas container exports 11.0% below March 2021 with year to date volumes down 5.8%;
- full container transshipments were 42.4% above March 2021 with year to date volumes down 7.9%;
- full container trade between Melbourne and Tasmania (excluding transshipments) decreased 0.9% on March 2021 to total 19,564 TEU with year to date volumes down 0.8%;
- total empty container movements were 18.4% below March 2021 totalling 63,665 TEU with year to date volumes up 3.9%;
- motor vehicle imports increased 12.0% (+3,667 units) on March 2021, with year to date volumes up 15.1%;
- dry bulk trade was up 2.1% over March 2021, with year to date volumes up 15.9%;
- break bulk trade was down 0.9% over March 2021, with year to date volumes up 33.2%; and
- liquid bulk trade was up 20.6% over March 2021, with year to date volumes down 0.2%.

Trade outlook

Container trade for early April 2022 is tracking slightly below the comparative month in 2021.

Supply chain

Global demand for shipping capacity remains high, with evidence that some rates are moderating from their extreme highs, although still well elevated from pre-pandemic levels. Congestion across many global ports is reported to be improving, however China's strict COVID-19 policy remains a concern for supply chains due to the impacts of lockdowns on shipping services at these major hubs.

Australian ports along the East Coast have been impacted by severe weather events, with shipping lines revising schedules, changing rotations or taking on significant delays. Locally, congestion delays have improved, however the weather events at other ports has seen a large uplift in transshipment cargo, which has impacted landside dwell time, placing pressure on the supply chain.

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