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DP World Brisbane Terminal Equipment and System Failures Lead to Significant Landside Delays and Added Costs

This past week, Automated Stacking Crane (ASC) failures and maintenance issues at DP World's Brisbane Terminal have caused significant landside transport delays and added costs.

DP World has an ASC Module out of action for annual routine maintenance. Unfortunately however, two further Modules failed last week, leading to a significant lack of capacity and congestion, while a separate IT issue led to the need for manual processing of trucks until a server could be brought back online.

These issues come at a time when DP World's TEU volumes are higher, with the terminal having recently won an additional shipping line contract away from a rival stevedore company in Brisbane.

A **video** posted earlier in the week on LinkedIn of the truck queuing delays experienced at the Terminal can be viewed: [HERE](#)

To an extent, DP World has been able to utilise the "old yard" adjacent to the ASC Modules for container stacking and receipt & delivery. Despite this ad hoc capability, truck turnaround times have been at least 30% longer than normal, with some reports of truck delays of up to four hours.

CTAA Director, Neil Chambers observed that "All facilities can experience equipment and technical failures ... it can happen to all of us."

"However, it's important for the Terminal to work closely with road transport operators to compensate to the greatest degree possible by providing offsets through extended import delivery free time & export receipt windows, and waivers of wrong zone and no-show fees for trucks that have experienced extensive delays in previous entries into the Terminal due to the congestion."

"The Terminal should also be trying to provide as much vehicle booking system slot capacity as it can to compensate as the failed Modules come back online this weekend and all of next week."

"It is regrettable that DP World hasn't given blanket extensions to import free time, instead only considering extensions on a case-by-case basis."

"The consequence of the failures and delays last week is that transport operators have had to work longer hours this weekend (Saturday shift and a Sunday shift) to try to ensure that import containers are collected before the "last free day" to avoid import storage fees being levied. However, truck servicing times have continued to be poor."

"The cost implications of these "catch-up" arrangements are significant for transport operators, with additional overtime for drivers & operations staff and added truck operating time."

"And there are no guarantees that there are enough vehicle booking system slots to achieve the necessary clearance of the backlog."

"As an example, one transport operator reported that the truck servicing delays on Saturday 13 May meant that they only achieved 60% of the import delivery task they had booked to try to clear during the day, leaving 40% of the slots to be recorded as no-shows."

"It will certainly rub salt in the wounds if DP World attempts to charge that transport operator hefty penalties for those "no-shows" given that their own servicing delays are the contributing reason. This applies equally to all the other transport operators in the same circumstances."

“The transport company in question now needs to not only catch up on the import pick-ups that are still left in the Terminal but also attempt to gain sufficient VBS slots to avoid other containers going into storage for vessels available over the weekend with last free day on Monday or Tuesday.”

“Traditionally, transport operators in Brisbane have a very good relationship with DP World’s landside coordinators, who are normally able to assist when problems occur.”

“This episode however has left some transport operators fearing that the increased market share now earmarked to flow through the Terminal, together with possible future equipment vulnerabilities, will mean a decrease in reliability and productivity levels at the landside interface.”

“CTAA has had stakeholders ask what improvements in infrastructure and operating systems have been delivered by DP World given that its Brisbane landside Terminal Access Charge (TAC) for import containers has risen from \$32.74 in January 2017 to \$140.20 per full container today? ... that’s an increase of 428% in seven years.”

“CTAA is calling on DP World to establish formalised Landside Efficiency Forums for collaborative dialogue with their landside “customers” on terminal infrastructure investments and associated productivity and efficiency improvements.

“There Forums should be similar to the Forums already established by Patrick Terminals, as well as being agreed recently to be established by Hutchison Ports Australia.” Neil Chambers concluded.

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About CTAA: Container Transport Alliance Australia (CTAA) is strong Alliance of leading businesses engaged in the container transport logistics industry. CTAA Alliance companies account for the majority of containerised freight handled in capital city ports in Australia.