



February 2014

About ICHCA – International Cargo Handling Coordination Association

The International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA) is an international, independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the safety, security, sustainability, productivity and efficiency of cargo handling and goods movement by all modes and through all phases of national and international supply chains. ICHCA International’s privileged non-government organisation (NGO) status enables it to represent its members, and the cargo handling industry at large, in front of national and international agencies and regulatory bodies. Its Expert Panel provides best practice advice and publications on a wide range of practical cargo handling issues.

ICHCA Australia Ltd is proud to be part of the ICHCA International Ltd global network. To access past newsletters and other useful information go to the ICHCA Australia website at www.ichca-australia.com . We also have an ICHCA international website at www.ichca.com

To join ICHCA please contact Ian Lovell, Company Secretary of ICHCA Australia Ltd on ian.lovell@ichca.com or telephone 0400 708 182.

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SAFC

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FREIGHT COUNCIL



“SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN SOLUTIONS”

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE, EXHIBITION AND GALA DINNER
29-30 OCTOBER 2014**

***AT THE SAJC MORPHETVILLE RACECOURSE, ADELAIDE
AND***

**INDUSTRY TOUR 31 OCTOBER 2014
RACE DAY 1 NOVEMBER 2014**

National Conference on Sustainable Supply Chain Challenges and Solutions

ICHCA Australia and the South Australian Freight Council have combined their resources to organise a National Conference on “Sustainable Supply Chain Challenges and Solutions” to be held in Adelaide from 29 to 30 October 2014.

The Event covers:

- Conference and Exhibition 29-30 October
- Gala Reception and Dinner 29 October
- Half Day Industry Tour 31 October
- Opportunity to be part of the ‘Race Day’ at the SAJC Morphettville race track 1 November
- A wide range of things to do during the conference for partners
- Pre and post event activities for partners and delegates.

ICHCA Conferences have a well established reputation for the breadth of topics covered, expert speakers and valuable contact network as evidenced by the ICHCA 2012 International Conference held in Melbourne. The participation of SAFC with ICHCA for this event in October will provide the opportunity to network, discuss and share perspectives on a significant range of challenges and solutions covering supply chain productivity, freight and the environment, innovation, information technology applications, integration, safety, policy and regulation.

For sponsors, speakers and exhibitors the conference provides real opportunity to deliver a targeted message and open doors to greater business opportunities.

ICHCA and SAFC rely on sponsorship of the conference program so that it can deliver a first class event that is highly affordable for delegates, thereby increasing the number of people that attend.

We are pleased to invite you to register your interest as a delegate, speaker, sponsor, supporter or exhibitor.

On behalf of ICHCA Australia and SAFC we invite you to take part in this significant event.

Please contact Ian Lovell, Conference Coordinator on 0400 708 182 / e-mail ian.lovell@ichca.com for further information.

ICHCA International Safety Panel Meeting

ICHCA held the 71st meeting of its International Safety Panel (ISP) Technical Panel at the Port of Malaga, Spain from 11-12 February.

Held at the **Instituto de Estudios Portuarios** (IEE) in Malaga, the meeting brought together experts and key players from across the supply chain to discuss technical and safety developments in the cargo handling, ports and shipping industries.

Presentations were given throughout the two-day event by speakers from **Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)**, **Lloyds Register**, **Noatum**, the **Port Equipment Manufacturers Association (PEMA)** and ETS Consulting.

Kimihiko Endou, Director of the Engineering Administration Office at MLIT, updated delegates on recent work to develop new port response policies for major earthquake and tsunami incidents in the wake of Japan's 2011 disaster. He also discussed the recent formation by MLIT of a new Committee on Large Container Ship Safety following the sinking of the **MOL Comfort** last year, as well as current investigation work into incidents of mooring rope failures in Japanese ports.

David Tozer, Business Manager Container Ships for Lloyds Register (LR), reviewed the ship classification process with specific focus on rules and calculations for container stowage. Mr Tozer outlined new LR rules recently introduced for safe container stowage on-board following six years of research. "Our primary focus has been to create rule formations that better represent the motions of the latest generations of container ships," he said.

He also reminded delegates that from 1 January 2015, MSC.1 Circular 1352, amending IMO's Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS Code), will become mandatory. This will usher in new requirements for lashing and securing arrangements on container ships, affecting both new and existing vessels. Among other changes for new vessels, wider lashing bridges will be required and ship length will need to increase "with no consequential increase in carrying capacity."

ICHCA plans a series of educational activities during 2014 to raise awareness of the new stowage rules and more broadly to discuss current safety and operational risks both on-board and at the ship-shore interface as a result of poor container securing practices, including inadequate maintenance of lashing and twistlock gear.

On a related topic, Bill Brassington of ETS Consulting spoke about recent research into container corner casting failures, particularly incidents of 'cruciform' casting deformations, which appear to be caused by container handling practices in ports during ship loading and unloading.

On environmental matters, Francisco Blanquer of Spanish terminal operator **Noatum** discussed the company's recent development of an LNG-powered terminal tractor and general research into terminal energy efficiency as part of the EU-sponsored **GreenCranes** project.

A joint working session, held by **ICHCA**, **PEMA** and the **TT Club**, also provided a forum for industry experts to discuss critical safety issues in ports. The session included a talk on collision prevention in terminals by Laurence Jones, Deputy Chair of **ICHCA** and Stephan Stiehler, Chair of **PEMA's** Safety Committee. The three organisations are now working to develop a new best practice document outlining new technologies available to help reduce collisions in ports, and operational processes to avoid man-machine, machine-machine and machine-container collisions.

Breakout work groups also facilitated focused discussion and feedback on initiatives in container securing, the ship as a shared place of work in ports and the new ILO/IMO/UNECE Code of Practice for the Packing of CTUs.

The meeting was sponsored by the **Port of Malaga**, **Pesyr I+D** and **Noatum**, a leading company in Spanish port operations and logistics and ICHCA Canarias/Africa (CARC), plus Multinational Correspondence and Working Groups, to provide a focal point for informing, educating, shaping and sharing industry knowledge across the global cargo handling community.

Sydney Hosts IAPH Conference

The International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) 2014 Mid-Term Conference is being held in Sydney this year from 6-10 April at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Sponsored by Sydney Ports Corporation, the event promises a high quality program which addresses the many issues confronting those involved in international trade.

There will be a focus on the boom in port automation with speakers who are regarded leaders in their fields of expertise – starting with a global perspective of what is next in automation technology followed by case studies on infrastructure and workforce challenges.

The Panama Canal Authority will deliver a keynote address on the progress of the \$6 billion expansion project and how it will change the face a shipping trade when it opens next year.

Further details on the conference can be found at www.iaphsydney2014.com.



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Feedback Requested on Options to Improve Chain of Responsibility Regime

Australians interested in improving the effectiveness of the Chain of Responsibility (COR) regime under the Heavy Vehicle National Law have been invited to comment on a just released options paper. The options paper has been developed by a joint industry and government taskforce appointed by the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure (SCOTI) to help identify potential improvements to the regime.

The paper draws on submissions responding to an issues paper released last year. Feedback and options provided by stakeholders about particular issues are summarised and the benefits and risks of adopting each option under the HVN are broadly analysed. The paper does not reflect any final views of the taskforce.

Responses to the options should be accompanied by rationales and evidence, supported with examples and scenarios.

During the HVNL's development, the COR regime was identified as requiring further review. In November 2012, SCOTI decided to establish the review to examine the COR provisions. The aim is to ensure that they are fair, effective and appropriately targeted, as well as consistent with relevant principles agreed by the Council of Australian Governments and with provisions of work health and safety legislation. The NTC and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator are providing the taskforce secretariat.

There will be further consultative activities, including further workshops with industry groups and regulatory bodies to help refine any proposals.

[Click here to make a submission through the NTC website.](#)

Submissions can also be sent to:

Chain of Responsibility Taskforce – Assessment of Options Paper
c/o National Transport Commission
Level 15/628 Bourke St, Melbourne VIC 3000

Submissions to the issues paper close on 14 March.

New UK Port Introduces Quad Lift STS Cranes

Port Technology International reports that DP World London Gateway, the UK's newest deepwater port, has become the first port in Britain to lift four containers simultaneously on its quay cranes. The spreader, capable of lifting four 20 foot containers or two 40 foot containers at a time, doubles the quay cranes handling capacity increasing efficiency and productivity for UK shippers.

Engineering Director, Andrew Bowen, was quoted as saying this was an excellent example of DP World innovation at London Gateway. "By introducing the tandem lift for two 40 foot containers to our operations, we will be able to improve productivity that will allow vessels to be turned around faster and cargo to move on to its final destination more efficiently."

"The culture at DP World London Gateway encourages us to innovate and improve supply chains and we look forward to continuous improvements in the future."

NSSLGlobal Opens Teleport in Perth to Extend VSAT Ku-Band Network



NSSLGlobal Ltd, the independent service provider of satellite communications, has opened a new teleport at the Perth International Telecommunications Centre in Perth. The additional hub allows NSSLGlobal to extend its existing VSAT Ku-Band network in the South Pacific region to cover Australia and New Zealand, meeting customer demand for a local point of presence in the growing Australasia market.

The teleport's first operational beam will be Eutelsat's E172a South Pacific satellite beam, which will be integrated into NSSLGlobal's DVBS2-RCS2 network. This latest extension makes NSSLGlobal's Cruise-IP and Broad-IP services the most comprehensive coverage in the industry, encompassing six teleports and 20 satellite beams.

The introduction of the E172a beam is due to the high demand from global maritime and super yacht markets for seamless service across Australasia with additional beam/hub duplication for redundancy and to eliminate blockage. It will also provide a meet me point for Australian head quartered customers in the maritime, oil and gas, mining and media markets who wish to terminate their satellite global connection in Australia.

Sally-Anne Ray, Managing Director, NSSLGlobal said, "Our investment in a new teleport in Australia shows our commitment to our customers in Asia and Australasia and comes on top of our sales and support office in Singapore. We are committed to providing our customers and partners the highest quality satellite communications across the globe and will continue to add to the geographic reach of our network as satellites become available."

Putting Swan Valley Bypass on the Map

The Federal Government has committed to funding of \$615 million to the Swan Valley Bypass project. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional development, Warren Truss, said the 37 kilometre Swan Valley Bypass project reflected the government's national priorities of boosting productivity and creating strong connections that have both economic and social benefits.

Mr Truss said the bypass will improve WA freight efficiency by introducing an alternative north/south freight route, relieving pressure on the Great Northern Highway through the Swan Valley."

Big, Bright Outlook Ahead for LA Port



The Port of Long Beach will handle more cargo and continue to invest in infrastructure this year. "The future is bright," said Al Moro, Acting Executive Director, who delivered the 2014 State of the Port Address to more than 700 people during the annual event held last month. "And for us, the future is big."

Mr Moro drew on hard numbers to illustrate the port's top competitive position and how it is forging ahead with its historic \$4 billion capital improvement program so that all ships, including the new-builds too big to

transit the soon-to-be expanded Panama Canal, will continue to move goods through the Port of Long Beach for years to come.

“Our cargo numbers were up last year by an impressive 11.3%. We grew faster than any major port in North America and four times faster than the US economy,” he said. “In the next two years, we expect to surpass more than 7 million TEUs, our peak before the recession.”

For fiscal year 2014, the port has dedicated \$788 million to spending on infrastructure projects to upgrade terminals, roads, railways and bridges. The sum represents 77% of the port’s budget and is its largest single-year capital outlay ever.

Watch the complete State of the Port Address at www.polb.com/stateoftheport.

Start for Toowoomba Second Range Crossing Project

One of Queensland’s highest priority road infrastructure projects has been secured for the state, with the Federal and Queensland governments announcing they will deliver the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing (TSRC).

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Warren Truss, called for the private sector to register interest in building the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing Project.

“The Registration of Interest is supported by financial commitments to the project by the Australian and Queensland Governments,” Mr Truss said. “It sets out the broad scope of works and objectives and invites the private sector to advise of potential interest in being involved.

“The registration process will move to a formal Expression of Interest stage over the next couple of months. A successful contractor will be named later this year, with construction expected to begin by mid-2015. The successful proponent will be responsible for the design, construction, financing of the new bypass, as well as for the operations and maintenance, including the collection of toll money.”

Queensland Deputy Premier, Mr Jeff Seeney, said the TSRC would provide a gateway to the state’s resource-rich Surat Basin and the agricultural food bowls of the Darling Downs.

“Up to 30-40 minutes will be shaved off the total travel time across the range for heavy and super heavy commercial vehicles, with drivers able to avoid up to 16 sets of traffic lights.”

Abbot Point Port Expansion Gains Final Major Approval

The development of further coal terminals at the Port of Abbot Point in North Queensland has moved a step closer with the granting of the final major approval.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) has approved an application by North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation (NQBP) to dispose of dredge spoil at a deepwater location offshore of Abbot Point, subject to strict environmental conditions.

Authority Chairman, Dr Russell Reichelt, said he recognised the amount of debate and community concern that the project had generated and shared with everyone a strong desire to ensure the Reef remains a

great natural wonder into the future. This approval is in line with the agency's view that port development along the Great Barrier Reef coastline should be limited to existing ports," Dr Reichelt said.

"As a deepwater port that has been in operation for nearly 30 years, Abbot Point is better placed than other ports along the Great Barrier Reef coastline to undertake expansion as the capital and maintenance dredging required will be significantly less than what would be required in other areas."

TT Talk - Ships' Gear and Equipment – Asset or Liability?

The following articles are published courtesy of TT Club's TT Talk.



All cargo ships, without exception, have some form of gear and equipment on board. Incidents have highlighted the need for greater clarity over the inspection and maintenance regime internationally. Here, we explore the background and proposals.

Ships' gear generally consists of two types, being shipboard lifting appliances and cargo lashing and securing equipment. Both are essential for the safe and efficient operation of the ship and especially so when we consider container ships. However, is this equipment being maintained as intended in the manufacturers' instructions and/or as specified by the Classification Society?

With respect to the first category of equipment, many incidents in recent years indicate that all is far from well. An equipment failure in a simple task such as loading ships' stores can lead to serious injury - such an occurrence led to the death of a stores barge skipper recently. A similar failure with a cargo crane could lead to a multiple fatality incident and/or serious cargo claims.

Call to Action

Several maritime administrations have been concerned about this failure in ships' lifting appliances for a number of years, leading to calls for IMO (International Maritime Organization) to legislate for inspection and examination routines. The proposal is to make them part of the all embracing SOLAS (International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea) legislation and not just a requirement of national and regional laws, which are by no means universally applied.

There is also a misconception that Classification Societies 'regulate' such inspections, but this is not so. Estimates reveal that perhaps only 3% of the global fleet is so covered as it is.

The only international standard is that contained in ILO (International Labour Organization) Convention 152, but as this has only been ratified by a relatively small number of maritime states (26) this can hardly be viewed as a truly global requirement (although some jurisdictions have independently implemented the standards). Furthermore, as Maritime New Zealand (MNZ, the country's competent authority) point out in their latest submission to IMO, this convention does not contain a 'no more favourable treatment' clause as

can be found in SOLAS. By bringing such equipment under the auspices of SOLAS, MNZ argue that Port States would have greater control and powers in relation to ships' lifting appliance.

MNZ has been co-ordinating a formal IMO inter-sessional correspondence group charged with looking at the potential scale of the problem and drafting an appropriate SOLAS amendment. IMO's DE (Design of Ships and Equipment) sub-committee listened to the views of various nations who have reported on serious incidents and also those of non-governmental organisations, notably ICHCA who presented an analysis of incidents obtained via the International Group of P&I Clubs.

Incident Causation

It is beyond doubt that there are far too many incidents occurring. The question remains what the International Shipping community is prepared to do about it? As part of the inter-sessional research it was necessary to establish the primary cause of such incidents.

New Zealand's submission lists the details of over 100 specific incidents that have occurred in recent times. Of these, 70 occurred with 'pedestal' type cranes and over 50 were attributable to maintenance issues. This lack of effective maintenance manifesting itself in outcomes such as:

- Parting of the lifting wires
- Hoist brake failures
- Hydraulic ram failures
- Structural failure at the slewing ring/holding down bolts
- Boom and other structural failure.

ICHCA's own research, carried out by the International Group of P&I Clubs, revealed that there was over 126 reported incidents from members representing 13,000 vessels. One serious incident in South America led to the death of three port workers when a pedestal crane failed just three weeks after examination. This clearly calls into question the effectiveness of these examinations and whether the personnel carrying out the work were competent to do so.

Examination Regime

Concerns over such examinations and crew preparations for same led the UK P&I Club, in conjunction with Lloyds Register and two crane manufacturers (Macgregor and Liebherr) to produce a guide to 'Survey and Examination of Ships' Lifting Appliances' which was published in 2011 and is [freely available](#).

This comprehensive document points out key parts of the equipment that should be included in such examinations. Some of these are difficult to reach, potentially a reason why there have been so many failures. This includes items such as the 'slewing rings' and 'holding down bolts' on pedestal cranes which can easily be coated in numerous layers of paint and rusting away quietly under that apparently intact cover.

All ships are required to carry a 'Register of Lifting Appliances and Cargo Handling Gear', which should include a full set of Certificates for all appliances and gear in use on the ship, and maintenance and service records should also be available.

In general (depending on national or regional legislation) lifting appliances should be examined by a competent person at least once every 12 months. It is normal to have a more thorough examination and a re-test every five years or after an incident or modification to the equipment. It is clear, given the number

of serious incidents, that the annual inspections, which are not required to be carried out independently, may not be totally reliable.

If the SOLAS amendment is approved – and that is by no means guaranteed – such inspections and examinations will be mandated under international law, thus affording Port States the ability to monitor such inspections and approve the competence of the person authorised to carry them out.

It is hoped therefore that by so doing, these very important 'assets' on cargo vessels do not become a 'liability'.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance in the preparation of this article of Capt Richard Brough OBE, ICHCA's Technical Advisor.



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TT Talk - Keeping Safe While Using Ships' Gear and Equipment



The use of unsuitable or unsafe ships' gear for cargo handling risks death or serious injury to those using it and damage to the lifting gear itself, other parts of the ship and/or to the cargo being handled. Incidents have arisen through lack of maintenance or repair, and unsafe and unfit conditions for use. Who should do what?

Although the majority of the world's ports provide shoreside cranes, it is still necessary in some facilities to use ships' gear to load/unload cargo. We focus here on lifting appliances, such as derricks and jib cranes located on the ship. Whilst all kinds of ships ramp, both external and internal, are classed as access equipment, the means to lift and lower them is classed as lifting equipment. Any gear provided by the stevedore will be subject to national port or general safety laws on that subject.

What is the Safety Standard?

The international standard regarding ships' gear is contained in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 152 on Health & Safety in Dockwork. It specifies that every item of lifting gear must be tested when new, or when repaired or modified so that its lifting capacity may be affected, and given a thorough examination. When in service, it should be given a thorough examination at least once in every 12 months. In addition, every lifting appliance on board ship must be tested every five years.

Apart from the unhelpful position that ILO 152 has not been implemented globally, there may be divergence between the applicable laws of the flag state and the port state. However, unless otherwise provided, where the ship is to be discharged/loaded by shoreside personnel, it is normally the laws of the port state that take precedence.

Under the ILO Code of Practice 'Safety and Health in Ports', published in 2005, the shoreside employer, whose employees will use an item of ship's lifting gear, is to check that the gear register or other documents are in order and, importantly, to check that the gear itself, as far as can be ascertained, is safe to use.

Depending upon the age of the ship, the quality of its records and the condition of its gear, this checking process may not take very long. Regular ship callers will be familiar with the port state requirements and this will also facilitate speedy checks. Inspections need only be carried out on the gear that it is intended should be used. In some instances, a simple check will suffice, whereas there will be situations in which more extensive examinations will be justified. Stevedore companies should ensure that only experienced employees, such as gang foremen, should carry out the checks. If necessary, training may be needed but adequate checking of the actual gear itself calls for experience.

Safe Procedures and Thorough Checks

The importance of the checks themselves is matched by the nature and rigour of the procedures that need to be in place. An horrific accident occurred when a pedestal crane was tested under near full load with numerous personnel in attendance; when the bolts holding down the structure failed, not only were the crane and load written off, but there were several fatalities.

Here are some essential principles to follow:

- Inspect and ensure that the Lifting Gear Register is up to date, and all the associated test certificates are available, not forgetting those for loose lifting equipment that might be used for the operation (such as slings, shackles, chains etc).
- Take particular care where the anticipated activity is with heavy lifts and project cargoes that may have specialist lifting rigs or frames to be used with the cargo.
- Carry out a visual inspection of the lifting equipment, preferably by someone who is experienced and competent. Take care to inspect the anchoring arrangements for hoist wires on the wire storage drum itself. If in doubt, or something doesn't look right, call in an expert lifting company for a professional opinion.
- Make sure the operating position is clean and visibility is clear, with protection from the weather, and there is safe access to the equipment.
- Test the crane through its full range of operations and ensure limit switches are working.
- Never overload the crane or equipment past its SWL which should be clearly marked.

- Ensure the operation, cargo and ambient conditions have been fully risk assessed and communications are effective and understood. Ensure everyone involved in the operation understands what is going to happen – anyone not involved should be kept away.
- When stevedores are operating the ships' lifting equipment, ensure that the operator has is properly trained and that he/she has been shown the controls by a responsible ship's officer.

Following these basic principles for every operation will go a long way to ensuring that there are no incidents that endanger life and/or cargoes.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance in the preparation of this article of Capt Richard Brough OBE, ICHCA's Technical Advisor

Building WA Transport Infrastructure for the 21st Century

The Federal Government will spend \$3.8 billion on transport infrastructure projects across Western Australia over the next five years through its new Infrastructure Investment Programme. Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Jamie Briggs, said this investment would include almost \$482 million for two major northern road projects.

Mr Briggs has announced the upgrades of the Great Northern Highway – Muchea to Wubin, and the North West Coastal Highway – Minilya to Barradale, with funding of almost \$308 million and \$174 million – representing 80% of the cost of the projects.

He said the Great Northern Highway project would realign and widen the highway, upgrade intersections and add more overtaking lanes.

“When this work is completed, the highway will be upgraded to a standard that will enable the triple length road trains operating north of Wubin to travel 160 kilometres further south.”

Mr Briggs said the widening and strengthening of the North West Coastal Highway between Minilya and Barradale would improve freight access to new resource operations and supporting towns. “The road will be widened to nine metres and two low level floodway crossings will be replaced by bridges to reduce the incidence of closure during flooding,” he said.

Australia Ends 2013 With Exports Strong

A positive end to 2013 helped Australia record a strong export performance for the year despite global uncertainties, according to data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The trade data shows exports rose by over 6% to reach a record \$319 billion, the third consecutive year exports have exceeded \$300 billion. Increases were recorded across the board, with rural exports up 9%, resources up 8%, services up 6.5% and manufactures up 1.6%. These outcomes resulted in Australia's trade deficit narrowing by 69% from the previous year to \$7.2 billion in 2013.

For the month of December 2013, Australia recorded a trade surplus of \$468 million, with exports rising 3.7% (seasonally-adjusted) to \$28.5 billion, more than offsetting the 2.3% rise in imports. Increases in exports were recorded in most sectors.

Resources exports rose 4.4% to \$14.6 billion with other mineral fuels rising 12%, metal ores and minerals 2.4 %, and coal, coke and briquettes 4.4%.

Rural goods contributed to the rise in exports, up 17% to \$3.6 billion, driven by cereals and cereal preparation exports, which rose 78% during the month. Manufactures exports also rose, up 8.5% to \$3.6 billion, driven by higher metals and transport equipment exports.

These increases were partially offset by falls in exports of non-monetary gold, down 28% and services, down 0.5%. Imports increased 2.3% to \$28 billion. This was largely driven by capital goods, which increased 4.4% to \$5.6 billion and consumption goods, which rose 2.8% to \$6.9 billion.

Australia's goods exports (not seasonally adjusted) to East Asia continue to rise, reaching \$19.3 billion in December to be 24.6% higher from a year ago.

Sydney Bulk Liquids Berth 2 Open



The second Bulk Liquids Berth (BLB2) at Port Botany is open for business.

Construction of the steel piled pier berth, adjacent to the existing BLB1 terminal began in mid-2011 and was completed in March 2013. Since then, individual users have been adding the infrastructure necessary to access the berth such as marine holding arms, onshore support facilities and pipelines to their storage areas.

Sydney Ports has operated a Bulk Liquids Berth at Port Botany since 1979. However, with the original berth operating at more than 80% occupancy (anything above 65 % is regarded as beyond practical and economic capacity) a second facility was needed to ensure NSW has adequate berth capacity to satisfy existing and forecast demand for the import and export of bulk liquids.

The open access, multi-user berth hosted its first ship on 3 December 2013 and is handling products including refined fuels, gases, chemicals and bitumen. It will operate around the clock, seven days a week, accommodating vessels up to 120,000 dead weight tonnes and 270 metres in length.

While the berth's planning, design, construction and licensing agreements were all overseen by Sydney Ports, the facility is being operated by the NSW Ports consortium which last year paid close to \$5 billion for the 99 year lease of Port Botany's landside operations.

Northern Territory Trade Volumes Surge

The Northern Territory Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has published a new report: *Australia's Trade by State and Territory 2012-13*, which provides a complete statistical guide to exports and imports of goods and services for each state and territory.

The Northern Territory's rate of trade growth stood out in 2012-13, with both export and import volumes up more than 15% on the previous year. Exports volumes from WA and Queensland also grew strongly, up 9% and 6%, respectively.

Australian farmers benefited from a 10% increase in exports of unprocessed food to \$15.2 billion. Exports of oilseeds (mainly canola) increased strongly for Victoria and NSW (both up around 100% to \$721 million and \$469 million respectively). Queensland registered strong growth in exports of vegetables (up over 50% to \$455 million). WA's wheat exports were up 46% to \$2.7 billion.

WA remained Australia's export powerhouse accounting for \$122.7 billion - or 41% - of Australia's total exports, followed by NSW and Queensland with 21% and 18%, respectively. NSW remained Australia's leading destination for imports, accounting for 34% (or \$109.4 billion), followed by Victoria, Queensland and WA.

Productivity Commission's Final Report on National Access Regime Released

The Federal Government has released the final report of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the National Access Regime ('the Regime'). The Regime is a regulatory framework that provides an avenue for firms to access essential infrastructure services owned and operated by others, when commercial negotiations are unsuccessful.

Since its introduction in 1995, the National Access Regime has influenced the way access negotiations occur across the economy, including in rail, airports, port terminal and grain handling facilities at ports.

The Productivity Commission's review of the Regime followed a recommendation of a 2001 report for a further review to occur five years after the report's amendments were implemented.

In addition, the Productivity Commission's review was also required by clause 8.1 of the 2006 Council of Australian Government's (COAG) Competition and Infrastructure Reform Agreement (CIRA) which called for a five year review of a number of the agreement's operation and terms.

The Final Report's key finding is that the access regime is working effectively and should be retained.

The Productivity Commission has made a number of important recommendations to refine the regime to ensure it continues to perform its important role of facilitating access to nationally significant infrastructure.

The Government will respond to the Productivity Commission's report following the outcomes of a root and branch review.

Ministers Endorse National Investment Priorities

Australia's ministers with responsibility for trade and investment have endorsed priority areas of national investment. The Trade and Investment Ministers Meeting, which saw all states and territories represented along with the Commonwealth was initiated by the Federal Minister for Trade and Investment, Andrew Robb.

The investment priorities agreed to by the ministers include:

- Food and agribusiness
- Resources and energy
- Economic infrastructure
- Tourism and education
- Advanced services, manufacturing and technologies.

Mr Robb said a country, like a business or any organisation, is best served by backing its strengths. "As a government we are determined to back our strengths, the things we do as well as anybody and better than most and these national investment priorities are about leveraging our strengths," he said.

Mr Robb announced the proposed appointment of five senior investment specialists by the Australian Government who will work with Austrade and the states and territories to identify significant investment opportunities and to help see them realised.

The ministers agreed to support a National Food Brand Initiative to help leverage Australia's reputation as a 'clean and green' food producer. "This will be the century of food and water security and as a country we are extremely well placed to help meet increasing consumer demand driven by unprecedented growth of the middle class in the Asia Pacific region," Mr Robb said.

The ministers also agreed in principle to embrace a 'Team Australia' approach in promoting Australian exports and investment opportunities during international trade shows and missions. The Commonwealth, states and territories will also work together to help businesses across Australia fully understand the significant benefits of the Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

Queensland to Assist National Regulator's Permit Load

The Queensland Government has stepped in to assist the recently formed National Heavy Vehicle Regulator in processing heavy vehicle permits. Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Scott Emerson, said the government had made the decision to take back the processing of some categories of permits following concerns raised by sections of the trucking industry.

"Queensland relies on a safe and efficient heavy vehicle industry and we've listened to the concerns of these carriers," Mr Emerson said. "Due to some teething issues, many heavy vehicle operators in Queensland have had trouble receiving permits. We support the uniform national laws. However, there are some issues with the regulator that need to be addressed.

"NHVR has agreed to temporarily delegate approvals for some heavy vehicle permits back to the Department of Transport and Main Roads."

Applications for over size and over mass, and special purpose vehicles in Queensland will be processed by TMR. There are up to 21,000 of these permit types issued in Queensland, particularly supporting the mining industry.

For general enquiries please contact the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator by email info@nhvr.gov.au or call 1300 MYNHVR (1300 696 487).

Port Access Corridor Project Reaches Major Milestone

Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development Minister, Warren Truss, and WA Transport Minister, Troy Buswell, have announced a major milestone has been reached in the Esperance Port Access Corridor.

The new bridge linking Twilight Beach Road with The Esplanade has been opened to traffic, signalling a major improvement to safety and efficiency and the end of conflict between port, local road and rail traffic.

Mr Truss said the Federal Government recognised the significance of the Esperance Port Access Corridor by funding this project under its Infrastructure Investment Program which is providing \$35.5 billion for infrastructure projects over the five year period.

“Esperance is experiencing a time of growth brought on by regional expansion in mining and agriculture,” Mr Truss said. “The upgraded port access corridor will support increased business activity at the port by delivering major transport efficiencies and reducing freight costs, boosting productivity. It will also cater for the general development of the town and region by improving road safety for local commuters.

Jointly funded by the Federal and State Governments, the \$120 million Esperance Port Access Corridor project was launched in early 2012 following a comprehensive planning and consultation exercise by Main Roads WA.

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