

Rail Taskforce - Meeting No. 19

3 December 2009

Stevedores and rail operators discussed the need to set minimum benchmarks for trains and also for lifts allocated to windows in order to drive customer behaviour change. Sydney Ports Corporation (SPC) asked when stevedores would provide proposed benchmarks. DP World (DPW) was concerned about any negative publicity however they agreed it could occur through a system-wide review over the next three months. Patrick PortLink (PPL) raised the need to devise a strategy to sell the concept to customers.

Discussion followed on what to do with trainloads that did not meet benchmarks. It was suggested that customers would change behaviour if containers were initially refused and that Enfield would help solve this double handling as shunting within Botany and PPL yards would only add to congestion. Other suggestion for dealing with scraps and mark-offs included PPL hauling to another location within the port or within the Enfield Marshalling Yard. At this point the chair suggested that a separate workshop be held on the issue.

Performance Report Review

SPC tabled a set of KPI performance trends for 2009 year-to-date. Of particular interest, the first graph showed an increase in Patricks' lift productivity rates for rail following the decommissioning of their Rail Mounted Gantry (RMG). The stevedores were averaging a similar number of lifts per hour. A second graph detailed two distinct troughs in rail throughput volumes at the port in early October and mid November which could be attributed to a list of major contingencies that occurred at the time. The final graph depicted a relatively flat mode share for imports whilst exports mode share had dropped from a peak of 35% in late February to around 20% in November. SPC stated that they would endeavour to uncover reasons why this might be occurring.

SPC next tabled train on-time-running reports (OTR) for September and October, 2009. Adeptus noted there had been an increase of approximately 3% of trains departing on-time from regional Intermodal Terminals (IMTs). This seemed to improve OTR throughout the train cycle by 3%, as shown by similar increases in other OTR categories.

Botany Users & Stevedore Meeting

ARTC provided an update on the previous meeting and noted that only Patrick PortLink (PPL) and Independent Rail (IR) had attended. Items on the Agenda had been described as:

- Line of sight shunting protocol had gone to the safety regulator for agreement
- Concern was raised about dangerous goods left too long in the port.
- POTA's recent growth was raised as restricting operators into that terminal.

SPC advised they had undertaken to write to POTA seeking clarification of access arrangements, as an action arising from the workshop.

Supply Chain Improvement Program

SPC gave an overview of the Supply Chain Improvement Strategy document and stated that it would be tabled to the group shortly following minor changes. SPC tabled a strategy paper on recommendations for rail operations on the Botany-Enfield Corridor, and requested comment.

RailCorp then gave a presentation to the group in order to improve understanding on the complexities inherent in operating the shared freight / passenger 'CityRail' network. RailCorp demonstrated there was little to no capacity for freight trains at peak times and further noted that some areas of the network were operating at levels above theoretical capacity already. The SPC Consultant added that peak traffic times actually started earlier as trains begin positioning in preparation for peak traffic.

Train Consist

The chair noted this had already been covered in previous action Agenda items.

Business Rules

The chair noted that the creation of the Rules Committee would follow the signing of the MoU. ARTC added that the Steering Committee structure under the MoU could approve any new rules that were discussed in the Rules Committee. SPC then tabled the latest iteration of the business rules, which the chair requested that the ARTC and the stevedores should review prior to the MoU being signed in order to provide a speedy Rules Committee formulation process.

600m Shuttles

On questioning from SPC, ARTC replied that Botany Yard resources would be relocated to Enfield staging roads in October 2010, following the ARTC take-up of the Metropolitan Freight Network (MFN). ARTC advised that initially RailCorp will control the Main lines at Enfield and the Enfield yard until ARTC complete signal separation works.

RailCorp noted that they were prepared to accommodate some scrap wagons as mentioned earlier; however there were other designs on the yard. SPC responded that they would approach RailCorp regarding the Enfield Marshalling Yard and seek any available spare capacity. The SPC consultant suggested the Port Botany Rail Team (PBRT) needed to present a business case to RailCorp and NSW government for use of Enfield.

Rail Paths & Windows Alignment

SPC recapped issues presented in the Rail Windows & Paths Alignment Workshop #2:

- Rail operators to revise the template that details each stage of operations for trains entering or exiting the port, including relevant timings.
- An agreed trial 60 minutes call up (Botany Yard to Stevedore or vice-versa).

IR reiterated that they were still dissatisfied with the current alignment as several of their on-time trains were being held up. Patrick noted that all rural trains were trying to enter the port prior to the early morning passenger peak and suggested change was needed to prevent bunching. SPC indicated that it would follow up with the IR train issues following the finalisation of the template.

Track Possessions

Railcorp stated that operators need to raise concerns 12-18 months prior to the alignment of track possessions by RailCorp and ARTC. RailCorp advised of the Config 10 goods road possession for 23/24 Jan 2010, which was a deferral of the maintenance planned for 14/15 Nov 09. RailCorp also noted that there were no possessions planned for Easter next year.

Other Business

ARTC briefed the group on the status of the Southern Sydney Freight Line project. It was noted that an executive decision had been made to hold back the works. It was stated that commissioning was likely to proceed in early 2011.