

Road Taskforce - Meeting No. 21

29 July 2009

Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The Minutes of Meeting No.20, held on Wednesday, 15th July 2009, were confirmed by members.

Force Majeure

Weather conditions: The stevedores provided clarification on what measures (temperature, wind speed etc.) constitute adverse conditions for their employees to stop work. These will be factored into the unforeseen events document. Some Taskforce members thought further clarification on 'heavy rain' was required before it could be included.

Strike action: There was debate on what would constitute strike action for stevedores. Road operators argued that if the work performance is slow and unauthorised, it is not an unforeseen event. The road operators specifically addressed the issue of a 'go-slow' commenting that it is not an unforeseen event. Go-Slow is a day to day issue for the terminals to manage. However, how to measure a go-slow is yet to be determined.

Arrival delay: Road operators queried including words that relate to arrival delay. This delay can be for vessels or trucks (for example due to Customs). There needs to be clear landside and portside categories. A Taskforce member expressed concern on the number of scenarios being considered under unforeseen events. He warned of the document becoming diluted and meaningless if more events are considered unforeseen than not. It was decided that the wording of shipside delays should be changed to provide further clarification.

Road closures: Road operators commented that if there is an accident on the key port roads with subsequent road closures then the carriers should not be penalised. A Taskforce member provided an example of proof that could be used to claim an unforeseen event due to the RTA stopping trucks randomly for inspection. Stevedores expressed concern with this however SPC are to review the example and report back to the Taskforce at the next meeting.

Truck Arrival Analysis and Feedback

SPC presented a Truck Arrival Analysis by time-zone based upon Trials 1 & 2 data to the Taskforce. It was noted that the data excludes weekends due to the high variability of arrivals, significantly reduced demand and terminal closures evident during these times. The purpose of the exercise was highlighted as being to re-examine the proposed shoulder period following feedback from some members that the afternoon shoulder extended too long into the evening. It had been previously suggested that shift times frequently change at around 7pm and a shoulder period out to 9pm would disadvantage some operators.

Under the new model, SPC demonstrated that a two hour period of evening shoulder may be removed. A new shoulder period in the lead up to the peak may be introduced to avoid a risk of congestion in the immediate periods before the Peak Period.

Sydney Ports believed the trial results showed an increase in demand from 3am onwards which may justify the need for a shoulder period leading into the peak to reduce potential 'bunching'.

Summary of PPP Feedback to Date

SPC presented the Landside Improvement summary email feedback & comments received from PBLIS stakeholders. It was mentioned that meetings with key groups has been planned and underway before presenting this feedback to the Minister's office.

Technology

SPC updated the Taskforce on technology developments and that a number of responses were received for the Truck Tracking EOI including technology for GPS, for cameras, and RFID tags. The evaluation process is progressing.

Other Business

There was debate regarding stack runs and the return of empty containers to the Ports and exemptions from PPP. Various opinions were expressed with no definite conclusions drawn. SPC decided the issue was to be explored further in coming Taskforce meetings. .

SPC provided a definition of congestion based upon its conceptual use arising from within the IPART report. The Taskforce requested further detail on where exactly the definition was written in the IPART report to which SPC advised they would provide detail.

SPC raised the Minister's Port Botany Logistics Taskforce empty container forum on Monday 3rd August 10:30-12:30pm at Governor Macquarie Tower. It was also advised that the invitees need to read through the executive summary of the NSW Maritime empty container report beforehand. Road operators questioned how the ACCC authorization process versus regulation would work. Patrick insisted the ACCC process was not Patrick's preference but nor is regulation. SPC advised the topic is being discussed between the stevedores and themselves. Any feedback from this will be conveyed to the group. The view on ACCC from SPC was the legitimacy this brings to all and an overall sense of binding the parties. Patrick prefers a separate and individual agreement with SPC. SPC stated this would mean an immediate end of all Taskforce consultations which they felt the road operators would not support. It was also stated by SPC that too much commonality already existed between what is being proposed in the OPM for the ACCC not to be interested. The supporting Cost Benefit Analysis is currently underway.