
M E D I A R E L E A S E

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Port Botany container trade hits 1 million

Despite the recent world economic downturn Port Botany has reached another record in container trade, recording its strongest trade movements on record for a six-monthly period in further signs NSW's economic recovery is on track.

Ports and Waterways Minister Paul McLeay today told more than 400 senior executives from the world's shipping industry at the *Intermodal Asia* conference, almost a million containers (or 993,300 TEU's, Twenty Foot Equivalent units) had passed through Port Botany from July to December. This compares to 1.784M containers for the whole previous financial year.

"The green shoots of recovery are well and truly growing in the NSW economy," Mr McLeay said.

"We're seeing record levels of trade through our main port. In December 2009 alone, an average of 5,600 shipping containers passed through Port Botany every day. This is up 10.6% for the month of December on the previous year.

"Strong export growth and continued demand for imports is continuing to drive the NSW economy.

"This is great news for our exporters, many of whom are based in rural and regional New South Wales," Mr McLeay said.

Mr McLeay said the latest figures continued an eight year growth in trade for Port Botany.

"When compared with other ports around the world, Port Botany has proven its resilience in a tough international economic climate," Mr McLeay said.

"Long Beach, California in the United States saw a 14% drop in container throughput in 2009 and the world's largest container port, Singapore, suffered a 13% decline.

"In this context, Port Botany's continued growth is clearly a strong achievement.

"Full container exports from NSW have continually increased since 2002/03, reflecting an increasing demand for Australian goods.

Cereal and grain exports were up 59.9% in the six months to December compared with the same period last year due to favourable growing conditions in the North West and Central West Regions of NSW.

“Full container imports for the first six months of the financial year were up 1.3% on the same period last year driven by strong demand for goods from China and East Asia (47%), South East Asia (15%) and Europe (14%).

Mr McLeay said Sydney Ports Corporation was well into the construction of the \$1 billion Port Botany Container Terminal expansion which will assist in the more efficient movement of our exports to global markets.

“The expansion of Port Botany and our third operator Hutchinson Ports Holdings will double our capacity to handle containers and help solidify our reputation as a world-class port,” Mr McLeay said.

“The addition of a third operator will increase competition in the industry, which will bring more trade and can only be a plus for exporters and importers, the productivity of the Port Botany supply chain and ultimately the people of NSW,” Mr McLeay said.

At a glance summary of half-yearly trade stats:

- December 2009 container trade reached 176,100 TEUs which was an increase of 10.6% on the same period last year. This is the highest container trade for the month of December in history. Predominately impacting on this result is the increase in imports of full containers (15.9%) and the lesser impact of an increase in the export of empty containers (11.2%) during the month of December 2009.
- Total full container imports for YTD December 2009/10 reached 496,000 TEUs, up 1.3% on the corresponding YTD period in the previous year. The leading import regions were dominated by East Asia (47%), South East Asia (15%) and Europe (14%), which combined account for 76% of total full container imports through the ports of Sydney.
- Full container exports for YTD December 2009/10 reached 223,300 TEUs up 0.4% compared to the same period last year. The higher exports of cereals, iron & steel and waste paper have been the primary drivers of the growth. Cereal exports continue to have strong growth as a result of favourable growing conditions in the North West and Central West regions of the State, up 59.9% YTD December 2009/10 on the same period last year.

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