



NSW ROAD TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION INC.
Your Road to Success is our Expertise

21 November 2003

URGENT

Circular to Importers: Delays in the Container Chain at Port Botany

Considerable delays are currently being experienced in the container chain due to:

1. The seasonal buildup in container movements in the pre-Christmas period.
2. An industrial dispute at Patrick's Port Botany stevedoring terminal.
3. Extended delays at empty container depots.

These factors are combining to slow down movements of containers through the transport chain. The current industrial dispute at Patrick is between Skilled Engineering and the Maritime Union of Australia is affecting equipment performance, resulting in lower service levels to ships, carriers and rail operators. This will lead to higher transport costs which may be passed on by carriers.

There are three areas where importers can take action to contain costs. They relate to:

Port Storage Charges

With only three free days of storage of FCL's from date of vessel availability at the port, it is critical that shipping documents/advice are provided to carriers in advance so time slot bookings to be made to suit your requirements. Additional costs may be incurred if your containers require transport via your carrier's depot.

Detention Charges

Some shipping lines, including Columbus, Maersk, OOCL, P&O Nedlloyd and Zim/Globestar, have advised the New South Wales Road Transport Association (NSWRTA) they will consider on a case by case basis requests to extend the detention free period in recognition of the present level of congestion. Other lines may take a similar position.

Requests for any extension of the detention free period can **only be made by the client of the carrier**, not the carrier. Shipping lines have advised NSWRTA they should be notified by you as their client as early as possible of a request for an extension of the detention free period. Requests should be **in writing** on company letterhead and sent **before** the standard detention free period expires.

Incorporated in NSW ▣ Established in 1890

CENTRAL OFFICE
Level 4, 162 Goulburn Street
DARLINGHURST NSW 2010

Email: enquiries@nswrta.com.au
Website: www.nswrta.com.au

NORTHERN DIVISION
PO Box 318
THE JUNCTION NSW 2291

Tel: 02 9267 8222 Fax: 02 9267 8388	A.B.N 99 815 226 244	Tel: 02 4969 3133 Fax: 02 4961 5836
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Storage of Containers at Empty Container Depots

Empty container depots are at or near full capacity due to the Skilled Engineering/MUA dispute and the seasonal movement of imports over exports. This leads some depots to refuse to accept or redirect empty containers to another depot. Shipping Australia Ltd advised NSWRTA that some lines do not have an alternate depot to accept empty containers, leading to long delays at the lines' nominated place of return.

In these circumstances, your carrier will advise you of this situation. As a client of the affected shipping line, ***you should notify the line*** in question, not the carrier, that their container cannot be returned and request they find another depot to store their container/s.

Please contact your carrier for further assistance and advice on the current logistics environment.

Yours sincerely

(signed by) Hugh McMaster

Hugh McMaster
Government and Commercial Services Manager