



TOMAX
NEWS

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PLUS:

MARKET SUMMARY

- Courier companies are currently experiencing a shortage in drivers due to COVID self isolation. Additionally, there is an increase in the turnaround times at collection and delivery points due to many businesses having COVID resourcing shortages. The reduction in available fleet and the increased time of collection and delivery are causing delivery delays which are unavoidable. These delays are predicted to continue for the short term with all staff under the pump to minimise the impact as much as possible.

TARIFF CONCESSIONS GAZETTE

Tariff Concession Orders (TCOs) are an Australian Government revenue concession that exists where there are no known Australian manufacturers of goods that are substitutable for imported goods. When a new TCO is made, it is published in the Gazette by the Australian Border Force.

The weekly Tomax Client Newsletter will contain a link to the latest Gazette document so that you can stay updated.

[Click to view Gazette 19/01/22](#)



EASING OF RESTRICTIONS DIVIDES TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

Following a government decision to continue easing restrictions for freight, transport and logistics workers, the industry is now divided on whether the decision is beneficial or will cause more detriment to the supply chain. The national cabinet meeting which took place on Thursday 13th January, where an announcement was made enabling close contacts in the industry to return to work immediately after receiving a negative rapid antigen test result. This decision in relaxing isolation rules for close contacts indicates the extreme urgency and push in keeping supply chains moving as staff shortages disrupt food supply lines across the country.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the changed regulations are no longer defined to transport workers in food distribution services, as they had been in some states. He stated, “they don’t have to be isolated for that period. They just go straight back to work. Now the most immediate extension of that is to all transport, freight, and logistics employees. So not just those directly involved in food distribution, but all in the transport, freight, and logistics sector.”

Scott Buchholz, assistant minister for road safety and freight transport, welcomed the decision, believing that alleviating the pressures on the freight and transport sector is vital to keeping the economy functioning. “These changes will help address some of the pressures industry has been telling us about and will enable critical workers to get back to

work. We are aware other pressures exist, but we are optimistic about the changes being made and we will keep working with industry and working to get the balance right”, he said.

In addition to the support for the change, the Australian Trucking Association (ATA) said it would explore entrepreneurial methods alongside government initiatives to maximise support for the industry during the pandemic. ATA chairman David Smith said, “whilst the ATA agrees it is a great step forward and these changes will support our industry, the sector knows that there is no silver bullet. Workforce shortages were a pre-pandemic problem...right now we need to find more non-traditional means of support. The ATA will continue to work closely with its members, state and federal governments – to bring certainty to the national supply chain.”

Although the national cabinet’s decision is intended to support supply chains, a conflicting viewpoint from unions is that the isolation period is being removed at the expense of workers’ health. The Transport Workers’ Union (TWU) has suggested that the further easing of restrictions will have the opposite effect, turning workplaces into infectious environments which will lead to an additional crippling of the workforce. Michael Kaine, TWU secretary, said the decision to send potentially infected workers back to work without providing free RATs would exacerbate the transport crisis in the coming weeks. Mr Kaine said, “national cabinet has cut the last thread of hope the transport industry

had of recovering from chronic worker shortages. Distribution centres will become virus hotbeds sending more essential workers to their sick beds, infecting their families along the way.” He advised that the union has already received reports of close contact transport workers being forced to return to work, and being told to keep working until they tested positive. He continued, “these are the workers who’ve kept us going throughout the pandemic, now given no choice but to risk their own health and that of their families. Months ago, we warned Morrison that supply chains would be crippled if he failed to set aside free and abundant supplies of rapid antigen tests. True to character, the Prime Minister refused to act. Now, he’s sacrificing workers to save his own skin.” He concluded that for the industry to survive this wave, transport workers need free and abundant rapid antigen tests, prioritisation and leave for booster shots, and isolation of those most likely carrying the virus, as ‘now is the time to shield the suffering industry, not detonate more virus explosions in essential workplaces.’

Dr. Stephen Kennedy, Secretary of the Commonwealth Treasury, advised national cabinet that current arrangements could lead to 10% of Australia’s workforce, which includes many workers in critical supply sectors, being withdrawn from the workforce.

Pacific National, Rail freight operator, highlighted the issue of securing adequate numbers of RAT kits to meet the testing requirements to keep the national supply chain moving. For instance, an operation the size of Pacific National who screens frontline rail workers three times a week can consume approximately 7000 RAT kits per week. Paul Scurrah, Pacific National CEO, said, “we understand the Australian government is bending over backwards to secure more RAT kits from around the world, but this could take weeks. Currently it’s a major challenge for businesses to source RAT kits and we need to address this immediately for the sake of public health outcomes and the economy. Like many other countries around the world, once RATs arrive on mass, national cabinet must commit to providing free kits for all essential frontline workers. The current system is creating unnecessary angst among essential workers and distorting daily supply chain operations. One thing is obvious, going forward, national cabinet must start learning more from the experience of other countries where new COVID variant outbreaks have hit.”

Williams, A. (2022). Transport industry divided over easing of isolation rules. Retrieved from <https://www.thedcn.com.au/news/logistics-and-supply-chain/transport-industry-divided-over-easing-of-isolation-rules/> on 18th January, 2022.



FTA PARTNERS WITH CONSORTIA PROVIDING RAPID ANTIGEN TEST (RAT) KITS



Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) has partnered with Protective Health as a part of a consortia, to provide Therapeutic Goods Administration-approved Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) to the Australian market, in response to an extraordinary demand by supply chain participants following the Omicron outbreak.

Paul Zalai, FTA Director, requested that urgent action was mandatory in response to the recent state and federal government re-assessment on testing regimes. He said, “once PCR testing was no longer a sustainable option we had to find a commercially viable solution for our members to maximise the safety of staff and allow continuity of sustainable business operations. After engaging leading business consultants BDO Australia in search of a large volume, reputable provider of RAT kits, we identified Protective Health as an ideal partner with a proven track record as a leading large-scale supplier of quality medical supplies since the first peak of COVID-19.”

The next critical step to the success of the consortia was the appointment of HubX as the warehouse and logistics provider for the projected large-scale import volumes. Importantly, its state-of-the-art facility is strategically located at Port Botany and within close proximity of Sydney International Airport.

Mr Zalai said the industry body had negotiated a rate of \$6.99 per test (boxes of five equating to \$34.95 excl GST). In order to streamline handling and distribution processes, the offer is only available for businesses purchasing a minimum of one carton holding 240 boxes (1200 tests). Mr Zalai said, “Our members can readily collect the tests from HubX with no additional delivery charge or alternatively, distribution will be offered within the Sydney metropolitan and interstate at competitive commercial rates.”

Stephen Chard, director of Protective Health said the TGA approved the Clungene COVID-19 Antigen Rapid Test on 7 January 2022 for use by companies and individuals for self-testing purposes. He stated, “furthermore, our products undergo independent quality testing to the highest standards by various global authorities to ensure they are compliant in all of the regions we serve. Whilst we are proud the TGA has rated the test as being of very high sensitivity and specificity, this would count for little if we could not get our supplies to market. To that end we look forward to partnering with our sponsors, manufacturer, FTA, BDO and HubX to support the critical needs of the supply chain sector and the Australian community.”

Purchase RATs Here

Wallace, P. (2022). FTA WORKS WITH PARTNERS TO PROVIDE RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS. Retrieved from <https://www.thedcn.com.au/news/customs-news-freight-forwarding-and-customs-broking/fta-works-with-partners-to-provide-rapid-antigen-tests/> on 20th January, 2022.



DESPERATE TIMES CALLS FOR DESPERATE MEASURES

Equipment availability has been significantly tightened at major export hubs, as demand surges during the pandemic causing a shortage of containers available at the right place. Additionally, as a result of the severe port congestion, containership capacity has been pushed to breaking point. Huge hikes in container lease rates, vessel charter rates and prices for equipment and ships which usually would have been retired or recycled, are now in effect. With many older containers being held in service, the TT Club believes there is a “heightened risk” from utilising the “any-box-will-do” solution to the market crisis.

“There has additionally been anecdotal evidence of containers being brought back into service from retirement. This practice has the potential to present more challenges for all in the supply chain,” said one marine insurer. TT Club suggested that, as the age profile of the boxes in circulation – around 25 million – rises, additional maintenance could be necessary. Not to mention extra considerations such as maintaining the in-service repair standard, which was critical for older boxes to prevent the risk of serious structural failures, some of which, such as corrosion, physical wear and tear to door hinges, pins and locking equipment, and have the potential to cause serious accidents.

Furthermore, there is notably some anecdotal evidence that the traditional wooden floors, routinely replaced during depot M&R, are being kept in the interests of turnaround time.

One shipper expressed feeling “appalled” at the quality of the containers arriving at his warehouse, saying, “they were very rusty, the floors were dirty and stained and had clearly not even been swept out. I complained to the line and they more or less said if I didn’t like the standard of their boxes I should go elsewhere – obviously not an option, as it had taken us a month to get these containers, let alone secure the transport,” he added.

Another key aspect of the structural safety of containers was their stacking capability, noting that on a ULCV, boxes can be stacked safely up to eleven high. “A serious structural deficiency in a container towards the bottom of such a stack, in dynamic circumstances, has the real risk of causing a collapse and loss overboard,” it warned.

Meanwhile, there has been concern in some quarters that many older containerships destined to be sent to scrap yards are being “thrown” into service on routes and trades that are extremely testing for both the ship and the crew.

Another carrier indicated that the normal extensive suitability checks his line carried out on ships before they were taken on charter were now “non-existent”. He exclaimed, “we are just fixing them on spec...in my view, which is not popular internally, we will eventually pay the price.”

Wackett, M. (2022). Any box or ship will do’ – weighing the risk of employing ageing assets. Retrieved from <https://theloadstar.com/any-box-or-ship-will-do-weighing-the-risk-of-employing-ageing-assets/> on 19th January 2022.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

MARIJKE HILDRETH

KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER

TOMAX LOGISTICS UNITED STATES

What do you do at Tomax?

I'm the Key Account manager for one of our major accounts, which means I supervise all of their shipments from door to door no matter which way they may be traveling. I also pitch in wherever else is needed as I've been doing this for over twenty years now so there isn't a lot that I haven't seen!

What are your hobbies and interests?

Spending time with the family is my major hobby - especially my grand children! And, with them, I like to pursue my interests. I enjoy thrift store shopping and anything art related such as painting, writing, crocheting e.t.c.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

Seattle. I've always wanted to live there as I love rain and grey skies. I recently had a chance to visit and I loved it!

Best thing you've ever eaten?

My mom's banana cake. I've spent a lot of time over the last year trying to find a suitable replicate - even baking it myself - but nothing ever comes close.

Any New Year's resolutions or goals?

I'm going to try to remain on my feet. I took a nasty spill this summer while feeding some baby squirrels and shattered my shoulder, which required surgery. So, stay on my feet, and perhaps feed wildlife from the safety of my car in 2022.

Most interesting thing you've ever done?

There are so, so many! I'd say the most interesting thing I ever did was give birth to the first baby in Colorado in 1995. She was born five minutes past midnight and was featured in all the newspapers as well as on TV.

Three words which best describes you?

Artistic, funny and compassionate.



Marijke's family and some of her artistic creations!

FIND 3 IDENTICAL SHIPS

See if you can find 3 ships which are identical!



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