

# ACROSS BORDERS



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## **PORT BOTANY – SUSTAINABLY SUPPORTING NSW**

**WORKING TOGETHER TO FACE THE CHALLENGES – THE HON JASON WOOD MP.  
INCREASED IMPORTS AN OPPORTUNITY AND A RISK – ANDREW TONGUE  
TRANSFORMATION OR BUSINESS AS USUAL – WENDY CRAIK AM**

“KEEPING AUSTRALIA’S INTERNATIONAL TRADE MOVING”



Australian Peak Shippers  
Association Inc. (APSA)



# SOUTH EAST INLAND PORT

Artist impression

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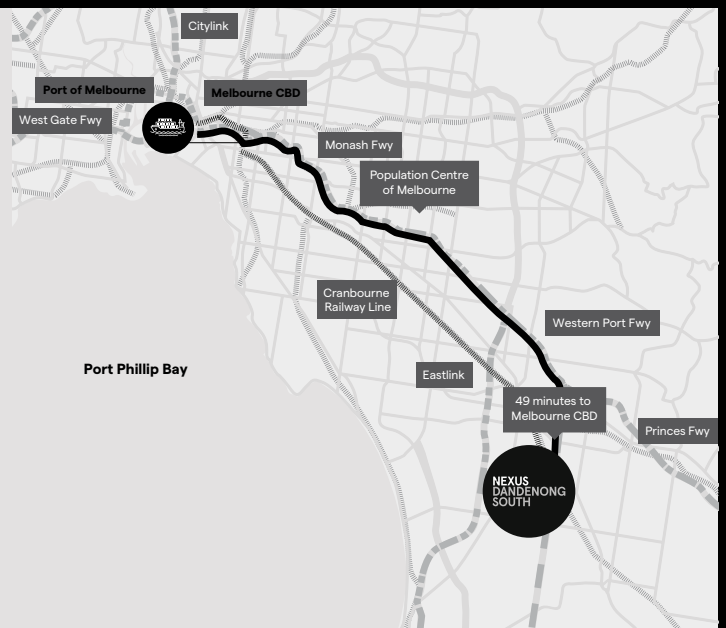
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# ACROSS BORDERS

EDITION ONE 2021



## Government and industry focus on a 2021 economic recovery

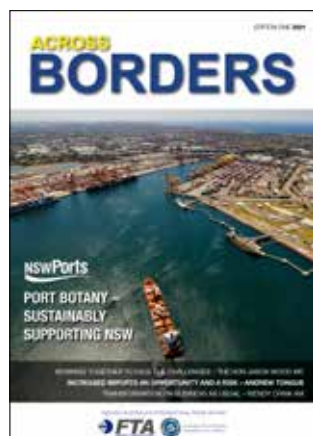
Australia is totally reliant on foreign owned international shipping lines to continue servicing our trade sector and therefore there is no questioning that they must be incentivised to do so on a profitable basis.

Supporting this outcome, the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) and Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) are calling for regulation to: 1) ensure vessel sharing consortia can continue to provide economies of scale achieved by deploying larger ships with qualified exemption from normal competition rules; and 2) monitor the appropriateness of shipping line and their contracted parties' surcharges, fees and penalties.

Due to a range of international and domestic operational factors experienced over the last 12 months, APSA and FTA members experienced exorbitant costs arising from shipping line administered congestion surcharges, staged movements to dehire containers and vehicle booking fees to stevedores and empty container park operators. This cost being above and beyond existing freight rates (and record high 'spot' rates), Terminal Handling Charges and other pre-existing surcharges. As a part of a government-led reform process, we will be providing detailed evidence to the upcoming Productivity Commission and Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) reviews.

Importantly, our advocacy will also focus on business continuity for the air cargo and the perishable goods export sector, biosecurity reforms and the emerging introduction of a Trade Single Window - an Australian Border Force led initiative to provide our future electronic interface to government. We were delighted to recently meet with the Assistant Minister for Customs, the Hon Jason Wood MP and thank him for elaborating on the economic recovery and border protection matters that we discussed in his detailed foreword to this edition of Across Borders.

By PAUL ZALAI, Co-founder and Director, Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA)



Front cover – sponsored by NSW Ports

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# Working together to face the challenges

By Hon JASON WOOD MP. Assistant Minister for Customs, Community Safety and Multicultural Affairs

Like many of you, I will remember 2020 as a year that tested our flexibility and resilience in the face of immense challenges. The high degree of cooperation between industry, the Australian Border Force (ABF) and other government agencies enabled us to successfully meet many of the challenges of COVID-19 together.

I thank the Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) and the Australian Peak Shippers' Association (APSA) for your help in supporting Australia's response to COVID-19.

The effects of the pandemic are both significant and ongoing. Government and industry will need to continue to adapt and establish new ways of working together to support our economic recovery.

While every country around the world grapples with unique COVID-19 conditions, Australia has done well, largely in part because the Government, supported by industry, took swift and early action to restrict international travel and protect the community.

We are also taking steps to support Australian industry and economic recovery. We are working with States and Territories and whole-of-government partners to facilitate the safe movement of maritime and air crew, seasonal workers and New Zealand travellers. We continue to put efforts towards preventing the spread of the pandemic on our shores, while working on reopening the border to international travellers, as it becomes safe to do so.

We have successfully supported keeping international supply chains operating during the pandemic, enabling Australians to access vital imported goods. We have supported Australian exporters to continue to get their goods to global markets. Together we have ensured Australians have continued access to vital health and safety equipment by applying tariff concessions for imported goods used to combat COVID-19, while also implementing temporary regulations to prevent profiteering from the export of essential goods.

Beyond our borders, Australia has worked with international partners to overcome the disruptions to trade

and travel caused by COVID-19. The ABF Commissioner was instrumental in establishing a new World Customs Organization (WCO) passenger control and facilitation working group with the aim to develop international standards on exchanging information on travellers' vaccination status to assist with the safe reopening of borders. Similarly, Australia also led a coalition of countries calling for an action-orientated response from the WCO to develop a global approach to facilitate movements of COVID-19 vaccines and limit illicit vaccine trade.

The ABF has swiftly responded to new passenger, mail and cargo volumes resulting from the pandemic. Reductions in passenger and international mail were matched by a 10.35% increase in air cargo and an astounding 139.5% increase in sea cargo in 2020. ABF redeployed resources to address pressure points at ports, and will continue to work on potential freight blockages while keeping Australia safe and secure.

As the economy recovers, the Government will continue to promote opportunities to build economic growth. The ABF is progressing its contributions to the Government's Simplified Trade System agenda, with \$28.6 million in funding announced in the 2020-21 budget. This program brings together a suite of forward-looking regulatory reform and digital investments across Government to create a simpler, more efficient and digitised trade system for Australian business and build towards the ultimate stand-up of a Trade Single Window.

Work to advance the agenda will include opportunities to learn from industry and international counterparts to trial cross border trade solutions. An example of this has been the recent successful trial the ABF undertook with the Singapore Government to test solutions to make cross-border trade simpler

“ *I thank you for your cooperation during these challenging times and look forward to our continued work in protecting our community and supporting Australia's economic recovery* ”



and paperless for Australian business. Under this initiative the ABF developed the Intergovernmental Ledger (IGL) as a verifiable credentials platform, built on block chain technology it authenticates trade documents.

More broadly, the ABF continues to seek opportunities to benefit industry and provide greater certainty when trading with our key overseas markets through mutual recognition between Australian and overseas customs administrations' trust based facilitation programs.

The ABF has embarked on an ambitious program of negotiation for Australian Trusted Trader Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) with the United States, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. This is in addition to our signed MRAs with eight economies – Canada, China, Hong Kong, Japan, The Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan.

In this edition of Across Borders, ABF Commander Special Investigations, Greg Linsdell talks about how industry supports the ABF as the lead agency of the Illicit Tobacco Taskforce (ITTF), to combat the trade of illicit tobacco in Australia.



*L to R - Andrew Crawford (Member Representative Border & Biosecurity - FTA/APSA), Paul Zalai (FTA/APSA), Sal Milici (Head of Border & Biosecurity - FTA/APSA), the Hon Jason Wood, Dr Bradley Armstrong PSM*

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Commander Linsdell, his team, and the ABF as a whole for seizing over 432 million cigarettes and 177 tonnes of loose leaf tobacco with an estimated value of \$621.45 million in evaded duty in the 2019-2020 financial year.

Once again I thank you for your cooperation during these challenging times and look forward to our continued work in protecting our community and supporting Australia's economic recovery.

Enjoy this edition of Across Borders.

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Australian Peak Shippers Association Inc. (APSA)

# JOIN THE ALLIANCE

## 2021/22 Membership Benefits

**ADVOCACY** - Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) and the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) are the leading industry bodies representing the international trade and logistics sector. This is achieved by bringing together importers, exporters and logistics providers to form an influential advocacy body. Importantly, we also ensure that members are at the forefront of all emerging supply chain issues through our responsive operational support, professional development training, industry updates, commercial services and corporate events.



**REAL TIME SUPPORT** – FTA Premium Members have real-time access to our support services as an extension of your operational team – through our extensive network and access to key personnel across government and commerce, we can assist businesses with operational matters.

**LEGAL SUPPORT** – Customs Global Trade Law (CGT Law) has been appointed alongside the reappointment of Mills Oakley as FTA and APSA legal counsel for 2021/22. FTA members are eligible to receive up to 30 minutes free legal support per issue from CGT Law.

**TERMS & CONDITIONS** – Exclusive to FTA members, for the one off payment of \$825 (incl GST) receive from CGT Law a clear, concise and legally robust set of trading terms and conditions

designed specifically for customs brokers and forwarders; a letter explaining the Terms & Conditions; a template credit application; a letter of authority; a credit application and guarantee; letter for use to customers introducing the new terms and conditions; ACCC Court Action Trading Terms Case; and updates to the documents due to legal developments (all proforma documents are provided in Word format).

**INSURANCE SUPPORT** – FTA Premium members receive free insurance review & support from Logical Insurance Brokers.

**WORKPLACE / HR CONSULTANCY** – FTA Premium Members receive hotline support via Employsure.

**CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)** discounts apply to FTA members to attend our one-day conferences to assist customs brokers in meeting their annual licensing obligations. Each event provides participants with 24 CPD points towards the annual requirement of 30 in the licensing period of 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

### 2021 / 22 LICENSING PERIOD CONFERENCES

Friday 30 July 2021 - Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach Hotel  
Saturday 31 July 2021 - Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach Hotel  
Saturday 7 August 2021 - Hyatt Regency Perth  
Friday 20 August 2021 - Hyatt Place Melbourne  
Saturday 21 August 2021 - Hyatt Place Melbourne  
Wednesday 1 September 2021 - Novotel Brisbane Airport

**NOTE:** 2022 / 23 licensing period conferences will be scheduled in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane from April 2022 (dates to be advised).



### ACROSS BORDERS MAGAZINE –

we supply members a FREE member magazine providing expert commentaries on emerging trade and government reforms (both in hard copy and electronically).

**ALERTS** – our webinars, podcasts, daily notices (some content password protected) and weekly report keep members at the cutting edge of operational matters, reforms and advocacy activity.

### EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION SPECIAL PACKAGE

Your Early Bird Registration (before 30 April 2021) at a cost of \$297 (incl GST) provides you with a unique 30+ CPD point & CBC Package

- attendance at one of the above listed CPD Border Compliance Program events – 24 CPD points
- complimentary access to Continued Biosecurity Competency (CBC) Activity 21-22/01 for 19.1. Non-commodity for Containerised Cargo Clearance (NCCC) - points in Stream A & date to be confirmed – online via ComplianceNetFTA.com.au ; and
- complimentary access to a further 6 CPD points in Stream A via ComplianceNetFTA.com.au

**REGISTER NOW at [www.ftalliance.com.au/upcoming-events](http://www.ftalliance.com.au/upcoming-events)**

**CONTINUED BIOSECURITY COMPETENCY (CBC)** – in this current accreditation period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 there will be only one CBC Activity (21-22/01) for Class 19.1 NCCC accredited persons. FTA will provide resources and an online assessment at a cost of \$49.50 (incl GST).



**NOTE:** The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment reserves the right to add additional mandatory CBC sessions during the accreditation period should they be required.

**ONLINE CPD / CBC –**

we offer extensive material via ComplianceNetFTA with courses, resources and online assessment available at listed prices. FTA members are offered unlimited CPD and CBC content for \$165 (incl GST) per person per accreditation period (1 April to 31 March).

**WOMEN IN LOGISTICS** – is an initiative to support and facilitate opportunities for networking and professional/personal development for women in the supply chain sector.

**APPROVED ARRANGEMENTS / DEPOT / RACA** – we have partnered with Andrew Christie Consulting to provide advocacy support to our newly formed Biosecurity Treatment Provider Reference Group.

AA, Depot and RACA application services available – price on application.



**WISETECH ACADEMY** – FTA member discounts apply for the wide range of high quality, cost effective courses provided by the WiseTech Academy, including:

- Approved Arrangement accredited training to manage onsite biosecurity risks.
- Section 77G Depot training to ensure all staff understand and meet licensing conditions.
- Safe Container Loading Practices and Chain of Responsibility
- As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO 45574), the WiseTech Academy also provides TLIX0008 Comply with biosecurity border clearance (pre-requisite training for NCCC and AEPCOMM Approved Arrangements) and TLI50816 Diploma of Customs Broking



**BORDERWISE** – FTA members receive a significant discount on the use of BorderWise – easy access to comprehensive customs reference materials used by trade professionals to correctly classify goods and meet regulatory requirements at the border for import and export declaration reporting.

**Note:** Member discounts are itemised at our ‘Featured Sponsor’ link available from the FTA home page at [www.FTAlliance.com.au](http://www.FTAlliance.com.au)

**BRANDING** – FTA provides members with access to its logo for use on stationery, email signatures & web sites.

**DIRECTORY** – FTA provides members’ details on a directory listing increasing access to new markets.

**FTA Premium Membership** is open to customs brokerages, freight forwarders, Section 77G Depots and Approved Arrangement premises.

- FTA’s Premium Membership rates are based on a scale of employees within a business / per ABN.
- Annual fee from time of subscription
- Membership pricing effective 1 July 2021 (includes GST)

Less than 10 employees \$880  
 Less than 30 employees \$1,265  
 Less than 50 employees \$1,595  
 Less than 100 employees \$1,925  
 More than 100 employees \$2,475

Further discounts are offered for online CPD / CBC registrations to businesses with six (6) or more registrations with the option for an all-inclusive invoice for membership and training – price on application to [czalai@FTAlliance.com.au](mailto:czalai@FTAlliance.com.au)

**FTA Individual Membership:** \$264 (1 April to 31 March) - is available to any licensed customs broker whose company does not hold FTA Premium Membership providing access to all online CPD / CBC courses and member discounts (1) to attend our annual one-day conferences and (2) for the use of BorderWise Software.

**FTA Importer Membership & APSA Exporter Membership:** \$2,200 per annum

**Biosecurity Treatment Provider Reference Group (BTPRG) Membership:** \$2,200 per annum

**Affiliate Membership:** \$2,200 per annum - for businesses and regulatory bodies affiliated with international trade sector. Included as Affiliate Members are transport operators, law firms, software providers and government agencies - a unique opportunity to join the growing alliance as a valued member of the Australian freight and trade community.

**Sponsorship** – as per our prospectus, FTA and APSA offer a wide range of online media and events which provide unique opportunities for entities wishing to engage with the freight and trade sectors.

**Membership forms are available at the JOIN THE ALLIANCE tab from the FTA website at [www.FTAlliance.com.au](http://www.FTAlliance.com.au)**

**For further detail, please contact us on 02 9975 1878 or [info@FTAlliance.com.au](mailto:info@FTAlliance.com.au)**



## Supporting trade at the heart of Australia

By OLGA HARRITON, APSA Chair / Global Logistics Manager - Manildra Group

Amid ongoing global transport uncertainty and upheaval to Australia's international distribution channels, the challenge to our shipping industries and disruption to essential workers has highlighted the need to strengthen our supply chains as they are the backbone of the nation's trade and lifeblood for worldwide delivery.

After a tumultuous year in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the grounding of international airlines all-but crushed air freight and turned many companies' attention to the sea as an avenue to market – a channel that is, however, narrowing.

Global container shortages, blowouts in transit times, lack of space on vessels, inclement weather and industrial actions have all combined to cause significant delays across the international shipping industry.

Congestion at ports caused by capacity constraints, and the imposition of so-called 'congestion' fees charged by shipping lines on goods brought into Australia, has the potential to lead to the loss of local jobs and industries. These issues are compounded by challenges faced by exporters and importers experiencing significant delays at international ports, which has increased



*'Trade Hub' members were the guests of the British High Commissioner Her Excellency Vicki Treadell CMG MVO (pictured front left) for a private business lunch at the Hyatt Canberra on Thursday 4 February 2021. Olga Harriton (APSA Chair – pictured front right alongside the British High Commissioner) and Paul Zalai (Director FTA – pictured back left) provided insights into global shipping challenges affecting Australian trade to complement general discussions on the future of UK-AUS trade policy.*

the cost of getting goods in and out of Australia.

What remains certain as we continue into an unsettled 2021 is that we need to work together as one community of exporters, importers, shipping lines, ports, government and industry to support trade which is at the heart of our nation's growth and integral to our future.

There are incredible opportunities for market and product expansion, particularly with Australia's established and exceptional reputation worldwide, for companies, industry and government bodies who ensure efficiencies for Australian shippers, importers and exporters working together. We are also fortunate to be strategically located on the doorstep of Asia, with a population of more than 4.5 billion.

We must recognise Australian ports and the entire logistics chain that facilitates cargo movement from / to the wharf as an essential service nationally, so we can keep Australia moving. The Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) has

been in close contact with industry as well as state and federal governments to emphasise how this absolute necessity should be approached to achieve the best outcome for the security of Australia.

Australia has always been defined as having 'consistent exporters and importers' – meaning day-in-and-out, 365 days a year. It is this consistent supply that is integral to traders and end-users, making it paramount for our nation to guarantee reliability in meeting all product quality and delivery expectations.

Exports is critical to the growth of Australia, so we need to produce more Australian-made products by creating more local jobs and investment here at home.

In the meantime, please enjoy this latest edition of Across Borders and stay safe.



**Australian Peak Shippers Association Inc. (APSA)**





# AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TRANSPORT INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT FUND

By PAUL ZALAI – Director Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) / Secretariat Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA)

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE FUNDS?

The Australian International Trade and Transport Industry Development Fund (AITTIDF) is a not-for-profit organisation whose objective is to provide grants to Australian international trade and transport industry participants to promote, support and enhance:

- e-commerce projects in Australia which benefit commercial, operational, legislative, and regulatory processes supporting Australia's International Trade and Transport Industry;
- projects in Australia to assist Australian industry to facilitate international trade with its trading partners;
- projects in Australia that encourage more efficient international supply chain solutions for Australian industry;
- projects in Australia aimed at measurably increasing the level of skills and training in the international trade and transport industry, including participants in that industry.

## ARE THESE GOVERNMENT FUNDS?

No, the funds were contributed to by all Australian importers and customs brokerages.

By way of background, the AITTIDF is a legacy from the old Tradegate arrangements.

As many members will recall, Tradegate had a board of industry representatives and Customs with a primary role to manage the dedicated network (supplied by connect.com and then later AAPT) between Customs and customs brokers / importers using the COMPILE system for entry (Import Declaration) creation.

In the COMPILE environment, each entry to Customs generated a "Tradegate Fee" which covered the network cost. A proportion of that fee was also put away which evolved into 2 industry funds:

- the Cargo Automation Development Fund (CADF) – we understand all funds have now been exhausted: and
- the AITTIDF

## IS THERE AN END DATE FOR THE AVAILABILITY OF THESE FUNDS?

No, however the AITTIDF can only continue until all existing funds (we estimate to be in excess of \$1.3M) are exhausted via approved projects.

COMPILE was turned off on 3 February 2006 with Tradegate, soon after, also being wound up as a result of a move to the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) and the use of Internet protocols providing modern, cheaper and more efficient communications. Since this time, no further financial contributions have been made to the fund.

## ARE THERE ANY SECONDARY PURPOSES FOR THE FUND?

No, appropriately the AITTIDF Chair has confirmed that there no secondary purposes for the fund – all funds will be dedicated to fund approved projects.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW TO APPLY?

The AITTIDF Chair has provided a word of caution reminding applicants that directors of the fund must exercise independent judgement and have no material or personal interest on all funding proposals and consider each application equally - therefore, each applicant must seek funding on their merits through the published procedure without director assistance - NOTE: approaches to individual directors may jeopardise an application.

For further information, members are encouraged to contact the AITTIDF secretary Ms Cath Wright at [secretariat@itdfund.org.au](mailto:secretariat@itdfund.org.au) who will assist you in making a funding application by using the funding kit as noted on the AITTIDF website <http://www.aittidf.org.au/> .

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Australian Peak Shippers Association Inc. (APSA)





# UNPRECEDENTED RESPONSE TO CPD TRAINING

The combination of online training and events (postponed from 2020 and safely hosted in February and March 2021) proved to be the perfect mix to support Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) members during the 2020 / 2021 continuing professional development (CPD) licensing period.

We would like to thank the record number of more than 1200 customs brokers who completed their mandatory training with us during these unprecedented times.

We witnessed a massive increase in uptake of our popular online training platform [www.ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://www.ComplianceNetFTA.com.au) and were delighted to again host 'face-to-face' events with record numbers in all states for our Border Compliance Program national roadshow which was also a great opportunity for the FTA community to reconnect.





## CPD BORDER COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

The following events will provide 24 CPD points for the customs broker licensing period (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022)

### REGISTER NOW

[www.ftalliance.com.au/upcoming-events](http://www.ftalliance.com.au/upcoming-events)

**SYDNEY** (Friday 30 July 2021, 8.30am to 4pm) Novotel Hotel, the Grand Parade, Brighton Le Sands

**SYDNEY** (Saturday 31 July 2021, 8.30am to 4pm) Novotel Hotel, the Grand Parade, Brighton Le Sands

**PERTH** (Saturday 7 August 2021, 8.30am to 4pm) Hyatt Regency, 99 Adelaide Terrace, Perth

**MELBOURNE** (Friday 20 August 2021, 8.30am to 4pm) Hyatt Place, 1 English St, Essendon Fields

**MELBOURNE** (Saturday 21 August 2021, 8.30am to 4pm) Hyatt Place, 1 English St, Essendon Fields

**BRISBANE** (Wednesday 1 September 2021, 8.30am to 4pm) Brisbane Airport Convention Centre, Dryandra Road, Brisbane

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- attendance at one of the above listed CPD Border Compliance Program events – 24 CPD points
- complimentary access to Continued Biosecurity Competency (CBC) Activity 21-22/01 for 19.1. Non-commodity for Containerised Cargo Clearance (NCCC) - points in Stream A & date to be confirmed – online via [ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://ComplianceNetFTA.com.au) ; and
- complimentary access to a further 6 CPD points in Stream A via [ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://ComplianceNetFTA.com.au)

**REGISTER NOW at [www.ftalliance.com.au/upcoming-events](http://www.ftalliance.com.au/upcoming-events)**



# FTA appoints Head of International Freight and Logistics

Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) announced on 1 March 2021 the appointment of Anthony (Tony) Vinson as its Head of International Freight and Logistics to support the peak industry body's sustained membership growth.



FTA now represents more than 420 international trade entities, including some of Australia's largest importers and freight forwarders and, through its Secretariat role of the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA), represents major exporters and trade associations.

Paul Zalai, Director of FTA commented "Tony comes with a wealth of experience as the founder and two-decade leader of an international freight forwarding business adding further strength to our team as we continue our national lead on international shipping and airfreight reform."

A licensed customs broker (the fifth in the FTA operational team), Tony will be based in Brisbane providing FTA and APSA further representation in dealings with the Queensland government, members and key stakeholders.

"Complexity of landside logistics at our ports combined with limitations in air and sea cargo capacity are having significant adverse commercial impacts for our diverse membership", says Tony, "I look forward to making an important contribution that will see our sector of commerce and the broader Australian economy prosper in the years ahead."

<b>SYDNEY</b>	
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Clint Latta, Head of Trade and Policy 0431 482 700 clatta@FTAlliance.com.au	Susan Danks Head of Customs and Regulatory Compliance 0407 128 378 sdanks@ftalliance.com.au
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<b>PERTH</b>	
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# Keep freight moving: the importance of Industry and Government working together to create resilient supply-chains.

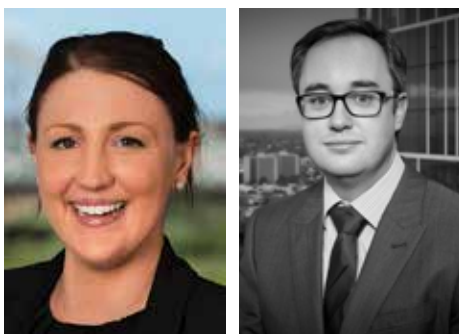
By JACQUI MARSHALL, Senior Advisory – Regulation and Economics – GHD Advisory and  
TRISTAN ANDERSON, Market Leader Transport – GHD Advisory

Structural change in the maritime industry is imminent. Climate change, changing vessel types, new fuels, changes in cargo mix, and the increased adoption of digital technologies is fundamentally changing the landscape within which global trade occurs. This structural change brings with it evolving risks and opportunities that can be harnessed to unlock the full potential of our ports and supply chains, embedding resilience into the heart of the sectors operations.

COVID-19 has taught us that disruptive events are difficult to predict. While we know that disruption is coming and roughly what the event could be, we can't accurately predict when they occur, what triggers them, how long they last and what else they might impact.

Disruptive events in the maritime sector have included things like; natural disasters, extreme weather events, mechanical failures, industrial action and human errors. Future disruptive events may include; more regular natural catastrophes, more disruptive cyber-attacks, faster changing geopolitical relations, trade embargoes, and even issues related to the possible adoption of autonomous shipping.

**These evolving risks represent increased systemic risk to the international trade sector and the supply chains that support it. This risk cannot be effectively managed**



## **at the individual asset level alone, Government coordination and industry representation is critical.**

Supporting over 90% of global trade, it's not hard to recognize that the connectivity of Australian maritime supply chains to the global economy is critical for our continued growth and standard of living. Our economic success depends on the transport, ports and shipping industry being efficient and resilient to disruption.

The Australian Government has recognized the need for greater understanding and reform, having recently launched several initiatives aimed at understanding supply-chain risk and vulnerabilities our critical infrastructure is exposed to. Key initiatives include the Productivity Commission's current inquiry into vulnerable supply chains, investigating the cause of vulnerability, how vulnerability can be identified and exploring risk management strategies.

Other initiatives include the 2020 Bills before parliament relating to Foreign Investment Reform (August 2020), setting out mechanisms to provide greater transparency on foreign investment in Australia, and the Critical Infrastructure Security amendments (December 2020), setting out reporting obligations for critical infrastructure owners, enhanced cyber security obligations and government assistance for relevant assets regarding cyber-attacks.

There have also been funding initiatives, such as the \$107.2 million Supply Chain Resilience Initiative announced in October 2020 by the Federal Government as part of the JobMaker plan. This funding is being used to work with industry to identify the essential goods and services during a crisis, mapping supply chains and Australian manufacturing capability, and evaluating supply chain resilience under both normal circumstances and potential crisis situations.

These initiatives provide a clear pathway for organizations and government to reflect on their current risk appetite for these future disruptive events and recalibrate to mature the industry's approach to managing risk. They also indicate the Government's desire to understand, identify and manage the systemic risk faced by the maritime sector and the supply chains that support it.

There is a critical need for industry and Government to work together to gain a greater understanding of the risks facing our supply chains, the impact of these risks at an enterprise level, the sector-wide impacts associated with a single supply chain being impacted, and the social and economic consequences of these risks.

Unlocking the full potential of our maritime sector depends on an industry that has embedded a considered and mature understanding of resilience into the heart of operations and processes. This includes a deep understanding of what makes supply chains robust and the aspects of supply chains that could be quick to repair where a disruptive event occurs.

The effective management of systemic supply-chain risk involves other institutions, such as the underlying competitive landscape the industry operates within. For example, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) responded controversially to COVID-19, by allowing businesses to co-operate in ways that would typically be anti-competitive. This enabled competitors in key sectors, such as the grocery sector, to temporarily work together in a controlled manner to enable continuous supply of essential goods and services in Australia. ACCC Chairman, Rod Simms, considers that this was part of Australia's successful navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is a clear benefit for this kind of co-operation to be allowed, with the correct controls, for commercial supply chains supported by ports that could mitigate the impacts of a disruptive event.

Key to creating a more cooperative, robust, and resilient supply-chain is active participation in industry groups such as the Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA), Container Transport Alliance Australia (CTAA), Ports Australia, and Shipping Australia which enable industry and Government to continue knowledge sharing, and to better understand and mitigate individual and systemic risks.





# Port Botany and Port Kembla - sustainably supporting NSW

By MARIKA CALFAS, Chief Executive Officer – NSW Ports

It's been a year since the onset of COVID-19 and its disruption of global supply chains. Throughout it all, Port Botany and Port Kembla have continued to demonstrate their role as essential services in supporting the people and businesses of NSW.

### Port Trades - An Economic Indicator

Many of the trades we handle at our ports provide a direct reflection on what's happening in the NSW economy. While there was an initial decrease in container imports at the start of the pandemic, we have seen strong volumes in recent months, with December 2020 and January 2021 delivering the highest container volumes on record at Port Botany. These increases are fuelled by pandemic buying - with Australian consumers spending money on home renovations and personal shopping rather than on travel and experiences.

At the start of COVID, unleaded and jet fuel imports decreased, while diesel volumes grew due to increased agricultural and freight activities. Unleaded fuel volumes have now returned to more typical levels and there has been a recent increase in motor vehicle imports through Port Kembla. Meanwhile, cement clinker import volumes remained strong throughout COVID-19 in support of Sydney's busy construction activities.

### Global Supply Chain Disruptions

That said, container trade continues to be impacted by disruptions within the global supply chain. High volumes of demand for goods globally, together with COVID-19 impacts on labour availability, have resulted in ships operating at or near capacity; a backlog of containers waiting to be

exported out of China; and congestion at many ports around the world including the USA, Europe, Asia and New Zealand – creating delays for vessels and the delivery of goods. International ports are now reporting delays ranging from several weeks to up to a month. By comparison, Australian ports are currently operating well.

### Port Botany Operations

At Port Botany we have seen improved berth availability, although vessels continue to arrive off-schedule due to delays at other ports. The container terminal operators are prioritising vessels arriving in window but also accepting vessels off-window, with few up to a few days' delay. There were 92 vessel calls in January 2021, consistent with vessel calls in January 2020. However there has been an increase in larger vessel calls – with 21 vessels >6,000 TEU capacity compared to 14 in January 2020.

Some stevedores are accepting shipping line requests to load more containers than their contracted volume. This is a delicate balancing act as it takes time to load more containers which may have a knock-on effect to subsequent vessels. Positively, this is assisting in alleviating empty container build-up.

In December 2020, Port Botany had a load/discharge ratio of 1.04, meaning there were more containers loaded and exported overseas than containers imported. This is a significant improvement from the 12-month average of 0.96, which led to empty containers accumulating in Sydney. In January 2021, the ratio dropped to 0.95. It's important that import/export dynamics are managed to achieve a ratio close to 1 to maintain a balanced supply chain. Ultimately, while Port Botany is well positioned to handle the volume of containers, it will be some time before global shipping schedules return to normal.

We remain concerned about the continued application of congestion surcharges by some shipping lines specifically for Port Botany calls and look forward to these charges being wound back. We also encourage shipping lines to continue to work with exporters to address the availability of containers for exports to ensure their long-term viability through reliable and cost-effective supply chains.

### Port Kembla Operations

Port Kembla continues to demonstrate its role as a key trade gateway for the State. In recent months, we have seen increased volumes of project cargo with components for wind farms, tunnel boring machines for the Snowy 2.0 hydroelectricity project and new trains for public transport. Port Kembla is now experiencing a resurgence in bulk grain exports after two years of extended drought. We continue to diversify the trades handled at Port Kembla and are progressing plans with Australian Industrial Energy for Australia's first LNG import gas terminal project. Looking to the future, Port Kembla is identified by the NSW Government as NSW's next container terminal.

### Sustainable investment

Since FY15, NSW Ports and port operators have together invested over \$2.2 billion in infrastructure and equipment at Port Botany, Port Kembla and Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre. Investment continued throughout COVID-19, with works including berth upgrades, empty container park developments, storage tank developments, port road upgrades and rail capacity, container cranes, straddles and more - ensuring that these key trade gateways will continue to effectively service NSW's long-term growing trade needs.



# We keep Australia's economy moving



Contributing  
**\$4.4 billion**  
to the economy

Supporting  
approximately  
**30,000 jobs**

**NSW Ports manages the key trade gateways that connect the people and businesses of NSW with the world.**



Port Botany



Port Kembla



Enfield Intermodal  
Logistics Centre



Cooks River  
Intermodal Terminal

# Supply chain safety is the responsibility of all cargo owners

By MIKE YARWOOD, Managing Director, Loss Prevention – TT Club

International freight transport and logistics insurer, TT Club, wants cargo owners to be more aware of safety issues arising from poorly packed containers and misdeclared goods.

**TT CLUB**   
50 years of established expertise



TT Club's analyses consistently indicate that two thirds of incidents related to cargo damage are caused or exacerbated by poor practices at the time of packing goods into a freight container. Such supply chain malpractice results in multi-million-dollar losses, including tragic containership fires with loss of seafarers lives and significant delays. Extrapolating known figures, all such incidents are estimated to result in economic losses exceeding USD6 billion per year.

This issue is of major concern to TT Club, the mutual status of which underpins its commercial philosophy and encourages the insurance provider to seek ways of minimising risk in the supply chain and maximising safety in all its various forms.

Cargo owners, whether retailers, manufacturers, traders, exporters and particularly importers, who rely so heavily on the global supply chains that transit thousands of miles of ocean and land transport, need to take responsibility to ensure these risks are mitigated. It is vital that they are well advised by their forwarding agents and other intermediaries, who are privy to the exact nature of cargoes and their potential danger. In addition, forwarders with a global reach are often better placed 'on the ground' in comparison with their clients, to monitor the packing process.

It should be understood also that the dangers are not just restricted to the more obvious hazardous chemical cargoes, such as those used in paints, cosmetics, cleaning products, fertilisers, weedkillers, and aerosols of all types but also to a wide variety of consumer goods. The list is long and often surprising – BBQ charcoal, battery powered electronic devices, fireworks, hand sanitizer, wool, cotton, vegetable fibres, marble, granite and other building materials, fishmeal, seed cake and many more. Those involved in sourcing, importing, storing, supplying or selling such commodities should ensure their procurement and logistics standards are of the highest level.

## Reputational damage

Sustainability and environmental impact are subjects that are constantly in the public eye and there is an ever-heightened market pressure being brought to bear to act responsibly to reduce waste and the carbon footprint. However, the risks of supply chain dereliction frequently go unnoticed. The mishandling of cargoes can result in unacceptable danger to those employed in their movement, to the environment, the general public, and not insignificantly, to brand reputations.

TT Club's concerns extend beyond awareness of commodity-specific risks. Packaging and dunnage, choking and securing techniques that already need to comply with safety standards also need to be universally applied at the time containers are loaded at the point of origin.

As CSR (corporate social responsibility) and ESG (environment, social and governance) policies and their implications to brand value come under increased scrutiny, then attention to 'Cargo Integrity' becomes even greater than a safety concern alone. Cargo owners as product vendors who profit from the efficiencies and opportunities of the global and regional supply chain need now to be confident that those acting on their behalf are doing so in accordance with industry standards, and within the applicable regulatory frameworks.

## Best practice

So, what are the 'industry standards'? The simple answer is the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units\* (CTU Code).

The full CTU Code is most comprehensive, but for those wishing to navigate it for guidance on their particular function or commodity, it might appear a little complex, especially for those unfamiliar with the processes. TT Club has therefore, along with its fellow partners in the Cargo Integrity Group, compiled a 'Quick Guide' to the Code. This includes a checklist of actions and responsibilities for those packing





cargoes in freight containers specifically. The aim is to make the Code accessible to as many operatives as possible, encouraging them to adhere to the good practices that it specifies.

Although a number of entities might be involved in the process of handling and moving goods, ultimately it is the responsibility of the shipper to ensure goods are packed and declared, for the purposes of bill of lading and customs entries, correctly.



The CTU Code defines “shipper” as “the party named on the bill of lading or waybill as shipper and/or who concludes a contract of carriage (or in whose name or on whose behalf a contract of carriage has been concluded) with a carrier”. A shipper can be a beneficiary cargo owner, a freight forwarder acting as an agent, or a freight forwarder that issues its own (house) bills of lading (an “NVOCC”).

Freight forwarders, in the role of shipper or acting as an agent for the shipper, with their intense knowledge of the varied handling and transport elements involved in a complex supply chain, have a crucial role in promoting high standards of safe and ecologically responsible container packing and movement. In addition to the serious health and safety risks already described, poorly packed containers can also cause damage to adjacent cargoes in the event of an incident and have been a cause of major consequential losses for shippers. Losses in terms of property, financial resource and corporate reputation are possible for cargo owner and forwarding agent alike.

The complexity of supply chain relationships across the globe makes it no easy task to achieve material change in behaviour and practice. It is recognised that beneficial cargo owners, and in particular buyers and retailers, often hold an influential position in the supply chain and can exercise control on the way that specifications and contracts are drawn up between entities. As professional agents for these cargo owners, freight forwarders are regarded as vital in disseminating good practice information and insisting on compliance.

“ “ So, what are the ‘industry standards’? The simple answer is the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units\* (CTU Code).” ”



# New Opportunities, Partnerships and continued focus on People

By BEAU PAINE - Regional Vice President Cargo – Australia, Menzies Aviation

In true unprecedented times, the traditional 'soft' season for air cargo occurring during our Australian summer, did not present itself in its usual fashion. Instead cargo volumes remained relatively stable as we transitioned from 2020 and into 2021. With continued strong demand for perishable exports and the extension of the Australian Government's, International Freight Assistance Mechanism until mid-2021, our cargo terminals across the country continue to be busy.

As many airlines continue the search for schedule consistency with a focus on air cargo rather than passengers, we have found new opportunities in new locations. Most recently, partnering with Cathay Pacific in a series of seasonal flights from Hobart to Hong Kong. These flights have carried fresh product, from both land and sea, direct from Tasmania into Asian markets and truly demonstrate what can be achieved through a partnered approach. In differing circumstances and an unfamiliar location, we relocated equipment and operated a fly in fly out manpower operation to successfully handle these flights from the island state. The opportunity to commence international flights from Tasmania serves well to repeat itself on a seasonal or more regular basis.

At the same time, we were pleased to expand our global partnership with Qatar Airways with commencement of cargo and ground handling services in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. Already having a long cargo handling partnership in Australia, via our operations in Perth, we were delighted to expand the relationship and partner with Qatar Airways across



all stations within Australia. Globally, we also commenced operations in London, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Auckland and continue to grow our relationship with Qatar Airways via their network handling partnership program. With aligned values of customer focus and service excellence, this partnership will enable smooth and seamless handling of all types of cargo, with a particular focus on pharmaceuticals and temperature sensitive commodities.

As COVID vaccines begin distribution within Australia, we are pleased to offer temperature-controlled solutions across all stations - with Sydney, Melbourne and Perth also offering dedicated controlled room temperature facilities to accommodate passive pharmaceutical storage. Sydney and Melbourne continue on the journey for IATA's CEIV Pharma accreditation with both ports targeting accreditation by mid-2021.

From a global cargo service delivery standpoint, we have announced new appointments to bolster our cargo team. Roles include a VP of Cargo Technology, Head of Cargo – Africa, VP Cargo – Americas and a new Head of Sales for Air Menzies International. These roles add to our already strong and experienced global Cargo Executive Team.

With an ongoing focus on our people we are very much aware of the mental impact that the continuing uncertainty presents. COVID-19 infections have not ceased, and it is not a flash in the pan event.

Whilst vaccinations are being rolled out and we are hopeful of a gradual recovery to the aviation sector, the current environment remains that much of the international passenger airline fleets are grounded, or schedules are severely reduced. For cargo, this reduction in capacity of passenger airline traffic continues to be an enormous challenge to meet consumer demand.

To support our people, our business has migrated to web based and virtual support services. We are proud to offer a **Wellbeing hub**. This new online hub is full of resources to help our people look after every aspect of their wellbeing. Supported with guides to managing some of the common challenges that can make life feel difficult, such as stress, anxiety or feeling alone. Pointing to dedicated resources within each country, and information about organisations and services where help can be found along with continued direct support from their direct line managers.

We are buoyed by the opportunities and new partnerships we have developed in the present marketplace however also realistic that as coronavirus variants emerge and travel restrictions remain a continuing trend, 2021 will be another tough year for aviation.





# Wellcamp airport – adapting to change.

By ROBERT KASCH, General Manager Cargo – Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport

Like all airports, Wellcamp Airport located just west of Toowoomba in Queensland has been affected by the quick and sharp downturn of passenger traffic due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Change in market conditions has meant the airport has needed to alter its strategic business model. As a result, there have been some existing markets that have expanded and some new markets that have developed.

International cargo, particularly export has been more important than ever before. With the lack of capacity in the market due to the withdrawal of many passenger flights, IFAM (International Freight Assistance Mechanism) initiated flights have been the cornerstone of keeping exporters connected to their overseas clients. Wellcamp have seen a large growth in the amount of export cargo moved through the airport. Along with the weekly Cathay Pacific freighter service, Wellcamp are now handling a Cathay Pacific freight only passenger flight and a Singapore Airline freight only passenger flight. Working with exporters Wellcamp have done all possible to ensure local producers can serve their overseas clients. If the continuity of service stops it is often a very hard task to restart the sales cycle.

Aircraft parking is another area that Wellcamp have been able to support



the aviation industry. With the weather conditions at Wellcamp ideally suited for the medium to long term parking of aircraft, Wellcamp have been able to support a number of engineering companies with effective solutions for

aircraft parking. The runway and airfield are designed to handle all size aircraft, along with Wellcamp being located within easy access to other major cities.

Wellcamp Airport are in discussion with the state and federal government regarding construction of a quarantine facility to allow a seamless and safe route for individuals looking to repatriate to Australia. The opportunity looks to try to use the unique environment to keep people safe from cross contamination of the virus.

A challenging environment has meant that Wellcamp Airport, along with many other airports have had to adapt rapidly to the everchanging nature that the industry is facing.



Photo credit to Garry Wilkinson Photography





## Top Tips To Finding A Job Throughout A Pandemic

By LEANNE LEWIS, Managing Director – Insync Personnel

### Recognise Your Accomplishments

Look back at your accomplishments and successes while thinking about the challenges you've successfully overcome.

The more confident you can be about your career as you look for a new job, the more effective you can be in marketing yourself to employers and making the case for the value you can bring to every role you apply for.

### Keep An Open Mind

Instead of thinking about the next traditional step up the career ladder, consider whether a horizontal career move could actually be more beneficial for you.

Don't assume that the only role that you take should be a permanent one. Temporary or contract roles, for instance, can be invaluable ways to build your skillset and gain experience in different areas, and that's before you consider that such roles can sometimes be made permanent later.

### Evaluate What You Really Want

There has never been a better time to reflect on your career so far and the direction that you would like it to take in the future. The changes that the pandemic has brought may also present you with an opportunity to be bold about what you truly want in your life and career.

So, use this time to reflect and be clear in your mind about exactly what you want your next career move to be. This level of clarity and focus will allow you to better target your job search, applying for only the most relevant opportunities and thus increasing your chances of success.

### Upskill, Upskill, Upskill

If you have identified one or more skills gaps that need filling in order for you to move forward in your career, it's a good idea to establish a pattern of proactively upskilling, making use of the various related resources out there – including online – that could help you to achieve it. Upskilling now will help to improve your chances of finding a new job by making you more employable and demonstrating to employers your commitment to lifelong learning.

### Have Your CV Up To Date

We may be entering a new era of work, but your CV will still be important when marketing yourself to employers. Important, too, is the need to optimise your CV for algorithms. Key to this is researching keywords and ensuring your CV includes them.

Look at job descriptions for your ideal role so you can determine what these keywords are and where they can be incorporated. Another crucial element of your CV is almost certainly your personal statement.

### Build Your Personal Brand

Now is a great time to fine-tune your own personal brand, including optimising your use of social media to more advantageously showcase your expertise. In particular, it's important to regularly update your LinkedIn profile, adding any new skills you've learned.

It's crucial at the moment, too, to use social platforms to network, as it might be some time until face-to-face events can happen again. One great step here would be to join relevant LinkedIn groups, sharing your

expertise and seeking advice from people in roles that you aspire to be in.

### Prepare For Online Interviews

Remote interviewing is increasingly likely to be the norm going forward. So, now's the time to make perfect your virtual interviewing skills, including ensuring you present yourself in the best possible way when being interviewed via a laptop, tablet or even mobile screen.

Do you, for instance, have an environment that lends itself well to video interviews? Are you comfortable with using the technology? Aware of your body language? Other good reasons to give the chosen virtual interview software a test drive before the actual interview include the opportunity this provides to ensure you won't be speaking too quietly or too loudly for the interviewer and to check for any time lags, which will help you to avoid inadvertently interrupting the interviewer.

### Mental Health

These are challenging times, and we are all dealing with different emotions. The added pressure of job searching may make an already trying situation even more difficult to manage. It's vital to stay positive and to try to be patient and persistent, too.

In the meantime, look after your wellbeing. Your own self-care should be high on your priority list right now. Also try to approach the job search process with a growth mindset, treating it as another opportunity to learn and develop.





## Who Is Insync Personnel

We are a specialist recruitment agency that has provided recruitment solutions to the International Transport & Logistics industry successfully for 10 years.

Our recruitment consultants have 'hands on' experience within the International Transport & Logistics industry, ensuring a successful match between client and candidate across both permanent and temporary positions.

Administration	Importers
Aviation	Logistics
Commodity Trading	Management
Customs Brokerage	Shipping Lines
Exporters	Supply Chain
Freight Forwarding	Warehousing (Permanent)

## Why Should You Work With Us

Insync Personnel's differentiator is simple... Insync Personnel works with you rather than for you. We are proud of our strict recruitment policy which ensures all clients and candidates are managed with individual needs kept in mind.

We are selective as to whom we partner with as we believe that representing quality, like minded companies and candidates is paramount to our overall success.

## Our Service Philosophy

At Insync Personnel we are passionate about delivering an overall favourable result. We are here to provide you with the right option when it comes to recruitment, be it staff or a position you seek.

Candidate Sourcing	We do not headhunt or poach staff
Confidentiality	100% guaranteed
Guarantee	6 month candidate guarantee
Teamwork	Multiple consultants working with you

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(L to R) Michael Punter, State Mge QLD - Wayne Morris, COO

## 2020 Was an “Opportunistic Year” for ACFS

The start of 2020 seemed like it had all the trademarks of a downturn. But where times are tough and short-term forecasts are uncertain, ACFS think big-picture and take a long-term approach to business management and planning. The continuous improvement and development program took ACFS to the next phase of growth by making significant investments in 2020 by expanding their business, focusing their investment on infrastructure, IT and their people.

Since April 2020, ACFS has had a positive trajectory of growth and a reinvention of their operating processes as a result of COVID-19. Whilst competitors maintained the status quo in the large majority, ACFS saw beyond the horizon and worked smarter to achieve what they call their “Zone Strategy” which has been in development for many years, resulting in successful outcomes such as:

### 1. Melbourne

- i. New 70,000sqm Warehouse and Container Yard in Altona
- ii. 11,000sqm extension of the Port of Melbourne Empty Parks

### 2. Sydney

- i. New 19,000sqm Warehouse in Eastern Creek
- ii. 4,000sqm extension to our Port Botany Empty Park
- iii. The commencement on the construction of a new 100,000sqm Rail Intermodal (Stage 1) at St Marys, in conjunction with Pacific National. This facility will develop additional warehousing in stages 2 & 3, which is part of the 440,000sqm site overall.

### 3. Brisbane

- i. 37,000sqm of Container Yard

expansion, including FCL and Empty container storage, increasing to a total of 3,100 TEU of full FCL storage, and a total of 4,500 TEU in empty container storage.

### 4. Adelaide

- i. Acquisition of Kerry Logistics Transport and warehousing business

### 5. National

- i. Additional 19 x Higher Productivity Vehicles, Euro 6 (HPV's) Truck/Trailer combination.

ACFS has maintained its focus on achieving its Strategic Zone Structure to position themselves as a value-add solutions based business partner to its customer base. That value-add has been developed through its infrastructure on the Port in every major port, as well as its off-Port facilities that link the Supply Chain through rail and / or higher productivity vehicle combinations, connecting the Port to final mile delivery of Containers and / or product.

ACFS has been delivering solid organic growth throughout 2020 with current and new customers, but growth was materially enhanced with the awarding of the largest import volume contract customer in July 2020, that added an additional 125,000 TEU of volume annually. The ability to quickly maintain services levels for existing customers, while absorbing a large inflow of new volume at short notice can directly be attributed to the foresight of the business and the investment ACFS made in preparing for growth as an essential services and goods provider.

In addition to continuous capital investment in Infrastructure, ACFS have also strategically aligned with Shipping

Lines right across the country. This alignment enables ACFS to efficiently complete the supply chain task in full, by also servicing shipping lines, importers and exporters through the empty depot process 24hrs per day, whilst also ensuring that they have access to empty depots during times of congestion. 2020 also saw ACFS enter into a national agreement with Shipping Line ZIM who recently re-entered the Australian market, whilst also on boarding other shipping lines in specific state based empty depot facilities.

ACFS CEO - Arthur Tzaneros specifically makes mention and credits the entire ACFS team who fuelled the company's growth through unprecedented times. ACFS's hard working staff have ensured that the challenges that were presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as vessel bunching, congestion at the Terminals and empty parks, Industrial Action, and many more industry issues were all made as seamless as possible to their customer base.

Whilst not giving much away in regard to its strategy and growth plans, it's very clear that 2021 will be an exciting year



(L to R) Wayne Morris, COO and Bryan Rau - 3PL Mgr VIC

for ACFS that will deliver the business its most important strategic asset in St Marys, where they state approx. 70% of all ACFS import volume in NSW will be destined for this facility within a few years.



# Markets emerging from the Pandemic

By PAUL BETTANY, Collinson FX

## Introduction

The global economy is now emerging from the global pandemic that has wreaked devastation upon the economy and markets. This year welcomes the vaccine and much improved treatments for the management of the virus. The roll-out of the vaccine and the effectiveness of this, will determine the extent of the recovery.

## Pandemic Management

The pandemic hit global markets at the beginning of 2020 and the whole year was been consumed with managing and controlling that virus and supporting individuals and businesses that have been devastated by it. Massive investment has been dedicated to the development of a

vaccine and effective treatments. There have been enormous resources burnt up in supporting the economy during this crisis. The Australian Government was amongst the best managers of the pandemic, among Governments around the world, directing massive fiscal resources to support lock-down programs. The numerous people and businesses negatively impacted by the lockdowns, also required Government support, which was forthcoming. In addition, the full resources of the Reserve Bank have also been directed at monetary support. The success of the Government has been through fiscal and monetary actions and the great fortune of geographical isolation. The cost of this

massive fiscal expenditure is enormous and inter-generational, as it is entirely funded by deficit and debt. The RBA's monetary policy has depressed interest rates to record low levels and facilitated demand for the expansive treasury issued debt.

## Central Banks and Monetary Policy

The key to the fiscal response has been monetary policy employed by the RBA and Central Banks around the world. Central Banks have cut interest rates to 'effective zero' in order to ensure debt service and pumped unprecedented levels of liquidity into economies. Debt monetising (Government Debt purchasing by their own Central Bank) has always





been a big policy 'No-No'. To ensure low interest rates and support demand for debt, the RBA and Western Central Banks have quickly adopted this previously taboo practice. This has ensured funds for necessary fiscal expenditure and support, while not tripping a surge in interest rates due to oversupply and lack of demand. This has effectively underwritten the massive debt, issued by Government and at historically low rates. Central banks have also expanded this monetary 'largesse' to commercial debt, to ensure liquidity in markets and low interest rates.

### The Post-Pandemic Economy

The vaccine is being rolled-out around the world and the hope is that it will be the panacea to solve the global pandemic. The roll-out will vary according to regional distribution, availability and cost. This will have implications, ranging from uptake to enforcement. The virus has shown mutations and questions remain about the effectiveness of the available vaccines, in combating the mutating varieties. Questions also remain about the effectiveness of the vaccine itself, in terms of herd immunity, take-up etc. Markets are looking forward to a return to some 'new normal', but many caveats remain, and it will be a slow process, conducted throughout the year of 2021.

### The Global Economy in Recovery-Mode

Global economic data is still extremely weak, but forward-looking measures are pointing to a more positive environment, towards the second half of the year. Europe is still in various stages of lockdown so historical data is not likely to reflect the recovery, until the second half of the year. Growth is being measured

in both GDP and inflation terms. These are coming off historical lows and will improve, but as this happens cost of living pressures may translate into inflation and interest rates, which already look set to rise. Central banks are determined to keep the 'QE Infinity' programs firmly in place, for an extended period, to stimulate growth and employment. US Bond Yields are already on the rise and this offers another threat to the recovery. Rising interest rates will test debt servicing ability and capital availability/allocation. The recovery is underway, but many threats remain.

### Monetary Policy and the Impact on Currencies

The massive injection of liquidity into global markets has necessarily reduced interest rates to unprecedented levels. This has triggered huge asset bubbles in housing, commodities and other asset classes. The rise in commodity prices has been a reflection of the weaker demand and a much weaker reserve currency. This has served to boost the commodity currencies, with the AUD as a particular favourite, combined with the perception of the pandemic management in Australia.

### The Economy and Markets 2021

The Australian economy has survived the pandemic relatively well compared to most economies, the geographical isolation of the country has allowed the borders to be closed and the population to be protected from major viral infections. The advantage of this has been considerable. This, in combination with quick and effective actions from the Government, has enabled relatively good outcomes. The welfare packages have camouflaged much of the massive damage done to

the domestic economy, but the truth will be unveiled when the support tapers off. The fiscal and monetary damage will be long-lasting, as it was funded by deficit and debt, as in most Western economies. Australian GDP data clearly illustrates the recovery, with Q3 (3.4%) and Q4 (3.1%), is the largest increase in six-month GDP since the post WW2 economic boom.

### Conclusion

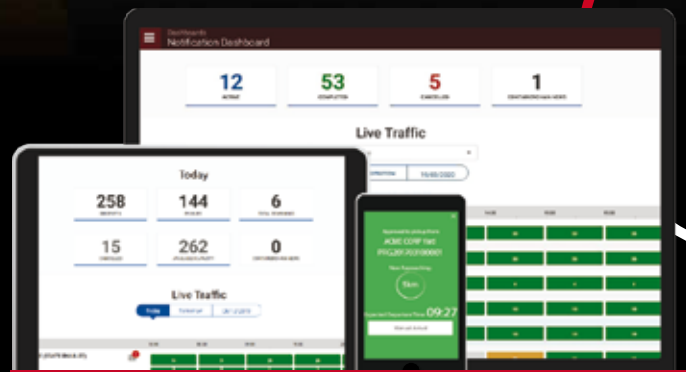
The Australian economy is coming out of the devastation relatively well and continued good Governance, should ensure strong prospects for the second half of the 2021 year. The currency continues to benefit from the weaker reserve and buoyant commodity prices. The big threat to global equities, capital and business in general, is the rise in interest rates. Strong cash flow management, especially in terms of foreign currency flows, will ensure risk-exposure is kept to a minimum







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- Increase profitability from improved service levels
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# “Safe Loads Safe Roads” – Container Loading Campaign Success

By NEIL CHAMBERS, Director – Container Transport Alliance Australia (CTAA)

In the second half of 2020, Container Transport Alliance Australia (CTAA) collaborated with Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) and the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) to roll out the “Safe Loads, Safe Roads” campaign drawing attention to the potentially serious safety consequences of poorly loaded and unrestrained cargoes inside shipping containers.

The campaign was funded through the Commonwealth Government’s Heavy Vehicle Safety Program (HVS) administered by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR). Other organisations actively involved included Wise Tech Academy, TT Club, ICHCA Australia, and at an international level, the Global Shippers Forum (GSF).

A major objective was to highlight to all container logistics chain participants the real safety dangers to heavy vehicles, sea freight and rail operations of poorly loaded, unrestrained and unbalanced cargo inside shipping containers.

The campaign sought to promote best practice, and to provide resource materials to assist supply chain parties to improve safety.



Heavy vehicle accident data (National Transport Insurance, 2018) shows that significant on-road incidents involving container-laden heavy vehicles are 36% more likely to result in a truck rollover, compared to vehicles carrying general freight. A common factor in these incidents is vehicle instability caused by the load inside the container.

From a commercial perspective also, TT Club insurance data shows that transport vehicle incidents account for 27% of all claims, while bad packing accounts for 7% of claims. Of the bad packing claims, 64% were because of poor load restraint.

The parties with the most influence and control over container loading and packing are packers and exporters (consignors). However, for imported containers these parties are in the country of origin. Instead, the Australian importer (or consignee), and in some case the freight forwarder, have obligations under the Chain of Responsibility (CoR) provisions of Australia’s heavy vehicle road laws to ensure that the cargo inside the containers “must not be placed in a way that makes the vehicle unstable or unsafe.”

A key resource provided through the campaign is a best practice “Container

Packing Checklist” launched by leading international organisations, including the Global Shippers Forum (GSF), and endorsed for use in Australia. Importers and exporters are encouraged to share the Checklist with their packers overseas and in Australia to assist with implementing best practice in container loading and load restraint.

Other resources available include a self-paced online training course delivered by Wise Tech Academy, and the recordings of five unique Webinars with presentations from subject experts in packing and load restraint, biosecurity requirements, Chain of Responsibility (CoR) and other legal obligations, container transport & insurance considerations.

Over 1,400 people registered their participation in the campaign’s Webinar series, and more than 250 people have completed the online training course to date.

Details on the “Safe Loads Safe Roads” campaign and its best practice resources can be downloaded at: <https://www.ftalliance.com.au/safe-container-loading-practices-heavy-vehicle-safety>

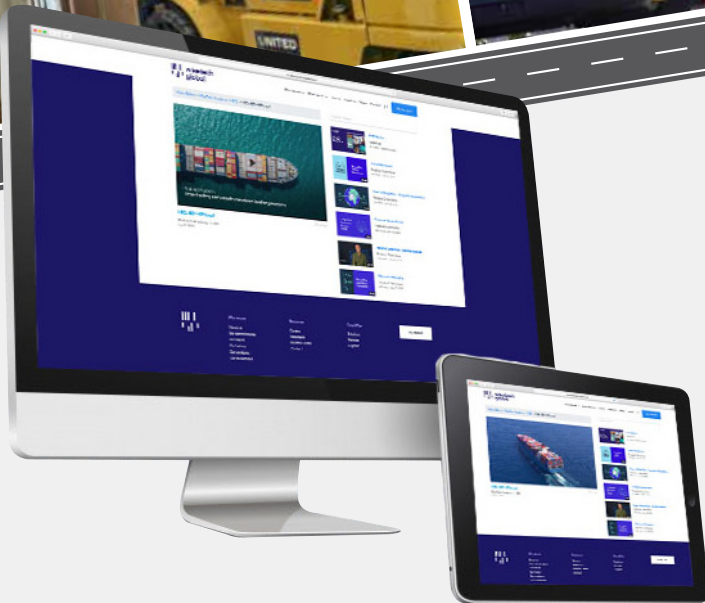


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[www.FTAlliance.com.au](http://www.FTAlliance.com.au)

Further enquiries please contact Caroline Zalai on  
**02 9975 1878**



## Data is the New Oil: How Big Data is Transforming Logistics

By MICHAEL BOUARI, Chief Executive Officer – 1-Stop Connections Pty Ltd

The phrase ‘data is the new oil’ has entered the world of freight logistics to suggest a commodity without which, the industry grinds to a halt. That’s certainly one interpretation – many sectors of industry would become redundant if data stopped flowing. But there has always been data, and to understand the impact of the phrase, it needs to be put into context.

The quote is attributed to UK data scientist Clive Humby in 2006. Michael Palmer, of the Association of National Advertisers, later expanded on it:

*“Data is just like crude. It’s valuable, but if unrefined it cannot really be used. It has to be changed into gas, plastic, chemicals, etc to create a valuable entity that drives profitable activity; so, must data be broken down, analysed for it to have value.”*

Big data vs lots of data

The importance of big data to freight has grown over the last decade. However, some people – while acknowledging there’s more data around – have failed to realise there’s a difference between ‘lots of data’ and ‘big data’.

The former is a relic of a time when data was a commodity companies sourced from accounting records. Having ‘lots of data’ meant a company could answer questions like:

*“How much fuel did our fleet consume last quarter?” or “How much does it cost us to send freight from A to B?”*

This type of data is called ‘look back information’. It was used to solve problems like:

*“We’re using more fuel for the fleet than we did last quarter. Let’s get rid of a few*

*vehicles to reduce our costs to what they used to be.”*

The effect of making a decision like that, based on that level of data will be obvious to anyone who has worked in a company with a complex infrastructure. The results will be arguments over which vehicles should be culled, from which divisions and why. The process of settling on a solution that satisfies everyone, often results in a compromise solution because there’s not enough information about where the fuel increase is coming from, at what times of the day and under what circumstances.

In freight logistics, there are similar problems. For example, a shipping company may be experiencing delays when freight is sent via a particular forwarder. No one can identify the problem, until it’s discovered that the office in question doesn’t have a rate sheet for that freight type.

Time is being wasted because the office is recalculating forwarding charges based on outdated rates which are not matching the invoice figures issued by the shipping company.

In both these cases, referring to ‘look back information’ will not help cut fuel costs or make a freight route more efficient. To do that, a company must have access to big data.

### Big data and the Internet of Things

We’ve established that there’s a difference between lots of data and big data. But what’s driving big data that makes it more valuable? What makes data ‘the new oil’?

The answer is the Internet of Things (IoT). This refers to the transformation of the internet from a network of information fed into it from external sources, to a network that gathers information from its own sensors. An array of sensors can be attached to animate and inanimate objects then wirelessly connected to the internet and the end user. Cows can be tracked through GPS-enabled ear tags; the speed

of a power turbine can be monitored; the location of a shipping container known with pin-point accuracy.

The advantage of the IoT is that the data is being updated in real time. No more guessing where a container is, if it left Shanghai two days ago – a quick check of its unique chip-powered tag will show exactly where it is, what it’s temperature is, and even how fast the ship is moving. It’s as if the container is phoning home.

### The 1-Stop platform solution

The place where the big data ‘oil’ receives its refining is just as crucial as any oil refinery. It is the hub of any IoT solution because it enables the data gathered and networked by the IoT to be processed into meaningful information. After that, decisions can be made automatically by the system, or by management.

1-Stop Connections view, to be the platform of platforms, fits in well with the ‘data is the new oil’ because it connects your existing freight software and links it to 1-Stop’s IoT framework.

The advantages of being connected to a platform that’s in turn connected to so much data are savings in time and money. What that adds up to are better results for your bottom line.

It’s time to start refining your company’s data oil into an ongoing source of enrichment by taking the next step with 1-Stop. To find out more about our vision read more on our website: [1-Stop.com](http://1-Stop.com)



# 1-Stop

Bringing new intelligence  
and efficiency to port  
logistics planning



## 1-Stop DirectPay via ComPay

1-Stop has developed a new alternative payment solution called, 'DirectPay' via 1-Stop ComPay. DirectPay is an optional payment service that allows Cargo Owners to pay landside charges directly to container terminals. If Cargo Owners do not opt to use DirectPay then the existing payment process will remain unchanged.

DirectPay will allow Cargo Owners & Freight Forwarders the option to pay DP World's Terminal Access Charge and Patrick's Landside Charge prior to the container being received or released from the terminal. Where DirectPay is used by Cargo Owners the Transport Operators will no longer need to make payment.



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## FLAT OUT FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS

By BRETT CHARLTON, Chairman - Tasmanian Logistics Committee

The traditional business greeting welcome on a telephone throughout my working life has always been “G’day, how’s it goin’, busy?”

Like many in our industry over the ages, I suspect the answer has always been “G’day, all good, flat out”.

2020 and 2021 for me has seen an amended narrative to the standard reply....”G’day, interesting, flat out for all the wrong reasons”. When I speak to most freight or transport companies, I get the impression that they relate.

With all the negativity around scheduling, costs, equipment, industrial action internationally it is actually quite pleasing to note that the Bass Strait operators (Toll, Searoad, TT Line) have been outstanding in their services between Tasmania and Melbourne. Collaboration around issues, as chaired by the Minister for Infrastructure in Tasmania (Michael Ferguson), has seen any perceived issue addressed quickly and resolved. I think it is fair to say that I have not heard of any issue relating to domestic shipping over the last fourteen months – Kudos to all for their excellent support of the Tasmanian economy.

As for the international lines, well that is another story. Tasmania is an island at the bottom of an island at the bottom of the planet. There are good reasons that we choose to live here - fresh air, great food, amazing wine and whisky, space, renewable energy and indeed the people. That said, at times it does feel like we are getting the stale biscuits at the bottom of the cookie jar.

We completely understand the “economy of scale” of course, but it does not enhance the great cheese when the biscuit is stale, so despite our understandings, we are at times quite disadvantaged by the circumstances. Tasmania does not have the services of Hapag Lloyd, ONE Line, Maersk (reefer an exception) or Zim Lines operating in Tasmania. From time to time a container may find its way here on one of these services but usually this is met with a panic by the operations of said lines frantically looking at maps and seeing that there is no bridge between here and Melbourne. ANL and MSC have the lion’s share of the market with COSCO, PIL, OOCL and Hamburg Sud dabbling in select trade lanes or client specific business.

Our balance is out down here as well. We are traditionally a 40’ importing state and a 20’ exporting state – empty container movements are one of the largest trades on Bass Strait with repositioning often in both directions. It stands to reason that with space capacity issues worldwide, changes in world trade flows, industrial action with containers stuck in east coast Australia and New Zealand major ports, lack of equipment in most ports around the world, the added challenge of an additional domestic leg plus concerns over the quick reuse of equipment for export, that the shipping lines may not have Tasmania at the top of the coveted list of desired allocation.

If there is any doubt on this, please let me reassure you that they most certainly do not.

I suppose you cannot blame them when you consider all the issues aforementioned (although there are certainly some choice expressions for

the shipping lines used from time to time by international traders in Tasmania). Tasmania is no different to the challenges of other ports other than the fact that the focus for Tasmania comes after that of the other ports, so the delays, costs and heartache is amplified a little higher.

One of the most frustrating aspects of 2020 / 2021 has been the inability to find solutions. By nature, the distinctive ability of a freight forwarder / logistics provider has been to look outside the box and provide alternatives for importers and exporters when one area is lacking. Another cliché (oh how I hate clichés) in 2020 / 2021 has been from me to my staff – “just the facts”. Unfortunately (another word I despise) the ability to find solutions to a customer’s problems has been lacking to say the least – where alternative solutions cannot be found our fall back and somewhat disappointing position is to provide the customer “just the facts”. This is not something that people are used too – innovation, plowing through issues and providing outcomes that are considered a solution have not been available for those wishing for a quicker transit or release of equipment.

We are all busy, but for all the wrong reasons and I expect there is some way to go yet I am afraid.

Good luck out there.



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Relevant details will be extracted from the email and attachments



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# Can Australian Consumer Law trump the liability limitations contained within STCs?

By JAMES COTIS, Principal – Logical Insurance Brokers

As I'm sure many readers would be aware, having a strong set of Standard Trading Terms and Conditions (STCs) which include various industry conventions, liability limitations and ensuring they are properly incorporated is a must. Equally important is making sure they are periodically reviewed and updated as necessary.

Whilst it is true that STCs will act to help protect logistics operators by excluding and limiting liability, this may not always be the result.

Take the following case of a New South Wales based logistics and warehouse operator. They had commenced a relationship some 10 years ago with a customer to move grain (for human consumption) from their customer's supplier's premises to the logistics operator's warehouse & then distribute the grain to the grain supplier's customers as required.

At the commencement of the relationship, the logistics operator duly incorporated their STCs by way of procuring an executed service agreement.

Over the years, the logistics operator updated their STCs and they diligently advised all their customers, provided a copy of the updated STCs and obtained their customer's agreement to the updated terms, including the grain supplier.

It should be noted that the logistics operator did not have any expertise in handling of cargo that was specific to this type of grain, so the grain supplier provided a handling procedure to the logistics operator. In addition to accepting the handling procedure, the logistics operator also made several representations regarding their service capabilities, particularly their capacity to competently handle grain cargoes.

The relationship was mutually beneficial for many years, with no incidents arising or claims lodged...until last year.

It started with the grain supplier's customers complaining that the grain delivered to them had a "chemical odour" and the processed product made from the "smelly grain" had a "funny, tainted taste".

Upon investigating the warehouse, the logistics operator noted that stocks of an odorant were stored adjacent to where the grain was stored. These two products were stored within the same storage facility for a number of years well away from one another without problem, however, it was in 2020 that the grain was relocated next to the odorant. The logistics operator explained that due to COVID-19, goods were accumulating within the warehouse and their space was

reaching maximum capacity. In attempting to manage the space more effectively, the warehouse team had inadvertently placed the two products side by side.

In response to this, the grain supplier tested the grain stored at the logistics operator's warehouse and recalled and tested all of the delivered-out grain. The test results revealed that all grain was tainted and no longer fit for human consumption. Therefore, the grain was considered to be a total loss and was properly disposed of.

The grain supplier made commercial settlements with its own customers and sought recovery from the logistics operator for its losses.

The logistics operator reviewed the incorporated STCs they had with the grain supplier and felt comfortable that any potential liability would be limited.

The grain supplier engaged lawyers to review their dealings with the logistics operator. Indeed, their lawyers indicated that the liability limitations contained within the signed STCs would present difficulties overcoming. However, during discussions with their lawyers, it was revealed that there were a series of representations made by the logistics operator at the beginning of their relationship regarding their competence handling grain cargoes, which induced the grain supplier into entering the services agreement. It was noted that the logistics operators could not have committed to those representations.

In light of this, the grain supplier commenced legal proceedings against the logistics operator for, inter alia, Misleading and Deceptive conduct, seeking damages in the millions and also seeking to void the liability limitations contained within the STCs.





The logistics operator's liability insurers stepped in to defend the action, however, it was noted that the quantum of the claim challenged the insurance policy limits purchased by the logistics operator.

What ensued was a lengthy period of negotiation between the grain supplier's lawyers and the logistics operator's insurer's lawyers where relevant points of law were debated. Thankfully, common sense prevailed in that both sides agreed that legal costs to run this case would be prohibitive, and the favoured course of action was to attempt to settle the matter.

Eventually, the matter settled on undisclosed terms.

Apart from the settlement moneys required to be paid, the grain supplier expended significant time and energy devoting scarce resources to manage the matter. This distraction caused significant pressure and stress to the employees, with some senior staff members deciding to leave the business.

What are the key takeaways from this case study?

- Great care needs to be taken with any representations made to customers;
- Review Standard Trading Terms and Conditions to ensure they are properly incorporated with customers and periodically review and update them;
- There is a real risk that liability limitations contained within Standard Trading Terms and Conditions can be voided by Misleading and Deceptive conduct and potentially other Australian Consumer Laws;
- Review activities and insurance programs to determine adequacy of cover and limits;
- Constantly monitor warehousing operations to ensure handling procedures and guidelines are complied with;
- Protracted legal disputes with customers can be an expensive, time consuming and angst-ridden exercise.

#### Who we are:

James and the team at Logical Insurance Brokers provide specialist risk management and insurance solutions to the logistics industry. Logical is delighted to be associated with the Freight and Trade Alliance (FTA) and is proud to be their appointed insurance adviser since its inception in 2012. James is also a regular presenter at FTA professional development events.

If you would like more information about how a carefully constructed insurance program can help protect your business, please feel free to contact James on 02 9328-3322, email jamesc@FTAlliance.com.au or visit the Logical Insurance Brokers website at [www.logicalinsurance.com.au/logistics](http://www.logicalinsurance.com.au/logistics).



Disclaimer: This article is designed to provide helpful general guidance on some key issues relevant to this topic. It should not be relied on as legal advice. It does not cover everything that may be relevant to you and does not take into account your particular circumstances. It is only current as at the date of release. You must ensure that you seek appropriate professional advice in relation to this topic as well as to the currency, accuracy and relevance of this material for you.

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# Can Employers Enforce The COVID-19 Vaccine On Staff?

By EMMA DAWSON, Business Partner – Employsure

As the COVID-19 vaccine starts to rollout in Australia, business owners who want to have their employees vaccinated need to be aware of their workplace vaccination rights, responsibilities and options.

The vaccine is not currently, and most likely will never be made mandatory at a federal level, according to the health department. In certain circumstances, state and territory Governments may introduce requirements for employees to receive the jab in certain circumstances.

While there are no current legislative or regulatory requirements which either permit or prohibit employers to direct employees to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, doing nothing will not satisfy their health and safety duties.

An employer has a duty to do everything reasonably practicable to reduce health and safety risks to their workers in the workplace. If they already have existing infection control measures that work effectively, this may be enough to meet health and safety obligations without requiring employees to get vaccinated.

An effective policy would see employers enforce physical distancing, routine environmental cleaning, and the increased use of hand-sanitiser and personal protective equipment. As

COVID-19 vaccinations become the norm in the coming months, business owners should consider introducing a detailed infection control policy which addresses vaccinations and an immunisation program.

An employer in Australia can give directions which are lawful and reasonable. To establish whether an employer's request to direct an employee to get a COVID-19 vaccine is lawful and reasonable, the employer has many conditions to consider. The first is whether or not there is a realistic or high risk of infection in the workplace. For an employer in an office building, the risk of infection would be much lower than a hospital or medical centre.

This is also true for the type of environment the work is taking place in. Are employees working in an environment prone to infection spread, or are the health and safety precautions taken by the employer already effective enough?

Even if the employer feels their current infection control policy is efficient, there may be other measures that could be introduced to further reduce the risk of infection. Any new direction to the policy must be consistent with federal, state or territory requirements. A risk assessment must then take place and employees need to be consulted.

If there are no legislative or regulatory requirements to mandate a vaccination (such as COVID-19), a direction by an employer to vaccinate their staff is unlikely to be considered reasonable. The only thing an employer can do from then on is to recommend or encourage staff to get the vaccination.

The Federal Government has stated every Australian who wants to be vaccinated will have received their first dose of the vaccine by October. As people start to receive the vaccine,

it is recommended employers record which employees have been immunised. People management software such as BrightHR have features built-in that allow employers to tick off who has received the jab, whether voluntarily or through company requirements.

We will undoubtedly see reports in the media over the coming year of employees refusing the vaccination. In instances such as this, the employer must look at the reason for the refusal, whether it can be justified under Government advice, and if a vaccination is required for the employee to do their job safely.

If the refusal is justified, the employer can consider whether the employee could perform alternative duties, work in a lower risk location such as from home, or follow alternative control measures to reduce infection spread.

In many cases, it will be difficult to identify whether or not a refusal is justified. In these cases, it is recommended the employer seek professional advice in regard to their options.

An employer should consult with employees who refuse a COVID-19 vaccination and discuss alternative measures that can help them do their job safely.

Where possible, limiting or eliminating face to face interaction, similar to what we've seen over the past year with employees working from home, is one of the best options employers have when trying to stop the spread in a workplace where not everyone wants to be vaccinated





# Welcome to WiseTech Academy



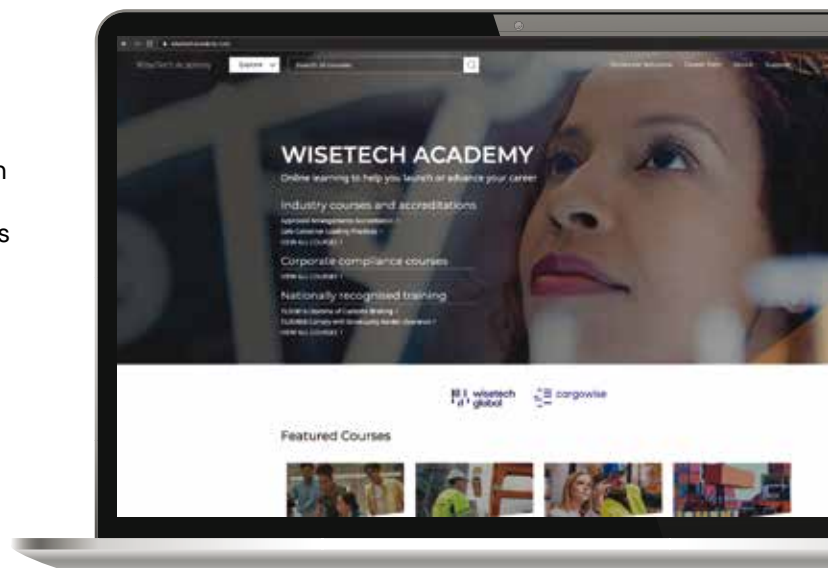
The WiseTech Academy was established in 2018 to bring world-class, and entirely affordable education to the supply chain logistics sector.

The Academy provides a range of training courses that allow your business to achieve success through the onboarding, upskilling and reskilling of your team, as well ensuring all of your mandated business compliance needs are met through efficient and effective training.

Come and get to know us at the Academy and let us show you how we can assist you to achieve your business goals through our professional training programs.

## **Bill Murphy**

Head of Operations and Business Development  
WiseTech Academy



# WiseTechAcademy

# Training solutions for your business

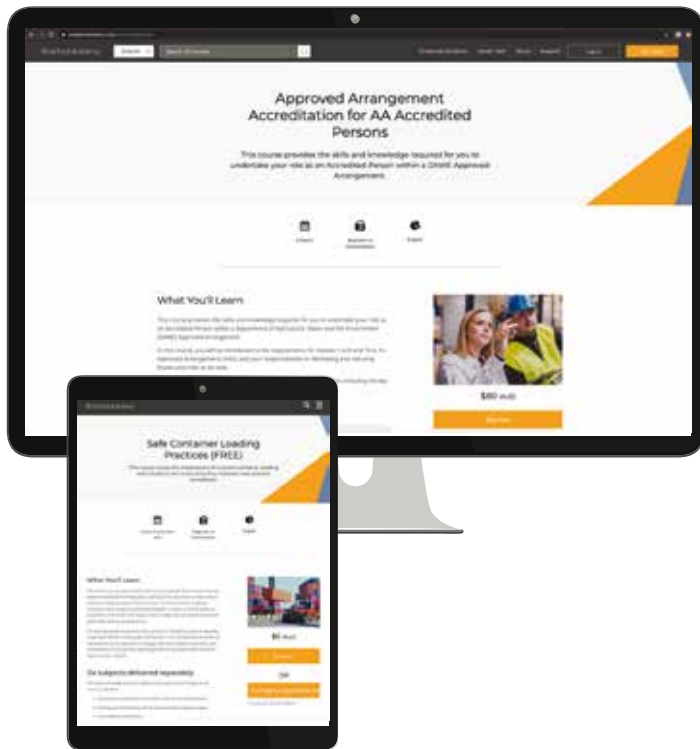
We know business can be tough and you don't always have the time to provide the training you need for your team. We also know that finding high-quality industry training is not easy as you just never know if the courses on offer out there will deliver on the outcomes you require.

The WiseTech Academy addresses these challenges.

Our online industry courses are developed by highly qualified industry experts with years of experience in their field, and they are offered in a way that is flexible, convenient, and affordable. Whether you were looking for training in international trade, related business skills, or corporate compliance, we have courses designed to meet your needs.

All you need to do is decide on the skills that your team needs, and we take care of the rest. Our specialist support team will show you how to manage your team's enrolments and monitor their progress.

As a leader in the supply chain logistics industry, you know that the success of your business is dependent on your people having the skills that they need for today, and the ability to quickly and easily upgrade those skills to meet the challenges of tomorrow. The WiseTech Academy stands ready to assist you as a trusted partner with your company's training needs.



Visit [wisetechnology.com](https://www.wisetechnology.com/academy)

## Why study with us



### Choice

Choose from a range of courses to suit your interests, job requirements or career stage.



### Convenience

All our courses can be completed online, which means you have the flexibility to study at a time and place that suits you.



### Quality

Our high quality courses are prepared and delivered by some of the most experienced leaders in the industry.



### Support

Our online learning provides the support you need to advance your career.

# Upskilling for the future

Your business is growing, and you need to add new staff to meet the demand. Congratulations! However, you know that getting your newest team members onboard, so they are effectively and efficiently up to speed, can be a challenge.

The WiseTech Academy is here to help.

We have designed a series of short online courses designed to bring your new hires right up to speed, without the need for them to be offsite at classroom courses or tied up in lengthy courses.

The Academy's induction courses provide an excellent introduction to the industry and address all of the key areas of air freight, sea freight, customs and international trade documentation.

Our focus with these courses is that your latest team members can, with your assistance, decide which courses they need and when they need to take them, using our just-in-time course planning methodology.

Our induction programs provide an array of practical learning activities so you can be assured that the latest addition to your team gets real-world experience in their training and not just the theory. As an added bonus, we provide many of these courses free of charge as part of our stated goal at WiseTech Academy to never let the cost of training be a barrier to learning for anyone.



“I want to add my welcome to you on behalf of the WiseTech Academy. I have been involved with supporting students undertaking training, and especially TLI50816 Diploma of Customs Broking, in this industry for several years now. It’s a role that gives me great satisfaction as I see graduates successfully forge their careers in this industry. Now, with WiseTech Academy, we have the opportunity to see a whole new cohort of graduates attain their career goals. As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO 45574), we are committed to providing educational excellence through our Diploma of Customs Broking program, which is thoroughly researched and written by licensed customs brokers, and designed to meet practical workplace needs through extensive scenario-based learning.

Get in touch with me to discuss your industry training needs, including how we can get you started on the path to a successful career as a licensed customs broker.”

**Alina Van Harn**

Manager – Continuous Improvement, Compliance, Student Affairs  
contact@wisetechacademy.com



# WiseTech Academy

## Attracting the next generation

The international trade logistics industry is an exciting field where the work is dynamic and fast-paced, offering opportunities for a fulfilling career. You know that, and we know that but, to the many out there, our industry is a well-kept secret with very few career advisors, or mums and dads, knowing the industry even exists.

To assist in spreading the word about our industry, WiseTech Academy has collaborated with a number of industry professionals and specialist recruiters to provide resources on the Academy website designed to assist job seekers to get to know more about our industry. We have produced a series of videos of young people from our industry talking about their roles as customs brokers and freight forwarders and how they have achieved success at a relatively early age in this sector.

WiseTech Academy is committed to supporting the future generations in our industry and we recommend these resources to you when recruiting for your next team members, or when you are asked about the industry by someone seeking a new career opportunity.

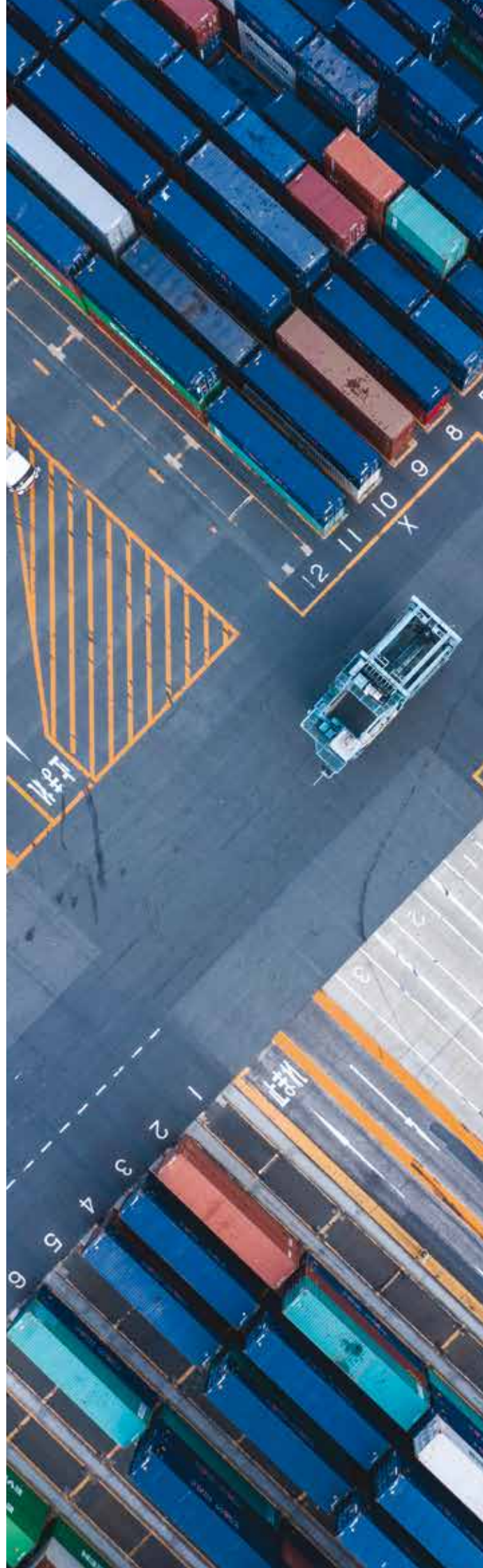


**“In this business, I have never been bored. I get to see parts of the world I never thought I would see and friendships from all over the world.”**

**Lauren**  
General Manager of Raitt International Freight



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# The Productivity Commission review into supply chain vulnerabilities – Have your Say

By THOMAS MANGAN, Lawyer – MILLS OAKLEY

It is hard to imagine that Australia, a country with over 59,000 kilometres of total coastline, isolated by the Indian and Pacific Oceans, reliant on international trade to maintain its economy, has only 13 flagged merchant vessels. In contrast, a landlocked Switzerland has around 50 merchant vessels.



It is obvious that the onerous and restrictive Australian laws and regulations have led to the decline of our domestic fleet from a once healthy 100 flagged merchant vessels, to the mere 13 that it is today. The vessel's flag determines the conditions that the ship and crew operate and where it can trade. Accordingly, an Australian flagged vessel must abide by Australia law regarding conditions of employment, safety, taxation and environmental regulation. The country's reputation as a nanny state is not unfounded and these laws create major expenses for international countries looking to save a dollar on the international shipping market. In fact, due to these onerous regulations, Australian flagged vessels can cost between \$5-\$7million more to run, in contrast to their foreign counterparts flagged in countries such as Panama, Liberia and Marshall Islands.

As a consequence of a lack of merchant ships, there has been ongoing concerns over:

- the environmental impact - from floating rust buckets with crews that have had 2 hours sleep;
- Australia's vulnerability in times of conflict and/or natural disasters - Vice Admiral Tim Barrett has commented that civilian cargo vessels are very important for Australia's national security and that we are one of the only developed nations without a fleet; and
- the consequences of the current global COVID pandemic.

In short, the Australian Government can requisition its flagged ships in times of need and with a lack of vessels, it is left exposed.

When the airline industry contracted as a result of COVID, this included air cargo. The result has been increased pressure on the sea trade and increased costs due to demand. However, when this is occurring on a global level, Australia is at the back of the line in terms of availability of their own containerised cargo vessels. Accordingly, there is a dual impact, being increased costs and import / export delays.

Prices of used cars have increased by 30% simply because new cars are just not arriving quickly enough. Last year, Kmart stores had empty shelves in major Australian cities. Meat exporters have faced significant delays in exporting produce due to a shortage in the availability of food-grade shipping containers. There are citrus producers who have reportedly scaled back international exports by 40% due to the increased costs and supply chain constraints.

The reality is that foreign shipping lines are commercial entities and will adjust their capacity and schedules to wherever

they can get the best margins. Given the lack of container vessels, Australia is exposed to the commercial strategies of foreign economies and corporations, not just from a costs perspective, but with no guarantee of the supply of fuel, pharmaceuticals or agricultural products in emergencies.

Accordingly, prices may continue to rise, particularly until at least air trade is fully operational again. The grim outlook should be the catalyst for freight forwarders and shipping lines to think outside the box and adjust the way they operate. The office of the Chief Economist of Australia has noted that supply chain reconfigurations may present opportunities for Australia. In this context, freight forwarders and shipping companies will need to add value to their services and work with customers to meet their needs and understand trends in demands, particularly in such volatile market conditions.

For a number of years, there have been calls for strategic Government intervention in the form of deregulation which will make Australia more attractive for merchant flagged vessels and reduce costs for those involved within the supply chain.

On 19 February 2021, the Morrison Government announced that it has requested the Productivity Commission to undertake an independent review into supply chain vulnerabilities. Part of this review will be to identify possible strategies to manage supply chains risks. An interim report will be released in March, and participants have been invited to comment on the report with submissions by Friday 30 April 2021. These submissions may be an ideal platform for those in the supply chain wanting to create opportunities for themselves.





# Australia's biosecurity system: Transformation or business as usual?

By WENDY CRAIK AM, Chair of the panel reviewing the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity 2017

Australia along with the rest of the world has experienced the most significant biosecurity event of recent times - the COVID-19 pandemic. Australia, according to a recent report by CSIRO (Infectious Disease Resilience, 2021), with “science informed response activities, early border closures and the public’s broad acceptance of social distancing and mask wearing” along with significant financial support has weathered the storm remarkably well. However, even in Australia as of 16 February 2020, 909 people have died and 28,905 people have been infected by the disease. Restrictions on activity resulted in a peak contraction in GDP of 7% in the June 2020 quarter and a peak of 7.5% in unemployment in July 2020. While the measures referred to above and the rapid development and distribution of vaccines are assisting with a growing economic recovery and provide strong grounds for optimism, CSIRO suggests there is room for improvement in a number of areas.

*How would Australia fare if a new and novel incursion of equivalent impact arrived on our shores over the next year or so?*

Australia's biosecurity system is a significant economic asset which underpins our agricultural production, our agricultural exports, our inbound tourism industry, our environment and our health and wellbeing. Our

agricultural production is worth about \$60b per year and the industry, supported by the Australian government, wishes to increase it to \$100 billion per year by 2030. Absent a pandemic, our inbound tourism is worth about \$40 billion per year. Our environmental assets are valued by the Australian Bureau of Statistics at over \$6 trillion. And we have seen the cost of a pandemic on our health and wellbeing.

Australia has the advantage of being an island nation and also has a relatively well developed and coordinated biosecurity system involving governments, industry, not for profit organisations and individuals. The system continues to evolve as it responds to an increasingly connected world.

However, a recent report by CSIRO involving CSIRO Futures and CSIRO Health and Biosecurity, Animal Health Australia, Plant Health Australia and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions<sup>1</sup> points out that interceptions at Australian borders of materials that are a biosecurity risk increased by almost 50% in the five years 2012 to 2017 to just over 37,000 per year. Despite Australia's strong biosecurity system keeping annual incursions relatively steady, the accumulated burden of uneradicated incursions and new incursions places “a growing strain” on the system. At the same time, Australia's biosecurity is facing a significant increase in those strains as threats to the biosecurity environment are growing as a result of a range of factors, including the increasing impact of trade and travel, climate

change, agricultural intensification, urbanisation, biodiversity loss and antimicrobial resistance. In addition, the biosecurity system faces its own challenges of improving data sharing and system connectivity, resourcing, adoption and commercialisation of new solutions and ensuring the social licence of emerging technologies. What is at risk is our quality of life- our food, our exports, our rural employment, our native flora and fauna, our clean and green image, our tourism and our health and well-being.

The authors point out that while the current system is relatively effective, the next ten years will be particularly confronting as we try to deal with these growing risks: for example, in the area of freight and trade, there is likely to be a very significant increase in freight leaving and entering the country. The report gives a pre covid estimate of a projected increase of 120% in the volume of freight flown into and out of Australia between 2014 to 2030. Seaborne freight is also on the rise. In 2017 the Australian Government Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) forecast the total number of incoming sea containers to increase from 3.6 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) in 2012-13 to approximately 9.8 million TEUs in 2032-33. In 2015-16 it is estimated there were approximately 4.2 million incoming TEUs. Non-containerised imports through Australian ports were forecast by BITRE in 2014 to be about 138.5 million tonnes in 2032-33. Additionally, the growth of ecommerce (as we have witnessed during the covid pandemic)

<sup>1</sup> Australia's Biosecurity Future: Unlocking the Next Decade of Resilience (2020-2030)



and particularly in illegal flora and fauna offers many opportunities for pests and diseases to enter the country.

In relation to the environment, human activities, including the impact of invasive species incursions and climate change, have resulted in the decline of the health of the environment generally and iconic places specifically, as well as species, with an increasing number of organisms on the threatened list. The 2020 review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act by Graeme Samuel concluded that “in its current state the environment is not sufficiently resilient to withstand these threats” and “the current environmental trajectory is unsustainable”. The CSIRO report expresses concern that the sharing of data and intelligence between jurisdictions, biosecurity sectors (e.g. health, agriculture, environment) and industry e.g. (tourism, freight, farming) is very limited and impacts on our ability to manage things like interspecies disease transfers, understanding supply chain origins etc. Declining and uneven budgets and loss of technical expertise in a range of specialist scientific areas, like taxonomy, hinder our response capability.

The report suggests we have a choice: Australia can continue with the current largely responsive approach and scale up its responses as incursions increase – investing when there is a crisis but reducing that investment between crises (a business as usual approach) or it can transform its approach by enhancing data sharing networks, increasing national coordination, investing in new technology, engaging communities and encouraging businesses to be more involved with government to ensure that our national interests are looked after (a transformational trajectory). Essentially this means a greater emphasis on prevention. Business as usual is likely to see increasing numbers of incursions and consequent negative impacts on our reputation as a biosecure trading nation, while transformation of the system will see us as “the most biosecure trade partner globally”.

CSIRO’s modelling suggests that even tripling investment in interventions out to 2025 will leave a greater residual level of biosecurity risk than that existing in 2014-15. As a result, the report says a transformation of the system is essential.

System connectivity, shared responsibility and innovation in science and technology are seen as the essential elements of a transformation. For businesses, improving system connectivity through modernising export processes, regular reviews of

supply chain risk reduction activities to optimise export protocols, improving pre-border clearance of imports and developing stronger partnerships within the national system are seen as critical. More could also be done in post-border prevention and surveillance. Under the banner of shared responsibility with industry lie activities such as identification of non-negotiable government conditions and industry incentives related to privatisation of biosecurity services and activities, better understanding of non-compliance behaviour through research and looking for incentives to improve accuracy and timeliness in incursion reporting. Innovation in science and technology includes setting national biosecurity innovation priorities, incentivising development and commercialisation of biosecurity technologies and encouraging more careers in biosecurity relevant areas.

Of course all this requires significantly increased collaboration and analysis to define more precisely what and who needs to be involved and how. As well it will obviously require significantly increased resources. The report concludes by posing a number of questions relating to resources sharing approaches, commercial opportunities, balance in the system between detection and response, better quantification of environmental biosecurity benefits, incentivising biosecurity benefits with carbon farming or biodiversity markets, and agreements and partnerships between industry, communities and government.

These are challenging issues to resolve, and require involving communities including indigenous communities, a range of industries, and many governments and their agencies. Two experienced biosecurity experts, Ron Glanville and Hugh Millar, have put together some thoughts “National Biosecurity Funding and Investment A Discussion Paper 2019” in which they propose that the biosecurity funding system “needs fundamental change”. They propose consideration of two options. One involves “nationalising” the “national interest” functions of the biosecurity system i.e. preparedness, planning and maintaining response capability and surveillance for early detection of pests and diseases and for the information required for trade and market access. All governments could be involved in development of policies and protocols and the states could act as agents for the national system Funding would come from the Australian Government and

industry and other beneficiaries. The authors use the nationalisation of agvet chemical registration as an example of such a system. The second option is for the development of national cost sharing agreements between all governments and industries (and communities) for surveillance and preparedness, akin to the existing cost sharing agreements for responses to incursions. Unlike the response agreements, funding would need to be available upfront and this would require levy adjustment under existing legislation for some groups and potentially new legislation in the case of other groups. In addition, this paper and the 2017 review of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity propose a national investment strategy for biosecurity. Such a strategy could start to tackle some of the issues raised by the CSIRO report.

Australia’s biosecurity future will be dependent on the choices made over the next decade. The threats outlined in the CSIRO report are upon us and will only increase in magnitude and consequence. CSIRO is pointing out that the decisions we make in the coming years will be critical.

“ *Business as usual is likely to see increasing numbers of incursions and consequent negative impacts on our reputation as a biosecure trading nation, while transformation of the system will see us as “the most biosecure trade partner globally* ”





# Innovation fuelling transport

By SAL MILICI, Head of Border and Biosecurity – Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA)

When tasked with writing this article I fast found myself sliding down a fascinating rabbit hole of discovery. Solar fuels, coal gasification, and steam reforming were but a few of the topics I stumbled upon. What is an electrolyser and why didn't I pay more attention in science class?

My interest in this subject in part has its genesis when Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) and the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) actively engaged with the Climate Change Authority as a part of their new research report, *Economic recovery, resilience and prosperity after the coronavirus*.

The report identifies measures that will contribute to a 'triple-win' stimulus package in a low-emissions world offering a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to not only jump-start an economic recovery but also set up Australia to prosper for generations to come.

Some of the many exciting developments in this sector and of most interest to MHD readers is around using renewable fuels to power the transport sector.

The passenger motor vehicle is better suited to the electric vehicle – I mean who doesn't want a Tesla replete with "ludicrous mode". Heavy transport isn't suited to this, so a renewable fuel is the required solution; and all signs point to hydrogen.

Recently energy giant Shell revealed plans to back hydrogen fuel cells on the road to the International Maritime Organisations goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2050

"We believe liquid hydrogen to be advantaged over other potential zero-emissions fuels for shipping, therefore giving a higher likelihood of success," it said in its latest report, *'Decarbonising Shipping: Setting Shell's Course.'*

In response to the industry wide goals

of at least 50%, leading container ship operator Maersk, has gone one better and announced a target to be 100% free of CO2 emissions by 2050.

To bring this all these aspirational targets to fruition using hydrogen it needs to be created using renewable methods. This is where some big sky thinking to create the necessary scale is needed. Chief Scientist Alan Finkel is on the money when he suggests Australia should have a target of 700% renewables. This would allow the surplus renewable energy to be used in a number of ways.

One would be storing it in batteries (be they of the Tesla Big Battery lithium-ion kind or perhaps Snowy 2.0 pumped hydro kind) to provide grid stability and to ameliorate the intermittent nature of the energy sources

Exporting the surplus power directly such as tech billionaire's Mike Cannon-Brookes ambitious Sun Cable project – which involves piping electricity direct from a vast cattle station size solar farm in the Northern Territory to Singapore

The third and possibly most exciting and lucrative is using renewable energy to manufacture hydrogen. This is achieved by using renewable energy to power the electrolysis of water; all that is required is water; a big (the bigger the better) electrolyser and a shedload of electricity.

Australia has access to plenty of water (it's not required to be potable) and exponentially growing levels of electricity from renewable energy. The big (and cost competitive) electrolyser is what is missing.

Enter the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and their \$70 million Renewable Hydrogen Deployment Funding. ARENA aims to support two or more shortlisted large-scale renewable hydrogen projects that involve deploying 10 MW or larger electrolysers, made up of various end uses including transport, gas injection, renewable ammonia production, power

and industrial use.

However, hydrogen is difficult and expensive to store in bulk (needing cryogenic tanks or high-pressure cylinders). To solve this challenge, we simply add a dash of nitrogen to create ammonia. In this case Green Ammonia. Yes, that smelly toxic chemical used when cleaning around the house. But Green Ammonia has several benefits over its Green Hydrogen cousin. Its energy density by volume is nearly double and it is much easier to ship.

Not more than a month ago Australia and Germany signed a joint feasibility study to investigate the supply chain between the two countries on hydrogen produced from renewable energy. This study specifically mentions hydrogen including its "carriers such as Ammonia" and is backed up by serious funding; Germany has indicated over \$A16 billion of its COVID-19 stimulus package is for the development of a hydrogen industry and building international supply chains – with countries like Australia.

The march toward sustainable fuels to feed the worlds transport task is happening as we speak. As I write this this the awarding of an engineering contract for the Arrowsmith Hydrogen Project near Dongara in Western Australia was just announced. Located 320 kilometres north of Perth the plant will produce 25 tonnes of Green Hydrogen per day when it commences production in 2022. It is happening.

Considering the many geographical and topographical benefits our continent enjoys - The export and wealth creation opportunities for Australia are limitless. In many ways it is up to us as a nation to determine how far (or behind) of the curve we are.

*NB: this article was first published in the November 2020 issue of MHD Supply Chain Solutions magazine*

AN AUSTRALIAN **PACKAGING** SOLUTIONS COMPANY, DEDICATED TO MEETING YOUR BUSINESS'S **UNIQUE PACKAGING NEEDS.**



## EQUIPPED TO OFFER A RANGE OF HELPFUL **PACKAGING SERVICES**

**Packing Services:** UBEECO supply experienced teams to pack goods at customers' own designated sites. Staff are available to instruct customers' workforce in the efficient packing of their cases and cartons, using the safest and most correct methods.

**Export Services:** As export specialists, UBEECO are fully accredited with ISPM15 certification for specialised heat treatment of exported timber boxes and packaging.

UBEECO's packaging services also include professional assistance with export packaging, transportation and regulatory issues. After being briefed about your export requirements, UBEECO can advise on the best export solutions for your budget and product needs.

**Consulting Services:** UBEECO offer an experienced team that can advise on a number of advanced options and material combinations to suit your budget and applications. UBEECO's consultants will gain a full understanding of your requirements and offer you practical solutions on packaging and logistics for your own unique needs.

### **Testimonial**

“ All of us at Quadrant Simulation Systems are extremely pleased to be working once again with UBEECO who is providing all of the Packing, Rigging and Transportation elements of our project to relocate seven full flight simulators and a range of cabin crew training equipment over the next twelve-month period.

*The successful relocation of this type of equipment depends upon some very specific packing requirements and strong communications with our teams, all of which UBEECO can support us with.*

*UBEECO continues to provide us with a professional and high-quality packing service and has been integral in the organisation of some very challenging logistical and transportation movements.*

*We are happy to recommend UBEECO and we look forward to working with them throughout the remainder of our project.* ”

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## Logistical Packing: Logistics and Packing Go Hand-In-Hand

By ADRIAN BIASIN, National Timber Manager - UBEECO® Packaging Solutions

Those in the logistics or packing industries know that they both have a symbiotic relationship to complete a smooth operation. Whilst we, at UBEECO, are renowned for our crating work, we have simultaneously developed and evolved our relationship with the transport and logistics industries.

At UBEECO, we approach every project with a thorough understanding of logistical processes – from start to finish – and place importance on the collaboration between the packing and logistics teams to execute each project in a time and cost-efficient manner.

Our first onsite crating job back in 1975 has demonstrated to us how truly

crucial it is for both the packing and logistics industries to have this kind of close relationship and collaboration. We were to build and pack 35 large crates for export from Parramatta to South Africa as part of a full production line shutdown. For a project of this scale, it is imperative to have both the packing and logistics teams work as one. Without correctly-engineered crates and proper handling of equipment – the damage would ensue from the lack of protection, potentially causing harm to the working teams and property damage. On the logistics side: without strong guidance, communication, and organisation – the project would not be completed within the time constraints.

From then on, UBEECO has implemented project management in

our onsite packing services. We plan, organise and direct each onsite packing project – on top of designing and manufacturing the crate and cases. We work with you as an extension of your team.

### On-Site Packing Service

Many of our customers who benefit from our On-Site Packing service come from a wide range of industrial backgrounds: from mining, defence, aerospace to civil works and others who require shipment of large, delicate machinery. Whatever the scale, it is crucial to understand the needs and logistic capabilities of each customer – no two are the same. This is why we have a hands-on approach to each project to ensure that our customers' packing solutions suit the shipment and are cost and time-efficient.

We build solutions by taking the time to listen to the logistical challenges you may have and tailor our service to you accordingly. We can offer to:

- Custom build cases, crates, and bases
- Engineer our product to hold 300kg or 30 tonnes
- Supply flat pack kits or fully assembled boxes
- Work on-site or off-site

### UBEECO: Marine Surveyors' Choice for Cargo Shipping

At UBEECO, we understand that it is just as critical that you manage your own customers' needs as well as your business's reputation. We are all too familiar with rushed, poorly-packed cargo: where strict shipping requirements are not met and proper protection is neglected. Businesses are often referred to us by marine surveyors





### Protective Packing and Preservation: Rust and Corrosion Prevention

Our teams also work to understand the sensitive concerns of your products' preservation requirements. At UBEECO, we can design a custom protective wrap that provides a complete seal around items of any size. The award-winning ICC Wrap we use at UBEECO is the premium solution for rust and corrosion protection during shipping: its copper properties attract the rust-causing acids and any external elements that may cause damage to delicate or sensitive materials. It is a fuss-free option that ensures your shipment remains in perfect condition.

The ICC Wrap can also be fitted with zippers and windows to view and monitor the item in storage, giving access to lifting points, turn shafts, replace desiccants and inspect contents inside.

Of course, protection is more than avoiding rust – it is also about securing and avoiding damages. Our crew measure with precision and complete protection in-mind: where lashings are to be secured, where to add chocking and blocking, as well as the order in which products are to be packed inside the shipping containers.

As one of the first businesses in Australia accredited with ISPM15 certification, we have always taken exporting seriously and understand that there is no room for shortcuts. We do it right the first time – every time – and understand that it is

not just about getting the goods to their destination. It is about:

- Smooth and safe loading onto vessels and aircraft
- Minimal risk of movement during shipping
- Ensuring the ability of safe unloading at the other end

Our 50 years in industrial packaging solutions will give you the confidence that we have the experience to deliver a high level of service to exceed your customers' expectations.

**Let our teams at UBEECO help you keep moving forward.**

to repack shipping containers that have been rejected and instances when crates have been damaged in transit. We are here to partner and support you with your export to ensure the smooth movement of products within your supply chain. We have budget and premium solutions but, most importantly, we are here to let you do what you do best on the logistics side, and we will take care of the rest such as:

- Repairing and/or rebuilding the shipping crate
- Repack shipping containers safely
- Secure and protect the load



*One of the many great experiences that helped us expand our business across the world goes back to 1994. An American shipping company contacted us to pack on-site at the Royal Easter Show in Sydney. An incredible, car-crushing Robosaurus was to arrive in Australia and would need to be packed for a safe return back to America after its roadshow of events. This project required us to source specific materials to securely wrap and protect the machine so that would arrive home in the same condition as it left the Northern Hemisphere. We also had to ensure a strategic method of packing for a smooth, efficient unpacking operation at the other end of the cargo's journey.*



# Interview

## NEOLINK – Combining Innovative Technology and Industry Expertise to Navigate a Challenging Global Shipping Market.

Paul Zalai, Co-founder and Director – Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) recently had the opportunity to sit down with Christopher Makhoul from NEOLINK Logistics & Distribution Pty Ltd. The NEOLINK Team have experienced extraordinary growth in the past two years despite a pandemic & we sat down with them to find out more about their business, as well as how they are navigating the current shipping market.



### 1. Paul Zalai - Chris, to start off with can you give us a snapshot on the NEOLINK business?

NEOLINK was founded in 2016 providing a wide range of global logistics, 3PL distribution, freight forwarding & customs services. We are members of WCA, JCTrans networks, as well as the FTA and are a Licenced Corporate Customs Brokerage with the Department of Home Affairs. Since our inception we have doubled the business every year with a Technology and People focused approach to how we engage with our customers.

### 2. Paul Zalai - Can you tell us how NEOLINK came about and how the business started?

I have been working in the Freight Forwarding and Supply Chain Industry for 15 years across Operations, Business Development and Account Management roles.

My business partner Sean was working for Lion Co (Australia's biggest brewer) at the time and approached me one day about importing a product. I was explaining to him how the traditional freight forwarding process worked and he was surprised at how heavily departmentalized and manual some of the processes were. This also explained some of the service failures he experienced in his role at Lion. This got us both thinking that we could bring both of our skillsets together and create a business which we felt could fill a void in the marketplace. After many Saturday's spent in my backyard mapping out our initial ideas on giant post-it notes, the first NEOLINK business plan was born.

During that process we met with WiseTech and discovered that the industry had huge potential to automate a lot of

the menial workflow tasks, which we felt could lead to a much more efficient business model. Starting the business with a technology first approach has given us an advantage to build that automation from the ground up and ensure our team are freed up to spend more time with our customers adding value to their supply chains.

### 3. Paul Zalai - Digital Freight Forwarding businesses are getting a lot of attention from big venture capital funds, how do you see "traditional" and "digital" forwarders evolving in the marketplace over the coming years?

Silicon Valley has poured a lot of money into "digitizing" the Global Freight Market and it would be wrong to say that there is not a big opportunity in doing so. That being said, "Traditional" Freight Forwarders have been using technology, automation, and other digital tools over the years to provide more efficient service, but probably not at the rate of some other industries. We believe that NEOLINK is in a strong position to capitalize on this in the Australian market.

Recently we partnered with a company to launch our New NEOLINK Digital Platform which integrates with CargoWise One. The platform provides live shipment updates 24/7/365, automated alerts, documentation management, online account management messaging, data analytics and so much more.

As part of the launch of our new platform, we conducted a survey of over 100 importers/exporters to find out what was important in choosing a Freight Forwarder, which provided some interesting results:

### What is the #1 ranked characteristic you look for in choosing a freight forwarder?

1. Customer Service – 36%
2. Technology and Digital Tools – 24%
3. Cheapest Price – 20%
4. Global Reach – 19%

Source: NEOLINK Logixboard Survey Jan 2021

Based on the above results, we are taking the position at NEOLINK that there are a lot of things we can learn from both sides of the Traditional vs Digital Freight Forwarders in the market. Providing a tailored service needs to be central to any business relationship we engage in and at the same time 81% of importers/exporters are telling us that it is also an important requirement for forwarders to improve their digital offerings. Continuous Improvement is a core component of our culture at NEOLINK and we are constantly empowering our team to come up with new ideas to improve our customer's experience.

#### 4. Paul Zalai - The global shipping landscape has had its challenges in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID 19 Pandemic – how is the NEOLINK team approaching these challenges?

Since the start of the pandemic our "Technology Focused" approach has paid significant dividends. All of our staff have laptop, mobile phones and the ability to seamlessly work remotely, which allowed us to engage our customers quickly and meet their needs. Automating a large portion of our workflows has freed up our Customer Operations Department this past year to spend time on our customers orders and being extremely proactive with all the carriers.

Inevitably interruptions are going to occur with vessel delays, congestion etc but what a lot of our customers need is real time and live communication to make quick decisions. If we are providing them with multiple ongoing options to ship and the ability to flexibly move their bookings to different carriers, we can ensure that all orders are landing as close to the RIS (Required In Store) dates as possible.

We have seen most of the exporters in China running on average of 12 to 15 days behind their Ex-Factory date – this is before any of the berthing delays vessels have experienced coming into Australian ports. Our team as a result has spent a



(l to r) Paul Zalai (FTA) Christopher Makhoul & Sean Crook (Directors Neolink)

lot of time educating our customers on the reality of this new "COVID Shipping Market" and to adjust their business models accordingly to account for this. We have seen a lot of supply chains increase orders to hold stock in storage to ensure they meet local demand. Despite the challenges there are still a lot of things we can do in our control to give us and our customers that competitive edge.

#### 5. Paul Zalai - What are going to be some of your key areas for focus and opportunities over the next 2 years?

Since we started the business, we have had a strong client retention rate of 98%, but not a lot of people have heard about NEOLINK and the great team we have here. Our biggest area of opportunity is to drive awareness of our business and how we are helping companies navigate this challenging market environment we find ourselves in – so marketing and selling our business has never been more important.

Another key area for focus is the training and development of our staff as we continue to Digitize and use New Artificial Technology. The automation of key tasks and processes is freeing up our staffs time to provide new value-added Account Management and Supply Chain services for our customers. It is important we continue to invest in the training of our staff and help them develop these skillsets to deliver these new services we will be offering in the future to our customers.



“Traditional” Freight Forwarders have been using technology, automation, and other digital tools over the years to provide more efficient service, but probably not at the rate of some other industries. We believe that NEOLINK is in a strong position to capitalize on this in the Australian market.”



## Transforming the Future of Security for the Transportation and Logistics Sector

By CHRISTIAN DORAU, Head of Technology Services - Certis Security Australia

Certis Security Australia is at the forefront of delivering cutting-edge technology solutions that safeguard the supply chain and protect suppliers' interests and is proud to announce our new partnership with Freight Trade Alliance. The logistics industry contributes 8.6 per cent to Australia's gross domestic product (GDP) and provides \$131.6 billion to Australia's economy. With such significant importance to Australia, it's important for carriers, freight and passengers to be adequately protected to ensure end-to-end operations are effectively maintained.

2020 was a year of ongoing disruption and with heightened risks from COVID-19, the importance of efficient and seamless supply chains has never been more significant for logistics and transportation organisations. Over the past 12 months, Certis Security Australia has provided temperature testing and COVID marshalling functions to various transport and logistics organisations to protect the supply chain and allow these organisations to focus on core business.

As a result, this past year has demonstrated there is a greater need to integrate innovative methods of security and protection, which requires the use of technology. The implementation of security innovations such as AI and IoT, can help to address vulnerabilities and minimise associated risks, to ensure optimal supply chain safety and the smooth flow of goods.

### The changing face of security

Technology not only enhances the capabilities of a physical security team, it helps to identify threats that humans can't and is therefore a critical part of modern security implementation. No longer does security refer to patrolling guards tasked with protection management of a nominated site. The tech-enabled security solutions of today can lead to productivity gains, cost savings and optimisations to supply chain processes.

Surveillance technology is perhaps the most well-known technology integration, with CCTV allowing guards to get a complete view of an

entire site. This enhances their ability to act swiftly should an incident arise, as action can be taken immediately from the control centre. In today's modern security advancements, a smart CCTV security camera can be integrated with an IoT platform to perform these more traditional security functions, as well as track and measure the performance of the logistics workflow.

### Data enabled decision-making

Intelligent analytics is an important part of modern security, allowing security professionals to analyse the data and recognise certain patterns such as time or location that incidents take place. Through the use of intelligent analytics, not only is it possible for Certis Security Australia to identify the problem but also determine why it has occurred, such as lower visibility in a particular warehouse.

Thanks to recent advancements in video analytics, automated notifications can be sent out to security teams to alert them of a potential threat or obstruction. Being armed with this data means that security teams can be better prepared to strategically place guards in certain areas at critical times to ensure assets are best protected and to help minimise any disruption. For example, when high-value freight is involved and only a designated number of people are allowed in a warehouse, Certis Security Australia professionals can manage access to ensure it is granted to approved personnel only.

### Technology for screening accuracy

The seamless flow of goods from production right through to consumption is crucial to Australia's economic growth. With freight screening as a core function of this, it is critical to ensure all shipments are accurately accounted for. This means qualified professionals who understand regulations and compliance, as well as the appropriate technology that can help to remove outdated manual processes. Freight screening technology not only ensures accuracy but does so in a way that maximises productivity, allowing operations to continue flowing seamlessly.

With this kind of technology, Certis Security Australia screening officers no longer physically have to search what goods are being carried and can effectively protect assets without slowing down operations.

### Business Operations Support System (BOSS)

Certis Security Australia has developed its own secure cloud-based platform that provides security managers with real-time visibility across everything happening on customer sites. It is key in delivering a consistently high level of service to customers as it enables security managers to remotely monitor sites and personnel via the National Operations Centre (NOC), while security patrols provide an on-ground presence, investigating any potential issues to protect the supply chain. This not only helps to protect customers but ensures the safety of employees.

### National Operations Centre

The NOC is a critical component of the services Certis Security Australia delivers to customers – it's the core of its business, with all security and facilities management offerings being driven through the NOC. The NOC delivers 24/7 support to customers and deployed guards, centralising Certis Security's operations and allowing the team to monitor and maintain a holistic view of over 500 client sites.

### The future of logistics security

Recent advancements in new-age IoT platforms and the use of AI to glean business insights for process improvements, means enhanced efficiencies and reduced costs for the transportation and logistics industry. The role of security has shifted, with technology the driving force behind the optimisation of workflows. Security professionals' capabilities now go beyond the protection of assets to play a more pivotal role in day-to-day supply chain operations. Now more than ever, a more holistic view is needed of how physical security comes together with technology to be more cost effective and ensure agile supply chain operations.

For more information on Certis Security Australia's work with the transport and logistics sector or how they can work with you, visit [certisgroup.com/au](https://certisgroup.com/au)





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# Interview

## Gregoire Putz – Managing Director, SIFA Australia

Paul Zalai, Co-Founder and Director, Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) recently had the opportunity to chat to Gregoire Putz from SIFA Logistics to see how they fared during COVID and the starting of the operations in Australia and New Zealand

### 1. PAUL ZALAI – Greg, to start, how has and is COVID impacting your French operations ?

The word which is coming up the most in France is weariness. That tells us a lot about the situation!

However, for SIFA France and it's 300 employees located in France, things are going well. From the early stage of COVID-19, we quickly implemented action plans to minimize the risk and keep a high level of services. Being a major service provider for the Pharmaceutical industry we had a lot of motivation to fulfil our commitments.

### 2. PAUL ZALAI – Greg, why did SIFA decided to recently open offices in NZ and AUS?

Launching the business in Australia and New Zealand was an obvious expansion for the SIFA group. To understand why, it is important to have a bit of background.

To quickly summarize it: SIFA started in the Caribbean islands and expanded to the French territories which it has been developing for the last 50 years. For the past 15 years, SIFA has been looking into international development with the opening



of offices in the United States, Singapore, and Africa.

Our presence has grown in the Pacific Area, especially in Nouméa and Tahiti. The Aussie and Kiwi branches were the next logical step.

### 3. PAUL ZALAI – Within a few months you have already established the company and depot facilities... how do you find doing business down under?

Australia & New Zealand are both known as a friendly place to conduct business. However for foreign companies there are some hurdles to overcome such as immigration (staff deployment) and regulation around anti-money laundering concerns which can both take months to negotiate / resolve even with the guidance provided.

Within 2 years we have set-up the entire in-house logistics chain, we do;

- Our own LCL pick-up with our company vehicles
- We pack Freight All Kinds (FAK) boxes in our 77G depot
- We organize import ABF/DAWE inspections, and
- Our IATA licence has been granted allowing us to manage our airfreight shipments more intimately.

### 4. PAUL ZALAI – What service do you provide?

We now have the capabilities to provide all services a freight forwarder can offer: packing, unpacking, inspection, storage, bonded storage. The Pacific Area is growing and our FAK packing capabilities have increased substantially (Nouméa, Tahiti, Fiji, Vanuatu etc).

We also have a strong and interesting partnership for import FAK boxes from the USA, and we are looking at launching a new European trade lane.

Having multiple sites in France is an asset.

Local business opportunities are growing with our 77G/1.3 Approved Arrangement

licensed depot. Our client's feedback is that they find our operations team to have a strong sense of flexibility when finding the right solutions for their needs.

We are dedicated to serving our customers' needs so we can build long term partnerships.

Last minute container packing unpacking are not rare anymore.

### 5. PAUL ZALAI – what has been the biggest challenge

Before we set-up our own depot we had to pack our boxes offsite. This was a challenge, as FAK is very demanding in terms of depot reception and very specific in terms of container packing. For Melbourne and Brisbane, we are still using third-party depots which we are very happy with. We were clear from the beginning that the nature of the business requires flexibility.

We now manage the whole supply chain. Controlling all the steps helps us to provide the best service. This is in SIFA's DNA.

### 6. PAUL ZALAI – and finally Greg, what is the Key of success?

If you ask me what the key to success is, I'd say without hesitation: SIFA's team.

Without the commitment of the operations team, nothing would have been possible.

Our teams average age is 30 years old, and everyone has the opportunity to accomplish goals which contributes to the business' development and continued improvement of our operations. We are optimizing our IT workflow. However this is the people behind who are constantly striving and making things happen.



### CHECK SIFA AUSTRALIA VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSsoy424Sos>



## 2021 'INAUGURAL WOMEN IN LOGISTICS WELLNESS WALK & BREAKFAST'

By CAROLINE ZALAI – FTA Co-founder & Director

Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) was delighted to collaborate with Next Leap Training Solutions and Wondering Women for the Inaugural Women in Logistics Wellness Walk & Breakfast, celebrating International Women's Day on 8 March 2021 at the beautiful Bondi Beach. The event was re-imagined this year in conjunction with the challenges we have all faced over the last 12 months and focussed on mental and physical wellness.

We would like to thank our event sponsors and the 120 men and women who attended from across the supply chain, the men who cooked the barbeque and the volunteers from Wondering Women for their support and assistance on the day.

We were inspired by presentations from Sarah Pike (Country Manager, Amazon Flex Australia & Singapore at Amazon Logistics), My Therese Blank (Head of Regional Ocean Management - Maersk), Lisa Tilsed (Wondering Women), Joyce Campbell (Next Leap Training Solutions) and Joel Pilgrim (Co-Founder & CEO - Waves of Wellness).

The 2021 International Women's Day theme was "Choose to Challenge". Sarah Pike said that we can all be a "force for change" and we have a shared responsibility to support and mentor other females in our organisations. Every company and leadership team has the responsibility to create a good work culture of inclusion, opportunity and diversity. Sarah explained the increased take-up of online purchasing during Covid-19 which has been timely for the delivery service of Amazon Flex.





With record volumes of imports and bumper agricultural crops to export our sector of commerce will again play a vital role in Australia's economic recovery. The need for fast and cost effective movement of goods and trade facilitation is growing exponentially and there is an enormous opportunity for females to join the industry and meet the labour short fall.

My Therese Blank encouraged ladies "to look out for opportunities, take the opportunity when it is there and show that you can do it". The relaxed and engaged attendees were in agreement with My when she said "Our industry is changing... but we still have more to do". My also encouraged everyone to step up and mentor each other.

Joel Pilgrim – Waves of Wellness advised the importance of looking after yourself. "Take time to look in the mirror and ask yourself - are you okay?" Don't discount your own needs as well as keeping an eye on others around you. Find a space where you can reflect and rejuvenate.... Connect to nature and its healing properties. If you are struggling don't be afraid to put your hand up and ask for help.

Joyce Campbell discussed the different personality types and how to recognise when someone is in distress and the importance of resilience and empathy within the workplace.

Lisa Tilsed introduced the Wondering Women imitative that currently brings 800 women from all walks of life together in a supportive environment to encourage, thrive and lift each other through a variety of activities including walking, canoeing, tours and weekends away just to name a few.

The event created a sense of community and belonging and importantly, recognised the value and achievements of the ladies in the industry and the important role we all played in servicing the Australian public when recognised as an "essential service".

With all profits going to charity, we were delighted to raise \$10,000 for a local womens shelter and Waves of Wellness.

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**WISTA QLD Chapter**

In February 2021, a small group of women from WISTA Queensland met for dinner and drinks at the Riverbar & Kitchen in Brisbane to start off the New Year, meet each other and chat about events for the coming year - fun was had by all! We are already looking forward to the next event, which will be held around the end of April (further details TBC).

If you would like to come along to the next WISTA Queensland event check out WISTA's Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram pages for more information.



**WISTA VIC Chapter**

The members from WISTA Victoria met for a casual Christmas gathering at the Mission to Seafarers at Docklands in December 2020. It was quietly enjoyed over a few drinks and some first-rate food. It was lovely to meet some new faces and share various working experiences in the Maritime Industry.

Sue Dight the Chief Manager of the Mission to Seafarers shared with us the amazing work they are doing with Seafarers arriving in Victoria who need to isolate due to Covid-19. They continue to look out for the Seafarers health and well-being and ensuring it is a home away from home especially during these difficult times.

We look forward to meeting again soon to share our home office stories.

WISTA Australia will continue to host our monthly webinars on topics which range from inspirational, to educating members on specific issues as well as professional skills which are applicable across all industries. This initiative enables us to remain connected as a community.

# Covid-19 Impact Sees Logistics Come to the Forefront

By JONATHAN SHARROCK, Chief Executive Officer - Cyber Citadel

The year 2020 was one of rapid change and development, in which businesses had to meet new challenges to survive. Many changes will remain, and the world needs time to adjust. The logistics sector has been at the front of the battlefield in directly enabling the healthcare sector to fight the pandemic but also in facilitating the working world to keep moving.

## Major Changes to Global Business

The pandemic marked a monumental shift to digital platforms. Home working increased demand for remote access to company servers, desktops, and software. Many businesses have shifted to cloud-based servers to facilitate and manage data access, and have also adopted services such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams for communication.

These changes were essential for survival, whether a company was ready to roll them out or not.

This rapid digitisation has coincided with leaps forward in Internet of Things (IoT) devices and Artificial Intelligence (AI) software. These developments have had considerable impact on the logistics sector in optimising processes in a supply chain.



Lockdowns and travel restrictions have resulted in a boom for e-commerce, which placed pressure on logistics firms to meet the demands of clients, putting both systems and workforces under strain.

Finally, the pandemic has revealed a great inter-dependence of different sectors; and the glue that holds them together is logistics. The logistics sector is critical to healthcare provision for example. From the supply of materials such as personal protective equipment (PPE) to the distribution of medicines; any who previously took such supply chains for granted are now acutely aware that any break in this chain could bring a country down.

It's easy to see then why sponsored cybercrime is targeting logistics companies more frequently. Heavy reliance on particular supplies to keep afloat fragile economies in politically volatile situations. Sudden and unprepared adoption of digital platforms and remote working. And the acquisition of new technology without time to securely integrate it into existing networks. The combination produces a cybercriminal's dream.

For more information on the changing threat landscape in logistics see the Cyber Citadel white paper *The Threat to Logistics*.

## Notable Incidents in 2020

Many firms were hit by major cyber incidents in 2020. TQL faced a USD 5 million lawsuit after the breach exposed partner carriers<sup>1</sup>. TFI International in a ransomware attack lost USD 6 million just from having to resort to manual sorting, and subsequently had data posted to the dark web when it refused to pay ransom. CMA CGM (CEVA logistics) had to disable its IT systems after an attack mostly targeting e-commerce operations; this is estimated to have cost USD 50 million<sup>2</sup>.

Though the defining logistics incident of the year was on Toll Group: two sequential and independent breaches which led to hundreds of gigabytes of stolen data, some of which was published to the dark web. The second of these attacks used ransomware which exploited Remote Desktop Connections, software which is being increasingly relied upon by remote workers<sup>3</sup>.

The attack on cloud computing provider Accellion, which compromised their flagship file-sharing platform designed to make sharing with third parties secure, affected many users including Transport for NSW<sup>4</sup>. This is another example of an attack on software more companies now rely on due to remote working.

And to cap off the year was the breach on cybersecurity firm FireEye which resulted in the theft of their own hacking tools. It was revealed to be part of a wider attack affecting more than FireEye<sup>5</sup>: the adversaries had used a network monitoring tool provided by a company called SolarWinds as a vector to gain access. Thousands of companies use this monitoring product, including Visa and Microsoft<sup>6</sup>.

## What to Look Out for in 2021

As employees settle into remote working, an increase in targeting of network perimeters is expected. A rising number of smart and home-IoT devices, often not secured by design, and connected to personal networks means increased perimeter vulnerability which is also difficult to monitor.

Governing bodies are recognising the increased risk, and more regulations are likely to come into effect addressing the issue of secure connectivity of devices, on top of stringent data privacy laws.

Cybercriminals know this and will use it for blackmail. Leakware campaigns threaten to report companies to a governing body such as the ICO if ransoms are not paid. But the reality is that the data is worth more than the ransom, and cybercriminals are now stealing data then locking systems so that they can leak and then sell on the data whilst still holding businesses to ransom.

Attacks on company supply chains have been effective, so we can expect more of these. Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) attacks are likely to rise which can bring servers offline, something which attackers know companies can't afford.

There will likely be greater scrutiny for logistics firms who are often third-party providers. The FireEye incident has revealed the risk of third-party interconnected systems, and the attack on

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cincinnati-firm-faces-5m-data/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.freightwaves.com/news/5-defining-cyberattacks-on-trucking-and-logistics-in-2020>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cpomagazine.com/cyber-security/toll-groups-operations-shut-down-by-yet-another-ransomware-attack/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.itnews.com.au/news/transport-for-nsw-data-stolen-in-accellion-breach-561396>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-12-15/fireeye-stumbled-across-solarwinds-breach-while-probing-own-hack>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.businessinsider.com/list-of-companies-agencies-at-risk-after-solarwinds-hack-2020-12>



Accellion suggests that when it comes to data sharing the third-party connector could (literally) be the weakest link.

## Meet the Risk

With spread out employees all trying to connect to each other, new importance is placed on workforce management via behaviour analytics and activity monitoring. In addition, zero-trust procedures should be implemented to ensure connected devices are identified and secured.

Companies need to assess unsecured devices already in place, whether these are smart devices not secured by design or old legacy devices adopted when the company was acquired. Legacy devices running old unsupported operating systems, or that haven't been patched, have been a favourite target of hackers in the recent past.

Companies also need to assess any third parties being used. If they are connected to the company network in any way, or even if they just provide software as a service, they should be tested and validated.

The ASD Essential 8 checklist can help guide companies on how to best secure their networks and improved cybersecurity practices, but logistics providers should think particularly about separating their information technology from their operational technology, and properly segmenting their networks to prevent lateral movement of an adversary.

It is worth remembering that better leadership can be critical to creating a cyber-aware workforce, and this can have real security benefits.

Cyber Citadel have teamed up with Wisetech Academy to offer cyber awareness training for employees. After a training period, Cyber Citadel will then test its effectiveness by running an artificial spear phishing campaign. Such exercises not only improve security but also show regulatory bodies that a company is making real effort and progress.

Cyber Citadel also offers a Next Generation Vulnerability Assessment (NGVA), using a mix of automated and manually reviewed

tools to better simulate an attack and to provide better risk assessment and key recommendations and results-driven advice. This streamlined service provides a simple and cost-effective way for a company to assess their security.

## 2020 accelerated change. Learn from it to prepare for the future.

For more information on how to approach cybersecurity improvements read The Threat to Logistics - <https://www.cybercitadel.com/the-threat-to-logistics/> and the Guide for Board Directors - <https://www.cybercitadel.com/cyber-security-guide-for-board-directors/>.

Check out the Logistics Industry Cyber Security Outlook <https://youtu.be/eGVWsdLzlo>



# New Age Technology 101

By KAI LINCOLN, Managing Director - SEKO Omni-Channel Logistics

And here we are, 2021. Only 8 years until cyborg wars will ravish the earth (according to The Terminator) and 6 years beyond hoverboards and self-drying clothes (according to Back to the Future 2).

Reality is that there have been some amazing technological advancements in the world since those movies were released in the 1980's, but it seems we haven't moved at the pace those writers had expected.

What do movies and logistics have in common? Not much really, however the



concept of advances in technology that will apparently improve our lives, or at least the efficiency of our lives, is the new horizon for most industries.

As logisticians, we are not exempt from this groundswell of change. While those of you reading this article might not be the ones actually building the tools, it's likely that aspects of new technology will play a significant role in both the industry and your lives in the years to come. In that vein, I thought it might be worthwhile to take a very simplified look at a few initiatives that you would've likely heard about, but maybe not explored the practical reality of – Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Block Chain Technology.

Though we've seen forms of "game changing" technology in the past that never really made the mark that we thought they might (RFID), these two are very real and have a lot of very real money behind them.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For the tech purists reading this, I do note that AI and Machine Learning (ML) are different. Machine learning is a more complex subset of AI. AI is simply a

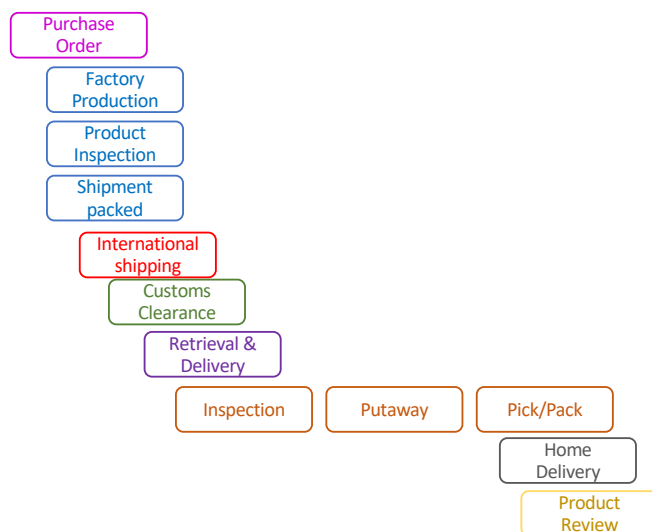
machine that has been programmed to make decisions, solve problems and perform actions based on programmed inputs. Machine learning involves a machine continually adapting based on new data flowing through it.

Regardless of what you call it, AI & ML are already a part of our daily life and the end-game is simple: automate manual work wherever possible.

Everyone would've interacted with a customer service chat at some point in the last few years. There's rarely a human typing those messages out. More often-than-not this is an AI chat-bot, who has been programmed to look for particular key words and questions to provide scripted responses. Some freight companies are already using similar technology in their customer service teams.

For our industry, there are a range of administrative tasks that will see AI taking a front seat, from customer service to customs classifications. The big one however, from a labour cost and safety perspective, are autonomous vehicles. If you think I'm talking about an unrealistic future state, look at the mining industry,

## The disjointed pieces and players of the standard supply chain from manufacture to consumption



## Transactional Parties

Retailer  
Factory  
Shipping Line  
Customs Broker  
Forwarder  
3PL  
Courier  
Consumer

## The consolidated digital record – BLOCKCHAIN - of all pieces of the supply chain



which already has autonomous vehicles for haulage, precise grading and digging. As the technology continues to prove that it is safer than human drivers and as shortages of drivers continue to plague the trucking industry and drive up wages, the more governments around the world will begin to endorse and approve AI led vehicles on public roads.

Obviously, the financial saving that AI will eventually generate through the removal of humans might be great for the P&L's of companies, the societal cost of redeploying redundant drivers will play a material role in how aggressive AI driven innovation will appear in our daily lives. These debates will carry on for years in both public forums and closed-door boardrooms, but there is no doubt that AI is here to stay and will fundamentally change our industry.

### Blockchain

This one has confused a lot of people over the last few years, including myself. On the surface it is best known as the engine room for crypto currencies. In supply chain it just seems like a really good tracking tool. While it is both of these things, the understanding is really in the name itself. I'll get to that in a minute.

As freight forwarders, we've long been a key player in the world of completing transactions for trade. When spending large sums of money with factories in foreign lands there has been reliance on shipping lines, freight forwarders and intermediary banks working together to complete a transaction between a factory and a buyer. There were many pieces to the puzzle that could go wrong, leading to delays, angst, fraud and even theft.

Now, think of those pieces as independent blocks, lying around the supply-chain waiting for their moment to become part of something bigger and complete. A chain even...

As each block reaches its completion point – mid-production quality inspection, final production check, goods loaded, goods delivered to port, goods sail, goods arrive, goods cleared, goods delivered, delivery inspection complete, etc. – it is added to a virtual chain on a cloud-based platform where all parties are active participants in the completion and coupling of the "blockchain". As an auditing tool, the blocks are preserved with specific time/date/notation information that paints a complete picture of the transaction.

Now, imagine these blocks becoming integrated with your financial system or with your warehouse management/inventory system. Traditional purchasing terms may evolve to mirror the blocks in the chain whereby partial payments are executed every time a new block is added. Warehouse receiving and balance sheet totals may immediately update prior to goods being put away in their final locations. At the product level the blocks may extend down to the unit levels and then follow on to the end consumer, creating a life-span history of every widget you sell, from purchase order to consumption.

Though advantages in visibility and efficiency are obvious, as with all technology, there are serious drawbacks. The biggest for our industry is the lack of readily available and widely adopted platforms that can be easily switched on, trusted and used at a competitive price. While many of the existing blockchain platforms are open source, meaning that you can freely integrate

with them using your own developers, few companies in our space would employ developers to build and maintain in-house blockchain integrations.

First-movers are also key to seeing this become industry standard. For those of you in retail related logistics, if you think back to the mid-2000's when retail compliance was just becoming "a thing". The idea of specialised labels, barcodes and data transfer was a real punish and was reserved for large companies who had the budgets to invest in retail compliant technology. Over the years, platforms like SPS Commerce have emerged to make retail compliance a reality for even the smallest of operators. Blockchain will need something similar to gain momentum – major clients working with large factories will likely be the start. Walmart, Amazon, Apple, etc., will drive this practice into the masses and platforms will emerge that will enable the technology to be easily used by all members of the chain.

So, what does all of this mean to you? Perhaps you can kick off a healthy debate at the next BBQ you're at (though footy is probably a safer topic). Maybe you re-watch The Terminator and nod more understandingly. But possibly, somewhere in your subconscious, this article plants a seed and, at some point in the future, when the time is right, you recognise that your new business process or the new client requirements coming across in RFP's are AI and Blockchain coming to life before your very eyes. From there, whether to fight it, adopt it or promote it will be very much up to you (and Siri if you choose to consult her...).



# Increased imports an opportunity and a risk

By, **ANDREW TONGUE**, Head of Biosecurity - Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.



With international travel still off the cards for the foreseeable future, Australia continues to see increased imports and sea freight. This poses both a risk and an opportunity for biosecurity.

Hitchhiker pests, like khapra beetle and brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB), continue to get a ride to Australia on cargo ships and in mail shipments.

Our biosecurity system is strong, robust and working hard to protect Australia from these pests.

We have increased offshore treatments, with 220 approved providers across 22 countries. We have also reduced delays for onshore treatment for BMSB and been able to reduce intervention in response to high compliance rates.

We have seen positive feedback from industry in response to our measures.

But there are still risks. Detections of live BMSB in air cargo and mail have increased. We rely on the vigilance of importers and the local community to identify and report hitchhiker pests.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment**

A recent case in Canberra, which resulted in an Australian Biosecurity Award being issued to a member of the community who reported strange insects in the packaging of his new fridge, is a great example. Without the efforts of that individual, we risked a genuine outbreak of khapra beetle in the community.

That incident, like others in the past, was responded to quickly and effectively, and we are confident that the khapra beetle associated with it were eradicated.

More information about the national response arrangements for exotic pests and diseases is at [outbreak.gov.au](http://outbreak.gov.au).

We have also seen an unprecedented demand for import clearance services in recent months, across document assessments, imported food shipments and self-assessed clearances, and acknowledge importers are experiencing delays in receiving services as a result. We have taken a number of steps to reduce these delays and appreciate industry's patience and understanding as we work through these issues.



Over 2021, we intend to bring about more changes to streamline and simplify import arrangements, to make them more efficient and effective. We want to make sure importers can get goods to Australia as quickly as possible, while still managing biosecurity and imported food risks.

A series of import roundtables were held recently to discuss additional co-design opportunities to enable industry to take on a greater role in managing biosecurity risks and safely speed up our border clearances.

Subscribe to our industry advice notices notification system to receive the latest updates on imports.



*Pictures are signs of Khapra Beetle infestation in packaging*



# Setting a global benchmark in biosecurity best practice through co-design

By SAL MILICI, Head of Border and Biosecurity – FTA / APSA

The year commenced with Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) and Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) representatives meeting on several occasions with executives from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (the department) leading to the establishment of short, medium and long term measures to address the unprecedented demand for their services. Of particular note are the following factors:

- the substantial increase in demand for service over the last year, including a 58% increase in Self-Assessed Clearance (SAC) lodgements, a 20% increase in imported food and dual (biosecurity/food) lodgements, and 62% increase in late lodgements. In response, the department has diverted resources from other tasks and is implementing other changes to help address this significant and unexpected increase in workload;

- the department acknowledged the effect on industry of the delays but emphasised the Government cannot afford to compromise Australia's biosecurity at the expense of achieving better service delivery outcomes, but that we must work together to co-design arrangements that deal with biosecurity risk and service delivery;

- robust biosecurity controls benefit all Australians as they protect against exotic pests and diseases, which could devastate our agricultural industries, the environment, exports and the economy. The impact would be felt across urban, rural and regional communities, and businesses seeking to recover from the effects of the COVID pandemic;

- where detections do occur at the border, the department works with importers, state governments and freight movers to manage the detection. This demand on the department's resources can be considerable. As an example, more than 20,000 hours

have been spent to date to deal with recent detections of khapra beetle, one of the most significant pests for our grain industry; and

- the department recognises that more needs to be done and is progressing other initiatives to reform its service delivery and become better biosecurity regulators, including partnering with industry to achieve biosecurity best practice through co-design at both a grass roots and strategic level.



(L to R: Paul Zalai; Minister Littleproud, Sal Milici and Andrew Crawford)

On 3 February 2021, Paul Zalai (Director, FTA / Secretariat APSA), Andrew Crawford (Member Representative – Border & Biosecurity, FTA/APSA) and I met with the Hon David Littleproud MP (Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management) in what was a very open and constructive meeting.



# Public Pest Enemy No. 2

By ANDREW CHRISTIE, Director – Andrew Christie Consulting

We have all heard of Khapra Beetle, the significance of this pest is not new to anyone in the import industry. Prevalent in over 40 targeted countries, industry and biosecurity alike are always on the lookout for Khapra.

Adding to Khapras already long list of undesirable attributes is that we know it can infest product as well as harbour within packaging or transport vessels.

What you may be surprised to know is that in the past 12 months there have been 17 incursions of Khapra Beetle and even more surprising is that 4 of these recent incursions were in non-agricultural products. Adding to what you may not already know is that of the 17 incursions, 11 were from countries not currently targeted as Khapra Beetle countries.

The potential damage that can be caused by the introduction of an exotic pest (to organisations, industry and the economy) mean that it is absolutely necessary to be aware of what you can do and what you must do should you find yourself in the position of discovering an insect incursion.

Dealing with an incursion once it has crossed the border is both expensive and time consuming. The exact process that will follow the discovery of the incursion is a matter for the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and will depend on many factors, not least the nature and type of insect we are dealing with.



What you can be assured of however, is that there are some critical initial actions that you can take to minimise delay, disruption and risk of further contamination.

In the event you find yourself the recipient of some unexpected guests in your consignment:

1. **Secure the goods as soon as possible.** This means the goods that are immediately affected and all goods within the same shipment or in close proximity.

This may mean closing and securing the container, or if goods are already offloaded, shrink-wrapping and tarping the consignment.

In some of the cases I was consulted to assist with, it was necessary to create a 10-meter exclusion zone. This means if you can, make sure all of the affected goods remain at least 10m away from other goods to ensure that if treatment is required, you minimise the volume of products requiring treatment.

Note: that it is not just products that may require treatment. Shelving and racking as well as vehicles may require treatment or fumigation so be mindful of moving the goods and if you need to, do so securely and quickly and minimise double handling.

Early intervention and segregation of goods may mean far less intervention in the long run.

2. Whilst this is listed as point 2, you must **immediately report your finding to the Department.** Getting any element of an insect incursion wrong may backfire greatly so setting yourself up for the best outcome includes appropriately securing the consignment and contacting the department in the first instance.

The person in charge of the goods, the Approved Arrangement or the importer is responsible for contacting a biosecurity officer or contacting the Department via the **Redline on 1800 798 636.**

3. **Start gathering information** beginning with a sample of the infestation, if it is safe to do so. A sample allows the Department entomologists to identify the insect and ascertain if it is in fact exotic or already

established in Australia (and therefore not a biosecurity risk).

That said, should the insects not be easily accessible or there is any risk of injury, take photos and detailed descriptions of the insects and their location within the consignment.

Entry numbers and import documents are also essential pieces of information for the Department so prepare these and have these on hand for the inspecting biosecurity officers.

4. **Using an insect knock-down spray** may be useful to stop crawling insects from escaping or cross contaminating. However, do this with caution. If the spray may cause the insects to disperse (for example flying insects) you are best to rely on closing containers, shrink wrapping and tarping. Segregation of goods is key.

5. **Nominate your contact person.** In the event of an incursion becoming significant (as were the issues I assisted with previously) having a central contact with whom the Department can communicate, streamlines the implementation of the Departments determined actions.

The discovery of insects within a consignment is not necessarily the beginning of a long and expensive exercise. Consignments can become contaminated onshore by established pests and this will usually be resolved quickly and without huge cost.

That said, insects should always be reported. What we have learned over the last year is that serious insects (like Khapra) can appear where you would least expect them and from places you would not have expected. There is just no room for complacency. In the event you do have a potentially serious incursion, your early action could make all the difference.





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# Have some role to play in the importation of goods ?? – you’re potentially liable for customs duty

By RUSSELL WIESE, Director – CGT Law

Recently a customs broker expressed alarm to me that the Australian Border Force (ABF) had demanded underpaid duty directly from the customs broker rather than the importer. This raises the important issue of who in the supply chain is potentially liable for customs duty. The issue is bound to come up more often as certain businesses are put under pressure by the impacts of Covid-19 and some other businesses attempt to avoid high dumping duties.

Below we consider the various parties who may be potentially liable for underpaid customs duty.

**Who is potentially liable for customs duty?**

Short answer – almost anyone who has had any connection with the goods. The Customs Act imposes liability for underpaid duty on the “owner”. This doesn’t seem too bad until you read the definition of “owner” in the Customs Act. “Owner” is defined as:

*“Owner “ in respect of goods includes any person (other than an officer of Customs) being or holding himself or herself out to be the owner, importer, exporter, consignee, agent, or person possessed of, or beneficially interested in, or having any control of, or power of disposition over the goods.*



“ *The biggest risk arises where an underpayment is identified following an audit. Examples would be misuse of a free trade agreement or tariff concession order, incorrect tariff classification, undervaluation of goods and not paying required dumping duty. In these circumstances the goods will have been cleared and possibly no longer exist.* ”

The “owner”, “importer”, “exporter” and “consignee” are at least parties that are commercially involved in the importation of the goods. However, the definition also includes an “agent”. Presumably this is someone who acts on behalf of the owner. This could include the customs broker or freight forwarder.

A person “possessed of” or “having any control of” the goods can include the any party that has physical control or possession of the goods at any stage. This would include the parties that carry or store the goods.

Based on the above, it is very likely that most logistics professionals providing services in respect of imported goods will fit within the definition of “owner”.

**How have the Court’s interpreted the definition of owner?**

Sometimes when the legislation acts to impose wide liability, the Court will interpret the wording narrowly. However, in an attempt to protect the revenue, the Courts have taken a different approach. On different occasions the Courts have held that:

- Numerous people will at the same time will meet the definition of “owner”
- Once liability as “owner” attaches to a party, it is not removed until the duty is paid
- The only way a party can discharge its liability as owner is for the duty to be paid
- The liability of the owner applies both to duties demanded at the time of import and duties subsequently demanded following a post importation audit

In short, the Courts have been happy to uphold the wide definition of “owner” and have rejected arguments that an “owner” can discharge their liability by parting with the goods.

**Approach taken by the ABF?**

Usually, this issue does not arise at the time of importation. The goods should not be released until a party has made payment of duty. However, the situation is different if there is a post clearance audit and it is found that duty was underpaid.

The ABF set out its position in Department of Immigration and Border Protection Notice No. 2017/16. In this notice the ABF noted the following:

- The ABF has an obligation to collect underpaid duty
- This may involve issuing demands against a party that does not have an obligation under the commercial agreement to pay import duty
- Generally, the demand will be made on the importer named in the import declaration
- Before making a demand on another party, consideration will be given to:

- All the parties who could be classified as the owner
- The involvement and actions of the parties in relation to the goods
- The impact a party's conduct may have had on the under payment of duty

**Does the ABF ever demand duty from a party that is not the importer of record?**

While a wide range of parties in the supply chain have a theoretical liability for duty, this only becomes a problem if the ABF actually elects to demand duty from parties other than the importer of record. In my experience, this rarely happens. But this is not the same as saying that it never happens.

Some examples of where the ABF has demanded duty from a party other than the importer on the import declaration are:

- DDP Transaction – where a foreign company was the importer under a delivered duty paid (DDP) transaction. The foreign company deliberately undervalued the goods. It was not alleged that the Australian consignee had any knowledge of the undervaluation. The ABF nevertheless demanded duty and GST from the Australian consignee. In this case the relevant factor seemed to be that the importer took the risk of being a party to a DDP transaction.
- Failed direct debit payment – more recently, the ABF has demanded duty from a customs broker in circumstances where the importer of record was unable to pay. In this case, the importer had set up a direct debit payment system with the ABF. The ABF had processed the payment in relation to the duty payable on the goods. It seems that that ABF made the choice to release the goods prior to actually receiving the funds. The direct debit was eventually dishonoured but the goods had already been released. The ABF made the decision to demand the underpaid duty from the customs broker even though:
  - the dishonoured payment was not from the customs broker's bank account;
  - the ABF elected to release the goods before confirming the receipt of the funds; and
  - the customs broker had not contributed to the underpayment of customs duty.

The ABF rarely makes demands on parties other than the importer of record where the underpayment of duty is identified following a post clearance audit. This is even the case when the underpayment relates to tariff classification or other issues that are within the technical expertise of the customs broker.

In most cases a demand would be made on the importer and it is expected that if there was a genuine claim that the broker

had caused the underpayment, the importer would seek contribution from the broker.

**Just to make certain that customs brokers are liable**

If there was any doubt that the definition of "owner" extended to licensed customs brokers, the issue is made irrelevant by section 183 of the Customs Act. The section has the blunt heading "Agents Personally Liable" and provides that customs brokers shall be deemed to be the "owner" of the goods.

The existence of this section doesn't leave any room for argument as to the liability of customs brokers.

**What can you do to protect yourself?**

The reality is that for most importers, the amount payable in customs duty will be less than the amount payable to the forwarder for the international transport of the goods. Your biggest risk is not the underpayment of customs duty but rather the non-payment of your own invoices!

In the absence of underpaid duty, it will be very rare that there is the potential for release of the goods without payment of all duty. An authority to deal with the goods will only be issued once payment has been made. An example is given above where a declined direct debit payment resulted in the release of goods without payment. It is recommended that you remind clients of an expected direct debit in the following circumstances:

1. it is a new client
2. the client does not regularly pay duty on its imports
3. the duty amount is much larger than the amount usually paid by the client
4. the client is behind in paying your own invoices
5. you are aware that the client is in financial difficulty

The biggest risk arises where an underpayment is identified following an audit. Examples would be misuse of a free trade agreement or tariff concession order, incorrect tariff classification, undervaluation of goods and not paying required dumping duty. In these circumstances the goods will have been cleared and possibly no longer exist. The importer may be wound up or simply not interested in paying any additional duty.

The ABF say that it will take into consideration the behaviour of the relevant parties. From experience, it is rare to see a customs broker receive an infringement notice or other penalty where the ABF believes that the customs broker acted in a professional manner. Consider the various tobacco smuggling cases – innocent customs brokers (who are "owners" and

“ The “owner”, “importer”, “exporter” and “consignee” are at least parties that are commercially involved in the importation of the goods. However, the definition also includes an “agent”. Presumably this is someone who acts on behalf of the owner. This could include the customs broker or freight forwarder. ”

potentially liable for duty) are never sent duty demand notices or prosecuted.

More importantly, acting professionally and exercising due diligence will help with preventing the events that result in an underpayment of duty. The more information you have about the goods, the more likely the correct duty will be paid at the time of importation. The motivation to do this will be good business practice and your obligations as a customs broker. However, the likelihood of avoiding direct liability as an “owner” should be additional motivation.

The reality is that even the best customs brokers cannot prevent all underpaid duty. Customs brokers are not ABF auditors and will only see the information that their clients choose to provide. In this case, awareness of the risk is just as important as prevention. Be aware that you are potentially liable as “owner” and this will impact how you select clients, price your services, select insurance and what due diligence you will undertake. This due diligence may not just be about the specific import but also the financial standing of the client.

If you have concerns about your potential duty liability or what steps you can take to reduce the risk of an ABF demand, we recommend speaking to a customs compliance specialist.



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## New Tariff Notes will change the way we classify some goods.

By **SUSAN DANKS**, Head of Customs and Regulatory Compliance – Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) Pty Ltd

The Customs Tariff Amendment (Incorporation of Proposals and Other Measures) Act 2021 amends the Customs Tariff Act 1995 to, among other things:

(1) separately identify specifically formulated caffeinated beverages, formulated supplementary sports foods and formulated supplementary foods;

(2) specifically identify vitamins and food supplements;

(3) provide that wheelie bins do not fall within the classification of vehicles;

(4) provide that plates, rods, angles, shapes, sections, tubes, pipes and the like requiring further modification prior to being used cannot be classified as parts; and

These amendments create new tariff subheadings to separately identify formulated supplementary food, formulated supplementary sports food and formulated caffeinated beverages within the meaning of ANZFSO under the broader, more generic water-based beverages classification heading.

Similarly, the amendments include new subheadings to separately identify formulated supplementary food and formulated supplementary sports food under the more generic food preparations classification heading. This will also be used to improve monitoring under the Imported Food Inspection Scheme.

The Act also inserts additional notes to provide for the classification of vitamins and dietary supplements, wheelie bins and metal profiles and pipes. These Notes have been inserted to overcome the decisions in recent cases:

### **Comptroller-General of Customs v Pharm-A-Care Laboratories Pty Ltd (Pharm-A-Care)**

This case considered the tariff classification of gummi bears. The Australian Border Force (ABF) argued that they should be classified as food preparations of heading 2106 or confectionary of heading 1704. The decision, which was upheld in the High Court and therefore a legal precedent, was

that the goods were classified to Chapter 30 as medicaments and were therefore duty free.

The ABF opinion is that in order to be classified in Chapter 30, goods should treat or prevent particular diseases or conditions, and that this interpretation is consistent with other WCO countries.

The new Note provides that vitamin and food supplement products cannot be classified as medicaments of Chapter 30 unless they are included in Schedule 2, 3, 4 or 8 to the Poisons Standard, and provides that they are classified to heading 2106 unless they are elsewhere classified.

### **Sulo MGB Australia Pty Ltd and Comptroller-General of Customs**

The Sulo case concerned the tariff classification of wheels for wheelie bins. The outcome of the Sulo case is that it sets a legal precedent for wheelie bins and their parts to be classified vehicles, not mechanically propelled, in Chapter 87 in the Tariff.

The new Note suggests that such goods should be classified according to their material in Chapter 39 or Section XV.

Since this decision, the WCO has changed the explanatory notes so that wheelie bins are excluded from Chapter 87.

### **Smoothflow Australia Pty Ltd and Comptroller-General of Customs**

In the Smoothflow case, Smoothflow Australia Pty Ltd imported steel pipes that could be used for fire sprinkler systems in buildings. The AAT decided that the goods were classified to heading 7308 and not heading 7306. Although both headings are dutiable, 7308 is not subject to anti-dumping and countervailing duties. (The Federal Court has since dismissed the ABF appeal of this decision).

The Act adds new Notes, which provide that

heading 7308 and 7610 (titled structures and parts of structures and aluminium structures respectively) do not include 'plates, rods, angles, shapes, sections, tubes, pipes and the like, requiring further modification before use in structures, including, but not limited to, cutting, drilling and bending'. In addition, heading 7308 does not include 'tubes, pipes and the like prepared for the conveyance of fluids (including water, oil and gas)'.

It will be interesting to see if these Notes are interpreted by ABF to overcome the decision in *Solu Pty Ltd and Comptroller-General of Customs*, which concerned the importation of various extruded aluminium components for kitchen builds that had to be cut to length on site. The importer claimed the goods were classified under either 8302 (base metal mountings, fittings and similar articles) or 9402 (other furniture and parts). The ABF claimed that the goods were classified under 7604 as aluminium profiles to which dumping duties applied. The judgement was not in support of the ABF claims.

The Customs Tariff Amendment (Incorporation of Proposals and Other Measures) Act 2021 has received Royal Assent and should commence on 29 March 2021. It should be noted that these amendments only apply in relation to goods imported into Australia on or after the commencement of this Act and goods imported into Australia before the commencement of the Act, but not yet entered for home consumption.

Should you have clients that may be impacted, we strongly suggest that the Notes be reviewed as these changes have implications not only for tariff classification, but also for existing and new tariff concession orders and the imposition of dumping duties. Please note too that it is probable that any Tariff Advices received based on the above decisions will be revoked by ABF.





**Australian  
BORDER FORCE**



**Australian Government  
Illicit Tobacco Taskforce**

# The High Price of Crime - Illicit Tobacco in Australia

By GREG LINSDELL, Commander Special Investigations - Australian Border Force

The trade of illicit tobacco supports serious organised crime groups (OCGs), weakens Australia's economic recovery and damages legitimate businesses. Illicit tobacco also undermines Australian Government health initiatives and defrauds the Commonwealth of significant revenue, which can impact the funding of vital community programs. The Australian Border Force (ABF) and other government agencies are committed to the fight against this harmful challenge to our economy and communities.



Every year large quantities of tobacco are illegally imported into Australia by air, sea and mail before being distributed to unsuspecting Australians at a much cheaper price. Tobacco is highly taxed in Australia compared to other countries, and the international cost differential makes it an attractive trade for established OCGs. For example, when compared to drugs illicit tobacco may be perceived as a relatively low-risk, high-reward by criminal enterprises. Because of this, it is often used to complement their syndicate's criminal activities magnifying the harm they inflict on our country. The market is fuelled by the greed of OCGs and the demand created by Australians looking to save money on cigarettes, often without a full

appreciation of the economic and social implications.

Australians need to understand involvement in illicit tobacco, including the purchasing of it at the retail level, is supporting organised criminals, the black economy and is a criminal offence. Producing, importing, supplying or buying black market tobacco is an offence. Buyers of illicit tobacco should consider what they are buying, and by making this illegal choice, understand that smuggled or counterfeit tobacco products puts money into the hands of criminals, rather than injecting it into the Australian economy and community.



“Illicit tobacco” is any tobacco product that has been produced (grown), imported, exported, purchased, sold or possessed in a manner that does not comply with legislation. This includes tobacco where the legally required duties and taxes are not paid, or when safety, health standards, packaging, copyright or trademark laws have been breached.

The size of Australia’s illegal tobacco market is challenging to measure. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) publishes a Tobacco Tax Gap report that estimates the scale of the illicit market in Australia. For 2018–19, it estimated that the net tobacco duty tax gap was six per cent, or \$822 million. Another way to consider this, is that only \$12.85 billion (94 per cent) of the total estimated tax payable on tobacco was paid in 2018–19. To imagine the scale of the problem from another perspective, the ABF recorded 157,549 of undeclared tobacco detections in the 2019-20 financial year, equating to approximately 494.28 tonnes of illicit tobacco being detected, seized and destroyed.

Australia has one of the strongest regulatory regimes for tobacco in the world, after the implementation of a range of measures to strengthen our ability to combat the illicit tobacco trade. This includes the requirement for all duties on tobacco to be paid immediately on import; the classification of tobacco as a prohibited import (without permit); and the establishment of the ABF-led Illicit Tobacco Taskforce (ITTF). The creation of the ITTF recognises that the trade in illicit tobacco is a global problem that is best combatted through a coordinated effort across all sectors including government, law enforcement, and community and industry groups.

Globally, investigations suggest OCGs are using the proceeds from illicit tobacco sales to fund other serious criminal activities, such as drugs and firearm trafficking, money laundering and terrorism financing – all of which feed into the black market economy. Unsurprisingly, criminals are not concerned with health or other quality/

safety regulations. Their focus is solely on profit margins. In some cases, illicit tobacco samples have been found to be contaminated with high levels of pesticides and even reported cases of products containing chicken feathers and animal faeces. These concerning practices are putting unsuspecting consumers at personal risk, many of whom may just believe they are saving themselves some expense, by avoiding taxation rates. This is particularly true when the products are counterfeited versions of reputable brands or appear professionally packaged.

The illicit tobacco trade affects legitimate businesses who are competing against criminals who avoid regulation and taxes and sell illicit tobacco products at a cheaper price. This places honest taxpayers and businesses – who are doing the right thing – at a disadvantage. If unchecked, this activity can foster a damaging culture of non-compliance that undermines Australia’s continued economic growth. Trade compliance and payment of duties and taxes is critical, particularly at this time of economic recovery, following the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Illicit tobacco is an operational priority for the ABF. Significant resources are deployed in relation to detecting and addressing the importation of illicit tobacco into Australia, maintaining supply chain integrity and managing the collection of duties and taxes on legitimate tobacco imported. These efforts are supported through enforcement, investigations and prosecution activities. The ABF uses advanced technology to screen and examine goods prior to entry into the Australian market, applying an intelligence-informed approach in identifying smuggling methodologies of criminals and in targeting prohibited goods at the border. In the 2019-2020 financial year, the ABF seized over 432 million cigarettes and 177 tonnes of loose leaf tobacco with an estimated value of more than \$621 million in evaded duty.

On 1 July 2018, the ABF led ITTF was established in response to recommendations made by the Black Economy Taskforce. The ITTF includes officers from the ABF, Department of Home Affairs, ATO, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre, and Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. The ITTF model complements the broader efforts of the ABF and allows investigations to be conducted collaboratively to protect Australia by targeting, disrupting and dismantling the most serious actors and criminal enterprises that deal in illicit tobacco. The ITTF also work with policing and health authorities at the state and territory level to address compliance and legislation breaches across Australia.

This approach has led to significant prosecutions and the dismantling of



criminal networks. It also supports the ever increasing development in the ITTF’s understanding of the illicit tobacco market, inclusive of overseas sourcing, importation, distribution, manufacturing and domestic cultivation. These efforts have resulted in annual increases in undeclared tobacco detections and destruction of tobacco crops by the ITTF. Together, these measures target major sources of illicit tobacco entering the Australian market supported by legislation that provides a maximum penalty for tobacco smuggling of 10 years’ imprisonment and/or a fine of up to five times the amount of duty evaded.

For example, in October last year, a 48-year-old Victorian woman was sentenced for her role in the large scale supply, distribution and sale of imported and domestically manufactured illicit cigarettes and tobacco products across Australia. She was charged with one count of possessing tobacco knowing that it was imported with intent to defraud the Commonwealth of revenue. She was sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three years to be released on a recognisance release order after serving a period of 22 months.

The ITTF, inclusive of its contributing partner agencies, targets all forms of illicit tobacco sourcing (not only imported goods), including tobacco which has been grown onshore in Australia. It is illegal to grow tobacco in Australia without the appropriate excise licence, and since 2006, there have been no licenced tobacco growers or manufacturers in Australia. However, OCGs continue to orchestrate these illegal growing operations, sometimes by targeting unsuspecting landowners leasing their land to grow tobacco. These operations are generally not run by genuine farmers or landowners, but by criminals living and operating in local communities. Farm land is leased in rural areas, crops are planted using illegal labour, exploiting and underpaying illegal workers and using water diverted from local water sources. These inexperienced growers frequently use pesticides which are not only damaging to the eventual consumer smoking the tobacco, but also potentially to workers tending to the crops and also potentially critically damaging the farming land.



In January 2021, an ITTF led activity near Singleton, resulted in the arrest of an individual after 50.3 tonnes of tobacco from an illegal tobacco crop was seized. Approximately two hectares of tobacco crops and just under a hectare of immature planted seedlings found at the property were seized and destroyed. The tobacco had a potential excise value of more than \$9.9 million. An arrest was made by New South Wales Police and an individual charged with the possession of tobacco/seed/plant/leaf 500 kilograms or above and manufacture of tobacco/seed/plant/leaf 500 kilograms or above.



The ITTF, including the ABF, are working hard every day to combat the trade in illicit tobacco. We encourage those in the trade, logistics and freight sector to use your commercial expertise to help us protect the Australian community by reporting suspicious importation details and behaviours. Reports of suspicious activity can be reported anonymously to Border Watch. Our investigations are often initiated or supported from this form of reporting, and while we are unable to provide a result on each report given to us due to operational and legal constraints, you can be assured that we review and incorporate all information received.

To make a report of for more information on Border Watch, please visit the ABF website at [www.abf.gov.au/borderwatch](http://www.abf.gov.au/borderwatch).

For more information on the ITTF, visit [www.abf.gov.au/about-us/taskforces/illicit-tobacco-taskforce](http://www.abf.gov.au/about-us/taskforces/illicit-tobacco-taskforce).

For more information on tobacco more broadly, [www.abf.gov.au/importing-exporting-and-manufacturing/prohibited-goods/categories/tobacco](http://www.abf.gov.au/importing-exporting-and-manufacturing/prohibited-goods/categories/tobacco).

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## Maintaining the pressure on illicit tobacco growers and importers

By KIRSTEN DAGGAR-NICKSON, Head of Corporate and Legal Affairs – Imperial Brands

Australian Federal agencies have busted one of the largest illicit tobacco crops on record on the Victorian/NSW border.

On 3 March 2021, officers from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), the Australian Border Force (ABF) and New South Wales Police, found 65 acres of tobacco crops in Kyalite, New South Wales. The Illicit Tobacco Taskforce (ITTF) operation saw the seizure and destruction of more than 183 tonnes of illicit tobacco which has a potential excise value of \$36 million.

On the same day, ATO officers and Victoria Police, found 29.3 acres of illicit tobacco crops in Beverford, Victoria as part of an ITTF operation. ATO officers seized and destroyed 183 tonnes of illicit tobacco crops and 140kg processed tobacco bales which has a potential excise value of more than \$36.3 million.

On 4 March, the ATO and Victoria Police attended a property in Vinifera, Victoria where they found 13 acres of illicit tobacco crops with a potential excise value of \$12 million. ATO officers seized and destroyed 60.7 tonnes of illicit tobacco. The crops had a combined value of more than \$84 million dollars.

The huge operation is further evidence of the sophisticated criminal syndications funnelling illicit tobacco into the Australian market, according to Imperial Brands Australasia's Head of Corporate and Legal Affairs, Kirsten

Daggar-Nickson.

"We know illicit tobacco is a massive issue in this country, with one in five cigarettes an illegal product," she said, citing last year's KPMG Illicit Tobacco report, which is due to be released again for 2020 in coming months.

Evaded duty on the illegal trade cost the Federal Government more than \$3 billion dollars last year, with the proceeds of the crime perpetuating heinous crimes including terrorism.

While it is encouraging to see Federal agencies destroying illicit crops, more needs to be done to deter the gangs behind the scenes.

More enforcement is required, and tougher penalties put in place to send a message that illicit operations will not be tolerated.

Growing tobacco has not been legal in this country since 2006 however years of continual tax increases and the introduction of plain packaging has made growing illicit tobacco increasingly lucrative.

In this latest bust, the farms were found on either side of the Murray River disguised to look like cabbage farms. The ABF has shut down the farms and arrested several growers found on site.

These seizures come after the recent arrest of a man after 50.3 tonnes of tobacco from an illegal tobacco crop was seized in NSW. The excise evaded was valued at \$10 million.

In another case the criminals behind an attempt to smuggle a 9.5 million cigarettes (\$7.7 million in excise) into Western Australia from Vietnam have been sentenced to almost five years jail.

In another case a 55-year-old Perth man has been sentenced to eight months jail for smuggling almost 100,000 cigarettes into Fremantle concealed inside a shipment of sofas and scented air fresheners. And the ABF has caught a man trying to smuggle 163,000 cigarettes and 85kg of tobacco into Adelaide and he faces sentencing next month.



# Connecting DFAT's diplomatic network to Australian Business

Open international trade and investment is vital to Australia's COVID-19 economic recovery, and that of our trading partners. Better access to international markets maximises opportunities for Australian exporters to diversify and expand into new markets and to spread their risk in an increasingly challenging global economic environment.

During the pandemic, protectionism and pressure to increase domestic production (or "on-shoring") increased around the world. The pandemic disrupted many global supply chains, reduced access to some international markets and dampened global economic output. The Australian Government will continue to work with our trading partners to keep overseas markets open and to ensure that COVID-related emergency measures are proportionate, transparent, and temporary. This will ensure Australia is well placed to take advantage of the economic benefits of opening-up in a COVID safe way.

The government is pursuing open trade and investment settings through multilateral, regional and bilateral forums. Trade liberalisation measures undertaken by Australia, including via free trade agreements, have delivered higher incomes, more job opportunities and higher economic growth. Around one in five Australian workers is employed in a trade-related activity and exports contribute exponentially to Australia's GDP growth.

Expanding and strengthening our network of free trade agreements (FTAs) will support Australian businesses and consumers. As a result of four agreements entering into force in 2020, Australia currently has a network of fifteen FTAs with twenty-six partner economies providing diverse trade and investment opportunities for Australians. In 2021, Australia will be negotiating new FTAs, including well advanced negotiations with the United Kingdom and European Union. Australia will also be working toward bringing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which is the largest trade agreement in history, into force to the benefit of Australian businesses and consumers. Where possible, Australia will work with our

trading partners to review existing FTAs to ensure they remain up-to-date and deliver additional mutual benefits.

There is no doubt Australia has fared better than most countries during COVID owing to our open trade policy settings and the resilience and innovation of Australian businesses. But we can't ignore the fact that COVID-19 has vastly changed the international trade and investment landscape. Many of those changes are here to stay. To remain relevant, and economically prosperous, we need to continue to develop and adapt our trade policy settings to support Australian businesses to harness new competitive advantages and navigate rapidly evolving international markets.

One example of this is the enormous shift toward digital platforms during the pandemic. Significant efforts are being made across government to support digital trade innovation. Building on the success of the Australia Singapore-Digital Economy Agreement, the government will advocate for consistent, commercially meaningful digital trade rules across the region. Better digital trade rules will help to unlock the potential of digital technologies for trade and to ensure our region remains the engine of world economic growth, even in these difficult times. For more information on the Government's digital trade initiatives have a look at the March edition of Business Envoy here.

In 2021, the government will continue to work to make Australia a more attractive destination for foreign investment in a very competitive global marketplace. This is because foreign investment helps us to finance new businesses, grow existing businesses, and build infrastructure. Investment in Australia also helps our exports and drives innovation and technological advancement.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) remains vital for maintaining open and predictable markets for Australia. The Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, The Hon Dan Tehan MP participated in a virtual WTO ministerial meeting on 29 January to advocate for Australia's WTO reform and negotiating priorities. Coming out of the meeting, Mr Tehan said there was a genuine desire for WTO reform among his counterparts. The government will continue to push for practical reform and negotiating initiatives that improve the way the WTO operates and delivers new rules in key areas, including on e-commerce, services, agriculture, and fisheries subsidies.

The government will work with domestic stakeholders to help Australian businesses navigate the trade disruptions caused by COVID-19, support Australia's economic recovery and ensure our longer-term prosperity. While the pandemic has been challenging in many ways, from crisis can also come innovation, and it is important that we use this as an opportunity to rethink and renew our trade settings in ways that will have a lasting positive impact for the Australian economy.



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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The Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) and Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) would like to acknowledge the following sponsors for their ongoing support of the Alliance.



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# What's on...

# Calendar

## of events 2021/22



Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) is accredited by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (to deliver CBC training) and by the Australian Border Force (to deliver licensed customs broker CPD training) allowing members to receive high quality, practical, cost effective and flexible solutions.

### CONTINUED BIOSECURITY COMPETENCY (CBC)

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment has advised that only one CBC Activity will need to be completed to maintain accreditation for Class 19.1 Approved Arrangement – Non-commodity for containerised cargo (NCCC) for the current period (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

Note: No mandatory training for AEPCOMM accredited persons and no Information Session for either NCCC or AEPCOMM is required. However, as per the training and accreditation for broker approved arrangements policy, the department may schedule additional activities during the CBC period if necessary.

The Department envisages the mandatory training to be scheduled for mid-2021 and will advise industry of the dates as they are available.

A recording will be made available by the Department in the days following this delivery for those that are not able to participate in the live webinar.

**MAINTAIN YOUR ACCREDITATION** - FTA will make the associated assessment available online for the CBC Activity 21-22/01 via [www.ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://www.ComplianceNetFTA.com.au) immediately following the live webinar (date still to be provided)

### ONLINE TRAINING

FTA offers practical online training at [www.ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://www.ComplianceNetFTA.com.au) with resources and online assessment available at listed prices. Members are offered unlimited Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Continued Biosecurity Competency (CBC) training for \$165 (incl GST) per person per accreditation period (1 April to 31 March). Further discounts are offered to businesses with six(6) or more registrations with the option for an all-inclusive invoice for FTA Premium Membership and CPD / CBC training - price on application to [czalai@FTAlliance.com.au](mailto:czalai@FTAlliance.com.au)

"KEEPING AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE MOVING"



Australian Peak Shippers Association Inc. (APSA)

### CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

#### CPD BORDER COMPLIANCE PROGRAM (24 CPD POINTS)

##### SYDNEY

Friday, 30 July 2021 & repeated  
Saturday, 31 July 2021 8.30am to 4.00pm  
Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach Hotel,  
Cnr Grand Parade and Princess Street,  
Brighton Le Sands

##### PERTH

Saturday, 7 August 2021  
8.30am to 4.00pm  
Hyatt Regency Perth 99 Adelaide Terrace, Perth

##### MELBOURNE

Friday, 20 August 2021 & repeated  
Saturday, 21 August 2021  
8.30am to 4.00pm  
Hyatt Place Melbourne, 1 English Street,  
Essendon Fields

##### BRISBANE

Wednesday, 1 September 2021  
8.30am to 4.00pm  
Novotel Brisbane Airport, 6 – 8 The Circuit,  
Brisbane Airport

### EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION

Your Early Bird Registration (before 30 April 2021) at a cost of \$297 (incl GST) provides you with 30+ CPD points and your CBC as a part of one registration:

- attendance at one of the above listed CPD Border Compliance Program events – 24 CPD points
- complimentary access to Continued Biosecurity Competency (CBC) Activity 21-22/01 for 19.1. Non-commodity for Containerised Cargo Clearance (NCCC) - 3 CPD points in Stream A - via [ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://ComplianceNetFTA.com.au) ; and
- complimentary access to a further 6 CPD points in Stream A via [ComplianceNetFTA.com.au](http://ComplianceNetFTA.com.au)

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