



Date: 10 November 2023

Key Notes

- An average of **~8 329 containers** was handled per day, with **~8 120 containers** projected for next week.
- Rail cargo handled out of Durban amounted to **2 636** containers for the week, **↑13%** (w/w).
- Cross-border queue times were **unchanged** (w/w), with transit times **↑2,0 hours** (w/w); SA borders decreased by **~3,7 hours**, averaging **~9,7 hours (↓28%)**; Other SADC borders averaged **~5,8 hours (↓28%)**.
- CTS container volume in September (dry & reefer) is down by **↓0,9%** (m/m) but up by **↑12,8%** (y/y).
- Global freight rates are up by another substantial **↑7%** (or **\$98**) to **\$1 504** per 40-ft container this week.
- Global air cargo is up by **↑1,9%** (y/y) but and remained down versus the pre-pandemic era (**↓1,3%**).

i. Port operations - General

- Port operations in the last week were characterised primarily by adverse weather conditions, equipment breakdowns and shortages, and internal congestion.
 - Strong winds in Cape Town ensured that more than 24 operational hours were lost during the week.
 - Durban is currently the only South African Port on the "*Port congestion Watch*" as more than **60 000 TEUs** were stuck at outer anchorage on Tuesday, 31 October.
 - By the end of the week, Crane 3 at GCT was still with the technical team undergoing hoist rope repairs and should return to service sometime over the weekend.
 - Intermittent cable theft took place on the rail network over the previous weekend, causing some delays.

ii. Port operations – Performance metrics

- CTCT stack occupancy for GP containers was **50%**, reefers at **24%**, and empties at **62%**.
- CTCT handled **~1 514 (↑30%, w/w)** containers a day, with a slightly increased average of **~1 601** projected this week.
- DCT Pier 1: Stack occupancy **48%** for GP containers. During the same period, **800 imports** were on hand, with **59 units having road stops** and **33 unassigned**.
- DCT Pier 2: Stack occupancy was **43%** for GP containers and undisclosed for reefers.
- DCT Pier 1 handled **~1 428 (↑24%, w/w)** containers a day, with a slightly decreased average of **~1 328** projected this week.
- DCT Pier 2 handled **~3 013 (↑23%, w/w)** containers a day, with a slightly increased average of **~3 209** projected this week.
- Average TTT for DCT Pier 1 this week: **96 minutes (↓24%, w/w)**, with a staging time of **92 minutes (↓20%, w/w)**.
- Average TTT for DCT Pier 2 this week: **73 minutes (↓12%, w/w)**, with a staging time of **54 minutes (↓26%, w/w)**.
- In the last week (*4 to 10 November*), rail cargo handled out of Durban was reported at **2 636** containers, up **↑13%** from the previous week's **2 325** containers.

iii. Local and cross-border road:

- The median border crossing times at South African borders decreased by **more than three and a half hours**, averaging **~13,4 hours (↓28%, w/w)** for the week. In contrast, the greater SADC region



(excluding South African controlled) decreased by approximately **two and a quarter hours**, averaging **~5,8 hours (↓28%, w/w)**.

- Several regional border crossing times have significantly decreased this week, including Mutukula OSBP, Nakonde, Hora-Hora, and Kasumbalesa.
 - However, some of the decrease could be directly related to the ongoing driver strike (in DRC, Zambia, Tanzania and surrounding) instigated by the self-proclaimed leader of the SADC Truck Drivers Association in Zambia, Steven Masunga.
 - Truck drivers in Tanzania are on strike, claiming a non-existent "risk Allowance" from mines, with demands for **\$500** per truck for copper cathodes and **\$700** for cobalt hydroxide.
 - However, the Tanzanian Truck Owners Association and Reload Logistics refute the existence of such allowances, while discussions with local authorities led to the strike being called off, pending further resolution.
 - Some areas are still blocked, though, with drivers not moving off; many mines are still blocked as well.
- Last week, processing of trucks at Kopfontein was halted due to a lack of parking on the Botswana side, posing a security threat as some drivers had to sleep at the border.
- The Namibian Revenue Agency (Namra) announced upcoming maintenance on the integrated tax administration system (ITAS) and Asycuda World on 11 November, from 07:00 to 23:00, rendering the systems inoperable during this period.
- In summary, cross-border queue time averaged **~4,4 hours (unchanged)** from the previous week's **~4,4 hours**, indirectly costing the transport industry an estimated **\$4,8 million (R89 million)**. Furthermore, the week's average cross-border transit times hovered around **~6,5 hours** (down by **~2,0 hours** from the **~8,5 hours** recorded in the previous report), at an indirect cost to the transport industry of **\$5,0 million (R93 million)**. As a result, the total indirect cost for the week amounts to an estimated **~\$9,7 million (~R182 million)**, down by **~R34,6 million** or **↓16%** from **~R216 million** in the previous report).

iv. Global shipping industry

- The latest container throughput figures for September from Container Trade Statistics (CTS) show that container volume has decreased by **↓0,9%** (m/m) this month after global volume increased in August (**↑2,8%**).
 - The change is significantly more negative than initial predictions led to believe, notably those made by Drewry, which expected throughput to increase by **↓1,4%**¹.
 - Despite the slight monthly reduction, annual throughput is now up by a massive **↑12,8%** (y/y) versus September 2022.
- Concerning freight rates, the upbeat narrative continues for shippers – similar to the index reported weekly by Drewry – the price index (reefer and dry) continued to moderate over the medium term.
 - It is down by another **↓4,1%** (m/m) and a considerable **↓59,2%** (y/y) versus a year ago – though the speed of change has subsided.
- Sub-Saharan African trade shows a slight decrease in exports (down by **↓0,5%**) but a significant decrease in imports (down by **↓10,2%**) for September.
 - As with overall trade, yearly SSA trade shows that imports continue to grow substantially (**↑12,8%**, y/y), while exports are also slightly up versus September 2022 (by **↑3,0%**).
 - Incidentally, South Africa accounted for **26,3%** of SSA imports and **59,6%** of SSA exports in August when measuring these versus TNPA figures.

¹ Drewry. 23/10/2023. [Port Throughput Indices – August 2023](#).



- El Niño events are anticipated to impact crop yields on at least a quarter of global croplands, leading to significant changes in seaborne gas and oil trading patterns, according to a report by Greece's Xclusiv Shipbrokers².
- The impact on shipping routes is already evident, as the Panama Canal queue has increased by **↑13%** from Thursday to Friday, as drastic transit cuts kick in at the drought-hit waterway that accounts for **3%** of all global maritime trade.
- The global fleet of cellular vessels aged 20 years or more comprises approximately 1 200 ships, totalling around **2,9 million TEUs** in capacity³.
- In September 2023, global schedule reliability saw a monthly increase of **↑1,2%** to reach **64,4%**, marking a significant annual improvement of **↑19,0%**⁴.
 - The average delay for late vessel arrivals decreased by **0,09** days (m/m) to **4,58** days, resulting in a remarkable **↓1,30** days (y/y) improvement compared to the same period last year.
- Drewry's "*Cancelled Sailings Tracker*" is stable and is trending at an **8% cancellation rate**⁵.
- Port congestion continues to be stable, only affecting **~6%** (some **1,60 million TEU**) of the industry; however, Durban's congestion continues to be worrying, with the port now featuring among the five most congested ports, reflecting the massive berthing delays currently experienced by the industry.
 - There are still more than **60 000 TEUs** at berth, which translates to more than eight days' worth of containerised cargo, assuming that the bottlenecks will be addressed at the daily average number of containers handled since January 2022 (**~7 464 TEUs** per day, as calculated from TNPA).
- This week, the "*World Container Index*" increased again and is up by another substantial **↑7%** (or **\$98**) to **\$1 504** per 40-ft container⁶.
- Other developments affecting the international market include **(1)** HHLA directors recommending MSC's offer to shareholders and **(2)** ONE consolidating its port terminal network.

v. Local air industry

- The daily average volume of air cargo handled at ORTIA the previous week amounted to **505 009 kg** inbound (**↑4%**, w/w) and **319 742 kg** outbound (**↓8%**), resulting in an average of **824 751 kg per day** or around **~100%** compared with November 2022.
 - The numbers keep hovering below the pre-pandemic levels (**~86%**); however, the levels have been increasing in recent times, which is positive for the industry.
- The average domestic air cargo moved in October amounts to **~50 821 kg** per day, down by **↓16%** compared to 2022.
 - However, the level is currently only around **~64%** compared with the same period pre-pandemic in 2019.

vi. International air industry

- IATA shows that global air cargo tonne-kilometres were slightly up in September, as air cargo capacity surged by **↑12,1%** (y/y), driven by robust international belly cargo capacity in the Asia Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East.

² Chambers, S. 07/11/2023. [El Niño wreaks havoc on global shipping patterns.](#)

³ Alphaliner. 08/11/2023. [World container fleet: three million teu now 20 years or older.](#)

⁴ Murphy, A. 02/11/2023. [Schedule reliability improves to 64,4%.](#)

⁵ Drewry. 03/11/2023. [Cancelled Sailings Tracker - 03 November.](#)

⁶ Drewry. 02/11/2023. [World Container Index – 2 November 2023.](#)



- Despite the decreased trade trend (**↓3,8%** in August), airlines in the Asia Pacific, Latin America, Middle East, and North America regions reported annual growth in international cargo.
- However, African figures showed a slight reduction in CTAs (**↓0,1%**) and a more modest increase in capacity (**↑2,7%**).