



Date: 1 December 2024

Key Notes

- An average of **~10 051 TEUs** was handled per day, with **~11 040 TEUs** projected for next week.
- Rail cargo handled out of Durban was reported at **2 587** containers, down **↓26%** from last week.
- SARS September trade stats – exports: **↑5,3%** (m/m); imports **↑4,4%**; YTD trade surplus: **R145,5 billion**.
- Cross-border queue: **↑0,3 hrs**; transit: **↓0,2 hrs**; SA borders: **15,0 hrs (↓12%)**; SADC: **5,0 hrs (unchanged)**.

i. Port operations - General

- In our container terminals, an average of **10 051 TEUs** was handled per day, down from **11 040 TEUs** last week.
- Port operations were characterised by adverse weather, an oil spillage, dredging, equipment breakdowns and shortages.
 - Minimal delays were reported at the Port of Cape Town this week; however, inclement weather, dredging, and equipment breakdowns ensured operational delays in Durban.
 - An oil spillage incident and adverse weather represented the main operational constraints at our Eastern Cape Ports, while operations were delayed in Richards Bay due to unavailable marine equipment.
 - The line between Johannesburg and Pretoria was heavily impacted by cable theft over the weekend, which rendered the line out of commission for a significant part of the week.
 - Additionally, the latest reports suggest that the NRCS strike is ongoing (as of 20 November), with the workforce demanding an **↑8%** salary increase.

ii. Port operations – Performance metrics

- CTCT for **GP containers was recorded at 19%, reefers at 14%, and empties at 13%**.
 - Additionally, the terminal operated with **seven STS cranes, 24 RTGs, and 65 hauliers** towards the end of the week.
 - Crane LC6 was again out of commission most of the week, and no ETR has been communicated yet.
- CTCT handled an average of **~1 214 TEUs (↓30%, w/w)** containers a day. A much improved average of **~2 128 (↑75%)** is projected this week.
- DCT Pier 1: Stack occupancy was **54%** for **GP containers**.
 - The terminal operated with **five STS cranes** for most of the week and had **12 RTGs** in service towards the end of the week.
- DCT Pier 1 handled **~2 039 TEUs (↓3%, w/w)** containers a day, with a reduced average of **~1 579 TEUs (↓23%)** projected this week.
 - The **average TTT** for the week was **~82 minutes (↓4%, w/w)** and an average **staging time of ~65 minutes (↓13%)**.
- DCT Pier 2: Stack occupancy was at **60%** for **GP containers**.
 - The terminal operated with **11 gangs**.
 - The number of available straddle carriers fluctuated between **44** and **49** out of a fleet complement of **88** this week.
 - Thus, the availability figure sat roughly at **52%** during this period.
- DCT Pier 2 handled a reduced average of **~3 740 TEUs (↓17%, w/w)** containers a day, with an increased average of **~4 307 TEUs (↑15%)** projected this week.



- The **average TTT** of **~113 minutes** (**↑7%**, w/w) and a staging time of **~179 minutes** (**↑64%**) for the week.
 - On Sunday evening, **four** vessels were waiting for Pier 1, **five** for Pier 2, and **three** for Point terminal, with a current estimation of **at least five additional days added to the schedules** (stable from last week).
 - South Africa's other container terminals produced the following results for the week:
 - Ngqura Container Terminal handled a reduced average of **~1 461 TEUs** (**↓26%**, w/w) containers a day, with an increased average of **~1 780 TEUs** (**↑22%**) projected this week.
 - Port Elizabeth Container Terminal handled an increased average of **~284 TEUs** (**↑173%**, w/w) containers a day, with a decreased average of **~215 TEUs** (**↓24%**) projected this week.
 - Other terminals handled a combined average of **~1 312 TEUs** (**↑97%**, w/w), with a decreased average of **712 TEUs** (**↓120%**) projected this week.
 - The Richards Bay Coal Terminal handled a low average of around **119 600 tons** (**↓39%**, w/w) for the week.
 - An average of 24 trains were serviced on the landside, above the target of 22.
 - In the last week (*25 November to 1 December*), rail cargo handled out of Durban was reported at **2 587** containers, down by **↓26%** from the previous week's **3 489** containers.
- iii. Ports Regulator: Tariff increase**
- On 27 November, the Ports Regulator of South Africa announced its Record of Decision on the National Port Authority's tariff application for financial 2025/26.
 - An across-the-board increase of **↑4,4%** was authorised.
 - Specific changes to tariffs include a **↑3,4%** increase on cargo dues except dry bulk cargo, which increases by **↑4,0%**.
 - Marine charges are to increase by **↑6,15%**.
 - The Authority's original application was for an across-the-board increase of **↑7,9%**.
- iv. SARS Merchandise Trade Stats: October**
- SARS released its latest "*Merchandise Trade Statistics*" for October¹, showing a preliminary monthly trade surplus of **R14,6 billion**.
 - Monthly trade indicates that exports increased by **↑5,3%** from September (m/m), while imports increased by **↑4,4%** (m/m).
 - The YTD figures reveal a trade surplus of **R145,5 billion**, a significant improvement from the **R83,4 billion** surplus recorded in 2023.
 - Annually, export flows for October 2024 were **R179,6 billion** and **↑3,3%** (y/y) higher than in October 2023, while import flows were lower by **↓8,3%**, decreasing from **R180,0 billion** to **R165,0 billion** in the current period.
- v. Local and cross-border road:**
- The median border crossing times at South African borders decreased by about **two hours**, averaging **15,0 hrs** (**↓12%**, w/w) for the week.
 - In contrast, the greater SADC region (excluding South African controlled) largely stayed the same – averaging **~5,0 hrs** (**unchanged**, w/w).

¹ SARS. 29/11/2024. [Trade Statistics: October 2024](#).



1. Skilpadshek and Kopfontein border posts updates:

- Queues measured 5,5 km (Skilpadshek) and 6 km (Kopfontein) last Thursday.
- Delays caused by new Cargo Clearing Systems in Botswana:
 - Implementing Biometric Identification and Unique Consignment Reference (replacing Consolidated Cargo Code).
 - Clearance time increased from 1 hour to 24+ hours.
- Resolutions from the Trans Kalahari Corridor Secretariat meeting:
 - Pre-clearance is mandated for all transporters; vehicles without pre-clearance will be turned back.
 - Priority is given to perishables, dangerous goods, and pharmaceuticals.
 - Manual processing to be used if online systems fail for over 30 minutes.
 - Long-term solutions proposed, including **(1)** 24-hour border processing, **(2)** OSBP development, and **(3)** implementation of regional tracking systems.

2. Port of Maputo and Mozambique border developments:

- Border traffic at the Port of Maputo halted last week Friday for about 90 minutes as a precautionary measure.
- After some disruptions earlier in the week, the Lebombo border post operated normally on Monday, 2 December.
 - N4 (KM4 to the Port): Normal traffic, no protest-related incidents reported in the past 24 hours.
 - Urgent Request: Transporters are urged to expedite truck removals; several trucks at the terminal have not yet requested release. Maximising movement into the port today is critical.
- In summary, cross-border queue time averaged **~6,3 hours** (up by **~0,3 hours** from the previous week's **~6,0 hours**), indirectly costing the transport industry an estimated **\$6,3 million (R115 million)**. Furthermore, the week's average cross-border transit times hovered around **~6,0 hours** (down by **~0,2 hours** from the **~6,3 hours** recorded in the previous report), at an indirect cost to the transport industry of **\$4,6 million (R83 million)**. As a result, the total indirect cost for the week amounts to an estimated **~\$10,9 million (R197 million, up by ~R30 million or ↑18% from ~R167 million in the previous report.**

vi. Global shipping industry

- According to Sea-Intelligence's Global Liner Performance (GLP) report, global schedule reliability experienced a marginal improvement in October 2024, increasing by **↑0,9% (m/m)** to **51,5%**.
- The average delay for late vessel arrivals decreased by **0,14 days** from the previous month, bringing it to **5,72 days**.
- Among the top 13 carriers, Maersk led with schedule reliability of **57,9%**, followed by MSC at **52,0%**. Most of the remaining carriers fell within the **40%-50% reliability range**, with PIL being the least reliable at **37,2%**.
- Scheduling remains volatile, as Drewry's "*Cancelled Sailings Tracker*" registered a high **10% cancellation rate** of pro-forma scheduling (2 December to 5 January).²
- Elsewhere, port congestion has remained stable in recent weeks and hovers around the **2,4 million TEU mark**, accounting for **7% of the global fleet**.³
 - In South Africa, port congestion at the Port of Durban also remained stable this week, as some capacity is waiting to be off-loaded currently outside at anchorage (some **27 475 TEU**).

² Drewry. 29/11/2024. [Cancelled Sailings Tracker](#).

³ Linerlytica. 02/12/2024. [Market Pulse 2024 Week 48](#).



- The queue-to-berth ratio at Durban decreased to **0,71** late on Sunday.⁴

- After a slight resurgence at the turn of last month, freight rates have again slipped this week. Drewry's "World Container Index" decreased by **↓2,4%** (or **\$82**), trading at **\$3 331 per 40-ft container**.⁵
- Charter rates have not followed suit, as the *Harper Petersen Index* (Harpex) remains elevated and traded around **2 037 points** (**↑0,2%**, w/w) on Friday.

vii. International air industry – South Africa

- The daily average of air cargo handled at ORTIA in the previous week amounted to **600 198 kg** inbound (**↓12%**, w/w) and **459 917 kg** outbound (**↑7%**), which continues to grow substantially.
- However, because of the decrease in the inbound cargo, this week's overall numbers have decreased by **↓5%** - but the average numbers remain up on last year (**↑8%** versus November 2023) and a similar increase over pre-pandemic levels (**↑10%** versus November 2019).

viii. International air industry

- Global air cargo rates continued to rise steadily in late November, with tonnages holding at prior-week levels and the average global rate climbing **↑2%** to **\$2,79 per kilogram**, the highest in 2024.
- Spot rates drove this increase, notably from North America (**↑12%**, w/w to **\$2,04**) and Europe (**↑8%**, w/w to **\$2,90**).
- Global spot rates grew **↑4%** to **\$3,21**, while contract rates dipped slightly (**↓1%**, w/w to **\$2,65**).
- Year-on-year (YoY), global average rates are up **↑10%**, with spot rates surging **↑22%** and contract rates **↑8%**.

⁴ Linerlytica. 01/12/2024. [Port Congestion Watch](#).

⁵ Drewry. 28/11/2024. [World Container Index](#).