



MEDIA RELEASE

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ACCC report reinforces VTA calls for landside port improvements

An Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) container stevedore monitoring report issued today has underscored how stevedores are unrestrained when it comes to increasing infrastructure charges at ports around Australia.

Industry groups, including the Victorian Transport Association, have been united in expressing concern at indiscriminate and excessive hikes in charges, which has put more pressure on operators to pass these increases through the supply chain and on to consumers. Among the key findings of the [ACCC report](#):

- Infrastructure charges on landside transport operators left unconstrained may continue to increase significantly over time, with importers and exporters facing higher shipping charges;
- Landside road and rail operators are unable to directly choose stevedores, which limits their ability to practically respond to higher infrastructure charges;
- Stevedores can now earn a greater proportion of revenue in a market where they have more market power, and without competitive pressure to constrain charges.

VTA CEO Peter Anderson said the report reinforced a VTA recommendation for the introduction of genuine landside improvements at the Port of Melbourne.

“A number of landside factors at the Port of Melbourne are restricting operators from achieving greater productivity and efficiency, including no choice of stevedore, vessel bunching, poor asset utilisation and prolonged waiting times for trucks,” Mr Anderson said.

“We are working with the Victorian Government, Freight Victoria and the Port of Melbourne on a strategy to deliver landside improvements road and rail freight operators desperately need to achieve productivity and efficiency gains to offset higher infrastructure charges.”

Mr Anderson said while stevedores may be within their rights to increase charges as a response to higher business costs, they owed it to operators to use proceeds to deliver real landside improvements. He said the stevedore report conceded the ACCC had no jurisdiction to regulate infrastructure charges, and that this would be better left to state government scrutiny.

“We welcome the Victorian Government’s announcement that it would bring forward a review into regulating pricing and charges, as a response to the most recent round of infrastructure charge hikes.

“Ending these indiscriminate cost increases would be good for all Victorians, and we look forward to playing a leading role in a review that will hopefully give landside operators a fair go at the port,” he said.

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