



TOMAX  
NEWS

Issue 177  
7<sup>th</sup> February 2025

---

PLUS:



# MARKET SUMMARY

---

• The world of international trade is set for a turbulent few months with so much uncertainty in world economies and global stability. The return of the Trump has already seen the introduction of tariffs on inbound USA cargo from China, effective almost immediately giving exporters and importers very little time to react. A worldwide “slump” in market sentiment and economic activity is already causing shipping lines to scramble to drop rates in an effort to keep as their vessels as full as possible. Chinese New Year has now come and gone and everyone is watching closely to see how strong or weak consumer spending will be in the short term.

• Ocean freight rates are dropping on import trade-lanes providing much needed relief for importers who have suffered with unsustainably high rates for almost a year. How far rates will drop is still very uncertain and the market is expected to be changing almost constantly.

• \*Tomax is now open for business in South Australia\* as we launched a transport and warehousing service this week in the Adelaide suburb of Magill. For more information on how the Tomax Group can assist you with the fully range of supply chain services please give one of our friendly team members a call on 1300 186 629.

# TARIFF CONCESSIONS GAZETTE (TC)

---

Tariff Concession Orders (TCOs) are an Australian Government revenue concession that exists where there are no known Australian manufacturers of goods that are substitutable for imported goods. The weekly Tomax Client Newsletter will contain a link to the latest Gazette document so that you can stay updated.

[CLICK TO VIEW LATEST GAZETTE](#)



# SHEAHAN BRIDGE UPGRADE

The Australian and NSW Governments are advancing plans to upgrade a key bridge on one of the country's busiest freight routes, aiming to accommodate more heavy vehicles.

The \$20 million jointly funded planning project for the Sheahan Bridge upgrade on the Hume Highway at Gundagai has entered its next phase, with a contract awarded to develop a concept design for the bridge's improvement or replacement.

WSP Australia Pty Ltd has been selected to carry out the concept design and environmental assessment for potential upgrade or replacement options for the northbound bridge over the Murrumbidgee River.

## A CRITICAL FREIGHT CORRIDOR

"The Hume Highway is the major freight corridor from Sydney to Melbourne, the oldest and busiest highway in Australia. It has been Labor governments which have invested and delivered the crucial upgrades that have ensured freight, tourism and other road users can rely on this vital network," says Jenny Aitchison, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, "instead of forcing HPVs to use permits, the NSW and Federal governments are working together to deliver a fit-for-purpose bridge which will reduce red tape for HPV freight operators by enabling them to use this route without having to obtain permits."

The existing northbound bridge was constructed in 1977, while the southbound lanes were duplicated and officially opened to traffic on May 25, 2009, by then-Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese.

Although the load limit for the northbound bridge was increased from 68 to 85 tonnes in 2020, safety concerns and structural limitations still require HPVs to obtain permits to travel on the NSW section of the Hume Highway. These limitations also restrict contraflow opportunities during emergencies or maintenance on the southbound bridge.

## EXPLORING UPGRADE OPTIONS

The planning project will evaluate potential solutions, including:

- Constructing a new replacement bridge upstream (east) or downstream (west) of the existing structure.
- Replacing the current bridge on its existing alignment.
- Strengthening the existing bridge.

A preferred option is expected to be identified and presented for public consultation by mid-2026. Transport authorities will continue to keep the community informed as the project progresses.



Chawla, M. (2025). Major bridge upgrade on one of Australia's busiest freight routes. Retrieved from <https://mhdsupplychain.com.au/2025/01/30/major-bridge-upgrade-on-one-of-australias-busiest-freight-routes/> on 3rd February, 2025.

# CHINA-EU RAIL FREIGHT REBOUNDS

After two years of decline, China-EU rail freight volumes have rebounded, with westbound flows surging by 130% year on year in 2024, partly driven by disruptions in the Red Sea.

China-to-Europe shipments exceeded 330,700 TEU, while eastbound volumes totaled 49,730 TEU. Although this represented the lowest eastbound figure since 2017, marking a 26.7% decline from the previous year, the combined China-Europe rail freight volume still saw an 80.2% increase compared to 2023, according to the European Rail Alliance.

One source attributed the surge in westbound volumes to market disruptions. It noted: “throughout 2024, rising freight rates on containerised maritime routes between Asia and Europe, caused by attacks from Yemen’s Houthi rebels in the Red Sea, helped rail freight regain its competitiveness.”

However, there is a caution against overreliance on the Red Sea crisis for sustained growth. If a ceasefire in the Middle East holds and attacks on shipping cease, ocean freight rates could drop significantly, making maritime transport the more cost-effective option once again.

“The extended maritime routes have helped absorb overcapacity, which could become substantial if normal conditions resume. Under such circumstances, Chinese exports would benefit from low-cost sea transport and improved access to capacity. For now, however, China-EU rail freight remains an area with operational and pricing improvements to be explored.”

Chinese exports to Europe had a strong year overall, increasing by 3% year on year to reach a total value of \$516.6 billion, according to preliminary Chinese Customs data.

A standout sector was China’s automotive industry, which saw a remarkable 192% growth in rail shipments to Europe, totaling 31,304 TEU and accounting for 9.5% of total export flows. With ongoing trade tensions and discussions on tariffs—especially from Washington—this sector’s performance could prove crucial, particularly if Europe strengthens ties with China amid potential shifts in U.S. foreign policy.

Poland has continued to solidify its position as China’s primary rail freight gateway to Europe, handling over 88% (292,950 TEU) of the westbound volume. This marks a 149% year-on-year increase. Poland overtook Germany as the main hub for China-EU rail trade four years ago and the latest figures reaffirm its dominance.

Meanwhile, Germany’s rail freight volumes from China, which peaked at 150,000 TEU in 2021 before collapsing, showed signs of recovery in 2024, albeit at a historic low of just 23,790 TEU.

As rail freight maintains its footing, the sector remains a dynamic space, influenced by global trade policies, geopolitical developments and logistical efficiencies.

Lennane, A. (2025). De minimis cut won’t hurt demand for Chinese ecommerce, but for air cargo? Retrieved from <https://theloadstar.com/de-minimis-cut-wont-hurt-demand-for-chinese-ecommerce-but-for-air-cargo/> on 6th February, 2025.



# \$400M PORT BOTANY RAIL EXPANSION PROJECT

**D**P World and NSW Ports are investing A\$400 million to expand the rail terminal at Port Botany, enhancing Sydney's logistics network and reinforcing its role as a critical international trade hub.

NSW Ports is contributing A\$148 million to the project, which will support both the Container Terminal and the Logistics Park—a leading example of the global trend toward locating logistics facilities near major ports.

## MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION

The project, set to begin in June and take two years to complete, includes the addition of five new rail sidings capable of accommodating 600-metre-long regional trains.

“Our investment in this new port-centric logistics infrastructure will deliver more capacity, superior agility, seamless integration of processes, increased productivity and added reliability,” says Nicolaj Noes, Executive Vice President, Oceania, DP World, “we cannot wait for our present and future customers to reap the benefits of this world-class facility, which accelerates the shift of freight from road to rail while reducing carbon emissions and improving Sydney's air quality at the same time.”

“This collaboration with DP World to deliver a new, enhanced, rail terminal continues the growth of on-dock rail capacity at Port Botany to service the state's import and export trade,” adds Marika Calfas, CEO of NSW Ports.

This new rail terminal will allow more containers to be moved by rail, reducing the number of trucks on roads and will deliver greater efficiency for the state's container supply chains.

## KEY BENEFITS OF THE EXPANSION

**Increased Capacity:** DP World's annual rail capacity will more than double from 400,000 TEUs to 1 million TEUs.

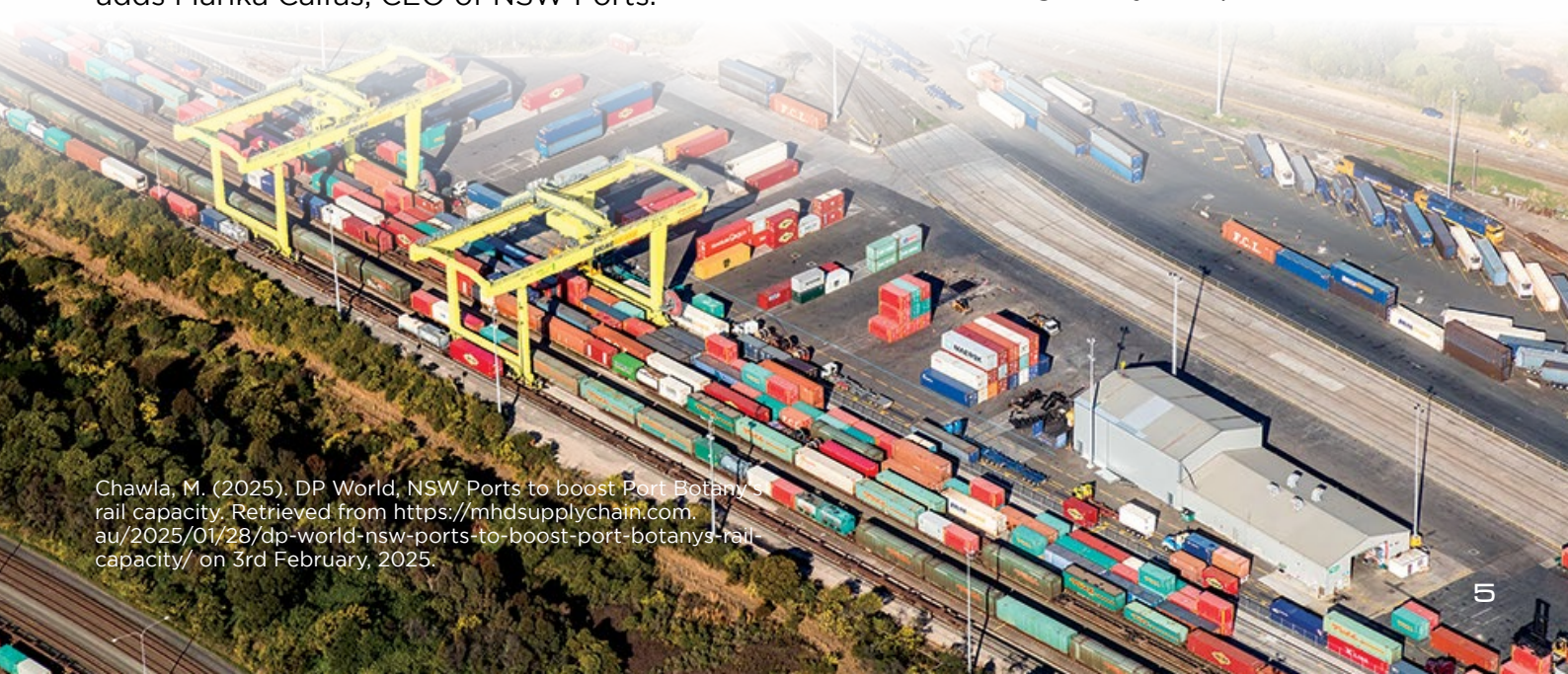
**Environmental Impact:** Reduced truck movements will cut carbon emissions, improving sustainability.

**Economic Growth:** More efficient logistics will benefit key sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, retail, and e-commerce, creating jobs across NSW.

Port Botany, handling 2.8 million TEUs annually, is NSW's largest container port, contributing A\$10.7 billion to the state's economy. It remains Australia's only port with on-dock rail at all container terminals, connecting seamlessly to metro and regional intermodal hubs.

DP World also operates the 20-hectare Sydney Logistics Park, the city's largest, with a capacity of 18,500 TEUs, offering services such as warehousing, storage and container maintenance.

This expansion is a major step in making Sydney's supply chain more efficient, sustainable and globally competitive.



Chawla, M. (2025). DP World, NSW Ports to boost Port Botany's rail capacity. Retrieved from <https://mhdsupplychain.com.au/2025/01/28/dp-world-nsw-ports-to-boost-port-botany-s-rail-capacity/> on 3rd February, 2025.

# HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR 2025!

---

We are wishing everyone all the best for the Lunar New Year! May the Year of the Snake bring good health, happiness and an abundance of prosperity and success to you and your family.

*From Team Tomax*



# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## DYLAN COATES

### WAREHOUSE HAND

TOMAX TRANSPORT MELBOURNE



#### What is your role at Tomax?

My role at Tomax is to look after the warehouse duties at our Hoppers Crossing depot.

#### Name your hobbies?

My hobbies consist mainly consist of guitar playing, gaming and car related stuff.

#### Tell us more about your guitar hobby?

I play both the acoustic and electric guitar almost every day. I mostly learn the songs I like or jam with my younger brother. I don't have goals to become famous or anything like that just yet.

#### Did you have any New Year Resolutions for this year?

I have not set any this year!

#### If you could only bring one thing to a deserted island, what would it be?

My guitar!

#### The last concert you went to?

I last saw Slipknot live.

#### Your favourite travel destination?

The Great Ocean road beaches.

#### Favourite childhood memory?

Landing my first kick flip.



# FRIDAY FUNNIES

**We hope the following jokes will put a smile on your face as we approach the weekend!**

Where do bad rainbows go?  
Prism, it's a light sentence.

What do you call a haunted chicken?  
A poultry-geist.

What's the leading cause of dry skin?  
Towels.

Know why the skeletons are so calm?  
Because nothing gets under their skin.

Today I gave my dead batteries away.  
They were free of charge.

What do you call a magician who lost their magic?  
Ian.

What kind of dogs love car racing?  
Lapdogs.

I broke my finger last week.  
On the other hand, I am ok.

What did the melon say when his lawn looked dry?  
Guess it's time to watermalawn.

Why did the invention of the dry erase board amaze the world?  
Because it was re-markable.

That's a pretty good ceiling.  
It's not the best, but it's up there!

