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### General Rate Increases

Several major carriers have indicated General Rate Increases (GRIs) of USD 300–500 per TEU, effective 15 November 2025. These adjustments are expected to build on the October rate restorations, reflecting continued efforts by shipping lines to offset higher operating costs and manage capacity during ongoing peak season demand. We will keep clients advised of any changes that may occur.

Source: Various Major Shipping Lines

### Global Schedule Reliability and Port Congestion

Congestion remains a major concern across global shipping networks, with weather disruptions, labour shortages, and vessel bunching driving longer waiting times at key international ports.

In China, ports including Shanghai, Ningbo, Yantian, and Qingdao are experiencing delays ranging from one to seven days. These delays are largely due to heavy weather, customs slowdowns, and increased vessel arrivals.

Across Europe, bottlenecks have worsened following a recent 48-hour strike at the Port of Rotterdam, Europe's largest container gateway. The industrial action halted vessel loading and unloading operations, creating ripple effects throughout North European ports such as Hamburg, Antwerp, and Le Havre, where rail delays, maintenance, and labour shortages are already contributing to multi-day congestion.

Globally, carriers continue to manage capacity through blank sailings, with approximately 8% of scheduled sailings cancelled through late October and November. While this strategy helps stabilise freight rates, it also limits available space and can create uneven vessel arrivals into Australian ports.

Closer to home, current data indicates 18 blank sailings out of 225 scheduled this month, equating to a cancellation rate of around 8%. This remains consistent with last month's figures but still noticeably higher than September's 4%. Sydney, Brisbane, and Fremantle continue to report vessel waiting times ranging from 12 to 72 hours, largely due to weather-related congestion and vessel bunching.

Source: FTA

### Terminal Infrastructure Charges – Effective 1 January

The Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) and the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) have announced that several major stevedores (Patrick, DP World, Flinders, and VICT) will introduce increases to Terminal Access Charges and associated ancillary fees across Australia's key ports, effective 1 January 2026. These adjustments will apply at container terminals in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth, with most increases ranging between 5% and 15%, and a significant 45% rise announced at DP World Fremantle. These adjustments come as stevedores cite rising infrastructure and operational costs, adding further pressure to the already elevated cost of moving cargo.

These costs will be reflected in future quotes for shipments arriving in 2026.

Source: FTA

## Freemantle Bridge Closure

One of Fremantle's traffic bridges will be fully closed for 12 months, starting February 2026. This closure is expected to cause significant disruption to freight operations and transport movements across Western Australia.

### Key Impacts:

- Approximately 23,000 vehicles will be redirected to Stirling Bridge, which already carries around 38,000 vehicles per day.
- Delays of 2–4 hours are expected during peak times.
- Canning Highway will be restricted to bus access only.
- Widespread congestion and extended transit times are anticipated between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM.

To help mitigate the impact, a transition to after-hours deliveries is strongly recommended. Operating during the evening (4:00 PM–10:00 PM) or early morning (4:00 AM–7:00 AM) will help reduce congestion, speed up transit times, and minimise the risk of container detention or delivery delays.

Our team will chat to affected customers at time of booking.

Source: FTA

## Trade Agreement Reviews - Have Your Say

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has opened public consultation for the General Reviews of the [China-Australia Free Trade Agreement \(ChAFTA\)](#) and the [Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement \(IA-CEPA\)](#). Please click on each title for easy access.

Australian businesses are encouraged to share feedback on how these agreements have performed and where market access and trade opportunities can be improved. Submissions close on 31 March 2026.

## Christmas and New Year Closure

As we approach the Christmas and New Year period, we kindly remind all clients to advise our team of your closure dates so we can plan accordingly. If you will remain partially operational with a skeleton team available to assist with shipping requests or receive deliveries, please share these details with us to help minimise delivery delays and avoid container detention during this busy time.

We also ask that all required documentation be submitted promptly to prevent processing delays.

If you have any last-minute orders that need coordination before the holidays, please contact our team as soon as possible so we can assist with scheduling and ensure smooth delivery.

## S.A.L. Port Tour - October 2025

On Wednesday, 22 October, we had the pleasure of hosting several of our clients for a Port of Brisbane Supply Chain Tour, led by Neil Chambers from the Container Transport Alliance Australia (CTAA). The day began with an informative morning workshop, followed by site visits to an unpack depot, a transport operation with CFS and biosecurity facilities, and a container terminal in the afternoon.

A big thank you to our clients and staff who joined us, your engagement and enthusiasm made the day a great success.

