



RoRo Heogh Tracker entering the port of Newcastle



Rail, road and land capacity make Newcastle an attractive deepwater trade hub

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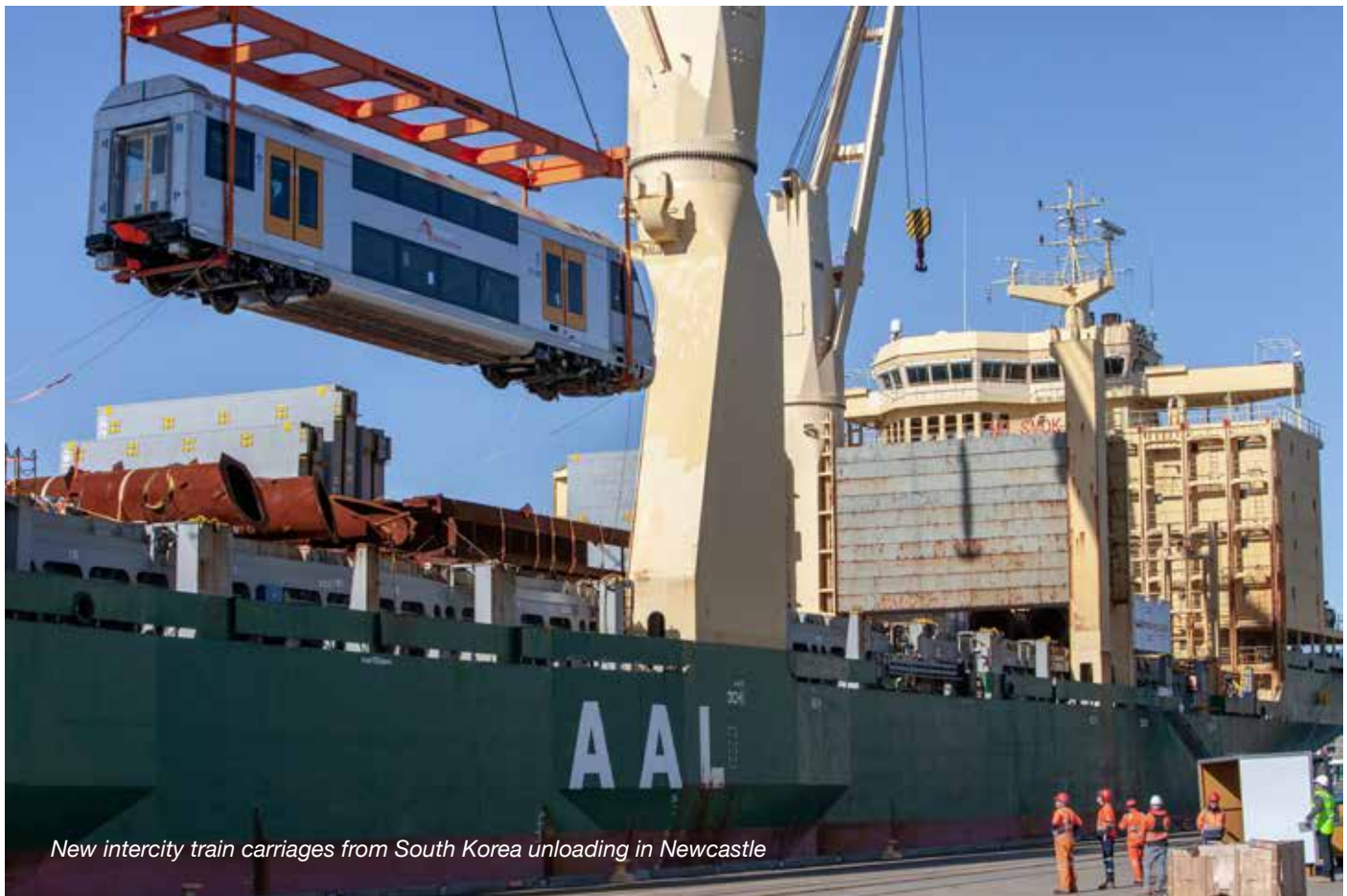
Australia's supply chains and national resilience were certainly tested in 2020. The year has been defined by the direct and indirect implications of the pandemic. Port of Newcastle, like many organisations, took a precautionary approach early on when COVID-19 first emerged in Australia. We identified three key priorities: to keep our people safe, do our part to minimise COVID-19 community transmission and to maintain the continuity of port operations for our customers. Port of Newcastle was one of the first organisations in the Hunter to shift to remote working arrangements for all office-based staff, while putting

in place a number of precautionary measures to keep frontline operational employees and contractors safe in their work environments.

The sudden change brought its own challenges, particularly around protecting mental health in the workplace. While COVID-19 gets the headlines, mental health has become an equally important workplace health and safety priority for our organisation this year. Our working arrangements made us more geographically fragmented than previous years, but in many ways we have grown stronger together. Initiatives

such as mental health first aid training for our staff and the Smiling Mind programme – both in the works before COVID-19 – took on greater significance. Agile working arrangements are now our new “normal”.

While Port of Newcastle's trade has so far been largely unaffected by the global COVID-19 pandemic, this has not been the experience for many in the industry. The resilience of the port community has become all the more critical in 2020. The longest-lasting consequence of the 2020 toilet paper shortage might be the fact it highlighted how much our society



New intercity train carriages from South Korea unloading in Newcastle

takes for granted, otherwise robust supply chains. The reality is that ports are important. Port of Newcastle's trade alone is valued at \$25 billion a year. More important, though, are the flow-on benefits generated from port activity. Respected economists HoustonKemp recently analysed the contribution that Newcastle's port activity makes towards the Hunter, State and national economies. The port's direct and flow-on contribution to Australia's gross domestic product (GDP) is almost \$1.5 billion and it also underpins almost 9,000 full-time equivalent jobs nationally. What drives

Port of Newcastle is the knowledge that, when Australia's largest east coast port is providing reliable, efficient and competitive access to global markets, the benefits flow well beyond the port boundary.

Safe, reliable, deepwater access requires regular survey and maintenance dredging. The port's dredger, David Allan, is a familiar sight around the harbour. David Allan this year marked 30 years of service. The vessel spent two months in Yamba for its five yearly docking and major refit at Harwood Marine. Targeted bed levelling

operations were undertaken during the David Allan's temporary absence to maintain safe access within the channel.

In 2020, Port of Newcastle's deepwater access and excellent connections to national road and rail networks continued to provide an attractive supply chain option for a range of trade types. Diversification continues to be a key goal for our region. The port's break bulk and project cargo handling facilities were again in high demand, most notably to facilitate the delivery of new ferries and trains for



New South Wales. May, saw the return of commercial roll-on-roll-off trade, with Höegh providing direct services for vehicles and heavy equipment needed in the mining, construction and agricultural sectors.

The port has long been recognised as Australia's leading energy port, dominated by thermal coal but with a growing and critical role as a gateway for renewable energy technology. During 2020, shipments of wind turbines continued to move through the port, and make use of the significant on-site storage before being transported to the build sites. The port's ability to store over-sized cargo enables customers to benefit from reduced double-handling of cargo and unnecessary truck movements. The port has a reputation as a critical part of the world's leading thermal coal supply chain. We want emerging energy technology to have access to a similarly competitive and efficient supply chain.

Embracing renewable energy trade is just part of a broader focus on creating a safe, sustainable and environmentally and socially responsible port of the future. We set ourselves an ambitious goal to transition to electric vehicles and 100 per cent renewable energy supply by the end of 2021. We are well on track to meet that with a significant part of our operations already powered by renewable energy and 70 per cent of the vehicle fleet now comprised of electric vehicles. It is amazing what can be achieved in a short space of time. In January, we became the first port in Australia and New Zealand to be accredited under EcoPort's Ports Environmental Review System (PERS), by meeting stringent environmental performance criteria. We are now benchmarked against the best ports around the world. The Port has also joined forces with other leading Hunter businesses to coordinate a regional response to the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals.

We are very optimistic about what 2021 will bring. With a multibillion-dollar capital investment programme, there is much to look forward to in the years to come. The port will continue building its team following a number of key appointments in 2020. The Multi-purpose Deepwater Terminal (MDT) project continues to be entirely subject to the removal of penalties applying to container movements through the port. The development of the new MDT will deliver cost efficiencies for businesses across New South Wales and contribute \$2.5 billion in economic activity across Australia, generating over 15,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Port of Newcastle is pleased to be providing competitive supply chain options for New South Wales importers and exporters, as we all look to rebuild the Australian economy. ▲



The East Coast's deepwater trade gateway and an economic powerhouse for NSW and Australia.

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