



Rail the key to connectivity at the Port of Brisbane

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As a major driver of economic activity in Queensland, Port of Brisbane enjoyed a strong year for trade in 2020/21, reaching a record 1.49 million TEUs and achieving 29.3 million tonnes of trade overall. While we saw fluctuations across commodities due to ongoing COVID-related impacts, the Port's diverse trade base continued to underpin its resilience.

It was very pleasing to see a resurgence of containerised and bulk grain exports through the Port after consecutive years of poor growing seasons due to the prolonged drought. Bulk cereal and grain exports reached over one million tonnes for the first time in almost a decade.

A growing port community

The port community continues to grow, experiencing sustained demand from trade-related businesses wanting to be close to the Port's wharves and terminals. The Port's visionary master-planning in the 1970's (to include a 224ha Future Port Expansion area), combined with our neighbouring industrial precinct, Port West, ensures Port of Brisbane can sustainably accommodate future growth for decades to come.

During the year we welcomed six new customers and helped eight existing customers expand their operations. This new growth continues to be concentrated within our Port West Industrial Estate in Lytton; just a decade ago the land was not much more than swamp – today it is prime industrial land located only 6km from the Port. The 89-hectare estate is home to eight global and national trade-related businesses, and we anticipate the first sections of land within Stage two of the estate will be available to the market from mid-2022.

Efficiency and productivity gains for customers

During the year, we've continued to work with Seaport OPX to drive improvements in our world leading NCOS Online technology, introducing four new modules to further improve safety, productivity and efficiency gains for customers.

Together with our customers and stakeholders, we're also looking to the future by planning for the arrival of the 14,000 TEU class of container vessel. This year, we've worked together to successfully complete a simulation study to accommodate a 366m LOA container vessel in the Port's navigational channel. As a result, Port of Brisbane is now ready to conduct a physical trial of this class of container vessel when an opportunity arises.

We also remain focused on landside operations, as heavy vehicles also grow in size as transport operators seek efficiencies by transporting more containers per vehicle. We're engaging regularly with our customers, transport operators and road authorities to understand their future operational requirements and improve efficiencies where it is safe and practical to do so.

Protecting landside connectivity

This is critical because trade will continue to grow to support Queensland's expanding population; forecast to reach 4.8 million TEU's by 2048. Future growth is a key reason why we're continuing to advocate at all levels of Government to directly connect Port of Brisbane to the Inland Rail project.

Currently, less than 2% of containers are transported to the Port by rail; globally, the average is 20-30%. We need a more sustainable modal balance.

Quite simply, without a dedicated freight rail connection, Brisbane faces a tsunami of trucks and heavy vehicles on our streets – far more than it is now. It is imperative that more freight is shifted off the road and onto rail and in doing so, realise the enormous environmental, economic and social benefits for industry and the community.

A sustainable future

This year, we took our commitment to sustainability further by putting it at the core of our business strategy, making sustainability central to all that we do. We took this approach because we believe it's the right strategy to deliver sustainable outcomes for the Port and the broader community.

We're moving ahead with industry-leading initiatives to reduce our climate change risks and emissions, and to support the decarbonisation transition more broadly. We've significantly increased our community outreach through employee volunteering, while retaining our annual grant program and long-term community partnerships. We've also continued to invest in our people, and we're committed to making our business more diverse and inclusive, working hard to ensure our workforce comprises the experience, skills and capabilities needed for the future.

This year, COVID continued to cast a shadow across economies and communities worldwide, with many impacts continuing in Australia. At Port of Brisbane, we continue to benefit from strong customer and stakeholder partnerships and on behalf of the PBPL team, I want to thank all our partners for their support and collaboration. I look forward to what we will achieve together. ▲