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Container Logistics Industry Benefits from Empty Container Park Automation

A study conducted by the Victorian Department of Transport (DTP) in conjunction with Container Transport Alliance Australia (CTAA) has proven that truck servicing at Empty Container Parks (ECPs) is more than 30% more efficient if pre-receival electronic data is provided by shipping lines and ECPs take steps to automate truck in-gate processes.

CTAA was responding to the launch by the Victorian Minister for Ports & Freight, Hon. Melissa Horne MP, of the **Empty Container Park Paperless and Contactless Truck Arrival Trial Report (August 2023)**.

“CTAA thanks Minister Horne for her unwavering support in committing the Victorian Government to assist in monitoring the landside performance of the container transport logistics chain, and now extending those efforts to measure the performance of the empty container management chain in Melbourne.” said CTAA Director, Neil Chambers.

“The analysis has shown that the ECPs which have combined electronic pre-advice from their shipping line clients with either a medium or high level of truck in-gate entry automation have Truck Turnaround Times (TTT) that are a third more efficient.”

“Also, the ECPs with medium to high levels of in-gate automated truck processing service more than double the number of trucks per hour compared to ECPs categorised as low automation.”

“The Report finds that by improving Truck Turnaround Times (TTT) on average by 6 to 10 minutes per truck per visit would save the container transport industry in Melbourne over \$5 to \$6 million in truck operating costs alone. That’s before you add in the cost savings from streamlined administration, greater in-gate servicing capacity at ECPs (leading to more slot availability and less delays), and better heavy vehicle fleet utilisation.”

“CTAA recognises that several ECPs in Melbourne have introduced optical camera recognition (OCR) or other technologies to enhance truck in-gate processes, while others have investments in the pipeline. Transport operators are keen to continue to work with those ECPs to improve transport logistics performance.”

“For those ECPs in the low automation category, we look forward to discussing with them the benefits of changing their practices and operations to benefit the whole supply chain.”

“The Report also highlights the need for ALL shipping lines to provide electronic pre-advice messaging that can be seamlessly loaded into the ECPs’ depot management and truck slot appointment systems.”

“It’s extremely unfortunate that after years of discussion, there are still several shipping lines servicing Australia’s container trades who do not provide this electronic information in a format that can be used seamlessly.”

“Finally, CTAA welcomes the inclusion of two new key performance indicators in the Victoria’s [Voluntary Port Performance Monitoring Framework](#) measuring average time on site for trucks at Melbourne’s ECPs and the average truck journeys (peak and off-peak).

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