

COMMERCIAL NEWS

RETAIL SALES UP, UNEMPLOYMENT DOWN

The latest ABS retail trade figures show that sales in November 09 rose 1.4 per cent, seasonally adjusted, compared with a rise of 0.4% the previous month.

Sales rose, in seasonally adjusted terms, across all retail industry groups: Clothing, Footwear & Other Personal Accessory Retailing (2.5%), Household Goods Retailing (1.7%), Food Retailing (1.6%), Department Stores (1.1%), Cafes, Restaurants & Takeaway Food Services (1.1%) and Other Retailing (0.2%).

South Australia (3.1%) recorded the strongest, followed by the Australian Capital Territory (2.7%), Victoria (2.1%), New South Wales (1.3%), Western Australia (0.7%), Queensland (0.6%) and the Northern Territory (0.5%). Tasmania was unchanged in November.

Trend turnover for November 2009 rose 0.4%.

The retail sales data also provides relief to the transport and logistics sector, as the continuing strong demand encourages investment in new premises, transport and warehousing equipment, and employment.

BOX TRADE TO EUROPE CONTINUES TO STRUGGLE

Container trade between Europe and Australia/Oceania fell 6.8% in November compared with the same month in 2008, European Liner Affairs Association data has shown.

The region's exports to Europe fell 15% to 10,232 teu against November 2008, the biggest month-on-month fall since August and its lowest level all year.

The southbound trade contracted 4% to 32,001 teu compared with a year earlier.

In the 11 months to November, northbound trade fell 9.4% and southbound volumes into Oceania dropped 14.7%, compared with the same period in 2008.

Combined trade fell 13% in the period.

STAND OFF LOOMING BETWEEN VTA AND SAL

Wharf bottlenecks and capacity constraints at container parks are blowing out queuing delays at the Port of Melbourne. Truckers are demanding action.

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA) calls the delays – more than two hours for some drivers – unacceptable, urging supply chain partners to address the issues.

It wants shipping lines held accountable and container parks investigated for breaching chain of responsibility laws.

Facilities for empty containers have reached operational capacity and are performing poorly, according to the VTA, and it's costing transport operators in administration and delivery delays.

"The Christmas peak turned into the New Year blues for the Port of Melbourne's container supply chain," VTA CEO Philip Lovel says. "Transport companies are not in a position to absorb the additional operational and administration costs caused by these delays. They will have no choice but to recover the costs from importers and exporters through higher rates, demurrage, or through other surcharges and levies."

The VTA also reports a marked increase in truck redirections, adding to futile trips and unnecessary heavy vehicle movements on roads.

Lovel says making drivers wait in queues for more than two hours is a breach of the legal obligations a container park has as loading managers under chain of responsibility law. He wants VicRoads and police to investigate, saying parks should be taking 'reasonable steps' to minimise driver fatigue.

"The shipping lines must be held accountable," Lovel says. "They have narrowed the number of empty parks they employ and have under-compensated those parks for years for the services they provide. Now, they cannot walk away from the consequences of their actions."

The VTA also wants confirmation that no empty container detention charges will be invoiced to importers if congestion and delays have restricted the ability to return containers on time. Lovel hints at legal action.

"We are at the point where we would welcome importers and their transport service providers taking on the shipping lines in court on empty container detention fees," he says.

"We will be urging everyone to crack on with these initiatives – let's move rapidly past trials to prove that the systems work and get on with actual implementation," he says.

PACVis: ACCURATE STOCK IN TRANSIT

Pacific Network's PACVIZ provides visibility of orders from off-shore processing of units at SKU level through to final delivery of product to store or distribution centre. PACVIZ interacts with various importers Enterprise Management Systems (EMS) enabling the effective integration of information and reporting processes.

PACVIZ enables instant visibility of accurate stock in transit of:

- Purchase Order Receipt
- Stock Control Capabilities
- Scan Picking of allocations by store by customer to SKU level
- Consolidation of shipments and International Forwarding
- Accurate Stock in Transit
- Domestic delivery on a National Basis
- Full SKU audit



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STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE

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- storage
- stock management
- return logistics
- transportation management
- project management
- electronic messaging
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STAFF MILESTONES

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Tony Egan 18 years
Thu Nguyen 4 years
Julio Pantano 4 years

SYDNEY

Marie Mendoza 4 years
Sharyn Wakeling 5 years

BRISBANE

Theo Karabetos 4 years
Melissa Matthies 5 years
Robert Wendt 7 years

PERTH

Bruce Sinclair 4 years

WORLD HOLIDAYS

NEW ZEALAND

February 6 Waitangi Day

HONG KONG

February 13 –16

Lunar New Year

USA

February 15

Washington's Birthday

CHINA

February 15—17

Lunar New Year

