

Transnet Port Terminals

Equipment Procurement Plan: '20 - 21

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In June 2019, Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) workers began an unsanctioned “go slow” at SA’s container terminals. This affected vessel schedules severely and hindered the export of citrus. The Ngqura Container Terminal was severely affected right in the peak of the citrus export season. Severe structural problems within TPT were highlighted during this process, especially when it came to labour, a failure in parts procurement, malfunctioning and shortage of critical machinery.

At the same time Transnet was being investigated for corruption, and certain levels of management were implicated and removed. Minister Gordhan (who himself was newly appointed as Minister of Department of Public Enterprises) established a new Transnet board, which then appointed an interim executive team to restore structural reform back in Transnet.

Michelle Philips was appointed as the Acting Chief Executive of TPT in July 2019. She was instrumental in drafting a machinery and labour recruitment strategy that was implemented from August 2019. A lot has been done thus far on the labour recruitment process, especially at the Ngqura Container Terminal, which was seriously impacted by labour shortages. Due to the international Covid-19 lockdown, many of the processes have come to a standstill or been delayed.

Below is an update on the procurement and maintenance of critical equipment that is in the process of being implemented at the terminals this year:

1. Cape Town Container Terminal (CTCT): Four straddle carriers have arrived at the terminal that are scheduled to be brought into service at one unit/week from mid-June to mid-July.

2. Port Elizabeth Container Terminal (PECT): Two mobile harbour cranes were delivered on 2 April. The commissioning of these cranes into service and certifying of the crane operators were delayed. However, they were finally fully operational by 6 June. The three ship to shore cranes at the terminal will undergo refurbishment by the end of 2021, at which time the mobile harbour cranes will be transferred to the Cape Town multi-purpose terminal.

3. Durban Container Terminal (DCT) Pier 2: 25 straddle carriers are to arrive at the terminal in batches in mid-July and mid-August respectively, as fully assembled units. These machines are scheduled to be fully operational and in service by the end of August 2020. A further 22 straddle carriers are expected to arrive at the terminal during the first quarter of 2021.

4. Durban Container Terminal (DCT) Pier 1: two new rubber tyre Gantry cranes are scheduled to be delivered to the terminal and in service during the first quarter of 2021.

5. Durban Point Terminal (DPT): five mobile harbour cranes are scheduled to undergo extensive maintenance that is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2020.

In conclusion, the procurement of staff and equipment, as well as the maintenance of equipment should position the various container terminals well to increase productivity levels to international standards by the second quarter of 2021. ❖

