

TFR TRUCK DE-CONGESTION INITIATIVES IN THE PORT OF RICHARDS BAY

[Johannesburg, Monday, 12 August 2024] As a commitment to continued service improvement and ramp up of tons migrated from Road to Rail in line with the overall Recovery plan, Transnet Freight Rail (TFR), has undergone a successful shut on the Coal Export Line which predominantly delivers coal to the Port of Richards Bay.

The shut primarily focused on initiatives to unlock train slots on the coal line. To this end 2 additional slots and 28 km of speed restrictions were unlocked. This has enabled TFR to increase from 24 planned train slots per day to 28 planned train slots per day to the Richards Bay Coal Terminal.

The GF Coal channel, which facilitates export of coal through the Richards Bay Multi-purpose Terminals (MPT), and the Navi Trade Terminals, had seen a ramp up from 21 trains a week to 28 planned trains a week in the first 6 months of the calendar year. As a result of the shut activities this channel is now undertaking a further ramp up to 32 trains a week by 30 September 2024. This will equate to a further 1 035 truckloads off the road. Furthermore, TFR and Eswatini Rail, in collaboration with customers, have also commenced a coal service via the Golela line to Richards Bay to further boost coal haulage to the port.

During the period of the annual coal line shut, exporters will generally ramp up road volume in order to supplement what would have gone on rail, as they seek to keep supply chains operational and meet firm vessel commitments. This is one of the key reasons why truck congestion became significant again in the Richards Bay Port precinct towards the weekend of the 09 August 2024. As the rail service returns to normal after the shut, and the indicated ramp-up initiatives take effect, Road Motor Transport (RMT) levels in the Port of Richards Bay are expected to normalise to pre-shut levels.

Whilst TFR implements a number of initiatives, supported by the National Logistics Crisis Committee (NLCC) and other stakeholders to recover capacity on the Coal line back to the pre-COVID numbers in line with the Transnet Recovery Plan, TFR is exploring various last mile strategies to optimise port logistics output. These strategies will aim to further reduce congestion in the port precinct whilst allowing those exporters who have an appetite to road haul to continue doing so at a faster turnaround time.

ENDS

Issued on behalf of Transnet Freight Rail

For queries:

E: TFRmedia@transnet.net