

## **Transnet Port Terminals citrus season off to a strong start**

**[Durban, Tuesday 21 May 2024]** The first of the citrus season's longest trains has arrived at the Durban Container Terminal Pier 2 from Limpopo, with 48 forty-foot containers of export citrus fruits ready for loading aboard calling vessels.

The containers have since been offloaded using rail-mounted gantry cranes that feed haulers which place containers in the reefer yard, fully equipped with plug points. Straddle carriers will then move the containers from the reefer yard to under the crane for loading when the appropriate vessels call. Managing Executive at the Durban Terminals, Earle Peters said, "We have officially begun the season in Durban, with every intention to make our customers competitive. The Bela Bela train promotes cargo movement from road to rail, a crucial component in supporting logistics and terminal operations".

Limpopo is the largest contributor to South Africa's citrus industry, accounting for over 40% of total citrus fruit production and area planted, followed by the Eastern Cape at over 25%, and Western Cape at over 15%. Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and North West are also contributors to the industry's total output.

The citrus industry has forecasted a 15% increase in citrus export volumes this year and Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) has assured industry of its commitment to make the season a success. In Durban, three terminals have been resourced to prepare for the season. To improve the reliability and efficiency of its services, the Durban Container Terminals Pier 1 has 1 440 plug points with back-up power. The Durban Container Terminal Pier 2 has a total of 2 424 plug points, while the Durban Multipurpose Terminal has 277 plug points. In Gqeberha, the Ngqura Container Terminal has 1 652 plug points, while the Port Elizabeth Container Terminal has 932.

The Port Elizabeth Container Terminal also received one of its largest vessels over the weekend, as trucks have begun bringing in the province's citrus fruit.



Citrus Growers Association (CGA) Chief Executive Officer, Justin Chadwick said, "The CGA values Transnet's responsiveness and willingness to engage with the citrus industry, at all levels. We have seen TPT remain resolute during crises before – from the July 2021 unrest to the Durban floods. The special initiatives undertaken by TPT to work towards a smooth citrus season is appreciated. Handling an increased export citrus crop this year will however be challenging, given that Transnet is still executing its turnaround plan and dealing with multiple equipment breakdowns".

He added that the CGA was excited about finding common solutions to current challenges and partnering within the container terminals throughout South Africa. "Such partnerships remain an important objective, where Transnet and the private sector can work together to improve port efficiency and thereby secure the 140 000 jobs the export citrus sustains," he said.

**ENDS.**

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## Notes to the Editor

Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) is a division of Transnet SOC Ltd and South Africa's (SA) leading terminal operator responsible for loading and offloading cargo aboard vessels calling the seven SA ports. The company provides import and export services for both domestic and global markets through a staff compliment of 9000 across 16-sea cargo and three inland terminals. Current plans are focused on geographic expansion, service innovation and diversification as the business transitions into a logistic solutions provider.