

**PRICE RELATED OBJECTION  
NOTICES  
MARCH 2026**



24 March 2026

Mr Warwick Davis  
Frontier Economics Pty Ltd  
Ground Floor  
395 Collins Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

via email: [warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au](mailto:warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au)

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear Mr Davis,

### **Objection to Australian Amalgamated Terminals (AAT) Proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule**

The FCAI is the peak industry body for the Australian importers and distributors of passenger motor vehicles, sports utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, motorcycles and off highway vehicles. FCAI members supply about 98% of new vehicles to the Australian market each year.

FCAI members import over 1.2 million new vehicles into Australia each year.<sup>1</sup> They are major users of AAT terminals and have a direct and significant commercial interest in the fees and charges levied on RoRo services at AAT's terminals at Webb Dock West, Port Kembla and Fisherman Islands.

The FCAI is lodging this notice on behalf of its members. A complete list of FCAI members is provided in Attachment 1 to this objection notice.

### **Proposed AAT 2026-27 Tariff Schedules**

By notice dated 3 March 2026, Mr Vincent Macheda, General Manager, AAT notified the FCAI of the proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedules to apply at AAT's terminals at Webb Dock West, Appleton Dock, Port Kembla and Fisherman Islands.

The FCAI has reviewed the Tariff Schedules including the preceding explanatory pages that set out *inter alia* what changes to the tariffs have been proposed.

### **FCAI's objection to proposed 2026-27 tariff schedule on behalf of its members**

On behalf of its members, the FCAI wishes to lodge an objection to a number of elements within the proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedules, as listed below.

	<b>Objection</b>	<b>Terminals Affected</b>
1	The designation of certain services as Charges and Other Tariffs	Webb Dock West, Port Kembla, Fisherman Islands
2	The imposition of a new Receival and Delivery Charge on wheeled and tracked vehicles loaded/discharged from RoRo vessels	Webb Dock West, Port Kembla, Fisherman Islands

<sup>1</sup> VFACTS National Report, New Vehicle Sales, December 2025.



	Objection	Terminals Affected
3	The change in the number of free storage days from 96 hours to three business days (which includes Saturday)	Webb Dock West
4	The imposition of storage fees on quarantine held cargo	Webb Dock West

The reasons for the FCAI's objections to the proposed changes to the 2026-27 Tariff Schedules are set out below.

### 1. *The designation of certain services as Charges and Other Tariffs*

AAT have amended each terminal Tariff Schedule to include a column that sets out whether each tariff is considered a *Charge* (and so regulated under the Undertaking<sup>2</sup>) or an *Other Tariff* (and so not regulated).<sup>3</sup> Parties can challenge the proposed designations (in accordance with the Price Dispute Resolution Process) if they believe AAT has wrongly designated a Charge as not regulated.<sup>4</sup>

The FCAI notes that most services have been designated as Other Tariffs, with only specific Facilities Access Charges, Stevedoring Access Charges and Receival and Delivery Charges being designated as Charges. All Quarantine Services Fees and Wharf Storage Fees have been designated as Other Tariffs.

The FCAI disputes the designation of All Quarantine Services Fees and Wharf Storage Fees as Other Tariffs. The FCAI believes that Quarantine Services and Wharf Storage should be designated as Charges.

The FCAI's objection to the proposed designations is based on the following:

- all Quarantine Services Fees and Wharf Storage Fees have for many years been included in the regulated tariff schedules of both AAT (at Fisherman Islands, Port Kembla and Webb Dock West) and (previously) MIRRAT (at Webb Dock West) enabling FCAI and its members to challenge price increases and/or the application of the fees;
- the FCAI has had cause in previous years to challenge proposed adjustments to Quarantine Services Fees and Wharf Storage Fees through the annual tariff schedule review process utilising the Independent Price Expert. On occasions, FCAI's objections have resulted in adjustments being made to proposed fee levels; and
- there is no reasonable commercial substitute for the AAT Quarantine Services and Wharf Storage readily available to FCAI members.

The Undertaking defines *Charge(s)* and notes:

*For the purposes of this definition, fees or charges payable by a Service Provider for a service are not compulsory where there is a competitive substitute for the relevant service. For example, fees applicable to standard storage and vehicle washing services are not Charges if other competitive alternatives are readily available servicing the Terminal including where a Service Provider has their own facility for providing those services.<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> Undertaking to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Given under section 87B of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) by Australian Amalgamated Terminals Pty Ltd ACN 098 458 229, Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal Pty Ltd ACN 163 814 364 and Qube Holdings Limited ACN 149 723 053.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Amalgamated Terminals Notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule, page 4.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Amalgamated Terminals Notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule, page 5.

<sup>5</sup> Undertaking to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Given under section 87B of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) by Australian Amalgamated Terminals Pty Ltd ACN 098 458 229, Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal Pty Ltd ACN 163 814 364 and Qube Holdings Limited ACN 149 723 053, page 40.



The FCAI believes that Quarantine Services and Wharf Storage meet the exclusionary condition in the above definition. They are not services for which other competitive alternatives are readily available to FCAI members, and so as a result, FCAI members are effectively obliged to use the services offered by AAT at the terminals.

It is extremely challenging (and generally not commercially viable) for FCAI members to seek alternative quarantine services outside of the AAT terminals for the following reasons:

- vehicles subject to the quarantine services have to be transported from the terminal to the alternative provider. To do so, the vehicles have to be transported in enclosed carriers which are not readily available and can carry only 1-3 vehicles per load (depending upon the size of the vehicle). Most car carriers are an open frame design (due to build costs and ease of load/unload access) and so the number of fully enclosed vehicles available to FCAI members is extremely limited;
- the movement of the vehicles off the terminal would also be subject to a number of timing difficulties given the need to source and secure alternate providers, amend cleaning declarations and obtain movement declaration issuance;
- AAT will impose demurrage charges on vehicles that are not subject to AAT Quarantine Services immediately following the expiration of the free time period. It is generally not possible to move all vehicles from the terminal in covered vehicles within the relatively short free time allocation;
- AAT will impose demurrage charges on vehicles not subject to their Quarantine Services immediately at the expiration of the free time allocation. A port discharge could easily consist of 1,000 vehicles. At 1-3 vehicles per truck, transporting the vehicles off the terminal will take several days, if not weeks. Effectively this means that FCAI members will be subject to demurrage charges if they elect not to use AAT for the provision of Quarantine Services, as they will not be able to move a shipment of cars off the port in covered vehicles before the expiration of this period. Practically, FCAI members incur significant additional costs (AAT demurrage, covered carrier transport costs, etc) and delays in getting their vehicles to market if they seek to use the services of an alternative provider.

The commercial constraints noted above explain why the vast majority of vehicles are treated at the terminal by the terminal operator. Removal of vehicles for external service provision generally occurs only in exceptional circumstances.

## **2. The imposition of a new Receival and Delivery Charge on wheeled and tracked vehicles loaded/discharged from RoRo vessels**

AAT have proposed that a new Receival and Delivery Charge apply at each of Fisherman Islands, Port Kembla and Webb Dock West. The new Receival and Delivery Charge will apply to wheeled vehicles discharged from RoRo vessels and varies between the terminals as follows:

- Fisherman Islands: \$7.24 per unit;
- Port Kembla: \$4.30 per unit;
- Webb Dock West: \$3.65 per unit.

The rationale for the imposition of the new charge is explained by AAT as follows:

*As part of more rigorously accounting for the cost of providing our regulated services, AAT has identified that we have failed historically to reflect several of our capital costs, and particularly the value of our premises costs, in our Charges. This is particularly relevant for those Charges for services that involve significant use of land or capital equipment, such as the Facilities Access Charge (FCA) and Receival and Delivery (R&D) Charges.<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>6</sup> Australian Amalgamated Terminals Notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule, page 2.



The FCAI is concerned at the imposition of the R&D Charge on the following bases:

- with regard to AAT's rationale for the introduction of the R&D Charge referencing significant land use – it is the FCAI's view that this would be encompassed in any demurrage charges;
- with regard to AAT's rationale for the introduction of the R&D Charge referencing capital equipment – the FCAI notes that RoRo does not utilise capital equipment (presumably cranes and forklifts) in the discharge of vehicles from vessels;
- the FCAI is concerned that the proposed R&D Charges not duplicate any or any part of existing fees and charges. For example, the FCAI has no visibility as to whether labour and security costs are already encompassed in part in other existing charges; and
- the differentiation in the proposed R&D across the terminals is significant (Fisherman Islands is over double the Webb Dock West rate) and unexplained. The differing rates do not appear to align with the volume of new vehicles that pass through the terminal.<sup>7</sup>

The FCAI notes that the imposition of the new R&D Charge is not insignificant to the industry at an estimated initial cost of over \$4.5 million per financial year.

### **3. The change in the number of free storage days from 96 hours to three business days (which includes Saturday) at Webb Dock West**

The proposed Tariff Schedule for Webb Dock West provides that FCAI members will have three Business Days free storage time following arrival at the terminal before the imposition of Wharf Storage Fees.<sup>8</sup> Previously the applicable free time was 96 hours.

AAT's reason for the change in free time from 96 hours to three Business Days is as follows:

*At Webb Dock West, the number of free storage days has changed from 4 calendar days to 3 business days, to align with the approach at the other AAT Terminals and to enhance the efficient operation of the Terminal – particularly to encourage the timely processing of vehicles through the Terminal.<sup>9</sup>*

The FCAI argues that the proposed 25% decrease in free time at Webb Dock West is effectively a price increase. It is not acceptable that such a measure is taken simply to 'align with other AAT Terminals' given the variety of different fees and conditions that currently apply at the terminals – including the proposed new R&D Charge.

The FCAI further notes that the designation of Saturday as a Business Day in the Tariff Schedule is inconsistent with the ordinary meaning of the term 'Business Day' and the relevant definition in the AAT General Terms. The FCAI understands that weekends and public holidays were initially included in the definition of 'working days' as a response to extreme congestion that affected East Coast ports in 2023 (refer Attachment 2). This situation no longer exists and the ports are no longer experiencing the significant congestion that affected terminal operations, berthing and queuing vessels at that time. The FCAI requests that Business Day (as defined in the General Terms and in general usage) be applied consistently in the Tariff Schedule and that Saturday and public holidays be treated accordingly. The FCAI further requests that this terminology be applied across all terminals subject to the AAT General Terms.

<sup>7</sup> VFACTS National Report indicates that in 2025 the following volumes of new vehicles were sold in each State and Territory: ACT – 16,917; NSW – 367,947; NT – 10,503; Qld – 259,903; SA – 78,811; Tas – 19,892; Vic – 323,768; WA – 132,067.

<sup>8</sup> Webb Dock West Automotive Terminal (formerly MIRRAT) Tariff Schedule, pages 3 and 5.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Amalgamated Terminals Notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule, page 2.



#### **4. The imposition of storage fees on quarantine held cargo (Webb Dock West)**

AAT have amended Schedule 4 of the Webb Dock West Tariff Schedule to enable the imposition of demurrage charges on held cargo, as follows:

*Unless otherwise agreed in writing with AAT, the following storage fees are payable on all cargo (including all Quarantine and Customs held cargo) stored at the Terminal for any period outside the free storage periods referred to in Schedule 1.*

*Wharf Storage Fees do not apply in respect of Quarantine held cars where those cars are undertaking the Standard Clean by AAT (per Schedule 5) in respect of any period prior to such cleaning occurring. From the time the car is cleaned and released from Quarantine, Wharf Storage Fees will apply. For the avoidance of doubt, standard Wharf Storage Fees under this Schedule 4 will apply in the following circumstances:*

- (a) *During the period that Cars are held to facilitate Other Quarantine Services including but not limited to fumigation, salt ringing, insecticide flushing, wet downs or any other treatment type ....<sup>10</sup>*

The rationale for the demurrage charge change listed by AAT is as follows:

*Following a concern raised by a user in 2026, the position in relation to wharf storage fees at Webb Dock West has also been clarified for vehicles requiring quarantine cleaning.<sup>11</sup>*

The FCAI objects to the proposed implementation of demurrage on held cargo. The imposition of demurrage in this manner effectively introduces a new charge on FCAI members. Traditionally if cargo was held for quarantine and directed for treatment by the terminal operator a demurrage fee was not applied – a longstanding practice recognised by previous independent pricing reviews.<sup>12</sup> FCAI strongly disagrees that the changed demurrage arrangement is simply a clarification of the application of the storage fees.

In summary:

- the note to the proposed demurrage charges adds an important and contentious condition in that it allows for the imposition of demurrage fees on held cargo;
- the FCAI believes that permitting the terminal operator to impose a demurrage fee on a vehicle in circumstances where the terminal operator manages the treatment process is fundamentally flawed. The FCAI believes that it is not reasonable for the terminal operator to impose demurrage on held vehicles given the terminal operator largely controls the amount of time the held cargo remains in demurrage before being directed to the treatment process;
- previous attempts by the (then) terminal operator to impose a demurrage fee on held vehicles have been rejected by the Independent Pricing Expert.<sup>13</sup>

The FCAI refers to a further earlier attempt to introduce a demurrage fee on held cargo in the 2025-26 Webb Dock West Tariff Schedule. While an objection to the proposed charge was initially lodged by the FCAI, it was withdrawn on the basis the proposal was discontinued by AAT. In withdrawing its objection, the FCAI did not believe it had agreed to the removal of demurrage fees only when vehicles were being treated for seed

<sup>10</sup> Webb Dock West Automotive Terminal (formerly MIRRAT) Tariff Schedule, page 5.

<sup>11</sup> Australian Amalgamated Terminals Notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule, page 2.

<sup>12</sup> *In the past if cargo was held for quarantine and directed for treatment a demurrage fee was not applied.* Dr John Fallon, Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal Pty Ltd Independent Price Expert Determination, 19 June 2023, page 3.

<sup>13</sup> Dr John Fallon, Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal Pty Ltd Independent Price Expert Determination, 19 June 2023, page 3.



decontamination (cleaned) while allowing for demurrage fees to be payable pending any other form of quarantine treatment.

The FCAI further notes that the terms *quarantine held*, *treatment* and *cleaning* tend to be used interchangeably by the FCAI and AAT. The FCAI's 2025 notice of objection to the Independent Price Expert referred to both the treatment and cleaning of vehicles (refer Attachment 3). AAT's *Authority to Treat* form refers to *quarantine held cargo that requires treatment under the Biosecurity Act*; to Quarantine Services (treatment and cleaning services) as treatment options to remove contamination in preparation for the final biosecurity inspection; and a note to the quarantine service table that sets out cleaning charges refers to AAT notifying the cargo representative prior to treatment commencement.

The FCAI contends that the imposition of demurrage charges on held cargo in the manner described in the 2026-27 Tariff Schedule for Webb Dock West is not justified given:

- the condition effectively imposes an additional charge that has not been justified by AAT in any way;
- a similar charge was rejected the last time this matter was considered by the Independent Price Expert in June 2023;
- the amount of time a vehicle remains in demurrage prior to being treated by the terminal operator is within the effective control of the terminal operator; and
- as noted earlier in this objection notice, the ability for FCAI members to move vehicles off the terminal for cleaning is extremely limited and time consuming. It is generally not commercially feasible for FCAI members to seek alternative quarantine services outside of the terminal.

## Summary

In summary, the FCAI requests that the Independent Price Expert:

- reject the proposed designation of Charges and Other Tariffs in the manner proposed by AAT. The FCAI requests that Quarantine Services Fees and Wharf Storage Fees continue to be included in the Tariff Schedules;
- not approve the proposed reduction in free time at Webb Dock West from 96 hours to three Business Days;
- reject the designation of Saturday and public holidays as Business Days (or working days) in the absence of significant congestion on the terminals;
- reject the inclusion of the new condition that AAT proposes in relation to demurrage charges that would permit demurrage be charged on held cargo awaiting treatment for biosecurity contamination.

I hope the above information is of assistance to you. The FCAI would be pleased to provide any further information that the Independent Price Expert may require.

Yours sincerely

**Dianne O'Hara**  
Director Industry Operations



**Attachment 1: Listing of FCAI members (and brands)**



Ateco Automotive Pty Ltd

- Maserati
- LDV
- Ram Trucks Australia
- Renault Australia

BMW Group Aust Ltd

- MINI

BMW Motorrad

BRP Australia Pty Ltd

- Can-Am

BYD Australia Pty Ltd

- Denza

Chery Motor Australia Pty Ltd

- Omoda Jaecoo

Ducati Australia and New Zealand

Ferrari Australasia Pty Ltd

Ford Motor Company of Australia Pty Ltd

GAC International Australia

Geely Auto Australia Pty Ltd

GM Holden Ltd

GWM Aust and NZ

- Haval Motors Australia

Harley-Davidson Australia Pty Ltd

Honda Australia Pty Ltd

Honda MPE (Aust) Pty Ltd

Hyundai Motor Company Australia Pty Ltd

- Genesis

Inchcape

- Deepal
- Foton
- Peugeot
- Subaru Australia Pty Ltd

Isuzu Australia Limited

Isuzu UTE Australia Pty Ltd

Iveco Trucks Australia Limited

Jaguar Land Rover Australia Pty Ltd

Jameel Mobility Wholesale & Distribution Company

Kawasaki Motors Pty Ltd

KGM Australia

KIA Motors Australia

KTM Australia

- Husqvarna
- GasGas
- MV Agusta

Lexus Australia

LTS Auto Holdings Pty Ltd

- JAC Motors

Mahindra Automotive Australia Pty Ltd

Mazda Australia

Mercedes Benz Australia Pacific Pty Ltd

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd

Nissan Motor Co Australia Pty Ltd

Peter Stevens Importers Pty Ltd

- Aprilia
- Moto Guzzi
- Triumph
- Vespa
- Piaggio

Polaris Industries Australia & New Zealand

- Indian Motorcycle

Porsche Cars Australia

SAIC Motor Australia Pty Ltd

- MG
- IM Motors

Stellantis Australia

- Abarth
- Alfa Romeo
- Chrysler
- Fiat
- Jeep
- Leapmotor

Suzuki Australia Pty Ltd

Suzuki Motorcycles Australia

Toyota Motor Corp Australia Ltd

Volkswagen Group Australia Pty Ltd

- Audi Australia
- Cupra
- Skoda
- Bentley
- Lamborghini

Volvo Car Australia

Xpeng Motors Australia Pty Ltd

Yamaha Motor Australia Pty Ltd

Zeekr Intelligent Technology Aust. Pty Ltd

Zero Motorcycles BV



**Attachment 2: AAT Notice dated 5/05/23, *AAT Storage Arrangements for Cars, wheeled and Tracked Vehicles***

**To:** AAT Valued Customers

5/05/2023

**Subject:** AAT Storage Arrangement for Cars, Wheeled and Tracked Vehicles

---

AAT currently is experiencing extended berthing delays for PCC and RoRo vessels at our Port Kembla (PK) and Fisherman Islands (FI) facilities. The delays are attributed to exceedingly high imports, high discharge volumes on individual vessels, extending berthing time along with yard capacity as the large discharge impacts the entire supply chain. The current situation has resulted in significant berthing queue within excesses of 10 vessels awaiting a berth at both PK and FI.

The seed contamination issue that created congestion and impacted terminals across the country has been largely contained at AAT sites and is no longer contributing to berthing or yard congestion. The recent indicators suggest that the number of seed contaminated vehicles is in decline which is evident in lower Biosecurity held vehicle numbers reported than in previous months.

However, vessel discharge volumes are significantly larger, increasing from an average of 900 cars movements per vessel, up to a peak of circa 5500 on a single vessel. Discharge volume averages are now reported at double the long-term average. The impact of these larger single vessel volumes is evident in the significant congestion issues as the terminals endeavor to clear the facility to create the laydown yard space for the following vessel. PDI operators are also impacted as the large volume of deliveries strains available capacity.

The addition of new shipping lines in the market and subsequent arrival of new vessels, along with the impact of end of financial year is expected to further increase volumes. Delivering cars out of the terminal and creating space is our biggest challenge and has been for many years. This issue is further compounded over weekends and public holidays when cargo delivery is significantly reduced.

On this basis, AAT is forced to change our storage arrangements to promote the delivery of cars, wheeled and tracked vehicles from our terminal. AATs existing policy includes 3 free days storage from vessel departure but currently excludes weekends and public holidays.

From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023, **weekends and public holidays will now be included as a working day**. Given there are no terminal restrictions, cars, wheeled and tracked vehicles are available for collection at our sites 24/7, which is consistent with, stevedoring, shipping and port operations which all operate 24/7, we will now require the rest of the supply chain to also participate on this basis to clear the terminals faster. At the expiry of the free three days storage period, storage charges will become applicable regardless of day of the week.

AAT recognises some PDI operators currently work nights and weekends to move cargo and we appreciate their effort and the close working arrangements with our operational staff. Whilst this does provide some relief, the sheer volume combined with lost deliver days over weekends and the recent Easter, ANZAC and Labour Day public holidays, yard congestion and vessel queues continue to grow at significant cost to the industry.

We thank you for your understanding.

Regards

Antony Perkins



**Attachment 3: FCAI correspondence dated 16 May 2025, *Objection to MIRRAT Proposed Price Increase – July 2025***



16 May 2025

Mr Warwick Davis  
Frontier Economics Pty Ltd  
Ground Floor  
395 Collins Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

via email: [warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au](mailto:warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au)

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear Mr Davis,

### **Objection to MIRRAT Proposed Price Increase – July 2025**

The FCAI is the peak industry body for the Australian importers and distributors of passenger motor vehicles, sports utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, motorcycles and off highway vehicles. FCAI members supply about 98% of new vehicles to the Australian market each year.

FCAI members are listed at <https://www.fcai.com.au/about-fcai/member-manufacturers/>.

### **Proposed MIRRAT 2025/26 tariff**

By notice dated 30 April 2025, Head of Commercial and Stakeholder Management at MIRRAT, Mr Jed Smith, notified the FCAI of the proposed 2025/26 tariff to apply to the Melbourne International RoRo and Auto Terminal. The tariff schedule indicated the following:

#### *Wharf Demurrage Fees*

<b>Cargo Type</b>	<b>Tariff (AUD)</b>
<i>Wheeled Vehicles &lt; 20 CBM</i>	<i>\$62.78 per unit</i>
<i>Wheeled Vehicles 20 - 50 CBM</i>	<i>\$89.93 per unit</i>
<i>Wheeled Vehicles &gt; 50 CBM</i>	<i>\$2.25 per cbm</i>

A note to the above 2025-26 table of proposed demurrage charges states:

*Charges are payable on all cargo (including all Quarantine and Customs held cargo) left undelivered after 96 hours for imported cargo. (our emphasis added)*

The FCAI has noted the reasons listed as supporting the proposed price increase in the MIRRAT correspondence, and requests a review of the proposed increases to demurrage fees (including the increases that will result from the abovementioned note).

### **FCAI's objection to proposed 2025/26 tariff on behalf of its members**

The FCAI objects to the 2025/26 demurrage charges proposed by MIRRAT on the following bases:



- the proposed demurrage charges represent a 7.0% – 7.14% increase to the 2024/25 demurrage charges, well above the average increase of 4.1% sought by MIRRAT in relation to terminal operations, and well above the 2.4% annual CPI increase to end of March 2025<sup>1</sup>; and
- the note to the proposed charges indicating that from 1 July 2025 demurrage will apply to held cargo is effectively a price increase (in addition to the 7% increase) that is unreasonable given the management of held cargo is effectively controlled by the terminal operator.

Increase in demurrage charges

The proposed 2025/26 MIRRAT tariff schedule outlines the following percentage increases to demurrage fees:

Cargo Type	Proposed 2025/26 Tariff (AUD)	% increase over 2024/25 demurrage charges
Wheeled Vehicles < 20 CBM	\$62.78 per unit	7.01
Wheeled Vehicles 20 - 50 CBM	\$89.93 per unit	7.00
Wheeled Vehicles > 50 CBM	\$2.25 per cbm	7.14

The reasons outlined by MIRRAT for the increased demurrage fees are as follows:

*Inbound volumes of passenger vehicles over the past 12 months have trended above the 5-year historical average, driven by consumer demand and OEMs/vehicle importers strategically positioning stock ahead of impending regulatory changes. While volumes have been relatively strong historically, this financial year, we have experienced a decline in inbound cargo being processed through the terminal compared to last year.*

*The outlook for FY26 will continue with this same theme of softening volumes. MIRRAT forecasts a decline in inbound cargo through FY26 driven by weakening market conditions. Economic pressures such as high interest rates and inflation are expected to dampen consumer spending, reducing demand for new vehicles. Additionally, the new automotive market is experiencing increased saturation, with several new OEMs/imports set to enter the market over the next 12 months, leading to consumers holding onto their current cars longer.*

The FCAI does not agree with the MIRRAT analysis which appears to be at odds with industry expectations, actual import volumes and expert forecasts. The past two years have seen record inbound volumes of new passenger vehicles.

Annual new vehicle volumes for the period since 2020 are listed below.<sup>2</sup>

Year	Number of New Vehicles (Australia)	Number of New Vehicles (Victoria)
2025 (YTD 30 April 2025)	373,438	99,203
2024	1,185,563	318,724
2023	1,165,055	313,127
2022	1,034,070	274,326
2021	1,006,510	261,067
2020	882,401	217,111

<sup>1</sup> CPI was 3.8% in the 12 months to end of June 2024.

<sup>2</sup> VFACTS data (including EVC data for 2024-25)



While the FCAI recognises that record volumes of new vehicles into Australia cannot continue to occur year on year, forecast new vehicle sales (as per S&P Global Mobility) are listed below. The data shows continuing strong new vehicles volumes in out years. Like other industry commentators, the FCAI does not anticipate that new vehicle volumes will fall below one million vehicles per annum in the near future.

Year	Forecast Number of New Vehicles <sup>3</sup>
2025	1,076,890
2026	1,061,327
2027	1,060,188

The FCAI also disputes the analysis offered by MIRRAT in regard to dampening consumer demand. The past few years of high inflation, rising interest rates and cost of living concerns has not resulted in any material reduction in consumer demand for new motor vehicles. The FCAI understands that household consumption growth has started to recover and underlying inflation is expected to ease further in coming quarters.<sup>4</sup> The addition of (predominantly Chinese) brands into Australia gives new vehicle consumers more choice in their selection of models and is not expected to lead to consumers holding onto their current vehicles longer. For example, BYD first entered the Australian market in 2023 and sold more than 20,000 units in 2024. Within 24 months, BYD has become a top 20 brand by volume in a market that has more than 50 distinct brands available.

Further, the FCAI notes that new vehicle import volumes is not the only way in which MIRRAT recovers its costs. In recent years Wallenius Wilhelmsen (specifically MIRRAT) has maintained and increased EBITDA through activities including washing and demurrage.

*Terminal volumes decreased 4 percent year over year. However, EBITDA for FY 2023 was USD 98 million compared to USD 63 million in 2022. The EBITDA growth was mainly attributable to extensive de-seeding activity in Australia, including washing and demurrage.<sup>5</sup>*

Similarly, in its 2024 annual report, Wallenius Wilhelmsen reported in respect of its entire terminal operations:

*Terminal revenue was USD 283 million, a 4 percent increase from 2023. EBITDA for 2024 was USD 102 million compared to USD 98 million in 2023.<sup>6</sup>*

*For logistics services, adjusted EBITDA increased 13 percent, as revenue increases exceed the increase in costs resulting in a higher average margin.<sup>7</sup>*

*Auto revenue for the full year ended at USD 566 million, an 11 percent increase from 2023. Auto EBITDA for the full year ended at USD 82 million, a 30 percent increase from 2023, thanks to 11 percent revenue growth and operational efficiencies.<sup>8</sup>*

In summary, the FCAI contends the proposed increases of 7.00%, 7.01% and 7.14% for demurrage for wheeled vehicles < 20CBM, 20-50 CBM and > 50 CBM respectively are not justified by reference to:

- the annual CPI of 3.8% up to end of June 2024 and 2.4% in the 12 months to end of March 2025;

<sup>3</sup> S&P Global Mobility, SBPT Forecast, March 2025.

<sup>4</sup> Reserve Bank of Australia - Statement on Monetary Policy – February 2025, <https://www.rba.gov.au/publications/smp/2025/feb/outlook.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/WWAnnualReport2023.pdf>, page 33.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/Investor-relations/WAWI\\_2024-Annual-report.pdf](https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/Investor-relations/WAWI_2024-Annual-report.pdf), page 28.

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/Investor-relations/WAWI\\_2024-Annual-report.pdf](https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/Investor-relations/WAWI_2024-Annual-report.pdf), page 22.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/Investor-relations/WAWI\\_2024-Annual-report.pdf](https://www.walleniuswilhelmsen.com/storage/images/Investor-relations/WAWI_2024-Annual-report.pdf), page 28.



- the past and anticipated volumes of new motor vehicles expected to be processed through the terminal which are not anticipated to see significant downward movement, particularly given population growth;
- the lack of evidence offered by MIRRAT for its assertion that consumers will hold their current vehicles for longer; and
- the lack of reference by MIRRAT to its associated sources of revenue (including demurrage and cleaning services) when considering a reasonable rate of return.

#### Note to demurrage charges

The note to the proposed demurrage charges adds an important and contentious condition to the proposed charges in that they allow for the imposition of demurrage fees on held cargo. Currently if cargo is held for quarantine and directed for treatment by MIRRAT a demurrage fee is not applied.

The FCAI notes that MIRRAT's previous attempt to impose a demurrage fee on held vehicles was rejected by the Independent Pricing Expert.<sup>9</sup>

The FCAI believes that permitting the terminal operator to impose a demurrage fee on a vehicle in circumstances where the terminal operator manages, schedules and controls the cleaning process is fundamentally flawed. The FCAI is aware that earlier this year some FCAI members were informed cleaning of their vehicles could not commence for periods of up to two-three weeks. Had the proposed MIRRAT demurrage on held vehicles regime been in place, this would have imposed a significant and unjustified expense on car importers. The FCAI believes that it is not reasonable for the terminal operator to impose demurrage on held vehicles given the terminal operator effectively controls the amount of time the held cargo remains in demurrage before being directed to the cleaning process.

The ability for FCAI members to move vehicles off the terminal for cleaning is extremely limited and time consuming. It is challenging for FCAI members to seek alternative quarantine services outside of the terminal for the following reasons:

- vehicles subject to the quarantine services have to be transported from the terminal to a very limited number (one) of alternative providers. To do so, the vehicles have to be transported in enclosed carriers and so are transported 2-3 vehicles per load. There are a very limited number of fully enclosed carriers in Melbourne;
- the movement of the vehicles off the terminal would also be subject to the time constraints applicable at the port. The FCAI understands that the MIRRAT booking system limits the volume that can be moved;
- MIRRAT will impose demurrage charges on vehicles that are not subject to MIRRAT quarantine services immediately following the expiration of the 96 free hours. A port discharge could easily consist of 1,000 units. At 2-3 vehicles per truck, transporting the vehicles off the terminal will necessarily take some days and so it is generally not possible to move all vehicles from the port in covered vehicles within the 96 hour time frame.

The FCAI contends that the imposition of demurrage charges on held cargo is not justified given:

- the condition effectively imposes an additional charge that has not been justified by MIRRAT in any way;
- a similar charge was rejected by the IPE in June 2023; and
- the amount of time a vehicle remains in demurrage prior to being cleaned by the terminal operator is within the effective control of the terminal operator.

#### **Summary**

In summary, the FCAI requests that the IPE:

---

<sup>9</sup> Dr John Fallon, *Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal Pty Ltd Independent Price Expert Determination*, 19 June 2023, page 3.



- review the proposal by MIRRAT to increase the demurrage fees at the terminal for wheeled vehicles by 7.0% - 7.14%;
- reject the inclusion of the new condition that MIRRAT proposes in relation to demurrage charges that would permit demurrage be charged on held cargo.

I hope the above information is of assistance to you. The FCAI would be pleased to provide any further information that the IPE may require.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne O'Hara".

**Dianne O'Hara**  
Director Industry Operations

Our ref: **ATH:20240937**  
Your ref:

Direct dial: 03 9321 7851  
Direct email: [ahudson@rigbycooke.com.au](mailto:ahudson@rigbycooke.com.au)  
Page: 1/12

24 March 2026

Mr Warwick Davis  
Frontier Economics Pty Ltd  
Ground Floor, 395 Collins Street  
Melbourne, VIC 3000

By Email: [Warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au](mailto:Warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au)

Dear Mr Davis

**Notice of Objection to the Australian Amalgamated Terminals (AAT) 2026-27 Tariff Schedule**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 We act for an Australian entity whose business entails regular use of the facilities operated by Australian Amalgamated Terminals (**AAT**), including the Port of Brisbane, Port Kembla and the recently acquired Webb Dock West Automotive Terminal.
- 1.2 We refer to the notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule (**Tariff**) issued by AAT on 3 March 2026.
- 1.3 We further refer to section 3.1 of Schedule 5 of the undertaking to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (**ACCC**) given by AAT, Melbourne International RoRo & Auto Terminal Pty Ltd and Qube Holdings Limited (**Undertaking**), under section 87B of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*.
- 1.4 In accordance with section 3.1 of Schedule 5 of the Undertaking, our client seeks to formally lodge this Objection Notice with respect to a number of Charges as defined in the Undertaking (**Charges**), as well as other fees, charges, tariffs or duties which have not been defined as Charges by AAT.
- 1.5 The Undertaking provides that AAT must comply with the Price Dispute Resolution process in Schedule 5 to the Undertaking to determine any disputes by any Dispute Applicant in relation to *“the introduction of any new fee, charge, tariff or duty however so described”*.
- 1.6 A Dispute Applicant is defined as *“a person with a genuine direct or indirect economic interest in the terms and conditions of use of the Terminal and includes users of a Terminal, importers and exporters (and/or their industry representative bodies).”*

This email transmission is intended to be transmitted to the person named. Should it be received by another person, its contents are to be treated as strictly confidential. It is a privileged communication between the firm and the person named. Any use, distribution or reproduction of the information by anyone other than that person is prohibited. If you have received this email in error please contact us on 61 3 9321 7888.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

20240937\_6623536v2

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 2/12

- 1.7 Our client specialises in freight forwarding and cargo brokering and frequently utilises AAT facilities to conduct its business operations.
- 1.8 The services our client provides range from door-to-door to port-to-port shipping. It facilitates transportation routes from Brisbane, Port Kembla and Melbourne, ending at Fremantle.
- 1.9 Our client's coastal shipments comprise a diverse range of cargo, including passenger cars, trucks, buses, boats on trailers, caravans, and construction machinery. These units are shipped to Fremantle for further distribution to various inland destinations across Western Australia. Our client's business does not involve exporting cargo overseas.
- 1.10 Our client's shipping services operate on a regular basis with quick transit times. These services present a more efficient and cost-effective alternative to transporting vehicles by road.
- 1.11 Beyond shipping, our client also arranges for the collection and delivery of vehicles, ensuring an end-to-end solution for road transportation needs across the country.

## **2 Our client's standing to raise an Objection Notice**

- 2.1 In our view, based on the above description of our client's business operations, our client clearly falls within the scope of a Dispute Applicant as defined by the Undertaking.
- 2.2 As the Independent Price Expert would be aware, our client has made previous attempts to challenge the 'vehicle export handling fee' imposed by AAT at various terminals it operates.
- 2.3 However, these actions have not led to the desired outcome of having the fee reviewed as the IPE and AAT were of the view that the 'vehicle export handling fee' did not fall within the definition of a Charge under the Undertaking.
- 2.4 We note that prior to the amended Undertaking being adopted in 2025 due to the acquisition of MIRRAT by AAT, previous undertakings given to the ACCC did not contain a mechanism to challenge the designation of a new fee, charge, duty or tariff as not being a Charge.
- 2.5 As a result of this stance, the export handling fee introduced at Port Kembla and Brisbane in 2023, and in Melbourne in 2025 was unable to be successfully challenged and reviewed under the Price Dispute Resolution mechanism in the Undertaking.
- 2.6 The introduction of the 'vehicle export handling fee' has been the subject of extensive complaints and correspondence to the ACCC on behalf of our client and other entities we have acted for previously.
- 2.7 We refer to previous submissions to the ACCC made on behalf of our client and other entities in relation to the acquisition of MIRRAT by AAT. We can provide the IPE with confidential versions of these submissions to the ACCC, which are not to be shared with any other party.

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 3/12

2.8 Those submissions provide further details regarding the lack of justification and reasonableness of the 'vehicle export handling fee', and the ongoing detrimental effects upon our client's operations and financial position.

### 3 Relevant fees, charges, tariff and duties

3.1 We note that the scope of this Objection Notice will be broader than only the 'vehicle export handling fee' previously identified in our previous correspondence with the IPE.

3.2 Our client has identified a number of other fees, charges, tariffs and duties in the Tariff which in its view are either unjustified, unreasonable or disproportionate to the service allegedly being provided by AAT on account of that expense.

3.3 Below we have set out the Charges, as well as the fees, charges, tariffs and duties identified by our client and explained why they are being disputed and the negative impacts they are having on our client's business.

3.4 Please note that where an item is already defined as a Charge, our client objects to the Charge. Where an item is defined as an 'other tariff', our client's position is that the 'other tariff' should be characterised as a Charge and there be able to be challenged under the Price Dispute Resolution mechanism in the Undertaking.

Item	Description	Category	Charge (C) or Other Tariff (OT)	AUD (\$)	Reason for Objection
Late Receiving Gate Passes	A fee applied to cargo that arrives at the terminal after the designated cut-off time, requiring a special authorisation for entry.	Port of Brisbane - Schedule 3 - Receiving and Delivery Charge	C	\$40.96 per car	The terminal operator performs no additional administrative or operational tasks to process a late gate pass beyond the standard receiving procedure. The fee is not cost-justified, as there is no incremental resource expenditure incurred.
Administrative Charge	For amendments to incorrect export receiving advice/pre receiving advice information	Port of Brisbane - Schedule 3 - Receiving and Delivery Charge	OT	\$91.48 per instance	The charge is excessive and disproportionate to the clerical effort required for minor data amendments. It does not reflect a reasonable fee for service and appears to act as a penalty rather than cost recovery.

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 4/12

Yard Move	A fee applied when cargo or a vehicle must be relocated within the terminal.	Port of Brisbane - Schedule 5 – Quarantine Service Fees	OT	\$83.88 per move	The requirement for a yard move is driven by the terminal operator’s internal logistical requirements rather than a request for service by the client. Carriers and stevedores routinely park vehicles in locations specifically designated by AAT; any subsequent relocation is for the operator’s own operational efficiency. Furthermore, the fee is commercially non-competitive, as the cost for a short internal transfer is equal to the market rate for a 50km external line-haul move. Consequently, the charge is both operationally unjustified and priced well above a reasonable cost-recovery basis.
Yard Jump Start	A service fee for providing battery assistance to a vehicle that is unable to start under its own power while within the terminal yard	Port of Brisbane - Schedule 5 – Quarantine Service Fees	OT	\$155.49 per start	The charge is excessive relative to the simple nature of the service. Additionally, there are ongoing concerns regarding the operator's standard of care during these procedures and a lack of recourse for damage caused by improper jump-start techniques.
Wharf Storage Fees	Fees charged for the storage of undelivered cargo left at the terminal	Port of Brisbane – Schedule 6 – Wharf Storage Fees	OT	Day 1 to 3 - \$85.29 Day 4 onwards - \$147.10	The proposed storage fees are commercially disproportionate and lack a transparent cost-basis. Despite Brisbane having lower underlying industrial land values compared to other states, the proposed rates are the highest. Furthermore, the escalation in the daily rate

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 5/12

					from Day 4 onwards is predatory and functions as an unreasonable penalty rather than a cost-recovery mechanism.
Second Hand Cars Handling Fee	A separate handling fee for imported second hand vehicles.	Port of Brisbane - Schedule 7 – Service Fees	OT	\$123.44 per import car	The fee lacks a functional basis as third-party providers, rather than the terminal operator, conduct the inspections. Under the ROCIP scheme, where only 5% of units are inspected, a blanket fee on all units is discriminatory and should, at most, apply only to the small percentage of vehicles actually inspected.
Export Handling Fee	The export handling fee is a service fee for preparing and handling export cargo.	Port of Brisbane - Schedule 7 – Service Fees	OT	\$123.44 per car, wheeled or tracked unit	There is no identifiable difference in the operational handling of new versus used vehicles for export. As the terminal operator's workload remains unchanged, this fee represents a charge for which no additional service or value is provided.
Late Reival Gate Passes	A fee applied to cargo that arrives at the terminal after the designated cut-off time, requiring a special authorisation for entry.	Port Kembla – Schedule 3 – Reival and Delivery Charge	C	\$304.29 per instance or load of general cargo/RoRo cargo \$58.51 per car	The terminal operator performs no additional administrative or operational tasks to process a late gate pass beyond the standard reival procedure. The fee is not cost-justified, as there is no incremental resource expenditure incurred.

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 6/12

Administrative Charge	For amendments to incorrect export receipt advice/pre receipt advice information	Port Kembla – Schedule 3 – Receipt and Delivery Charge	OT	\$89.40	The charge is excessive and disproportionate to the clerical effort required for minor data amendments. It does not reflect a reasonable fee for service and appears to act as a penalty rather than cost recovery.
Car Inspection	A fee for the physical examination of a vehicle to verify its condition, identity, or compliance with safety and biosecurity standards.	Port Kembla – Schedule 5 – Quarantine Services Fees	OT	\$88.67 per unit	Our client seeks formal verification that this inspection fee will not be levied against used import units. It is our client's position that such a charge would constitute a duplication of existing services, as used vehicles are already subject to comprehensive biosecurity and identity verification protocols upon discharge.
Yard Move	A fee applied when cargo or a vehicle must be relocated within the terminal.	Port Kembla - Schedule 5 – Quarantine Service Fees	OT	\$55.47 per move	The requirement for a yard move is driven by the terminal operator's internal logistical requirements rather than a request for service by the client. Carriers and stevedores routinely park vehicles in locations specifically designated by AAT; any subsequent relocation is for the operator's own operational efficiency. Furthermore, the fee is commercially non-competitive, as the cost for a short internal transfer is equal to the market rate for a 50km external line-haul move. Consequently, the charge is both operationally unjustified and priced well above a reasonable cost-recovery basis.

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 7/12

Yard Jump Start	A service fee for providing battery assistance to a vehicle that is unable to start under its own power while within the terminal yard	Port Kembla - Schedule 5 – Quarantine Service Fees	OT	\$115.91 per start	The charge is excessive relative to the simple nature of the service. Additionally, there are ongoing concerns regarding the operator's standard of care during these procedures and a lack of recourse for damage caused by improper jump-start techniques.
Day 1 to 3 of storage	Fees charged for the storage of undelivered cargo left at the terminal	Port Kembla – Schedule 6 – Wharf Storage Fees	OT	\$36.49 per unit per day	The proposed increase exceeds a reasonable annual adjustment and lacks sufficient cost-based justification. Our client submits that any price escalation should be capped at the prevailing CPI rate, resulting in a maximum charge of \$35.17 (plus GST).
Day 4 onwards	Fees charged for the storage of undelivered cargo left at the terminal	Port Kembla – Schedule 6 – Wharf Storage Fees	OT	\$56.24 per unit per day	The proposed daily rates and the sharp escalation from Day 4 are excessive and exceed reasonable CPI adjustments. Furthermore, storage fees should not accrue where delays are caused by government regulatory impediments (ABF/DAFF) beyond the importer's control.
Second Hand Cars Handling Fee	A separate handling fee for imported second hand vehicles.	Port of Kembla - Schedule 7 – Service Fees	OT	\$55.22 per import car	The fee lacks a functional basis as third-party providers, rather than the terminal operator, conduct the inspections. Under the ROCIP scheme, where only 5% of units are inspected, a blanket fee on all units is discriminatory and should, at most, apply only to the small

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 8/12

					percentage of vehicles actually inspected.
Export Handling Fee	The export handling fee is a service fee for preparing and handling export cargo.	Port of Kembla - Schedule 7 – Service Fees	OT	\$120.64 per car, wheeled or tracked unit	There is no identifiable difference in the operational handling of new versus used vehicles for export. As the terminal operator’s workload remains unchanged, this fee represents a charge for which no additional service or value is provided.
Late Receival Fee	A charge applied to cargo that is delivered to the terminal after the officially coordinated cut-off time.	Webb Dock West – Schedule 3 – Receival & Delivery Charge	C	\$88.54 per unit	The imposition of a late receival fee is not supported by a corresponding increase in operational activity or resource expenditure by the terminal operator. Given that the physical receipt and processing of the cargo remains identical to a standard delivery, the fee lacks a cost-recovery basis and appears to function as an arbitrary penalty rather than a fee for a distinct service.
Administrative Charge	For amendments to incorrect export receival advice/pre receival advice information	Webb Dock West - Schedule 3 - Receival and Delivery Charge	OT	\$93.39 per instance	The charge is excessive and disproportionate to the clerical effort required for minor data amendments. It does not reflect a reasonable fee for service and appears to act as a penalty rather than cost recovery.
Wheeled Vehicles < 20CBM storage fee	Fees charged for the storage of undelivered cargo left at the terminal	Webb Dock West – Schedule 4 – Wharf Storage Fees	OT	\$63.43 per unit per day	The proposed storage rate for wheeled vehicles under 20CBM is commercially excessive and lacks a transparent cost-based justification. The fee significantly exceeds reasonable cost-recovery

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 9/12

					levels for the provision of standing room and does not appear to reflect the actual land-use costs or operational overheads incurred by the terminal.
Second Hand Wheeled Vehicles < 25 CBM	These tariffs are charged for the inspection and treatment of cargo to ensure compliance with local government biosecurity and quarantine regulations.	Webb Dock West – Schedule 5 – Quarantine Services Fees	OT	\$518.81 per unit	The proposed tariff is grossly excessive and lacks a functional cost basis. In Melbourne, the terminal operator performs no additional labour or administrative tasks for these units, as importers are mandated to engage third-party providers to conduct the actual biosecurity inspections. Furthermore, for vehicles processed under ROCIP, only a 5% random audit is required by DAFF. Applying a significant, uniform fee to 100% of these shipments is inherently discriminatory and does not reflect a fee-for-service model. Any such charge should, at most, be strictly limited to the 5% of units that actually undergo physical inspection.
Second Hand Wheeled Vehicles > 25 CBM	These tariffs are charged for the inspection and treatment of cargo to ensure compliance with local government biosecurity and quarantine regulations.	Webb Dock West – Schedule 5 – Quarantine Services Fees	OT	\$622.57 per unit	The proposed tariff is grossly excessive and lacks a functional cost basis. In Melbourne, the terminal operator performs no additional labour or administrative tasks for these units, as importers are mandated to engage third-party providers to conduct the actual biosecurity inspections. Furthermore, for vehicles processed under ROCIP, only a 5% random audit is

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
 Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
 Page: 10/12

					<p>required by DAFF. Applying a significant, uniform fee to 100% of these shipments is inherently discriminatory and does not reflect a fee-for-service model. Any such charge should, at most, be strictly limited to the 5% of units that actually undergo physical inspection.</p>
<p>Movement to/from designate inspection/washing area</p>		<p>Webb Dock West – Schedule 5 – Quarantine Services Fees</p>	<p>OT</p>	<p>\$74.09 per move</p>	<p>The proposed fee for internal movement to and from designated inspection or washing areas is commercially unreasonable and disproportionate to the service provided. By way of comparison, the market rate for a full-scale external transport of a vehicle via truck to a third-party wash bay is approximately \$80.00. Given that this terminal charge applies to a significantly less resource-intensive internal driving movement over a minimal distance, it lacks a transparent cost-recovery basis.</p>
<p>Inspection Fee</p>	<p>A fee for the physical examination of a vehicle to verify its condition, identity, or compliance with safety and biosecurity standards.</p>	<p>Webb Dock West – Schedule 5 – Quarantine Services Fees</p>	<p>OT</p>	<p>\$98.42 per move</p>	<p>This fee is misaligned with the terminal operator's role, as statutory compliance is overseen by government authorities, and vehicle identification is already performed by the stevedore during discharge. It represents a duplication of existing processes.</p>

# RIGBY COOKE LAWYERS

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 11/12

Yard Jump Start	A service fee for providing battery assistance to a vehicle that is unable to start under its own power while within the terminal yard	Webb Dock West - Schedule 8 – Service Fees	OT	\$124.80 per unit	The charge is excessive relative to the simple nature of the service. Additionally, there are ongoing concerns regarding the operator's standard of care during these procedures and a lack of recourse for damage caused by improper jump-start techniques.
Export Handling Fee	The export handling fee is a service fee for preparing and handling export cargo.	Webb Dock West - Schedule 8 – Service Fees	OT	\$118 per unit	There is no identifiable difference in the operational handling of new versus used vehicles for export. As the terminal operator's workload remains unchanged, this fee represents a charge for which no additional service or value is provided.
Second Hand Cars Handling Fee	A separate handling fee for imported second hand vehicles.	Webb Dock West - Schedule 8 – Service Fees	OT	\$62.40 per unit	The fee lacks a functional basis as third-party providers, rather than the terminal operator, conduct the inspections. Under the ROCIP scheme, where only 5% of units are inspected, a blanket fee on all units is discriminatory and should, at most, apply only to the small percentage of vehicles actually inspected.

## 4 Introduction of the Receival and Delivery Charge

- 4.1 Our client also strongly opposes the proposed introduction of a Receival and Delivery (R&D) Charge for wheeled and tracked vehicles as it constitutes an unreasonable duplication of existing fees.
- 4.2 Historically, the costs associated with the handling and processing of automotive cargo have been recovered through the port charges already levied on the shipping lines.

Our ref: ATH:20230767  
Your ref:

Letter to: Mr Warwick Davis, Independent Price Expert  
Page: 12/12

- 4.3 As the terminal operator provides no additional or distinct service to justify this new tariff, the charge represents a 'double recovery' of costs for functions already captured under the existing pricing structure.
- 4.4 Furthermore, the operator has failed to provide a transparent breakdown of the incremental costs specifically associated with automotive R&D that would necessitate an additional per-unit levy, making the R&D charge commercially unjustified.

**5 Further issues with storage fees**

- 5.1 Our client submits it is an industry principle that storage should not accrue while cargo is subject to a mandatory government or quarantine impediment (such as 'flushing' or Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (**BMSB**) treatments).
- 5.2 The current practice of levying storage fees while vehicles are held for biosecurity processing is inconsistent with the 'free time' objectives of the Tariff Schedule.
- 5.3 Furthermore, there is a lack of national consistency in how 'free time' is calculated. While Brisbane correctly commences the three-day free period only after a quarantine inspection is completed, the practices in Melbourne and Port Kembla prematurely trigger storage charges before the cargo is even available for collection.
- 5.4 Our client seeks a uniform rule across all ports ensuring that storage does not accrue until 72 hours after the cargo has been cleared of all regulatory impediments.

If you require any further information and documents or wish to discuss any aspect of this Objection Notice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Hudson  
Partner



Alexander Uskhopov  
Associate



**Shipping Australia Limited**  
ABN 61 096 012 574  
Suite 606, Level 6, 80 William Street  
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011  
PO Box Q388 QVB PO, Sydney NSW 1230

[www.shippingaustralia.com.au](http://www.shippingaustralia.com.au)  
[admin@shippingaustralia.com.au](mailto:admin@shippingaustralia.com.au)

SAL2026-009

23 March 2026

Mr Warwick Davis  
Frontier Economics Pty Ltd

Via email: [warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au](mailto:warwick.davis@frontier-economics.com.au)  
Cc: [Vincent.Macheda@aaterminals.com.au](mailto:Vincent.Macheda@aaterminals.com.au)  
[mergersru@accc.gov.au](mailto:mergersru@accc.gov.au)  
[hugo.dunkley@accc.gov.au](mailto:hugo.dunkley@accc.gov.au)

Dear Mr Davis

**RE: Price dispute – objection notice to Australian Amalgamated Terminals’ notice and proposed 2026-27 Tariff Schedule as issued by AAT in accordance with clause 5 of Schedule 1 and clause 2.2 of Schedule 5 of the AAT Undertaking**

Shipping Australia is an industry association that represents the participants in Australia’s international supply chain. We have over 70 members, which includes large ocean shipping lines, shipping agents and companies that generally provide services to the maritime industry in Australia.

**Objection 1: lack of disclosure in calculation of charge**

Transparency, predictability, and structured consultation are essential to maintaining confidence in the regulatory framework. Cost recovery principles require transparency, efficiency, and proportionality.

Without access to the underlying cost model or revenue projections, members are unclear whether the increase reflects genuine cost pressures, reform-related expenditure, or structural changes in service delivery arrangements.

Objections are raised on the basis that the cost justification used to determine the increases has not been adequately disclosed.

Members would like disclosure on:

- the basis and cost justification used to determine the magnitude of increases for breakbulk cargo
- whether AAT has undertaken an impact assessment on breakbulk operators and project cargo supply chains
- A detailed breakdown of the specific cost components underpinning the proposed increase
- Quantification of accumulated costs and revenues over a five-year period
- Revenue projections before and after adjustment

## **Objection 2: the amount by which it is proposed that the charges be increased**

Our members note that CPI-based annual adjustments are generally accepted but that the proposed fee increases are considerably above inflation. Members have specifically commented adversely in relation to:

- **Receival and delivery**
  - Members object to the new R&D Charge on RoRo units from next year.
- **Melbourne**
  - that the Facility Access Charges are rising by up to 59%.
  - general and breakbulk cargo is to increase by approximately 24–25%.
- **Brisbane**
  - general / breakbulk cargo will increase by approximately 21–22%.
- **Port Kembla**
  - general cargo: increase of approximately 35%, primarily driven by a near doubling of the R&D (receival and delivery) component; it is noted and accepted that the published R&D tariff represents a worst-case scenario and that in practice the terminal may charge approximately 50% of the listed rate if approvals are obtained prior to discharge, however, the headline tariff nevertheless represents a substantial escalation.

Generally, it is also noted that the lay-up rate adjustment is comparatively modest at 3.76%, which further highlights the magnitude of the increases applied specifically to breakbulk handling. In contrast, in contrast, containers will rise by about 2% to 3% in line with typical adjustments.

We would therefore like to raise a Price Dispute with you in accordance with the process in the AAT Undertaking given to the ACCC.

As the membership organisation of the international ocean shipping industry (including marine service providers) which has been instructed to raise this Price Dispute by our members – which are direct users of AAT’s services – and we therefore consider we have a genuine economic interest in this matter.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Capt Melwyn Noronha  
CEO, Shipping Australia