



As technology improves the world is changing and for better or worse as the transport industry adapts with these changes the overriding desire to reduce costs and increase efficiency continues.

A transparent IT platform has recently come into action which can help industry members who deal with container transport.

Containerchain's 'eGate' was launched late 2015 across a number of empty container parks in Melbourne as well as Qube Container Park (QCP) in Fremantle.

Founded eight years ago by industry, for industry, Containerchain is designed to bring structure to the chaotic nature of returning empty containers to the wharfs around Australia. This innovation has been designed to share information between transport operators and empty container depots as well as improve container depot operations.

Containerchain's new 'eGate' is an App for Smartphone's and Tablets that connects container truck drivers with empty container depots, their own transport operations, and other parts of the container logistics supply chain.

Containerchain's Luke Duffy says, "In terms of the technology as a solution,

I think it's another step forward to change the way that transport companies and drivers interact with empty container depots and that is a good thing. We expect this App will further reduce operating costs for the whole container supply chain."

By enabling automated gate processing at empty container depots, eGate reduces costs for transport operators and empty container depots by:

- Improving truck turnaround times
- Reducing errors
- Providing visibility to all industry participants.

Luke also says, "The rollout is going well in Melbourne. As with all major changes / improvements it takes time for people to adapt, but all in all, the response has been very good."

Free eGate training sessions were held at the Fremantle Ports offices early December 2015. Each training session lasted for one hour and drivers, fleet controllers and managers learnt how to use the new eGate 'App' and find out how it operates at Qube Container Park.

QCP in Fremantle has been eGate enabled since November 2015. The take up was initially quite slow with the launch occurring right in the

middle of the Christmas peak season. However, as the weeks progresses, more and more operators were taking it up; most seeing the benefits straight away with the ability for trucks to enter the park through the 'green lane'.

The next potential empty container parks to take up the service are ICL as well as Intermodal Group's ICS.

The rollout hasn't all been smooth sailing though. There have been issues where the operating systems version of software hasn't been compatible with the Tablets operators already had in place. There is a particular brand of Tablet that cannot be used, so users be aware and seek advice first if you

are planning to purchase a Tablet or Smart Phone and find out what the best options are for compatibility with this App.

One transport operator says, "There have been other instances of jobs popping up on the Tablet which the driver would accept however, after passing through the first or outer geofence nothing has triggered so the driver has no idea if he is ok to proceed to the park (green) or if there is an issue that needs to be resolved prior to entry (red). Once he arrived at the park after one or two minutes the App would finally show red and had to be processed manually anyway."

These are teething problems / glitches that are to be expected when there is any new system. It's just a matter of the length of time it takes to resolve these issues to reduce the cost impact to transport operators.

Industry is well and truly behind eGate in terms of adding functionality and improving port operations. However, there are still a lot of questions remaining. For example:

What are the parameters / options surrounding exceptions? i.e., what

THIS INNOVATION HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO SHARE INFORMATION BETWEEN TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND EMPTY CONTAINER DEPOTS AS WELL AS IMPROVE CONTAINER DEPOT OPERATIONS

if there is capacity within the park, how do I get brought in earlier if it's possible? I may be out of my timeslot, but if there is the ability for the empty container park to service transport, then why not have some ability to allow for it. There's no point sitting around idling.

What is the redundancy plan when there are outages / issues with the WIFI service that's the fault the internet provider? Do we revert back to past manual processes? Will we all of a sudden require hard copy DO's again?

How will transport operator's data be protected to ensure privacy / protection of their commercial activities? What happens with my data when I leave the park? What is being tracked and recorded? How is that data being used and for what purpose?

Containerchain's Privacy Policy states, 'Containerchain may also disclose personal information and you consent to Containerchain disclosing your personal information to third parties. These include 'Containerchain's agents, business partners or joint venture entities.' How are 'business partners' defined? This clearly raises privacy issues in terms of the releasing of sensitive commercial data which could be... which trucks from which company have gone to certain locations, a certain number of times in a certain period.

One thing is for sure is transport operators definitely don't want their data being used without express consent. These issues need to be explored further and clarified for the protection of the transport industry. ■



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