

TMTA Port Issues Committee

Meeting with POV at VIG Monday November 19, 2018

Introductions

Background on formation of the Committee

Current situation

1. Up to 20% of transactions require intervention
2. Dwell times of 8 hours
3. Incomplete transactions – no box picked up

Goals of the Committee

1. Meaningfully reduce transactions requiring intervention
2. Meaningfully reduce transactions with excess dwell times on POV facilities
3. Improve communication between the Motor Carrier Community and POV

How will this happen?

1. Identify root causes
2. Implement solutions
3. Communicate with root causes and solutions back to the community

Review the PowerPoint

Additional items

1. Need to organize the queue for dual move transactions. Drivers are not clear where they stand in order after they drop their first box. Safety department concern – getting out of trucks to figure out who is next.

Attendees:

Allen Campbell – National Sales Manager, Givens Transportation

Bob Eveleigh – Chief Operating Officer, Port City Transportation

Charles Glover – GTL Transport

Jake Darrell – Fleet and Safety Manager, DB3 Logistics [not in attendance – stuck at PMT]

Kevin Price – Sr. VP Operations

Patrick Jefferson – Gate Operations/Landside Operations VIG and NIT

Mark Higgins – Systems

Tom Christman – Reservation System VIT and NIT

Vance Griffin – VP Operations

Start Time

11:00 a.m.

End Time

12:45 p.m.

Location

VIG

Notes/Findings from 11-19-2018 Meeting

Dwell Time

Port is finding drivers going to a different stack than their ticket indicates. System does not take any action when that occurs because the driver should not be in that stack. Three reasons this is occurring: 1) driver is going to a different stack on their own (when making empty drops) or 2) driver is redirected by Port personnel incorrectly or 3) driver is redirected by Port personnel but they do not update the system to show new truck location. Port is retraining personnel to avoid #2 and #3. Port is educating drivers who go to wrong stack. Motor Carrier community can pass the word to drivers to not go to any stack other than the one their ticket shows. During the discussion we determined that ProPass reads the truck is in the wrong stack. We asked Mark Higgins to look into how that read can be captured and used to get the truck into the correct stack and serviced.

Exception clerks, the ones who identify and react to trucks on port too long, have been turning over at a high rate. This has led to a need to retrain to make them effective. Port is undertaking retraining existing staff. Not clear what is driving the turnover. More follow up required.

We discussed boxes being mounted backwards and wrong box mounts. The first is attributed to a number of new hires in the water side cranes not stowing boxes in the proper direction. The second probably has several causes that we will dig into more.

N4 was stowing too many imports from a single ship call in a single stack leading to congestion in that stack. A rewrite to the stowage algorithm has been written and tested by another port. The algorithm spreads the imports among more stacks, let's say 6 as an example, which would increase the number of those boxes that can be mounted per hour.

There were too many empties in the stacks. The early and sustained peak season resulted in more empties in the stacks than desired. This resulted in reduced crane efficiency. In the past few weeks the number has declined but still remains high. Ship lines currently have too many full exports to evacuate more. The group noted the need to collect and use more information on imports, exports and returns to advance plan for empty containers and to avoid stack congestion and last minute operational changes.

The Port is shifting some ship calls to NIT as too many import services currently call on VIG. First change occurred this past weekend (11-17/18-2018). Port is looking to rebalance the import loads to take pressure off VIG.

We discussed the number of transactions that do not result in a driver leaving with the box he/she came for. Let's call those 'abandoned' reservations. We determined that there are too many reason codes and not enough of the codes clearly identify causes that would lead to corrective action by the Port. The list of reasons will be reviewed and cut down. The short list

will be focused mainly on items that the Port should act on rather than driver related items like 'feeling ill and need to go home'. Clerks will be trained on asking for and getting the right reason. The list will be shared with the Motor Carrier Community so drivers will know what reasons to give to the clerk like 'box can't be found', 'no 20' chassis available', 'no gensets', etc. We will discuss more in future meetings.

There is a new lighting system in the stacks. The new system is LED and consists of a Blue light, Red light, Green light and possibly one more (not clear). The Port will publish the key to what the lights mean but for now our understanding is:

1. Blue light – something is wrong with your transaction. Exit your truck and push the yellow help button. If there is no yellow button call Customer Service.
2. All lights flashing – your ProPass scan has been read and you will be serviced soon. Light flash for about 20 seconds.
3. Red – Exit the truck and stand on the pad.
4. Green – service complete. Return to your truck and leave.

Next meeting (11-28-2018) we hope to look in detail at the results of the Summer 2018 dwell time study to look for additional changes that can be made.

Communications

Text alert system is having problems. Not all signed up users are getting texts or getting them reliably. Vance will check to see if users need to sign up again or whether the system is too broken. The Port is installing a new text alert system to address the failings of the current system. Until that occurs the Port will use additional emails to communicate with us.

Safety

We discussed the difficulty drivers waiting in the transfer zone have determining what order trucks will be serviced. Drivers currently get out of their trucks and talk to other drivers to figure out who is next in line. This is undesirable from a safety perspective and inefficient. A clean transfer zone would help but we also asked the Port to look at a better way to organize the transfer zone when congestion occurs.

Equipment

Stacked Chassis – most are 18+ years old and not repairable. All are being disposed of. New chassis are being brought in to increase supply. Current utilization is 84%.

Customer Service

The Committee identified four problems with Customer Service. Three involved phones:

1. Repeated hang ups by Customer Service personnel (phone picked up then hung up quickly with no answer)
2. Fast busy – callers receive a fast busy signal indicating the phone system is overloaded with calls.
3. No answer – the phone rings but no one answers during regular operating hours.

All of these issues were a surprise to the Port. They have committed to look into each one for a solution. For item 2, our impression is the Port hopes this will cease as operations improve. We will address again.

Port Operations

The Port is looking for ways to make operating hours and the services available during those hours more consistent. They face hurdles to make all hours the same. We have provided a spreadsheet for the Port to complete so we can jointly look at the hours of operation and services available during those hours with the goal of identifying the gaps. We anticipate the spreadsheet will be published on the ProPass site as a resource for the Motor Carrier Community.

Reservations

Mark Higgins is working on improving the information the reservation system provides to us. We discussed:

1. Providing visibility into the single and dual move options available.
2. Having the system provide more detailed explanations when a transaction is not accepted so Motor Carriers can look for options that will work.
3. Having the ability to load the containers we want for given day and find out where they are located so we can plan more dual moves or recognize when we have too many in a single stack.

We discussed the inability of Motor Carriers to get reservations between 8 and 11 am. As a first step the Port will visit with GTL to look for answers.

Port throughput goal per day is 2,500. Productivity varies greatly by hour. There are a variety of contributing factors. Let's leave it at that until we learn more.

Gate Processing Issues

Patrick Jefferson has a copy of our PowerPoint deck and is working on the issues identified. We will discuss at a future meeting.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 28