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Port of Cape Town stacks extended to ease delays

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Source: Ground Up



Stack windows have been extended at the Port of Cape Town to help exporters meet shipping commitments after storm damage to Western Cape road infrastructure disrupted cargo movements to the harbour.

Western Cape Exporters Club representative Terry Gale said the port had been unable to work on Monday because of extreme wind but terminal operations had otherwise remained stable this week.

"We had winds of up to 140km an hour," Gale said.

Since then, he said, terminal operations had normalised. "The port is working fine. There are no delays," Gale said on Thursday.

Transnet told *Freight News* operations resumed in a phased restart process. "Since the resumption of operations on Tuesday, there have been no further weather-related disruptions," the port operator said.

However, he said the impact of the storms on Western Cape road infrastructure had severely affected exporters' ability to move cargo to the

harbour, echoing wider concerns raised by business bodies over road “washaways” and disrupted arterial routes.

“To get goods to port is a big problem at the moment.” The N1 had since reopened, but only with one lane operating in each direction, resulting in major delays for trucks moving cargo to the harbour, Gale said.

Gale said Transnet and industry stakeholders had met on Thursday morning to assess conditions and explore relief measures.

He said a focus was ensuring that exporters, in particular fruit exporters, could still meet their shipping commitments despite congestion and delays on trucking routes. The industry had asked for flexibility on stack windows for affected vessels.

“They agreed to extend the stacks for an additional day or two. They were very accommodating,” Gale said.

Gale said the port was “quite willing” to support such measures, although “it’s a shipping line decision”.

He said rail played a limited role in regional fruit logistics, and road damage had forced costly detours.

“That’s an extra few hours and a few thousand rands, probably, in transport costs as well,” Gale said.

