

II. SHIPPING

Overview

Covid-19 was undoubtedly the Big story for 2020/21. The COVID-19 Economic impact barometer developed by the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) revealed that, at the global level since March, Week 12 of 2020, about 45% of ports faced a drop of more than 5% in the number of container ship calls in comparison to a situation of normal conditions. As a response to Covid-19, the TCI imposed a national lockdown and closed its borders at the end of March to July 2020, while imposing other measures to reduce the spread of the virus throughout the islands. These measures reduced economic activity, which did not rebound by the end of the financial year. This had a significant impact on the international trade and shipping sector within the islands, which is an underlying theme in this year’s shipping report.

Vessel Calls

The Turks and Caicos Islands Port Authority handled 621 vessels during the Financial Year 2020/21, a 21% decline from the previous year which reported the arrival of 787 vessels. As shown in table 1 vessel calls which are broken down into four main categories; complaint, non-compliant, local vessels and pleasure crafts. Vessel calls, declined significantly at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and did not recover.

Vessel Type	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Compliant	370	493	505	518
Non-Compliant	128	137	145	138
Local Vessels	122	157	154	210
Pleasure Crafts	1	0	5	4
Total	621	787	809	870
%Increase/Decrease	-21%	-3%	-7%	15%

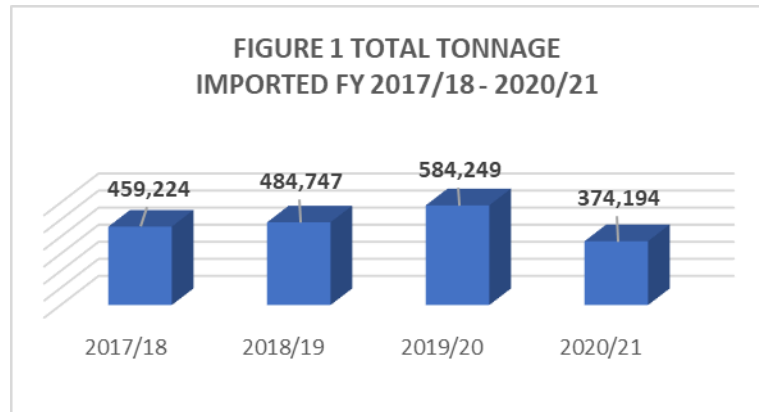
All categories of vessels declined during the year. However, complaint Vessel calls, comprised mostly of Container Ships, had the most significant change contracting by 25% from the previous year, while Non-Compliant and Local Vessels contracted by 7% and 22% respectively.

The 21% reduction in vessel calls in the financial year 2020-21 can be attributed to measures instituted to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures restricted movement of non-compliant vessels, and reduced operational time slots for port operations. In order to comply with government mandated curfews port operations were reduced from 24 hours to 15 hours per day.

Accordingly, the Providenciales port, which typically receives 75% of total vessel calls in a financial year, experienced a 45% decrease in vessel arrivals in comparison to the previous year.

Cargo Movements

The Turks and Caicos Islands Ports Authority recorded 374,194 tons of imported cargo for the financial year 2020-21, a 36% decline from the previous year as depicted in Figure 1. This result again reflects the national response to Covid-19 and the impact on economic activity.



25,700 tons of throughput was handled by the port during the 2020-21 financial year, a decline of 37% from the previous year which recorded 41,078 tons. TEUs are categorized into four (4) main categories; Containers, Flat Racks, Reefers and ISO Tanks (see figure 2). Of the total TEUs handled in FY 2020-21, imports via Containers accounted for 56% of cargo volumes while Reefers were 21%. ISO Tanks and Flat Racks were 14% and 9% respectively.

The sharp decline in container volumes for the period can also be attributed to a number of factors directly related to the Covid-19 pandemic response. This includes disruptions in the global supply chain which affected the availability and shipment of essential goods. Additionally, economic downturn brought on by the virus containment measures, caused blank sailings and ship cancellations. Local shipping companies such as Seacor Island Lines and Tropical Shipping, reduced weekly schedule from twice weekly to once per week and consolidated cargo because of reduced volumes.

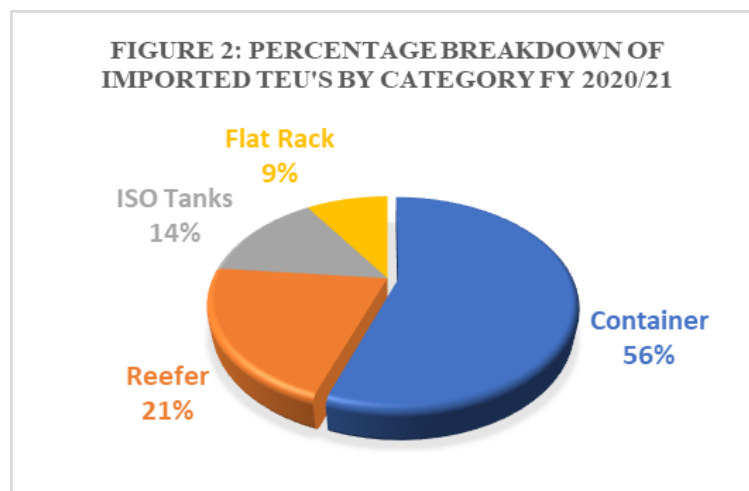


Figure 3 illustrates the dramatic decline in Containerized imports to Providenciales at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. By April 2020, Providenciales, which receives approximately 92% of the island’s imports, saw a 57% drop in cargo volumes from the previous month. By December 2020, overall containerized cargo volumes to Providenciales fell by 21% from the previous year.

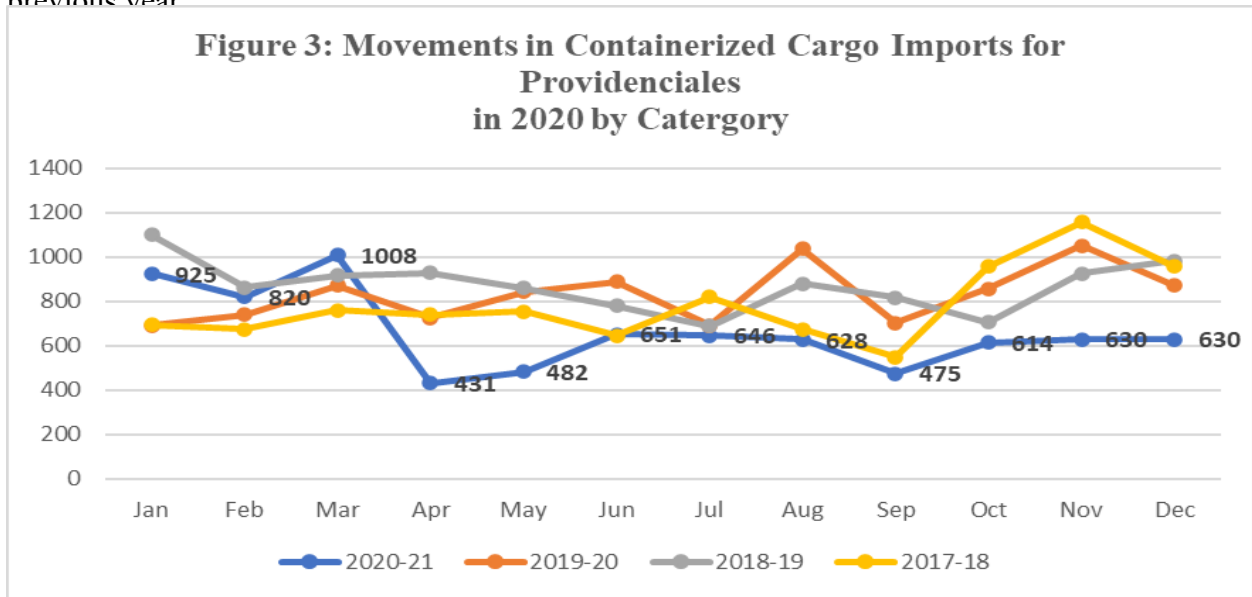
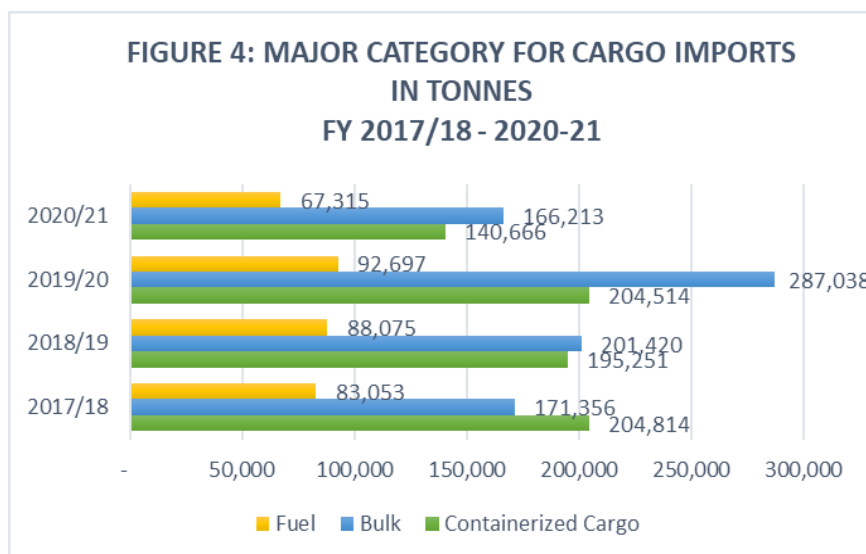


Figure 4 illustrates the major categories of imported general cargo during the financial year, for all islands over a four-year period. Of the total cargo handled in FY 2020-21, containerized cargo fell by 31% from the previous year and accounted for 140,666 or 31% of total imported tonnage. Petroleum and fuel imports also decreased by 21% from the previous year and accounted for 18% of total imports during the period.

Consistent with last financial year, Bulk Cargo recorded the largest volume of imports in tons for the period ending March 31 2021, 44% of total imports or 166,213 tons, falling by 42% from the previous year.



Bulk Cargo is categorized into three (3) major categories; Cement (14%), Blocks (13%) and Aggregate (73%) for the period ending March 2021 (see figure 5). The decline in bulk cargo is due to stoppage of construction activity for most of year, which only now rebounding.

