**MEDIA RELEASE  
27 May 2025**

**Port of Auckland surprises freight industry with 77% access fee increase**

Auckland Council-owned Port of Auckland has surprised the freight industry by announcing today that port access charges for road transport operators in 2026 will be increased by 77%. The Port’s previously announced 35% increase for 2026 charges has already been baked in by port customers and transport operators, so a doubling in that planned increase has been a bitter pill to swallow.

Justin Tighe-Umbers, Chief Executive of the National Road Carriers Association which represents port transport operators, says there is no justification for this escalation in charges. “The Port was already on a price path to deliver the financial return Auckland Council was seeking. This sudden escalation does nothing to improve port productivity or services for customers, it is a cash grab, plain and simple.”

The timing couldn’t be worse, says Tighe-Umbers. Exporters, importers, manufacturers and ultimately consumers stand to wear the estimated $25 million per year cost increase, during a cost-of-living crisis without seeing a single improvement in return.

“We accept that Auckland Council needs to make a fair return on behalf of ratepayers, and the Port of Auckland is already on track to do that. But the council will be stripping another $25 million a year out of the productive part of the economy and adding no value themselves. This is classic monopoly behaviour – who else can raise prices 77%?

“They are treating the Port as a revenue tap they can simply keep turning on without consequence. The Council needs to be very careful not to overreach and attract the attention of the Commerce Commission – VBS charges have gone up an incredible 2,461% over the last four years.”

The Port has taken on board feedback from the freight sector, extending out the timing of the total increase to July 2026, Tighe-Umbers says. “But in the end, the increase has still doubled, and will still impact the competitiveness of our exporters, importers and manufacturers and in turn increase the cost of living for consumers. The increase is the opposite of what the Government is trying to achieve in the year of productivity and growth. As an exporting nation, every time costs increase we hurt our ability to compete on a global stage.”

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| **Vehicle booking system charges** | | | | |
|  | **Peak**\* | **% increase** | **Offpeak**\* | **% increase** |
| **2022 (April)** | $ 8.39 |  | $ 8.39 |  |
| **2022 (May)** | $ 35.00 | 317% | $ 8.39 | 0% |
| **2023** | $ 65.00 | 86% | $ 20.00 | 138% |
| **2024** | $ 95.00 | 46% | $ 40.00 | 100% |
| **2025** | $ 130.00 | 37% | $ 65.00 | 63% |
| **2026 (original increase)** | $ 175.00 | 35% | $ 75.00 | 15% |
| **2026 (new increase)** | $ 230.00 | 77% | $ 100.00 | 54% |
| *\* Peak hours are 0500-1759, Offpeak 1800-0459 weekdays* | | | | |
| *Increase 2022-2026* | *$ 221.61* | *2641%* |  | |

**Ends**

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***National Road Carriers Association*** *(NRC) is New Zealand’s progressive nationwide organisation representing supply chain companies. It represents 1500 members, who collectively operate 16,000 trucks throughout New Zealand. NRC supports its members with legal, financial, employment relations, health & safety, workplace relations, business and environmental advice. It advocates on behalf of members and works with Central and Local Government on road transport infrastructure and regulations.*