

No more delays, says PKA chief

New implementation date for policy to shorten free container storage period in Port Klang

By Presenna Nambiar
presenna@nstp.com.my

PORT Klang Authority (PKA) general manager Kee Lian Yong is confident the implementation of a policy to shorten the free container storage period in Port Klang won't be delayed again.

"We have been running trials and doing the necessary to iron out issues raised. There shouldn't be any more delays," Kee said.

PKA, the regulator of Northport (M) Bhd and Westports Malaysia Sdn Bhd, has set January 1 2010 as the new implementation date. From then on, containers left in the terminal's yard for more than three days will be charged a fee. There have been four postponements so far since the idea was first mooted in 2002.

The regulator said it will actively mediate and continue to hold discussions with all parties to ensure their readiness.

"It is imperative that this initiative by PKA be implemented without further deferment in order to provide for more efficient utilisation



Kee says the move will provide for more efficient utilisation of port storage capacity and overall improvement in the logistics chain.

of the port storage capacity and overall improvement in the logistics chain," Kee told reporters in Port Klang last Thursday.

Another issue is the feeder incentive scheme, which has been suspended since 2008.

The incentive scheme was developed and introduced by the PKA in 2000 as part of an overall strategy to further strengthen Port Klang as a national load centre and a regional hub port.

Before the suspension of the

incentive, selected local and regional feeder operators and land-bridge operators enjoyed a rebate of RM20 for a 20ft container and RM35 for a 40ft container sent through Port Klang.

A 10 per cent discount on marine charges such as pilotage and tug boat services was also given by the respective terminals, Northport and Westports.

"PKA has fulfilled its obligation and it is only fair that the authority be relieved of the burden and allow the terminal and feeder operators to work out matters on a commercial basis," Kee said.

An announcement on the matter is expected to be made by the end of the month.

Commenting on the issue of depot gate charges, he said PKA has been requested to step in to mediate to seek an amicable solution to the matter.

Talks between the Association of Malaysian Hauliers and the Malaysian Container Depot Association were deadlocked despite several attempts made to reach an agreement.

Dredging work to finish in Dec

THE dredging of the south channel in Port Klang is expected to be completed in December this year.

The south channel, which will be 16.5m deep and 500m wide once completed, is now between 60 and 70 per cent done

"Initially, the plan was to deepen it to 17.5m but due to a constraint in funds, it is only being dredged to 16.5m from 15.5m, and widened to 500m from 365m," PKA assistant general manager Captain David R Padman said last Thursday.

He said the government was only able to allocate RM100 million for the dredging project.

The widening of the channel will enable the largest super post panamax container vessels of drafts exceeding 15m, to pass one another safely while transiting the 8km channel.