

# News in brief

## Strikes to hit importers

IMPORTERS were bracing for a hip pocket hit with Maritime Union strikes at both the Fremantle and Port Botany container terminals.

A 72-hour strike at Fremantle ended at midnight Friday but 48-hours of action were expected to commence at Port Botany yesterday (Wednesday).

Platinum Freight Management chief executive Peter McRae said the strike meant the strong possibility of blow-outs in importers' budgets.

Mr McRae said importers should consider if other ports also might be affected in coming weeks and plan accordingly and identified higher wharf charges, shipping line detention and increased delays as major loss areas.

Mr McRae said the Australian Border Force still had to complete due diligence checks, leading to further delays in stock exiting terminals.

□Industrial action is all too common, and while media tends to focus on the trade issue at stake, the forgotten loser is the importer, who has no bearing in the delays other than waiting for their stock, whether it be apparel or building materials, or even fresh produce, □Mr McRae said.

□There is no way for the importer or indeed their broker to avoid many of the main offending charges associated with a strike □it's just bad luck.