

# Identification of Freight Forwarder Company Strategy to Avoid Unloading Demurrage: Case Study at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, Batam City

## Abstract

This study aims to identify the factors causing and the impacts of demurrage costs at PT. Melvin Prima Perkasa, as well as to develop strategies to prevent or reduce these costs. A qualitative method was used with a descriptive approach, SWOT analysis, and Fishbone analysis. Data analysis was conducted using SWOT and Fishbone. Data collection techniques involved interviews, observations, and documentation. The results showed that unloading delays were caused by document delays, equipment limitations, and weather conditions that could result in a full dock. The impacts include burdens on the company's cash flow, disruptions in the logistics flow, production delays, and price instability that reduces the company's competitiveness. Recommended prevention strategies include ensuring document completeness, coordinating with related parties, evaluating employees, and arranging timely demurrage payments.

## Keywords:

Freight Forwarder, Demurrage, Export and Import, Loading and Unloading

## Introduction

International trade and globalization play an important role in the development of logistics. Dependence on global supply chains drives innovation in logistics management. Logistics management covers cost control, efficiency, and product quality, including the management of transportation, storage, and inventory costs. Good management can increase profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction help maintain competitive prices, overcome product availability problems, thereby meeting consumer needs (Rustina, 2022).

According to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia Number 8 of 2011 also emphasizes the important role of ports in regulating the flow of goods, and also as an extension of shipping lines, exporters and importers in shipping goods both domestically and cross-country or import-export activities (Sakti, 2022).

An example is the loading and unloading activities at Batu Ampar Port in Batam City, which is operated by the Batam Concession Agency (BP Batam). The port serves various types of vessels, such as passenger ships and freighters. Its facilities include docks, container handling areas and storage yards to ensure efficient cargo handling.

**Table 1. Batu Ampar Port Activity Data January - April 2024**

Product Type	Jumlah
Ship (CALL)	32.301
Ship (GT)	16.090.548
Container (TEU's)	206.860
TONS	2.914.545
Domestic Passenger	1.341.547

Source: bpbatam.go.id (2023)

According to Sriyanti (2022), the high volume of ships at the port causes the docks to be often full, slowing down the loading and unloading process. Delays in shipping goods can increase costs for companies or consumers, and using freight forwarder services can help in the process of shipping goods. Freight forwarders are companies that provide services related to the export and import of goods. The function of the Freight Forwarder is expedition

services, customs services, as well as delivery of goods and completion of customs formalities (custom clearance) (Susilo, 2020).

PT Melvin Prima Perkasa was established in March 2012 as a land transportation company, Expedition of Marine Cargo (EMKL)/ Transportation Management Services (JPT) in Batam. As a freight forwarder, PT Melvin Prima Perkasa often experiences demurrage during the import-export process, especially in the unloading activities of several vessels handled. This delay is at risk of demurrage.

Demurrage is an additional fee charged to the shipping company and cargo owner if there is a delay in the loading and unloading process of goods at the port or terminal from the predetermined schedule (Amalia, 2023). To overcome this problem, companies need to find and implement effective strategies to prevent demurrage. As described in research (Layli, 2020). The research discusses how important supply chain management is in handling demurrage during the unloading process at PT Krakatau Steel, which is engaged as a steel manufacturing company often experiences demurrage every year, as experienced by PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, as shown in the following table:

**Table 2. Demurrage Data at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa**

Month	Container	Demurrage	Demurrage Cost
January	159	33	12,725,000
February	174	80	70,490,000
March	184	73	37,505,000
April	187	59	31,795,000
May	77	22	15,070,000
June	73	28	12,660,000
July	96	30	12,525,000
August	134	45	9,125,000
September	129	41	11,190,000
October	151	47	25,135,000
November	79	10	3,775,000
December	131	9	1,061,000

Source: Data History at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa (2022)

These findings show the complexity and relevance of issues in the logistics industry, especially related to demurrage which has a direct impact on the operational costs of freight forwarders. Based on the background that has been explained, this is the basis for the author to carry out research entitled "Identification of Freight Forwarder Company Strategies to Avoid Demurrage for Unloading: Case Study at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, Batam City". Therefore, this study aims to identify strategies that can help freight forwarder companies in reducing demurrage costs. This study also aims to analyze the factors and risks of demurrage and identify strategies to prevent it.

## Research Method

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The selection of appropriate research methods is very important to achieve research objectives. Research methodology is a scientific approach used to prove a research object and obtain the truth of the problem at hand, to produce objective and accountable research results.

The data needed for this research consists of primary data obtained through observations and interviews with parties involved in loading and unloading services. Secondary data is

obtained by collecting information from journals and other sources, as well as company records. This research was conducted using the SWOT and Fishbone Analysis method approaches.

SWOT Analysis: SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is a comprehensive analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a company (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008: 64) to evaluate the company's internal resources (Gaspers, 2002) (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats). Fishbone: Fishbone (Ishikawa) analysis is a structured approach to analyze problems in more detail, to find possible causes, discrepancies, and gaps (Gaspers, 2002).

According to Tianglangi (2023), this research used the depth interview method with informants at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, Batam. The author worked and interned there, and researched the delay in unloading that caused demurrage and its impact on the company's profitability. The research was conducted from September 2023 to May 2024.

The research focused on PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, a company operating in the Freight Forwarder services sector. Informants in this research are people who have knowledge or information related to a particular topic or event. They were selected based on their expertise, position, and relevant experience in the field.

**Table 3. Data of Interview Informants of PT Melvin Prima Perkasa**

No	Name	Position
1	Maya Dewi	Director
2	Nurlita	Finance
3	Ade Rizky	Admin
4	Nael	Field Employee

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024).

## Results and Discussion

In reality, the process of unloading imported goods often does not go as expected. Many obstacles that can hinder this process, including delays in document processing. (Alfiansyah, 2023) These delays can cause demurrage which affects cash flow, delayed production, and unstable production costs, potentially causing losses to the company.

Demurrage is a common problem that is often faced by PT Melvin Prima Perkasa. This problem can reduce the operational efficiency and profitability of the company. In this study, several factors that support the demurrage process were identified as the main causes of problems in the process, namely:

### 1. SWOT Analysis in PT Melvin Prima Perkasa

SWOT analysis aims to identify factors that can affect the achievement of PT Melvin Prima Perkasa's business objectives. By understanding these, the company can take appropriate strategic steps to capitalize on opportunities, overcome challenges, and strengthen advantages. This analysis is based on interviews with employees of PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, as follows:

#### A. Strengths

##### 1. Human resources who have good experience and skills

In carrying out its duties, especially in export and import container unloading activities, PT Melvin Prima Perkasa has an experienced and qualified team. Based on the results of an interview with Mrs. Nurlita also as the company supervisor said that:

"The employees in this company have been working for a long time and have educational backgrounds and careers that are by their fields. For example, every

year the company recruits student interns from institutions such as Batam State Polytechnic that have study programs relevant to the company's needs" (Interview, March 27, 2024).

The purpose of recruiting student interns is to ensure that prospective employees already have a basic knowledge of the field they will be working in, so that they can immediately contribute effectively. Having employees with experience and skills can help with better problem identification and resolution.

## 2. Provide Good Service

Providing quality service also increases customer satisfaction. Based on the results of the interview, Mrs. Ade as the Admin of the document management section said that:

"PT Melvin Prima Perkasa is known for its excellent level of service compared to other similar companies. Because it can provide a fast, friendly response, and provide the right solution regarding demurrage, it is not uncommon sometimes Mrs. Maya as Director also often participate in providing solutions to problems experienced by consumers to make them feel happy with the services provided." (Interview, March 25, 2024).

Therefore, satisfaction increases their likelihood of returning to use the company's products or services and also builds strong loyalty, to improve the company's reputation and attract more new customers.

## B. Weaknesses

### 1. Delays in the SPPB (Goods Release Approval Letter) Process

SPPB is a document issued by an authorized party (such as customs) to permit to release goods from storage. This document is required for the process of exporting, importing, or completing activities involving the movement of goods through borders. SPPB contains information about the goods to be released, their quantity, value, and other documents required for inspection and recording by the authorities (Dirhamsyah, 2023). Based on the results of an interview with Mrs. Ade, the document management section said that:

"The delay in the SPPB process is caused by delays in documents sent by parties working with PT Melvin Prima Perkasa and by customers, not only that, the delay is also caused by frequent errors in the system so that the process of inputting data into Ceisa is delayed so that it cannot carry out the SPBB process, there are often errors in information or data on the documents provided so that later they have to redress the Bill Of Lading (B/L) which takes a very long time, and if the SPPB process has not occurred on the website, field employees cannot carry out unloading" (Interview, March 25, 2024).

If there is a delay in the SPPB process, it can hamper other activities and potentially cause demurrage costs, therefore coordination with related parties is needed.

### 2. Tools that are relatively old and often damaged

The main obstacle that often occurs in the field besides the weather is inappropriate equipment which is often the main factor in the delay in unloading. Based on the results of the interview Mr. Nael as a field employee said that:

"The ability of loading and unloading equipment at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa is often damaged due to overload or too heavy so that it can make the tool broken and also the tools used are old tools and also the lack of regular checks" (Interview, March 26, 2024).

The breakdown of these loading and unloading equipment not only disrupts the smooth running of daily operations but also impacts the overall efficiency of the company. Delays in the unloading process affect shipping and receiving schedules, which in turn affects the company's reputation in the eyes of customers and business partners. Therefore, Mr. Nael suggested that the company increase the frequency of periodic checks and promptly renew obsolete tools to reduce the risk of damage and demurrage.

### 3. Low productivity

In the freight forwarding industry, where timeliness and efficiency are highly valued, delays and inefficiencies can negatively impact a company's reputation. Customers tend to switch to other companies that can provide faster and more reliable services. Based on the results of the interview Mr. Nael as a field employee also said that:

"The loading and unloading productivity at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa is still low compared to other freight forwarder companies, especially in the field of import-export containers so the competitiveness of the loading and unloading productivity level decreases, one of the causes is inadequate equipment and infrastructure at the port and inefficient operational procedures" (Interview, March 26, 2024).

Therefore, improving loading and unloading productivity is a top priority for PT Melvin Prima Perkasa. Measures such as training for employees, investment in more sophisticated equipment, and improvement of operational management systems need to be taken immediately to improve the company's performance and increase its competitiveness in the industry.

## C. Opportunities

### 1. Attracting stakeholders

Improving customer trust and relationships is a crucial step for PT Melvin Prima Perkasa. By involving customers in the decision-making process and listening to their input through meetings or discussion forums, the company can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. This helps in maintaining existing market share and attracting new customers through recommendations.

In addition, engaging suppliers and business partners also open up more efficient and innovative collaboration opportunities, such as effective and cost-effective logistics solutions through advanced tracking technologies or integrated supply chain management systems. This can reduce operational costs and improve service quality. Engaging potential investors and shareholders provides access to financial resources for expansion and operational improvements, enabling investment in new infrastructure, advanced technology, or market expansion that increases the competitiveness of the company.

Finally, engaging with the government is critical as authorities help companies comply with regulations, obtain permits, and possibly get support or incentives, speed up the licensing process, and help deal with policy changes. Engaging employees in training and skills development improves their competencies and the overall performance of the company, through continuous development programs that include technical, management, and leadership training, providing opportunities for employees to grow and contribute more significantly (Dayana, 2022).

### 2. Increased market share

Based on the results of interviews with Mrs. Maya as Director of PT Melvin Prima Perkasa company said that:

"There are several opportunities open to companies to expand their market share as freight forwarders. One of them is to increase partnerships with companies in the manufacturing and trading sectors that require freight forwarding services. By expanding this network, companies can increase customers and market share. Identifying new markets that have not been fully explored can also be an opportunity to expand market share" (Interview, March 27, 2024).

By understanding market needs, PT Melvin Prima Perkasa can take strategic steps to increase its market share in the freight forwarding industry.

#### D. Threats

##### 1. Full Dock at Batu Ampar port

Researchers interviewed with one of PT Melvin's field employees, Mr. Nael, who said that:

"The fullness of the dock can also be a factor in late unloading, causing demurrage. In addition, demurrage factors that often occur in the field are due to limitations or damage to equipment that often occurs, due to weather that is often unstable so that sometimes makes the unloading process late and inefficient" (Interview, March 26, 2024).

Several obstacle factors that occur in the field such as full docks, limited tools, and bad weather, can hamper the unloading process so that it has the potential to incur demurrage costs. To overcome this, companies can improve dock management, carry out regular maintenance of equipment, use weather early warning systems, and provide training to employees. The existence of quality port infrastructure that is adequate, modern, clean, and well-maintained port infrastructure (clean docks and terminals, no waiting time due to queues or damage) waiting time due to queues or damage to ships) (Ambali, 2019). By paying attention to this, it is expected that operational efficiency can increase and the risk of demurrage can be minimized.

##### 2. Market share decline

According to Dayana (2022), a decrease in market share can have a negative impact on the company's financial performance and long-term growth, so companies need to identify the causes and take appropriate steps to improve the situation. The results of the interview with Mrs. Ade said that:

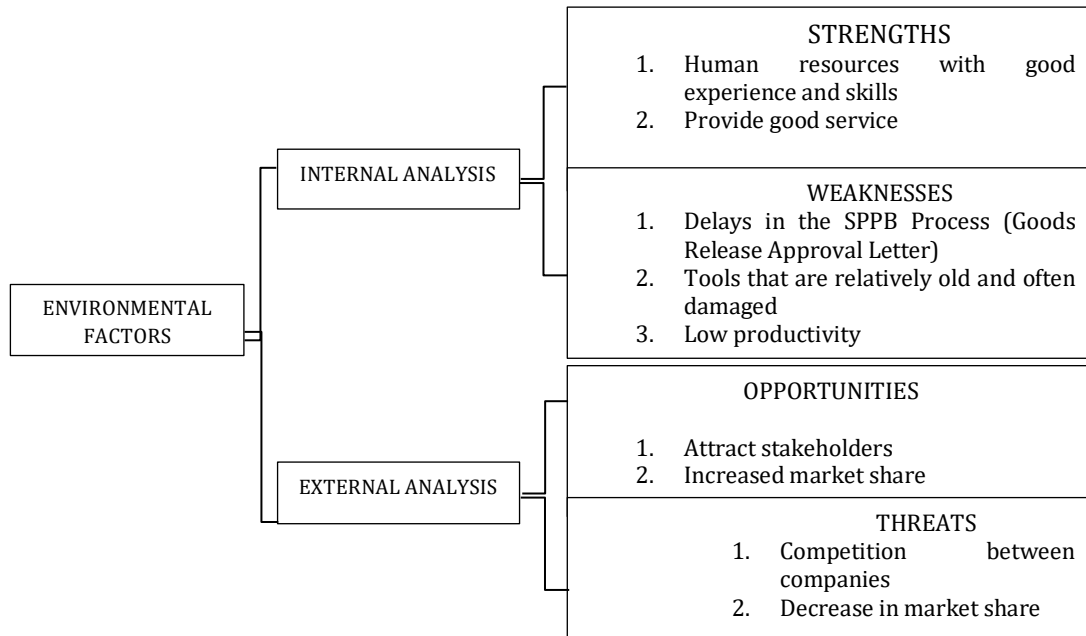
"Competition between companies in terms of area coverage, loading and unloading equipment capabilities, and low productivity can be a threat to PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, potentially leading to a decrease in market share. If the company is unable to improve loading and unloading productivity or performance to avoid demurrage, the risk of losing the market to other companies becomes real" (Interview, March 25, 2024).

To avoid a decline in market share, PT Melvin Prima Perkasa can improve loading and unloading productivity through process evaluation, employee training, and the use of modern technology.

Therefore, companies must take advantage of internal strengths to overcome weaknesses and take advantage of existing opportunities and anticipate threats with a good strategy (Bani, 2023).

The following are the results of observations and interviews presented in the form of a SWOT analysis for PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, which reflects the internal and external conditions of the company.

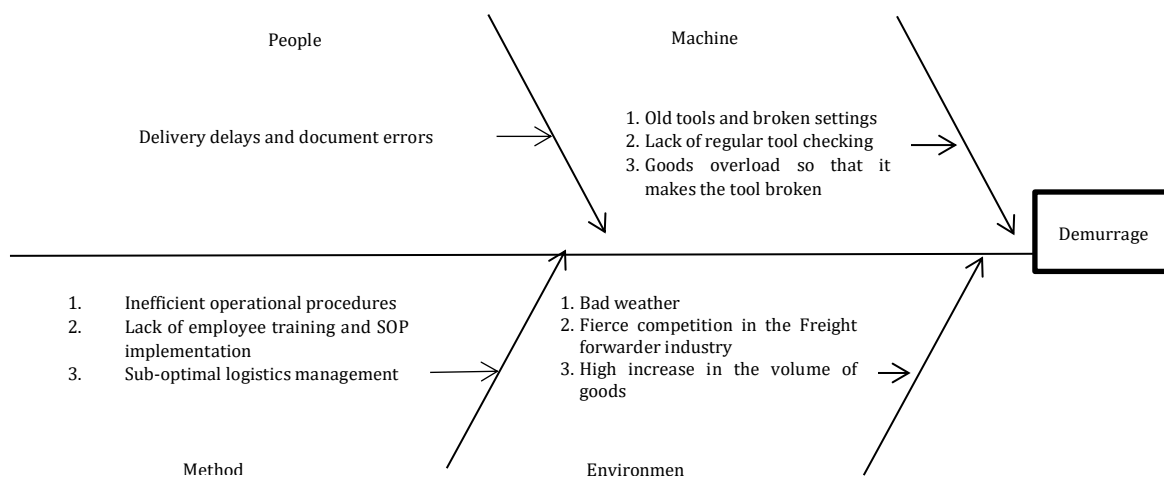
**Table 4. SWOT Analysis of PT Melvin Prima Perkasa**



Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

## 2. Fishbone in PT Melvin Prima Perkasa

Based on the conclusion of the SWOT Analysis above, we need to know that there are weaknesses and threats for PT Melvin Prima Perkasa which are the main causes of demurrage. After conducting a SWOT analysis, the researcher gets findings related to the obstacles that cause the process. Next, a factor analysis of the causes of demurrage will be carried out, based on the results of the weaknesses and threats that often occur at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa through the SWOT Analysis method. Fishbone diagrams are commonly used by industry as tools in problem analysis investigations and are developed to identify the main causes of a problem. The fishbone diagram can describe in detail the main factors causing the problem to be analyzed in determining the right improvement. The depiction of the fishbone related to the demurrage problem is as follows:



## Figure 1. Fishbone Diagram Analysis

Source: Data processed by researchers (2024)

Based on the analysis of the fishbone diagram above, several root causes of delays in unloading goods at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa were identified, which pose a risk of demurrage. These factors include delays in the process of issuing SPPB documents, old and often damaged equipment, dock congestion at Batu Ampar Port, and PT Melvin's logistics management methods that are still not maximized. These problems interact with each other and make things worse, so they require comprehensive attention and solutions. By addressing these root causes, PT Melvin Prima Perkasa is expected to reduce demurrage risk and improve overall operational efficiency.

### 3. Factors that cause delays in unloading activities at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa resulting in demurrage:

Based on the results of the SWOT Analysis and Fishbone Analysis, there are several main factors that result in demurrage risk:

- a) Due to delays in the SPPB (Goods Release Approval Letter) process, where this is caused by the lengthy process of sending documents provided by customers or coworkers who use the services of PT Melvin Prima Perkasa. Something similar also happened to (Kustiyati, 2020) where custom clearance is often a factor in demurrage, so it is very important to pay attention to it. A slow custom clearance process can cause delays in the release of goods from the port, which in turn incurs demurrage costs. The study showed that in several major ports in Indonesia, delays in the custom clearance process accounted for up to 40% of the total delay time.
- b) Due to the limitations of loading and unloading equipment, where based on the results of SWOT and fishbone analysis, the limitations of the equipment are the main factors in the process of unloading cargo, which often occurs damage to the equipment due to lack of regular maintenance of the equipment and also overload, making the tool broken. The same thing also happened in research (Layli, 2020) which shows that tool limitations are often the main factor in demurrage. The study showed that a lack of adequate equipment preparation can hinder operational efficiency, causing delays in the loading and unloading process, and ultimately incurring significant demurrage costs. For example, at the ports studied, frequent breakdowns of cranes and forklifts had a direct impact on the slow cargo handling process. In addition, Layli also emphasized that equipment maintenance and renewal are crucial to prevent demurrage. The study underlined that investment in new technology and regular maintenance can significantly reduce waiting times and improve operational efficiency. Therefore, serious attention to equipment availability and condition is key in reducing demurrage risk, as outlined in this study.

### 4. Impact caused by demurrage on PT Melvin Prima Perkasa

Based on the results of the SWOT analysis and fishbone analysis, there are several impacts due to demurrage:

- a) The company's cashflow becomes unstable and has an impact on the company's business development. The same thing also happened in (Layli, 2020) where the impact of demurrage can also affect the company's cashflow to be unstable and have an impact on the company's business development. The research shows that the additional costs incurred due to demurrage not only increase the direct financial burden but also reduce the trust of investors and business partners. This instability

often leads to difficulties in working capital management and a reduction in the company's ability to make long-term investments essential for business growth and expansion.

- b) The density of the docks at Batu Ampar Port which affects the flow of logistics and the risk of demurrage. Something similar also happened in research by (Layli, 2020), where the impact of demurrage can significantly affect port operations, including the full dock at Batu Ampar Port. Demurrage causes delays in the loading and unloading process of goods because ships do not leave the dock immediately after the specified time. This condition hampers logistics flow, reduces port efficiency, and increases the risk of further demurrage.
- c) A report by the Batam Port Management Agency (2021) notes that the increasing frequency of demurrage is directly related to the low productivity levels of equipment and labor at the docks. These factors prolong vessel dwell time and reduce the effective capacity of the port, leading to decreased logistics flows and increased operating costs.

5. Strategies undertaken by PT Melvin Prima Perkasa to avoid demurrage due to delays

After identifying the factors and also the impact of demurrage, on PT Melvin Prima Perkasa and also based on the results of the SWOT Analysis, fishbone then the strategy that must be done to avoid demurrage involves several steps, namely:

- a) It is necessary to replace old equipment / rental equipment, increase the frequency of checking equipment to ensure that the equipment is in good condition, technical training and routine maintenance so that potential damage can be detected and repaired early, as well as making arrangements for the maximum load of goods, regulating the distribution of loads evenly and also training employees on safe lifting procedures to prevent equipment damage.
- b) Re-evaluate operational procedures to identify and eliminate inefficient steps. Training employees on procedures and implementation of SOPs and conducting regular training to employees to ensure a good understanding of SOPs.
- c) Improve logistics management system by adopting more advanced technology for better monitoring and planning.
- d) Creating backup plans to cope with the impact of bad weather, such as using tools that are more resistant to bad weather.
- e) It is necessary to replace old equipment / rental equipment, increase the frequency of checking equipment to ensure that the equipment is in good condition, technical training and routine maintenance so that potential damage can be detected and repaired early, as well as making arrangements for the maximum load of goods, regulating the distribution of loads evenly and also training employees on safe lifting procedures to prevent equipment damage.
- f) Re-evaluate operational procedures to identify and eliminate inefficient steps. Training employees on procedures and implementation of SOPs and conducting regular training to employees to ensure a good understanding of SOPs.
- g) Improve logistics management system by adopting more advanced technology for better monitoring and planning.
- h) Creating backup plans to cope with the impact of bad weather, such as using tools that are more resistant to bad weather.
- i) Improve operational efficiency to offer more competitive prices and expand network to reach a wider market.
- j) Review logistics processes and identify areas where efficiency can be improved and expand capacity and infrastructure to handle larger volumes of goods.

- k) Implement a clear and structured career development program for employees, and periodically evaluate employee needs, provide rewards and build open communication.

## **Conclusion**

The results of research related to the analysis of unloading delays that have an impact on demurrage at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa using the SWOT Analysis method and also Fishbone can be drawn several conclusions, namely:

1. There are several factors that can cause delays in unloading at PT Melvin Prima Perkasa, namely due to delays in the SPPB process (approval letter for the release of goods and also the full dock at Batu Ampar Port where if this continues to occur and is not resolved immediately, it can cause demurrage.
2. Demurrage certainly has a huge impact on the sustainability of the company so that it makes the company's Cash Flow unstable and has a huge impact on business development in the company. In addition to unstable company cash flow, demurrage also has an impact on customer satisfaction where if there is a delay in unloading, it has the potential to reduce the quality of goods that are too long in the container.
3. Based on the results of the factors and also the impact of demurrage, PT Melvin Prima Perkasa also needs to make the right strategy to minimize the consequences of demurrage so as to reduce company expense.
4. The impact of demurrage has a significant effect on port operational efficiency, particularly in Batu Ampar. Increased demurrage risk has a negative impact on logistics flows, decreases port productivity, and increases operational costs for both goods owners and port managers. Therefore, demurrage reduction strategies need to be a top priority in efforts to improve port performance

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