



#### About this document

This document aims to support the entire port ecosystem, including terminal operators, port authorities, OEMs, and grid operators, in navigating the sequence of decisions and actions required to transition to battery electric container handling equipment (BE-CHE). By offering a structured transition checklist, it provides visibility into the main steps, supporting analyses and cross-stakeholder coordination needed to move from diesel-based fleets to electric alternatives. The checklist has been designed to support improved coordination, planning and alignment between stakeholders, and reduce implementation hurdles.

#### About ZEPA

The Zero Emissions Port Alliance (**ZEPA**) was formed expressly to **accelerate port decarbonisation**. Container terminals are our focus because the electrification of container-handling equipment is one of the most immediately addressable source of port emission. ZEPA aims to **accelerate take-up of battery-electric container handling equipment** (BE-CHE) among terminal operators by making BE-CHE **affordable and accessible by 2030**.

The Secretariat is hosted by **Systemiq** and is responsible for managing ZEPA's day-to-day operations and coordinating member activities, including research and analysis, project management, and industry engagement.





This document aims to be a practical tool towards electrification of battery electric container handling equipment (BE-CHE) by laying out the main steps in that transition











Terminal operators

**OEMs** 

Grid operator

Port authority

Regulator

Stakeholders can use this document at various stages of the fleet electrification process:

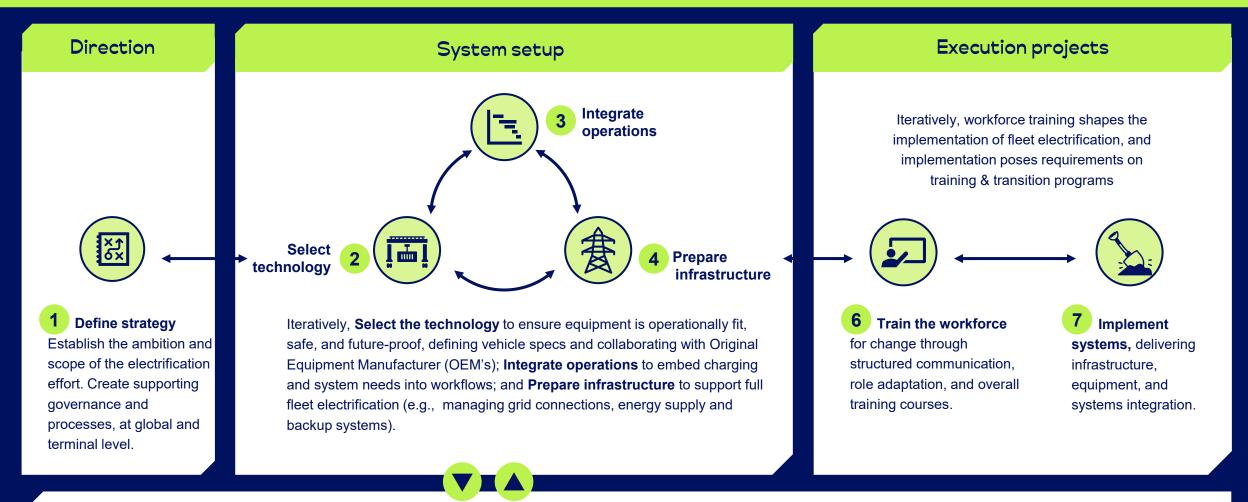
- In the planning phase, it helps identify and prioritize critical decisions, ensure timely coordination with other stakeholders, map interdependencies across dimensions (e.g., charging strategy and grid connection), and ensures prerequisites are in place before advancing.
- In the execution phase, the checklist can be revisited at **key decision gates**, such as procurement, grid applications, site works, and commissioning, to cross-check dependencies and avoid missteps.

Importantly, the process is iterative: the checklist should be revisited whenever elements of the plan change, enabling stakeholders to maintain a robust, coordinated, and up-to-date plan.

Note: This checklist aims to provide a comprehensive overview to support fleet electrification. However, given the variability in terminal-specific conditions, including infrastructure, operational models, and local constraints, actual steps and priorities may differ. Users are encouraged to adapt the checklist to their context.



## The Transition Plan covers 7 interdependent steps towards electrifying container handling equipment





5 Structure financing

Structure ownership models and funding strategies based on Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) analysis to make the transition economically viable and bankable.

#### Direction



- 1 Define strategy
- 1.1 Set (internal)
  intermediate
  decarbonisation
  targets and define
  the full fleet
  electrification
  target date
- 1.2 Define **terminal specific transition**
- 1.3 Establish internal governance structure for fleet electrification process
- 1.4 Engage in crossvalue chain learning and knowledge-sharing

#### System setup



2 Select

technology

equipment needs

2.1 Determine future

2.2 Establish technical

dialogues with

2.3 Define procurement

requirements for

2.4 Select preferred

requirements

2.5 Decide if pilot trials

are required before

full-scale procurement

electrified equipment

equipment models,

software and OEMs.

based on procurement

OEMs<sup>1</sup>







- 3 Integrate operations
- 3.1 Select charging strategy per vehicle (depot, rotational, battery swapping, opportunity or hybrid)
- 3.2 Assess impacts of charging on terminal operations and scheduling, and integrate this in the TOS & EMS<sup>2</sup>
- 3.3 Determine and optimize number, location and configuration of chargers
- 3.4 Assess data and software integration needs to move towards centralized data management system
- 3.5 Update operational, safety and emergency protocols for container handling equipment & associated infra
- 3.6 Determine **spare parts and maintenance strategy** for equipment and charging infrastructure

## 4 Prepare infrastructure

- 4.1 Confirm future grid readiness and capacity at terminal, port, and regional levels
- 4.2 Select and secure lowcarbon electricity supply
- 4.3 Select and secure resilient and flexible **backup power** (e.g., Battery Energy Storage Systems)
- 4.4 Evaluate and plan to mitigate impacts on local power grids and energy supply
- 4.5 Obtain **permits**, finalise **engineering design**, and set **construction milestones**

#### **Execution projects**



## 6 Train the workforce

- 6.1 Map evolving tasks and skills needs across operations, maintenance, safety, and scheduling for mixed diesel—electric and full-electric fleets. Additionally, budget for (re)skilling needs
- 6.2 Design trainings for workforce and select appropriate delivery method (e.g., OEM-led trainings, in-house trainings, third party trainings)
- 6.3 **Develop & deliver training plan** for workforce



#### 7 Implement systems

- 7.1 Select and contract
  Engineering,
  Procurement and
  Construction
  (EPC) partner(s)
- 7.2 Conduct pilot phase, if needed
- 7.3 Deploy
  centralized data
  management and
  carbon
  accounting
  system





- 5.1 Develop **internal project finance model**
- 5.2 Engage with subsidy and concessional finance providers
- 5.3 Select optimal procurement and ownership model for BE-CHE
- 5.4 Select optimal procurement and ownership model for charging and power infrastructure
- 5.5 **Structure and secure financing package** for electrified CHE fleet and infrastructure

The Transition Plan **Integrate operations** covers 7 steps crucial for electrifying container Prepare infrastructure Select technology **Define Strategy** Train the workforce **Implement systems** handling equipment ■ Structure financing **■** Electric ship-to-On-site renewable shore operations generation **Tethered battery** electric container handling equipment (BE-CHE) **Shore power Untethered BE-CHE** HQ: strategy, finance, data management Charging area **Battery system Workforce training Grid connection Energy Management System (EMS) Maintenance** SYSTEMIQ









#### Involved **Key steps Underlying actions & analyses Key dependencies** parties (TO +.. Set (internal) intermediate decarbonisation targets Assess emissions baseline and model future emissions trajectory Define terminal specific transition and define the full fleet electrification target date under BAU vs electrification scenarios 1.1 Determine future CHE equipment needs (e.g. 'reduce scope 1 + 2 emissions by 50% by 2032 Define scope and ambition of target and fully electrify by 2040 ') Consider aligning with SBTi or other pledges Map existing fleet asset age Decarbonisation targets Understand and align with regulatory roadmap and/or port-wide 1.2 **Define terminal specific transition** decarbonisation targets and concessions in all relevant Determine future CHE equipment needs geographies Future grid readiness Determine operational disruption risk per approach Decarbonisation targets Define governance scope and objectives Establish internal governance structure for the fleet 1.3 Appoint key roles and stakeholders across all relevant teams Define terminal specific transition electrification project Set up decision-making protocols Impact on terminal operations Engage in joint planning with port authorities, neighbouring terminals and local utilities Engage OEMs early to validate technical feasibility, performance Decarbonisation targets Engage in cross-value chain planning and trajectories, and operational impacts of electrification options, 1.4 knowledge-sharing given rapid EV technology development and varying solution Internal governance structure maturity.

Connect with industry alliances (e.g. ZEPA) to set up cross-sector

learning and knowledge sharing





## 2. Technology selection

parties











|     | Key steps  | Underlying actions & analyses   | Involved parties (TO +) | Key dependencies   |
|-----|--|---|-------------------------|--|
| 2.1 | Determine <b>future equipment needs</b>  | <ul> <li>Conduct full audit of current CHE fleet (vehicle types, #, age, utilisation, emissions, maintenance, etc.)</li> <li>Map terminal outlook, both for greenfield and brownfield terminals (inc. length of concessions)</li> <li>Assess future needs by type, quantity and interoperability</li> </ul> | <b>\$</b>               | <ul><li>1.2 Define terminal specific transition</li><li>3.4 Data and software integration needs</li></ul>  |
| 2.2 | Establish <b>technical dialogues</b> with (shortlisted) <b>OEMs</b>                            | <ul> <li>Schedule initial conversations with OEMs</li> <li>Request required data (e.g., motor specifications, lifetime, battery lifetime)</li> </ul>  | ltg.                    | <ul><li>2.1 Determine future CHE equipment needs</li><li>2.3 Technical procurement requirements</li></ul>  |
| 2.3 | Define <b>procurement requirements</b> for electrified equipment                               | See deep-dive on next page  |                         |  |
| 2.4 | Select preferred equipment types/models, software, and OEMs, based on procurement requirements | <ul> <li>Develop Total Cost of Ownership comparisons for equipment models</li> <li>Compare alignment with <u>ZEPA voluntary standards</u></li> <li>Ensure integration and interoperability with digital systems</li> </ul>  | (hg)                    | <ul><li>2.3 Technical procurement requirements</li><li>3.2 Impact on terminal operations</li><li>3.4 Data and software integration needs</li></ul> |
| 2.5 | Decide if <b>pilot trials</b> are required before full-scale procurement                       | <ul> <li>Assess technology readiness of selected equipment</li> <li>Evaluate risk of operational disturbance</li> <li>If piloting: select region for pilot</li> </ul>   |                         | <ul><li>2.2 OEM technical dialogue</li><li>2.3 Technical procurement requirements</li></ul>  |







**DEEP-DIVE** 

## 2.3 Deep dive technical procurement requirements

Involved parties







#### Involved Key dependencies Key steps **Underlying actions & analyses** parties (TO+.. Select vehicle type (e.g., straddle carrier, terminal Match equipment and charging inlet location to use case tractor, RTG) **Choose charging inlet location** and operational needs **Vehicle** Ensure good ergonomics and operator interface · Assess needs for ergonomics, operator interface and safety Ensure sufficient safety features are in place features and liaise with OEMs (power-off switch) Consider battery chemistry options vs operational needs, (energy density, safety, lifecycle, costs) **Determine battery type** (LFP/NMC/LTO/Other) • Determine appropriate battery capacity and C-rate based on **Determine required battery capacity** (x kWh) operations and charging strategy **Determine required C-rate** $(<1C/\sim1C/>1C)$ **Battery** · Verify battery (fire) safety considerations with OEMs Define terminal specific transition · Integrate battery fire and circularity · Plan battery circularity strategy for end-of-life batteries, considerations into procurement requirements Determine future CHE equipment needs integrating strategy in procurement (e.g., take-back clauses) See below for more information Charging strategy · Determine C-rate and power level by analysing vehicle Impact on terminal operations Select charging type (e.g., MCS/CCS/Pantograph) **Determine required C-rate** $(<1C/\sim1C/>1C)$ battery specs, charging windows & charging strategy Future grid readiness Determine power level (x kW/MW) and · Design charger configuration based on available space, Charging configuration (e.g., dual-port/single-port) charger specs, and available grid capacity Select and implement charging and • Select and implement charging communication protocol in communication protocol (CCS2/NACS/ GB/T) collaboration with charging OEM and vehicle OEM Continue to ensure interoperability between vehicles, Note: large dependency on Ensure new vehicle and infrastructure are chargers and communication systems is integrated in charging strategy (3.1), interoperable and can be integrated into TO **Systems** procurement specifications operations (3.2) and grid operating systems (e.g., TOS, EMS) In collaboration with relevant OEMs, ensure data and integration readiness (4.1) Optional: set up requirements for an energy communications from vehicles and infrastructure can be

linked into existing and new systems (e.g., TOS, EMS)

management system









## 3. Operations integration (1/2)

parties









#### Involved **Key steps Underlying actions & analyses Key dependencies** parties (TO +..) Determine future CHE equipment needs Model load profiles for different charging strategies to understand impact on grid infrastructure Technical procurement requirements Select charging strategy (depot/rotational/battery 3.1 Analyse TCO for different charging strategies swapping/opportunity charging or hybrid mix) Select equipment models Evaluate operational and spatial constraints, combined with Impact on terminal operations terminal layout Determine future CHE equipment needs Select equipment models Determine scheduling impacts from electrification, based on Assess impacts of charging on terminal operations and charging strategy (e.g., on breaks, shift changes) 3.2 Charging strategy scheduling, and integrate this in the TOS and EMS · Update TOS and EMS with changes in operations Evaluate spatial constraints for chargers and design charger Determine future CHE equipment needs locations (depending on terminal set-up and charging strategy) Technical procurement requirements Determine and optimise number, location and Determine required redundancy: analyse risk of operational 3.3 Select equipment models configuration of chargers disruption from charger unavailability vs charger costs Charging strategy Determine number of required chargers (depending on charging Impact on terminal operations



strategy)





## 3. Operations integration (2/2)









|     | Key steps  | Underlying actions & analyses  | parties (TO +)     | Key dependencies   |
|-----|--|--|--------------------|--|
| 3.4 | Assess data and software integration needs   | Evaluate integration needs, which may include real-time SoC tracking, load balancing, predictive maintenance and integration of BE-CHE data into TOS or central energy management and optimisation systems   |                    | <ul><li>2.4 Select equipment models</li><li>3.1 Charging strategy</li><li>3.2 Impact on terminal operations</li></ul>  |
| 3.5 | Update <b>operational, safety and emergency protocols</b> for electrified CHE and associated infra   | <ul> <li>Identify new or changed procedures, performing a risk assessment for BE-CHE to understand mitigation measures needed</li> <li>Integrate with existing protocols</li> <li>Validate with local first responders and conduct emergency drills</li> </ul> | + First responders | <ul> <li>2.4 Select equipment models</li> <li>3.1 Charging strategy</li> <li>3.2 Impact on terminal operations</li> <li>3.4 Data and software integration</li> <li>6.3 Workforce training</li> </ul>   |
| 3.6 | Determine <b>spare parts and maintenance strategy</b> for BE-CHE and charging infrastructure (e.g., full-service contract with OEM, in-house workshop, hybrid model) | <ul> <li>Determine availability of external services</li> <li>Assess availability of internal technical workforce</li> <li>Compare costs over vehicle lifetime</li> <li>Evaluate operational impacts of strategy</li> </ul>                                    | lts.               | <ul> <li>2.4 Select equipment models</li> <li>3.1 Charging strategy</li> <li>5.3 Procurement/ownership BE-CHE</li> <li>5.4 Procurement/ownership power infra</li> <li>6.3 Training programs</li> </ul> |





**Battery fire safety:** 

A transitioning fire risk profile



## 4. Infrastructure readiness











#### **Key steps**

#### **Underlying actions & analyses**

#### Involved parties (TO +..)

#### **Key dependencies**

Confirm future grid readiness and capacity 4.1 at terminal, port, and regional levels

- Model future electric loads (→ See ZEPA Load Profile Scenario Explorer)
- · Determine peak grid connection capacity required
- Assess if current grid capacity is sufficient (external capacity, internal capacity) and contracted capacity). If not: request increased capacity from grid operator
- Communicate with port authority about future grid needs





- Charging strategy
- Charger configuration
- Electricity supply

Select and secure (low-carbon) electricity 4.2 supply (grid mix, green PPA, on-site renewables)

- Determine availability and cost for each option
- Evaluate emissions impact for each option



+ Utilities

+ Utilities



- Charging strategy
- Charger configuration

Decarbonisation targets Select equipment models

Decarbonisation targets

Future grid readiness

Select and secure resilient and flexible 4.3 backup power (e.g., BESS, generator, hybrid, port-wide shared backup system)

- Determine duration of backup power needed
- Evaluate TCO for back-up power, including potential revenues (BESS)
- · Determine emissions profile of backup power
- · Consider safety and circularity of back-up system





- Charging strategy
- Charger configuration
- Future grid readiness
- Electricity supply

4.4

Evaluate and plan to reduce dependency on local power grids and energy supply

- Assess options for on-site renewable generation (solar, wind)
- · Assess options for on-site BESS or port-wide microgrid to reduce required grid connection capacity





- Charging strategy
- Future grid readiness
- Electricity supply

4.5

Obtain permits, finalise engineering design, and set construction milestones

- Secure building and electrical works permits
- Complete engineering design
- Align construction schedule with terminal and port operations





- Select equipment models
- Charger configuration
- Future grid readiness
- 4.2 Electricity supply

+ EPC contractor

Interested to learn more?







Read more detailed information in **ZEPA's Load Profile Scenario Explorer** 





## 5. Financing









|     | Key steps   | Underlying actions & analyses  | Involved parties (TO +)                        | Key dependencies   |
|-----|---|--|--|--|
| 5.1 | Develop <b>internal project finance model</b>   | <ul> <li>Determine cost inputs for diesel vs electric CHE</li> <li>Model CAPEX and OPEX for the specific terminal</li> <li>Conduct sensitivity analyses to key variables (e.g., power price, battery price)</li> <li>Evaluate emissions trajectory vs internal carbon pricing</li> </ul> |  | <ul><li>2.4 Select equipment models</li><li>5.3 Procurement/ownership BE-CHE</li><li>5.4 Procurement/ownership power infra</li><li>5.5 Financing package</li></ul>                 |
| 5.2 | Engage with <b>subsidy and concessional finance</b> providers   | <ul> <li>Map applicable subsidies and concessional loans</li> <li>Conduct eligibility assessment</li> <li>Draft applications for selected instruments</li> </ul>   | <b>S</b>                                       | <ul><li>1.1 Decarbonisation targets</li><li>5.1 Project finance model</li><li>5.5 Financing package</li></ul>  |
| 5.3 | Select optimal <b>procurement and ownership model for BE- CHE</b> (e.g., CAPEX, leasing, service-based)   | <ul> <li>Evaluate TCO under different options</li> <li>Assess impact on balance sheet and cash flow</li> <li>Determine financing cost and availability per model</li> <li>Determine impact on terminal autonomy</li> </ul>   | + Financial institutions                       | <ul> <li>2.4 Select equipment models</li> <li>4.5 Permits, design, construction plan</li> <li>5.1 Project finance model</li> <li>5.2 Subsidies/concessional finance</li> </ul>     |
| 5.4 | Select optimal procurement and ownership model for charging and power infrastructure (e.g., terminal-funded, port authority-funded, third party as-a-service) | <ul> <li>Determine financing cost and availability per model</li> <li>Evaluate TCO under different options</li> <li>Assess impact on balance sheet and cash flow</li> <li>Determine impact on terminal autonomy</li> </ul>   | + infrastructure investors / service providers | <ul> <li>2.4 Select equipment models</li> <li>4.5 Permits, design, construction plan</li> <li>5.1 Project finance model</li> <li>5.2 Subsidies/concessional finance</li> </ul>     |
| 5.5 | Structure and secure financing package for BE-CHE fleet and infrastructure  | <ul> <li>Assess balance sheet and cash flow</li> <li>Structure financing package (debt/lease/cash investment)</li> <li>Secure financing package</li> </ul>   | + Financial institutions                       | <ul> <li>5.3 Procurement/ownership BE-CHE</li> <li>5.4 Procurement/ownership power infra</li> <li>5.1 Project finance model</li> <li>5.2 Subsidies/concessional finance</li> </ul> |

6.2

6.3

## 6. Workforce training









#### **Key steps**

Map evolving tasks and skills needs across operations, maintenance, safety, and scheduling for mixed diesel-electric and fullelectric fleets. Additionally, budget for (re)skilling needs

Design trainings for workforce and select appropriate delivery method (e.g., OEMled trainings, in-house trainings, third party trainings)

Deliver training programs for workforce

#### **Underlying actions & analyses**

- · Engage workforce and unions early
- · Identify key organisational and behavioural shifts
- Based on this, map training needs for different roles affected by electrification (e.g., operator/ technician/ supervisor/ emergency responder) for key topics (e.g., battery fire, safety and charging strategy)
- · Invest early in workforce (re)skilling: create structured (re)skilling paths for impacted roles, focusing on those with the biggest changes, such as maintenance
- Include workforce and unions in the design of (re)skilling programmes to ensure training relevance, engagement, and optimal outcomes for each role.
- · Partner with OEMs and training providers to assess standard training availability and costs, and (where needed) co-design tailored learning modules and certification programs.
- · Additionally, OEMs themselves could:
  - · Standardise components, interfaces, and documentation to simplify training and maintenance and reduce skill fragmentation across fleets
  - · Provide training packages for terminal teams
  - Develop clear technical documentation and open access to diagnostics and maintenance data
- · Overall, develop a communication and engagement strategy, including feedback mechanisms
- Deliver curriculum with OEM, port authority and union input
- Promote inclusive reskilling programs, ensuring access for existing workers and new entrants
- Share best practices and certification standards to harmonise training across ports

#### Involved parties (TO +...

+ Unions

Key dependencies

Select equipment models

Impact on terminal operations



+ Unions

Select equipment models

Impact on terminal operations

Safety & emergency protocols





+ Unions

Select equipment models

Impact on terminal operations

Safety & emergency protocols

Spare parts & maintenance strategy









## 7. Implementation









| Key steps |   | Underlying actions & analyses  | Involved parties (TO +) Key dependencies |   |
|-----------|---|--|--|---|
| 7.1       | Select and contract <b>EPC partner(s</b> )                      | <ul> <li>Define scope of work and planning</li> <li>Compare various EPC partners and select preferred ones</li> <li>Ensure integration with OEM equipment</li> </ul>   | + EPC firms                              | <ul> <li>2.4 Select equipment models</li> <li>5.3 Procurement/ownership BE-CHE</li> <li>5.4 Procurement/ownership power infra</li> <li>3.4 Data and software integration</li> <li>4.5 Permits, design, construction plan</li> </ul> |
| 7.4       | Optional: <b>conduct pilot phase</b>                            | <ul> <li>Select pilot scope (vehicle, terminal (zone), period)</li> <li>Define and monitor performance and reliability KPIs, safety incidents, operator feedback</li> <li>Conduct lessons-learned review and update roll-out plan</li> </ul> |  | <ul><li>2.4 Select equipment models</li><li>2.5 Pilot trials</li><li>1.4 Scope and timeline per terminal</li><li>3.4 Data and software integration</li></ul>  |
| 7.5       | Deploy centralized data management and carbon accounting system | <ul> <li>Integrate new vehicle and infrastructure data and communication with TOS, EMS and other relevant systems</li> <li>Track key KPIs (inc. energy use, battery SOC, idle time, emissions)</li> </ul>                                    |  | <ul><li>2.4 Select equipment models</li><li>3.4 Data and software integration</li></ul>   |



#### **DEEP-DIVE**

# Most existing port risks are unlikely to significantly change as the terminal transitions to battery electric equipment

|                                | Diesel   |   | Battery electric  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
|                                | Description of risks   | % of claims costs at ports and terminals <sup>1</sup> | Expected change when transitioning from diesel to electric equipment  |  |
| Port infrastructure and assets | <b>Damage to cargo, facilities or equipment</b> – incl. cranes, port structures, quays, buildings, and other assets                    | 33%   | BE systems introduce a <b>different</b> set of risks, altering the overall risk profile                                     |  |
| Extreme weather events         | <b>Losses from extreme weather events</b> – such as flooding, storms, wildfires  | 13%   | Could increase due to batteries' sensitivity to flooding and temperature, depending on mitigation.                          |  |
| Fire                           | Fires involving hazardous or flammable goods – leading to destruction of cargo and infrastructure                                      | 11%   | Risk is different, frequency is lower and impact could be higher, mitigation options available                              |  |
| Vehicle                        | Vehicle operation mistakes – accidents that can cause serious injuries and damage to vehicles/ other port assets                       | 10%   | <b>Different</b> incident types may occur due to operational shifts required for charging                                   |  |
| Slips, trips and falls         | Individual workplace accidents – incidents resulting in injuries, sometimes with life-changing consequences                            | 7%  | No change   |  |
| Reefer cargoes                 | Cargo spoilage from temperature deviations – caused by equipment faults or operational/ comms mistakes                                 | 4%  | No change   |  |
| Environmental incident         | <b>Environmental contamination –</b> spills or release of pollutants due to damaged cargo, process failures, or equipment malfunction. | 3%  | Lower as in an electrified scenario shore power is used whilst ship is berthed, leading to smaller chance of diesel spills. |  |
| Energy supply                  | Energy dependency risk – not being able to fulfill operations due to energy shortage (i.e., diesel availability)                       | NA  | Higher as more vulnerable to grid disruptions and energy price volatility   |  |
| Workforce and legal compliance | Includes <b>reliance on labour stability</b> and potential <b>compliance risks</b> under new net-zero policies                         | NA  | EVs may improve workforce stability (as operators experience benefits of electric vehicles) and improve net-zero compliance |  |

Note: [1] Fraud and theft (4%) and ship related incidents (4%) not included in overview as these play a small role and will not change during the shift to battery electric vehicles. Source: TT Club (2025), 2025 Mediterranean Port & Logistics Conf.

## Disclaimer

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The Zero Emissions Port Alliance (ZEPA) is a cross-value-chain port alliance set up by its members to tackle BE-CHE adoption challenges together. ZEPA has multiple members for the 2025 Work Programme, whose activities span the container handling sector.



























This report has been developed by Systemiq and constitutes a collective view of participating organizations in the Zero Emission Port Alliance. ZEPA members have supported and validated the analyses, and have agreed to endorse the findings as presented in this report.



We would like to thank other expert collaborators for providing valuable contributions to this report.



For further information see <a href="www.zepalliance.com">www.zepalliance.com</a> or email zepalliance@systemiq.earth