



THE HON. JOE TRIPODI MP
MINISTER FOR FINANCE
MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
MINISTER FOR REGULATORY REFORM
MINISTER FOR PORTS AND WATERWAYS

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Planning for the future of the State's ports

Embargoed until July 24, 2009

Three major ports - Newcastle, Port Botany and Port Kembla – have been identified as State significant sites under the NSW planning system to highlight their importance to the State's economy.

Ports and Waterways Minister Joe Tripodi said today a new State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) will define the boundary of ports and port related activities, and allow the streamlining of port related investment.

“This planning policy consolidates the existing zonings and protects industrial land and key transport corridors essential to the operation of the ports.

“It will provide clearly defined boundaries to allow local government, industry, and residents to plan for a future in harmony with each of the State's three major ports.

“By implementing this plan now we will be able to get the balance right for the future,” Mr Tripodi said.

“Declaring the port and related industrial lands as a State Significant Site (SSS) provides certainty for the future of these important infrastructure and employment lands.

“They are a crucial provider of jobs and income directly through port related activities, as well as indirectly through the flow on benefits created by imports and exports.”

Mr Tripodi said the NSW Government had today published an amendment to State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Development) 2005 which outlined land-use controls for the three ports.

He said the amendment would:

- Introduce a consistent planning system across the three ports;
- Protect the ports from new incompatible land-uses (including residential) which have the potential to limit the ports' operations; and
- Zone the ports' land and surrounding waterways to accommodate port activities, including maritime industrial and bulk storage facilities, with relevant nearby industrial land.

Mr Tripodi said the Port of Newcastle handled more than 90 million tonnes of exports worth more than \$10 billion during 2007-08, which was the equivalent of 13.6% of Australia's total export volume.

Last year Newcastle posted a record \$17 billion trade result and further export growth is expected with the completion of a third coal loader and as port land is developed.

Port Botany is Australia's second largest container port, handling more than \$50 billion worth of trade each year.

The SEPP amendment also covers both the inner and outer harbour areas of Port Kembla, which contributes \$418 million annually to the Illawarra economy and is replacing Port Jackson as NSW's primary port for automobile imports.

Under the amendment, the Planning Minister will remain the approval authority for all port related development proposals of more than \$30 million as well as proposals which are likely to have a significant environmental impact.

The relevant port authority will determine port facility proposals of less than \$30 million on port authority land.

The Planning Minister's approval authority role will be unchanged in Newcastle and Port Kembla, while in Port Botany the capital investment value threshold before Ministerial approval is required has increased from \$5 million to \$30 million.

Mr Tripodi said several amendments were made to the planning policy following public exhibition last year.

These include transferring the protection of 29 existing heritage items from local environmental plans to the State policy.

Mr Tripodi said most submissions from councils and other stakeholders during the public exhibition process were able to be accommodated in the final version of the policy.

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