

MEDIA STATEMENT



Port of Richards Bay Floating Dock Receives Green Stamp of Approval

[Richards Bay, South Africa, 31 October 2018] The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) has given Transnet National Ports Authority's (TNPA) Port of Richards Bay the green light to construct its long-awaited multi-million-rand floating dock infrastructure.

The new R1.4 billion floating dock facility, which will be located at the port's Small Craft Harbour, forms part of the R4.4 billion capital investment plans announced by TNPA in 2017.

The consent from DEA followed a rigorous process, which included a series of specialised studies, impact assessments and consultations with various environmental and industry stakeholders, including the South African Heritage Resources Agency, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, DEA: Coastal Pollution Management as well as the local municipalities among others.

Market studies and Expressions of Interest confirmed an appetite for a Floating Dock in the region.

Richards Bay Port Manager, Thami Sithole, said: "Implementation of a floating dock has been in the pipeline for a number of years, gaining traction in 2016 when an expression of interest was issued. At the time, 23 interested parties attended the site briefing, while 11 submissions were received, including ship / rig repair players, consulting firms and entities interested in being service providers or sub-contractors to the potential sponsor. Respondents were favourable towards mobilising a floating dock provided that certain risks were addressed. TNPA will approach this project in two streams, namely the infrastructure development and a concession to a private sector operator to supply and operate a floating dock. As the Port of Richards Bay we are extremely excited about moving forward with this long-awaited project."

Furthermore TNPA will be supporting this initiative by undertaking the dredging, marine infrastructure and bulk landside infrastructure developments.

The project is expected to create approximately 1000 direct and indirect jobs, with a current targeted operational date of April 2022. Once complete, the facility will be capable of accommodating Capesize vessels. This will require upgrades to the existing quay and extensive deepening of the berth from its current 8.5 m to a planned minus 18 m depth.

The floating dock project represents Initiative 7 of Operation Phakisa, a government-driven programme aimed at unlocking the potential of South Africa's Oceans Economy. Of a total of 18 Marine Transport and Manufacturing (MTM) Initiatives under Operation Phakisa, TNPA is directly associated with eight initiatives of which four involve infrastructure developments. Other initiatives address operations, skills and capacity building as well as market growth.

TNPA has specifically identified ship building and repair as strategic competencies to the grow GDP and create jobs in the Richards Bay region.

Ricky Bhikraj, Operation Phakisa Programme Director said that the new development would ensure that the Port of Richards Bay was able to enter the ship repair market for typical vessels that call at Richards Bay and grow a base for wider marine manufacturing at Richards Bay.

"Former Richards Bay Port Manager, Preston Khomo, has been appointed as the TNPA Ship Repair Executive. He will lead the creation of an enabling environment for wider marine manufacturing at our ports to enable this industry to thrive and to contribute towards the nation's prosperity," Bhikraj said.

"Across our ports, we are making steady progress on the upgrades at our ship repair facilities to ensure they are internationally competitive and capable of attracting more business to South Africa. Having addressed the start-up and planning issues, it remains for us to accelerate delivery of these projects in consultation with port users. This is in line with our role as a lead implementer of the Operation Phakisa initiative," Bhikraj concluded.

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About Transnet National Ports Authority

Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) is one of five operating divisions of Transnet SOC Ltd. The National Ports Authority is responsible for the safe, effective and efficient economic functioning of the national port system, which it manages in a landlord capacity. It provides port infrastructure and marine services at the eight commercial seaports in South Africa – Richards Bay, Durban, Saldanha, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Mossel Bay and Ngqura. It operates within a legislative and regulatory environment and is governed by the National Ports Act (Act No. 12 of 2005). For more information visit www.transnetnationalportsauthority.net.

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