



Media Release

17 December 2020

NSW Ports and The Mission to Seafarers call on the Illawarra community to help deliver Christmas cheer for seafarers

As we gear up for Christmas, a merry band of Christmas elves are working overtime to deliver a little joy and cheer for the hundreds of seafarers required to remain on-board their vessels on 25 December ... but they need your help!

NSW Ports and The Mission to Seafarers are calling out to the Illawarra community to help spread some Christmas cheer by sending Christmas cards with messages of care and hope for seafarers at Port Kembla this Christmas.

The cards will be included in a special Aussie Christmas gift bag containing Tim Tams and Vegemite – the two most requested items – that are being packed and delivered with a festive Christmas lunch.

Seafarers perform a critical role for Australia by transporting food, medicine, minerals and other essential supplies around the world by sea. However, with COVID-19 many have been required to remain on-board their vessel for extended periods of time, away from family and friend for long stretches of time, without the usual access to shore leave and limited access to phone and internet. This isolation can be damaging for mental health, particularly at Christmas when seafarers miss important moments with their loved ones.

NSW Ports CEO Marika Calfas said, “2020 has been a challenging year for everyone around the world, but most particularly our seafarers, many of whom have been on-board and away from family and friends well beyond the normal designated maximum period of 11 months.

“We are calling out to the Illawarra community to get behind this initiative and join us in letting our seafarers know how much we value their efforts. Seafarer play a critical role in connecting Port Kembla to domestic and global marketplaces, and to support the people and businesses of NSW. We are thrilled to be working with Chaplain John Kewa of The Mission to Seafarers to coordinate a special Christmas treat for these vital workers.

The Mission to Seafarers Chaplain John Kewa said, “Our Wollongong/Illawarra community, Mission volunteers, Committee Members, Mission Friends, Churches, Corporate bodies and community leaders all play an important role in ensuring that the Mission remains a vital source of comfort to seafarers visiting Port Kembla, especially during COVID – a period described as a ‘humanitarian crisis’ that has forced some 400,000+ seafarers stranded at sea on cargo ships, globally. We look forward to continuing to share this message of hope at Christmas time with this special delivery.”

NSW Ports supports a range of community initiatives in the Port Kembla area, including the delivery of local school programs, sponsorship of surf-life saving initiatives and the conservation and maintenance of heritage-listed items and surrounding wetlands and habitat at Port Kembla Heritage Park.

As NSW’s port of growth, Port Kembla operates 24/7 to handle the trade needs of NSW, handling 100 percent of NSW’s motor vehicle imports and the import/export of agriproducts, minerals, bulk and liquid bulk cargo. The Port delivers nearly \$543 million in Gross Regional Product to the Illawarra (roughly \$1,805 per person) and supports local jobs, with 99 percent of Port Kembla’s workforce residing within the Illawarra. Port Kembla is also approved by the NSW Government as the site for NSW’s next container terminal, once Port Botany nears capacity.

For more media information contact: 0410 597 547 or vida.cheeseman@nswports.com.au

About NSW Ports

NSW Ports manages Port Botany and Port Kembla, key export and import gateways connecting to global markets, and the Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre and the Cooks River Intermodal Terminal. NSW Ports is a private consortium of leading institutional investors: IFM Investors (including Cbus, HESTA and Hostplus), AustralianSuper, Tawreed Investments Limited and Q Super. Our shareholders represent over six million Australian superannuation fund members and are long term investors with interests in a range of Australian infrastructure assets.