

MEDIA STATEMENT

PORT OF EAST LONDON RECEIVES RELIABLE TUGS TO REV UP VOLUME GROWTH

[East London, 5 September 2024] The Port of East London has received two tugboats, marking the completion of Transnet National Ports Authority's (TNPA) R1billion investment towards the Marine Fleet Renewal Programme, aimed at boosting tugboat availability and enhancing shipping operations.

TNPA's Marine Fleet Renewal Programme, which is a key element of the Transnet Recovery Plan, is critical in driving shipping efficiencies and reliability, whilst positioning the ports as competitive and a catalyst for economic growth. Tugs are designed to provide marine services including safe navigation of vessels, pilotage, towage and waterside pollution combat.

The two tugboats (tugs) delivered by Damen Shipyards Cape Town replace the existing tug fleet that has reached its operational lifespan at the Port of East London. The latest tugs comprising of the modern technology solutions are built with an azimuth stern drive and have an improved pollard pull of 60-tonnes compared to the 43-tonnes bollard pull on the existing tugs.

The procurement of the tugs serves as a catalyst for the Port of East London's expansion plan. The plan includes the deepening and strengthening of the port's automotive berth to address berthing challenges. The project hit a significant milestone in November 2023 with the commencement of the concrete works package. Once completed, the port will be able to simultaneously berth two larger vessels with a ripple effect on increased volume throughput, a welcomed development for the port and the Eastern Cape province.

Also included in the river port's expansion plan is the delivery of two Jib Cranes for the port's dry dock facility, which will increase the ship repair facility's capacity and volume throughput in the 2024/25 financial year.

The advanced features of the two new tugs will enable the port to respond to the anticipated shipping and volume demands.

"The journey towards the full recovery of Transnet lies in our commitment to growth and investing in fit-for-purpose equipment. This acquisition is a crucial investment towards creating a sustainable port system and will enable the execution of strategic projects currently underway at

the Port of East London,” said Transnet Board Chairperson, Andile Sangqu during the tug naming and christening ceremony held at the Port of East London today.

At the Christening Ceremony, tug *Lentswe* meaning the voice of sailors was unveiled by TNPA Board Member Valda Gossmann in her role as the tug’s Lady Sponsor, while tug *Kganya* “light”, symbolising guidance in safe navigation of vessels, was revealed and christened by Transnet Board Member, Boitumelo Sedupane. The names were chosen through a naming competition ran among TNPA employees.

The two tugs are in addition to five tugs which were delivered at the Port of Durban last month.

“We are proud to have delivered these tugboats for TNPA. The vessels represent a substantial investment in our maritime infrastructure and will contribute to local job creation and skills development as DSCT will provide all operational support, including spares, repairs, and services. Through a centralised system the vessel will provide data-driven insight for timely information on ship operations”, said Sefale Montsi, Director at Damen Shipyards Cape Town.

-END-

About Transnet National Ports Authority

Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) 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

Issued by Transnet National Ports Authority.

For media queries please email: TNPAMediaDesk@transnet.net