



Press release: Port Sector Plan for Improving Safety on our Ports

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11AM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15:

The Port Health and Safety Leadership Group – made up of unions, ports and stevedoring companies, the Port Industry Association, Maritime NZ and WorkSafe NZ – is proud to release its advice to the Minister of Transport, a multi-year *Port Sector Insights Picture and Action Plan* to make ports safer.

This follows the tragic deaths of two port workers in 2022, after which the Minister of Transport asked the Port Health and Safety Leadership Group for advice to address health and safety on ports.

The plan pulls together information from fatalities, injuries, incidents, near-misses, regulatory notifications, investigations and assessments, worker surveys, and worker interviews and workshops to build a picture of what drives serious harm on ports - who it is happening to, and why. It lays out six key interventions where changes can have a real impact:

- Implementing the Fatigue Risk Management System: Good Practice Guidelines to reduce the risks associated with worker fatigue.
- Putting in place an Approved Code of Practice around loading and unloading of cargo to implement more consistent regulatory standards in relation to some of the highest risk activities in Ports.
- Recommending the Government extend the Maritime NZ designation to cover the whole port.
- Work to improve incident reporting, notifications, insights and learning across the Ports, so the sector can get better real time understanding of harm and take necessary action.
- Action to improve training and workforce issues.
- Actions to ensure there are easier ways of sharing good practice that the sector is doing here, or overseas, to encourage continuous improvement on Ports

“We owe it to those working on ports every day, the people who have died, their families, and those who have been injured, to improve safety on ports,” says Port Health and Safety Leadership Group Chair and Maritime NZ Chief Executive Kirstie Hewlett.

“We have built a comprehensive picture of why and where harm is happening on ports. All port and stevedoring companies, regulators, and many workers, have contributed significant data, insights and time to develop this picture, which is the foundation for our multi-year harm prevention programme. This is already providing valuable insights to sector participants on where to target their effort.”

Maritime Union of New Zealand National Secretary, Craig Harrison, says the plan is a crucial step in improving safety on ports.

“While research shows that over time serious injuries on ports have declined, there is still more work to do. Hearing workers’ voices and including workers’ experiences has been vital.

“This mahi has required trust, partnership and a different way of working. It shows what can be accomplished when the sector works together towards a common goal. This will make a real difference to the lives of our people.”

Ports of Auckland Chief Executive, Roger Gray, says the sector is making a firm commitment to its workers and their families.

“Everyone has the right to go home safe to their whānau.”

“The leadership group has already started implementing the action plan. We have published fatigue risk management guidelines, started training and want all organisations employing workers on ports to have at least started a fatigue risk-management system by September.

“Work on an approved code of practice for stevedoring is well underway, and there is a lot more to come.”

The group has presented the plan to the Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety, and Transport, Michael Wood, who has endorsed it.

For more information and for a copy of the plan

<https://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/content/about/people-we-work-with/port-group/documents/port-sector-insights-picture-action-plan.pdf>

(NB this link will not be live until after the embargo lifts)