

# MEDIA RELEASE

4 July 2022

## UPDATE 1800 Hours: Operation progresses to safe waters

The operation underway to tow the vessel, MV Portland Bay, to safe waters is progressing well with the vessel now around 2.5 nautical miles away from the shoreline.

Incident Controller, Chief Operating Officer at Port Authority of NSW Captain John Finch said the operation continues to be challenging but progress is being made safely and surely.

“Our priorities remain twofold - getting this vessel and its crew into safer waters and away from land and the potential of grounding, while keeping all responders safe,” Captain Finch said.

“We are not out of the woods, but we are heading in the right direction.

“All response crews will continue this operation for several hours well into the night despite the ocean conditions which are atrocious.

“Our thoughts are with them and the crew as they continue the slow and delicate operation to remove this vessel to deep water and well away from the State’s coastline.

“I can confirm the crew are all safe and in good spirits at this stage.

“Three tugs are in attendance, the critical step of raising the anchors was achieved and they are now secured and they are now traveling at 1.5 knots. This will put them about 12 nautical miles off the coast by before midnight.

“Two tugs will remain in place until the main engines are repaired and operational.

“I reiterate my acknowledgement of the enormous team effort, particularly the crew of the Engage tug SL Diamantina, in difficult conditions to undertake this operation, giving us the best possible chance of getting this vessel away.”

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