

MEDIA STATEMENT

6 July 2022

UPDATE 1100HRS: PILOTS TO ATTEMPT BOARDING VESSEL

Media Update 1100HRS

The Incident Management Team, led by Port Authority of NSW, has met this morning and a decision has been made that Port Authority Marine Pilots will attempt to board the MV Portland Bay this morning to meet with crew and assess conditions as the first step in a detailed plan to bring the vessel safely into berth.

A window of favorable ocean and weather conditions has opened and the multi-agency Incident Control Team has assessed this first step can commence, which is focused on assessing that all conditions, the vessel and technical requirements are suitable for further action to commence.

Maintaining the safety of the crew, the front-line responders, our marine pilots, cutter crews, tug operators and the marine environment remain central to all decisions, at every step of this difficult operation.

Highly trained marine pilots are boarding by ladder from a cutter vessel in an environment that is not normal procedure.

This is a critical first step in assessing if further steps can be undertaken today or it is more prudent to await further improvement in the weather later in the week.

Port Authority will also transfer a marine engineer and salvage expert onboard to support the crew in assessing the engine issues and current capability, whilst a salvage expert will also board to help ensure the towage equipment is connected to the vessel as planned..

The plan remains to bring the vessel alongside a suitable berth in Port Botany as a final step once when is it safe to do so. This will take several hours and it remains dependent upon the weather conditions which could delay progress beyond today.

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