

MEDIA RELEASE

SYDNEY PORTS PUTS STEVEDORES ON NOTICE

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Sydney Ports Corporation Chief Executive, Grant Gilfillan, today said he would speak to Ports Minister Joe Tripodi about using regulations to implement landside port reforms if there is not an immediate improvement from stevedores following two weeks of poor performance at Port Botany.

“We will be approaching the Minister to move towards regulation if we don’t see an immediate improvement from the stevedores in the service provided to industry and their cooperation in delivering these reforms,” Mr Gilfillan said.

Mr Gilfillan said delays had affected both terminals over the past two weeks with truck drivers queuing for up to four hours for each trip to the port.

“It is clearly unacceptable to have trucks waiting hours for stevedores to let them into the terminal.”

Mr Gilfillan said changes by stevedores to treat Sunday as a normal working day for charging storage came as a surprise given poor stevedoring performance and the lack of consultation.

“While Sydney Ports supports a transition towards 24/7 operations, it appears the stevedores decided upon these charges and have implemented them on a very short timeframe without speaking to anyone in industry,” Mr Gilfillan said.

“To unilaterally decide they are going to change their pricing regime and make Sunday a normal working day without discussing with anyone is completely against the spirit of the Port Botany reform program.

“The rest of the industry has been patient in waiting for the stevedores to pull their socks up and provide reliable service and timely notice of any delays. So far they have failed to provide either.

“The performance of DP World has been comparatively better than Patrick, but delays and servicing issues have been experienced at both stevedore terminals,” Mr Gilfillan said.

Mr Gilfillan said stevedores were also failing to deliver in implementing new reforms to drive better performance at Port Botany.

“One of the key objectives of PBLIS is to improve communication and the provision of greater transparency of processes and data between industry partners.

“A communications protocol has been agreed with the stevedores yet updates on recent delays have not been given to industry on a timely basis.

“It is disappointing to see this has become a pattern rather than an exception. The information coming from the stevedores is often inconsistent and late.

“We have been working with the stevedores to introduce the reforms on a voluntary basis. To make sure the work on these important reforms is not delayed we will be speaking with the Government about using regulations to improve performance at our key trading port,” Mr Gilfillan said.

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