

Media Release

SYDNEY PORTS TAKES PART IN “OPERATION SPLASH”

Friday 21 May 2010

Sydney Ports will play a key supportive role tomorrow in a NSW Police exercise designed to test the response of emergency services to an airport ‘splashdown’ in Botany Bay.

The Chief Executive Officer of Sydney Ports, Grant Gilfillan said the exercise, “Operation Splash”, would involve a number of agencies, including NSW Water Police, NSW Fire Brigade, NSW Ambulance Service, Polair, Coastguard, NSW Maritime, NSW Fisheries and the Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter.

“This exercise will test the command and co-ordination of resources in response to an aircraft that has ditched into Botany Bay,” Mr Gilfillan said.

“Given Sydney Airport’s proximity to this body of water, it is important that agencies, including Sydney Ports, train for any emergency situation.

“This exercise will test the efficacy of the new boat ramp at Foreshore Road as a primary evacuation point. This ramp has been built as part of our Port Botany Expansion project.

“In tomorrow’s scenario, a Sydney Ports fire tug will represent an aircraft that has ditched into Botany Bay. It will be carrying 10 life rafts and will anchor in Botany Bay at 10 am.”

- The fire tug will deploy the life rafts into the water and secure them to the vessel until the exercise starts.
- The 200 ‘passengers’ to be ‘rescued’ in the exercise—all NSW lifesavers—will assemble at Port Botany at 9 am and will be transported to the life rafts.
- Emergency services will be contacted at 11am and given the details for an aircraft ‘ditching’ into Botany Bay.
- All agencies will respond from their normal area of operation, as they are called, via their call-out system.
- Police divers and lifeguard-operated jet-skis also will take part in the operation.

“Sydney Ports welcomes the opportunity to join other agencies in testing, co-ordinating and refining emergency procedures for such incidents,” Mr Gilfillan said.

Contact: Lachlan Benson 0412 492 403
