

## **PORTS OF AUCKLAND HOPES MEDIATION WILL AVERT STRIKE**

DATE: WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2008, 4.30PM

The Ports of Auckland is hoping mediation by the Department of Labour will avert what it considers is unnecessary strike action by the Maritime Union of New Zealand - Local 13, with which it is in Collective Employment Agreement negotiations.

A mediation session has been scheduled for Wednesday 26 November 2008.

The union has given notice of strike action affecting the Port's two container terminals, road, rail, shuttle and engineering services during a 24 hour period from 2 to 3 December 2008. The Company's General Wharves, on both the Manukau and Waitemata Harbours, and the marine services division, will continue to operate.

"We are keen to participate in further mediation and have a genuine hope that we will be able to avert the strike," Managing Director Jens Madsen said.

"We are committed to ongoing dialogue."

Mr Madsen said any protracted dispute on the waterfront risked paralysing the Upper North Island supply chain.

"We remain concerned at the impact of industrial action on our customers, local exporters and importers, and on New Zealand's international reputation, given the seriousness of the global economic situation and the busy pre-Christmas period."

Mr Madsen said the Port had participated in numerous mediation exercises since the Port's Collective Employment Agreement with the Maritime Union expired in 2006, most recently in early November 2008.

"We have bent over backwards to resolve the situation. We continue to act in good faith and at all times have tried to be constructive and flexible."

The company also participated in a facilitated bargaining process with the Employment Relations Authority in late 2007.

"While we accepted the recommendation made by the facilitator from the Employment Relations Authority, the union did not," Mr Madsen said.

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*The Ports of Auckland is New Zealand's largest container port by volume, handling around 840,000 TEU (20ft-equivalent units), more than 1,700 ship calls and 3.6 million tonnes of break-bulk (non-containerised) cargo per annum. It is New Zealand's major import port and a key partner to export industries. The Ports of Auckland is 100%-owned by Auckland Regional Holdings.*