



THE HON. JOE TRIPODI MP
MINISTER FOR FINANCE
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MINISTER FOR PORTS AND WATERWAYS

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Maritime online alert service launched

August 2, 2009

Ports and Waterways Minister Joe Tripodi today launched a first in Maritime safety – an on-line alert system to help boat owners and rock fishermen prepare and plan a day out on or near the water.

Mr Tripodi said the Maritime alert is based on official weather data and will be delivered free of charge through the internet.

"NSW Maritime is delivering this system as a 12 month trial in a bid to encourage people to think about their limits when it comes to boating and fishing.

"Changing weather conditions mean every skipper and their boat and every fisherman has a limit to their capabilities or comfort zone.

"This alert system encourages people to think about the conditions and to seek more detailed weather reports before deciding to go on the water."

Mr Tripodi said NSW Maritime had worked with Coastalwatch over the past 12 months to build and deliver the system.

"To join go to **www.maritime.nsw.gov.au/alerts/wind.html** and register your details, choose a wind threshold you want to be alerted to and choose the area where you intend to go boating.

"If the chosen wind threshold is forecast to be met or exceeded, an alert will arrive by email just after midday on the day prior to the planned boating or fishing excursion."

Mr Tripodi said the alert will provide the following:

- A near shore forecast;
- The marine forecast;
- Official sunset and sunrise times;
- Tide heights and times at Fort Denison, and a link to the time lags for tides along the coast.

Coastalwatch previously helped NSW Maritime deliver 16 live webcams at locations such as bar crossings along the NSW coast.

"The webcam system is delivering real time vision of coastal bars and has proven popular with people wanting to see the conditions live. Now, with the Maritime alert people are being encouraged to think about the wind and sea conditions prior to heading out," Mr Tripodi said.

"NSW Maritime is delivering these services to help promote a culture of safe boating, but the alerts may also be of interest to rock fishers.

"The Maritime Alert system is not intended to replace any existing weather service and should be considered as just another tool people can use to be safe."

Mr Tripodi said NSW has a growing recreational boating community, with an estimated 1.5 million people enjoying the waterways each year.

The Maritime alert is an extension of the "You're the Skipper - You're Responsible" awareness campaign.

Subject to evaluation and feedback over the next 12 months, it is intended to make the service permanent while Maritime is also investigating the feasibility of introducing an SMS alert system. More information can be found at www.maritime.nsw.gov.au