

1 October 2024

Hon Nicola Willis  
Minister of Finance  
Parliament Buildings  
**WELLINGTON**  
Email: [Nicola.Willis@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Nicola.Willis@parliament.govt.nz).

Hon Simeon Brown  
Minister of Transport  
Parliament Buildings  
**WELLINGTON**  
Email: [Simeon.Brown@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Simeon.Brown@parliament.govt.nz)

Dear Ministers

### **Emergency Response Provision**

As you are aware there have been a number of marine incidents in the Wellington and Marlborough region, including the Shilling, the Rangitata, the Kaitaki, the Aratere, the Ovation of the Seas and most recently the Connemara. In response to these incidents CentrePort has been proactive in sending our marine assets and our people to assist or being prepared to do so. Where we can control, CentrePort has invested at our own cost in better assets (towing ropes) to be prepared for these circumstances which were used to manage the recent Connemara incident.

CentrePort has responded to the situations presented and has assisted to the best of the abilities of both our assets and more importantly of our people. However, CentrePort and Greater Wellington Regional Council (**GWRC**) are firmly of the view that we need a more sustainable way forward for marine emergency response, as the current model only supports the occasional occurrence, which is not currently the case.

CentrePort is a full service port operation facilitating cargo flows, it is not set up as a 24/7 marine emergency first responder. We have responded to the incidents to date, but we are responding to events and investing into assets beyond our remit (as a port operator) and we are doing so with people's safety at the forefront. CentrePort and GWRC are proud of our people and how they have responded and supported.

However, by responding to these incidents this creates a business risk of potential disruption to the CentrePort business and customers, the Cook Strait and our regional economy. This disruption includes:

- placing CentrePort people into a position where they may be needed to operate the vessels (tugs) outside of the parameters that they were designed and intended to be used for;
- ceasing and disrupting port operations while tugs are away from port responding;
- delaying other port operations to allow our people to rest and recover after an incident response; or
- potentially closing the port should our vessels (tugs) be damaged and out of service for an extended period which would impact our ability to respond and/or the consequential costs associated.

With the number of increasing incidents in the past few years, driven by various factors including the condition of vessels, asset management and human factors, we believe the need for a coordinated, nationally lead, plan for emergency marine response capability is now critical. We appreciate the work done to date, and the funding for a business case to look at an emergency marine response capability. We need assurance that there is an emphasis on outcome and priority to determine a solution, rather than another business case process. At this point, there is no certainty, with an increasing likelihood, to address the risks to CentrePort's overall business.

As a matter of urgency, CentrePort and GWRC request a meeting to clarify the status of the EORC Business Case work and understand mechanisms to mitigate the risks to CentrePort's business from responding to these incidents. We are also happy to do this in conjunction with Maritime New Zealand.

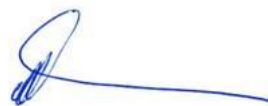
Regards

Yours sincerely  
**CentrePort Limited**



**Anthony Delaney**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Yours sincerely  
**Greater Wellington Regional Council**



**Nigel Corry**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**Cc**

Kirstie Hewlett, Chief Executive Officer, Maritime NZ

Daran Ponter, Chair, Greater Wellington Regional Council

Lachie Johnstone, Chair, CentrePort