

MEDIA RELEASE

PORT OPERATIONS UNDER ALERT LEVEL 3

23 April 2020

The easing of COVID-19 restrictions to alert level 3 will see several port operations and projects recommence under physical distancing measures at Port Nelson from April 28.

Forestry is Port Nelson's largest export by volume and the announcement of the restart of the industry under alert level 3 is welcome news to the port and the Te Taihū region. From next week forestry management, sales, harvesting and haulage can commence. This will see the return of log cargo through the port gates into log storage which had been used as imported car storage during alert level 4. These cars will now be able to be moved off site easing wharf and storage pressures.

As log vessels return to the port, we will see the re-activation of log stevedoring operations in Nelson and Picton. Picton operations had been at a standstill during alert level 4, however, the arrival of the logging vessel Hainan Island, which was loaded by port stevedores on Thursday evening, has started the process of clearing the wharf in preparation for the arrival of more volume once the industry is up and running.

With wood processing allowed from next week, Nelson Pine Industries will be able to restart their MDF and LVL plant, though returning to full production capacity will not be immediate. Nelson Pine is a key customer of Port Nelson's QuayPack business who store and pack NPI product for export. QuayPack had seen a significant reduction in work during lockdown with staff being utilised in busier port departments. The return flow of Nelson Pine and other processed timber products, along with the ongoing fitting of wine flexitanks, will see QuayPack return to nearly normal levels of operation. However, collection of imported personal effects will still be unavailable.

The port's Calwell Slipway will also be able to resume its important maintenance work on all vessels.

Essential import and export container and QuayConnect services will continue as they over the last four weeks.

The resumption of the construction industry will allow a number of halted and planned port infrastructure projects to continue. McConnell Dowell will continue replacement work on Main Wharf North, vital work necessary to improve port resilience, emergency lifeline services and capacity to receive larger vessels. Other projects include the replacement of the Wakefield Quay Pontoon during May as well as internal paving and upgrade work on berths.

All on port work by staff and contractors will continue under strict COVID-19 practices in their dedicated cells or isolation. Corporate staff that can work from home will continue to do so. Temperature readings and stronger protocols around managing health prior to coming to work are also being introduced.

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