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MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR BOOST FOR NSW GRAIN INDUSTRY

The NSW Government has underpinned the success this summer's grain harvest, transport and marketing program with the approval of an emergency tonnage increase at the Port Kembla grain terminal.

Minister for Planning and Infrastructure Brad Hazzard says the emergency approval allows an additional 200,000 tonnes of grain to be transported to the facility by road – a potential \$60 million boost in grain sales.

“If this decision was not made, growers would be forced to send excess crop to Geelong, Melbourne or Newcastle, incurring higher transport costs and eroding profit margins.

“This would have severe implications for our farmer's ability to sell grain into both domestic and export markets with consequent impacts on the NSW economy.

“The approval also extends delivery hours by waiving a condition which previously restricted deliveries to weekday daylight hours.”

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson has welcomed the approval, particularly in light of a bumper grain crop.

“If the season holds, NSW is anticipating a winter cereal, pulse and oilseed crop to total in the order of 10.8 million tonnes.

“This will be the biggest harvest in many years, and will put obvious pressure on transport, handling and storage infrastructure.

“This decision to enable increased road transport capacity to Port Kembla will be of tremendous relief to the grains industry.”

Minister for Western NSW, Kevin Humphries says the NSW Government approval will enable the state's grain growers to optimise returns in a very competitive global marketplace.

“For too long, Western NSW grain growers - that are not serviced by rail - have been severely disadvantaged by the cap on road transportation.

“This is a major win for grain growers, the regional NSW economy and a leap forward in grain exportation in this State.”

Mr Hazzard says an assessment by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure confirms the increased tonnage can be catered for by the existing road network and the increased delivery hours would have minimal noise impacts on local residents.

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