Tuesday 25 November 2014

**Private certifiers to fast-track port upgrades**

The Department of Planning and Environment today released draft criteria for private certifiers who will speed up the delivery of vital port infrastructure at the State’s three major ports.

The proposed criteria requires specialist engineers to certify infrastructure at Port Botany, Port Kembla and the Port of Newcastle.

Under the criteria, port certifiers will be able to issue complying development certificates and construction certificates for port infrastructure such as:

- fixed cranes, rail-mounted cranes and crane rails to move freight containers
- ship loaders, unloaders and associated facilities to manage cargo container movements; and
- bulk liquid storage tanks.

“Currently only a number of councils are able to approve port infrastructure, which will affect the ramp up of new infrastructure at our ports,” a Department spokesperson said.

“Without help from private certifiers, these works could be delayed, reducing the productivity of our ports – and that’s bad news for the NSW economy.

“Accrediting private certifiers is a simple, common-sense solution to speed up the delivery of vital infrastructure around our ports and keep the State’s economy moving.”

Major port projects such as large-scale dredging work and new berths will continue to be assessed by the Department of Planning and Environment.

The spokesperson said it was critical that port operators continued to upgrade and expand infrastructure to respond to growing demand for goods across the state.

“Our three key ports in Sydney, Newcastle and the Illawarra receive about 99 per cent of more than 180 million tonnes of freight goods which is imported to NSW each year,” The spokesperson said.

“By making sure there is no backlog of work that needs to be certified, we are keeping the State’s economy moving.”

The Building Professionals Board is seeking feedback on proposed criteria for the accreditation of certifiers in the A5 category until 19 December 2014.

For more information, go to [www.bpb.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bpb.nsw.gov.au)

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