

MEDIA RELEASE

Port of Richards Bay Celebrates 40 Years

[Richards Bay, South Africa, April 2016] South Africa's premier bulk port commemorated its 40th anniversary on Friday, 1st April, with further celebratory events planned for the remainder of the milestone year. The Port of Richards Bay was established in 1976 and – despite being one of the “newcomers” to the industry – has expanded to include a variety of exports, earning it a reputation as one of the most successful of its kind within South Africa's shores.

Chief Executive of Transnet National Ports Authority, Richard Vallihu, said landmark year for the port served as an indicator of the economic growth opportunities available.

“When you consider that this area was once seen as one lacking in potential as a harbour, the rise of the port and the town as a whole becomes that much more remarkable. The success of the Port of Richards Bay over these past 40 years demonstrates the capabilities of the country and our ports in providing a system of growth that is beneficial to the surrounding communities, promoting careers and business opportunities in the maritime industry,” Vallihu said.

The Port of Richards Bay was created for the purpose of transporting locally-mined coal to international shores. Today it routinely handles a diverse mix of commodities inclusive of magnetite, chrome ore, alumina, coking coal and ferro alloys – all this in addition to the port's main line of export, coal.

Its existence has led to the creation of other industries within Richards Bay, providing thousands of direct and indirect job opportunities for the people of the city and in turn, transforming the small fishing village into an industrial hub, while supporting big businesses such as Richards Bay Coal Terminal, BHP Billiton, Richards Bay Minerals and Foskor.

Richards Bay further cemented its role as one of the country's leading ports during the 2010-2011 period, when it increased its revenue generation, breaking the R1 billion turnover mark for the first time in the port's history. During the 2015/2016 financial year the port handled 99.229 million tons of bulk and break bulk cargo.

In addition to this, the port's 23 berths, specialised cargo handling facilities, fast vessel turnaround, deep-water infrastructure, excellent rail links to the hinterland and its large greenfield development potential, has made the Port of Richards Bay one of the world's leading bulk ports.

Preston Khomo, Richards Bay Port Manager, said the achievements of the port showcased the key aspect of working together to build the standing of an entire public.

“The continued success of the Port of Richards Bay will be dependent upon partnerships with business and the community, and we see this landmark anniversary as a means through which these relationships can be strengthened.”

Future planning at the port is in line with the South African government's National Growth plan, and in particular the Operation Phakisa initiative where the main objectives are economic development, job creation and skills development.

As part of the Port's 40th Anniversary celebrations, TNPA has planned a host of events to mark the occasion. The festivities kicked off on 1st April, when TNPA honoured the real heroes of the port's achievements – the employees.

There will also be community inclusive events, as well as exclusive celebratory occasions for dignitaries and principles of industries.

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Image Gallery:

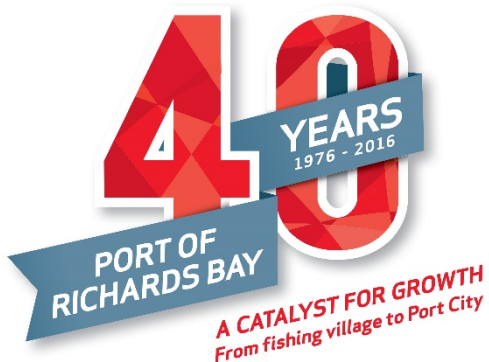
Below: Breakthrough of the Port of Richards Bay's entrance channel prior to its opening 40 years ago.



Below: Today the port routinely handles a diverse mix of commodities in addition to its main line of export, coal.



Below: Port of Richards Bay's 40th Anniversary logo.



Below: A celebratory cake was part of employee celebrations on 1st April to mark the Port of Richards Bay's 40th Anniversary.



About Transnet National Ports Authority

Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) is one of five operating divisions of Transnet SOC Ltd. The National Ports Authority is responsible for the safe, effective and efficient economic functioning of the national port system, which it manages in a landlord capacity. It provides port infrastructure and marine services at the eight commercial seaports in South Africa – Richards Bay, Durban, Saldanha, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Mossel Bay and Ngqura. It operates within a legislative and regulatory environment and is governed by the National Ports Act (Act No. 12 of 2005). For more information visit www.transnetnationalportsauthority.net.

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