

R1bn investment to boost tugboat availability

Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) is injecting a R1bn investment in its marine fleet renewal programme through the acquisition of seven tugboats aimed at enhancing marine operations at its commercial seaports.



Source: Sung Jin Cho via [Unsplash](#)

"The seven tugboats will replace marine craft that has reached its operational lifespan at the ports of Durban [in KwaZulu-Natal] and East London [in the Eastern Cape]. TNPA has awarded two contracts to a shipbuilding company, Damen Shipyards Cape Town, to deliver the seven tugboats from April to August 2024," Transnet said in a statement.

From this procured tug fleet, the Port of Durban has been allocated five tugboats and two will go to the Port of East London.

"This investment demonstrates TNPA's ongoing commitment to providing reliable marine craft at our South African ports, which will enable us to effectively service the marine industry and respond to global shipping demands," TNPA Chief Harbour Master, Captain Rufus Lekala said.

The procured tugboats boast the latest hull design and propulsion, as well as a 60-tonne bollard pull, which is a much-needed improvement from the bollard pull of the existing tugboats that will be replaced that ranges between 32 and 40-tonne

bollard pull.

“The 60-tonne pollard pull meets international standards and makes the craft highly manoeuvrable while guiding larger and newer vessels safely in and out of the ports.

“TNPA’s marine fleet programme demonstrates a reimagined focus in ensuring that the Ports Authority delivers on its mandate of providing a competitive port system in its role as an enabler of economic growth,” Transnet said.

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