

MEDIA RELEASE

Sutherland Shire
COUNCIL



Thursday 13 October, 2011

Port Hacking Dredging Delayed

Sutherland Shire Council has been forced to delay dredging of the Port Hacking due to the workload of its specialist dredging contractor. Australia's only dredge of this kind is currently completing dredging of the Tweed River which has taken longer than expected due to poor weather conditions, and this has impacted on the start date for the Port Hacking.

A revised timeframe for the works is currently being devised. It is hoped that the contractor will start dredging the Port Hacking by the beginning of next year. A minimum of three week's notice will be provided to the public before the project commences.

Up to 61,150 cubic metres of material will be removed from navigation channels in the Port Hacking. This will help ensure safe navigation for the Bundeena ferry and private boats. It is anticipated that the dredging will take approximately eight weeks. The sand will be dumped strategically in water eight metres deep offshore from the sea wall at North Cronulla to form a mound or 'sea-slug', which will be the first time this has occurred at a Sydney beach. The aim is to create a bombora that will bend and refract the swell to create improved breaking waves for surfers.

In 1995 Council entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the management of dredging within Port Hacking with the NSW government. The MoU states, in part, that dredging work needs to be carried out on the navigation channels within Port Hacking, to ensure ease of operations for public and private vessels and that the responsibility for the dredging lies with the NSW government. The MoU commits the NSW government to regularly dredging the channels in order to maintain navigable depth. Since 1995, the NSW Government has funded four rounds of dredging of the Port Hacking navigation channels, with Council administering the contract under a consultancy arrangement.

For the coming dredging project, the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet (formerly the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water) has provided Council with a total of \$2.56 million. The funding is intended to cover the full cost of maintenance dredging of the navigation channels. Under the funding agreement Council takes responsibility for obtaining all approvals necessary for the works, preparation of contract specification and tender documents, calling of tenders and contract supervision and administration.

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