MEDIA RELEASE

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TIMBER VESSELS SUCCESSFULLY SALVAGED FROM SOUTH COAST WATERWAYS

Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast Gareth Ward has today thanked boaters for their patience this month while two timber vessels were removed from waterways along the State’s South Coast.

Mr Ward said that the timber vessels were removed from the Shoalhaven River near Nowra and Bermagui Harbour at Bermagui to ensure the safety of the waterways.

“Maritime crews have had a busy month on the South Coast carrying out functions under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act to remove sunken vessels,” he said.

“As the regulatory authority, Roads and Maritime has taken action to remove these vessels to ensure the safety of the environment with local contractors from Batemans Bay and Bega appointed to carry out the removals.

“Crews removed a 14 metre timber vessel from the Shoalhaven River last week. The vessel sank in early February after heavy rain lashed the South Coast and several attempts to compel the owner to remove the vessel failed.

“While there was no indication of pollution from the sunken vessel, it was important to remove the timber boat from the water to ensure safety for other vessels and the environment.

“It was a complex operation to remove the vessel from the water, with four large underwater air lift bags used to refloat the boat before a large crane was used to lift the vessel from the water.

“Once the vessel removed, it was demolished and disposed of safely.

“Roads and Maritime was also forced to appoint contractors to remove a 20 metre timber vessel from the Bermagui Harbour at Bermagui after the owner failed to comply with clean up notices.

“The old timber vessel was assessed as a high risk to the environment due to its condition and also has been removed and disposed of safely,” Mr Ward
concluded.

All the contractors are local contractors – from Bega and Batemans Bay. Roads and Maritime is seeking to recover costs from the owners of both timber vessels.

For more information about boating safety, please visit the website at: http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/.