

# Richards Bay's 39-year-old lighthouse demolished

Richards Bay's 39-year-old lighthouse has been demolished due to severe coastal erosion. Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) has therefore erected a temporary light and structure on the site to guide vessels navigating the surrounding waters.



The original lighthouse situated at Meerensee was commissioned on 22 May 1979 and stood more than 200 metres from the edge of the cliff at the time of its construction. More recently the structure had come close to toppling into the sea.

David Gordon, executive manager for TNPA Lighthouse and Navigational Services (LNS) said the recent slippage was a unique situation of great concern.

“The South African Maritime Safety Authority was informed and a navigational warning was issued. TNPA’s LNS division issued a tender calling for specialist advice for the demolition and removal of the structure and four unique proposals were received from well-established contractors,” he said.

The proposal submitted by Atomic Demolishers was selected and TNPA LNS enlisted its services in March 2018.

The new, temporary structure was successfully commissioned on 1 April 2018 after a period of testing and calibration. The steel structure was fabricated by a local company, while the LED long-range beacon was shipped from the United Kingdom.

Access to the dune face is presently restricted by a newly-erected wire fence.

LNS is working with the City of Umhlathuze to put the necessary services in place for a new lighthouse on a new site in Richards Bay. An environmental impact assessment (EIA) is outstanding, however construction of the new lighthouse is expected to begin later this year.

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