

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Minister for Health Infrastructure



Wednesday, 25 June 2025

SUPPORTING OUR SEAFARERS TO STAY CONNECTED

The Allan Labor Government is recognising the major contribution of thousands of maritime workers as they keep our critical supply chains moving in the state's ever-growing \$36 billion freight and logistics sector.

Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne today celebrated the International Day of The Seafarer recognising the contributions made by mariners to trade, global economies and societies.

The Melbourne Seafarers Centre provides essential support to the diverse seafaring community, hosting more than 11,763 mariners, across 923 different ranks and 46 countries in 2024 alone.

In the same period, 1,575 international vessels from 92 destinations visited Melbourne and the Seafarers centre volunteers provided more than 7,800 shuttle bus trips from the docks to the centre – working more than 6,000 hours.

Last year, the Labor Government delivered \$500,000 to allow visiting workers to access free Wi-Fi, counselling, a 24/7 helpline and text messaging service, translation services, critical incident onsite support, and specialised support for diverse cultural needs.

The investment helps seafarers stationed at commercial ports of Melbourne, Geelong, Hastings, and Portland.

With many spending long periods isolated at sea away from their families and friends from between 14 days to six weeks, mental health support is a key consideration.

Victoria's commercial ports are vital to the state's economy, handling 98 per cent of exports by volume. In 2023, more than \$85 billion worth of goods were imported into Victoria via maritime routes.

To find out more about Victoria's ports and support for seafarers, visit vic.gov.au/about-victorias-commercial-ports.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"Helping our maritime workers stay connected to their loved-ones is critical for their health and well-being which means they can continue to support our producers and exporters who rely on their expertise every day of the year."

"Mental health is recognised as a serious issue in the maritime industry and providing specialist mental health services in Victoria is a really important step forward in supporting seafarers visiting Victoria."

Quotes attributable to Chair Melbourne Seafarers Centre Captain Warwick Norman AM

"The Seafarers Support Package has been warmly welcomed in our commercial ports, and we would love to see it grow."

"Seafarers love it - especially those who may not be able to get shore leave while at port - it gives them the flexibility and support that they often don't have while at sea."

Quotes attributable to Maritime Union of Australia Victorian Branch Secretary Robert Lumsden

“On this International Day of the Seafarer, the Maritime Union of Australia recognises the vital contribution of the men and women who crew the ships that keep Victoria’s economy moving. Seafarers are essential workers - without them, our supply chains stall and our ports grind to a halt.”

“We welcome the Albanese Labor Government’s continued support for the Melbourne Seafarers Centre, which provides critical services for international crews facing long periods at sea, isolation, and tough working conditions. Respecting seafarers means backing them with real, practical support - and this investment does just that.”