

**Speech at Wiri Inland Port rail connection sod-turning**  
**Jens Madsen**  
**09 June 2009**

---

Thank you., Mr Bolger.

Tena koutou, Tena koutou, Tena koutou katoa

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Ports of Auckland's Wiri Inland Port.

On behalf of Ports of Auckland Chairman John Lindsay and myself, a particular welcome to the Minister of Transport – The Honourable Steven Joyce, to the Chief Executive of KiwiRail - Jim Quinn, and to the National List MP for Manurewa - Kanwal Bakshi.

I'd like to start by acknowledging the Government's contribution to this project, and the support and cooperation we have received from KiwiRail and ONTRACK.

We look forward to working in partnership to make Wiri a success not just for Ports of Auckland, but for the whole Auckland region and for New Zealand.

The establishment of a rail link here at Wiri is a common sense development that offers benefits on number of levels. It's been long in the making, and the port has so far invested in the land and upgrades.

Wiri is already close to State Highway 1 and State Highway 20, and to Auckland International Airport. The rail connection will be the icing on a very cleverly positioned cake.

For South Auckland, we see a bright future for Wiri as a 'freight hub' that will attract new import and export businesses and jobs to the area.

The intermodal connections that Wiri offers to rail, road, sea and air transport will also help Ports of Auckland work smarter – taking waste out of the supply chain, increasing productivity and offering customers and other users more flexible options for moving their goods. It is about being close to market.

Once the rail connection is in place, we'll step up our efforts to use Wiri as a staging post for cargo between the Waitemata seaport, South Auckland and the Waikato.

This is also about addressing one of the key problems for New Zealand's supply chain – the cost of 'carrying air', or empty containers.

Currently, around 30 percent of the containers leaving or coming into a New Zealand port are empty, and this is costing our country dearly – both in the pocket and environmentally.

Wiri is part of the solution to that problem.

I also know that the Wiri rail link is eagerly anticipated by many of the port's neighbours in central Auckland.

Once fully operational, Wiri will eventually save around 100,000 inner city truck trips - or 2.5 million kilometres - per annum.

Cargo volumes through Ports of Auckland are doubling - roughly - every 10 years.

Trends in international shipping towards hubbing and larger ships will see even more of New Zealand's cargo being focused on Auckland in the future.

From an economic and a community perspective it's vital that the right supporting infrastructure is in place.

Wiri is a major step forward as Ports of Auckland and New Zealand prepare to serve that need.

Thank you and it is my great pleasure to introduce to you the Minister of Transport, the Honourable Steven Joyce.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen.