

KwaZulu-Natal ports show steady recovery from recession

TRANSNET recently issued details of port turnover for the financial year ended on March 31. As far as the two KZN ports of Durban and Richards Bay are concerned they reveal steady growth, showing recovery from the economic downturn of 2008 and 2009.

Richards Bay once again handled the most cargo by volume – 84.93 million tonnes, of which

Richards Bay Coal Terminal's share was 62.29 million tonnes. The port therefore handled 22.64 million tonnes of "other" cargo, mostly bulk commodities but including general breakbulk, which is a highly credible figure for any port on the African coast.

The Port of Cape Town by comparison handled less than 13 million tonnes of cargo.

In the previous financial year which ended March 31, 2010, Richards Bay handled 80 442 million tonnes, giving Richards Bay a growth of 5.58 percent for the year.

The Port of Durban was again the big money spinner for Transnet by virtue of the huge volumes of container and breakbulk cargo handled at its various terminals. Total cargo handled at Dur-

ban amounted to 76.758 million tonnes compared with 71.848 million tonnes the year before. Total cargo handled by South African ports came to 253.795 million tonnes. These numbers are gathered by including an estimated 13.5 tonnes per 20ft equivalent unit (TEU) handled.

The number of containers handled at Durban was 2.572 million

TEUs, compared with 2.437 million TEU the year before – a small growth of 0.55 percent. Collectively the South African ports handled 4.090 million TEU, up 12.17 percent from 3.646m TEU.

Richards Bay had 1 871 ship calls with a gross tonnage of 63 625mt. Durban had the most calls of any port with 4 633 calls and a gross tonnage of 131.708mt.