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TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2021

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Cray boat saved

KATIE JACKSON

A CREW of professional divers were called to the Local Port of Portland on the weekend after a large vessel sank in the harbour last week.

The 45-foot ex-crayfishing boat sank on Thursday from reasons not yet discovered, prompting a call out by the Port to a crew of seven divers from Professional Diving Services.

Service founder Frank Zeigler said the group arrived at the port on Friday to begin preparations to retrieve the boat.

"The boat sank to the floor landing on its side which means attaching equipment is not an easy task - it takes a lot of measuring and prep work to determine the best course of action," he said.

"The equipment we use to float vessels is quite expensive, so we have to ensure we don't damage it or the client's vessel when we take on these retrievals.

"So much of Friday was spent doing the necessary prep work so everything was ready to go on Saturday morning."

Mr Zeigler said the expert crew were able to get the boat to the surface in less than 30 hours.

"Divers were in the water from around 9am on Saturday until 6.30pm that night," he said.

"The crew of seven - including five locals and two from Melbourne - spent much of their weekend working to retrieve the vessel, with four 10-tonne lifting bags eventually attached to float it.

"It came to the surface late Saturday and we were able to have it out of the water and onto a truck by around 1pm on Sunday afternoon."

The diving crew was assisted in the retrieval by a number of local companies including crane operation by Keppel Prince.



A 45-foot ex-crayfishing boat was floated over the weekend after it sank last week due to unknown circumstances. The boat was craned out of the water at the Trawler Wharf on Sunday.

Picture: DENIS BELDEN 210725db01