

## Executive summary

This report reviews the Taranaki Regional Council's performance and achievements on its navigation and safety and marine oil spill response functions for the 2008/2009 year.

The Council has responsibility for navigation and safety functions within Port Taranaki under the Local Government Act 1974 (continued by the Local Government Act 2002), and also has responsibilities for marine oil spill response under the Maritime Transport Act 1994. The Council directs an effective oil spill response through implementation of the Taranaki Regional Council Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan and takes action to mitigate or remedy the adverse effects of any marine oil spills within the Taranaki region.

Set out below is a summary of the main activities carried out by the Council in 2008/2009:

- In 2008/2009, there were 1,560 vessel movements in Port Taranaki (a decrease of 25% from the previous year) without a navigation and safety incident;
- A review was commenced into the *Navigation and Safety Bylaws for Port Taranaki and its Approaches*;
- The Council obtained programme and funding approval for 2008/2009 from Maritime New Zealand for specific oil spill response activities, including training;
- The Council undertook one complete audit of the oil spill equipment and undertook maintenance three times during the 2008/2009 year;
- The Council organised one two-day practical marine oil spill response training exercise, and involved oil industry representatives. One full day exercise using the ro-boom was also held during the year; and
- All the above activities contributed to sustainable, connected, and secure and healthy Taranaki outcomes where the staff preparedness for a potential major oil spill was tested, environmental quality in the Port was maintained, and no maritime navigation and safety incidents occurred.



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

This report reviews the Taranaki Regional Council's performance and achievements on its harbour management (navigation and safety) and marine pollution incidents and response (oil spill response) functions for the 2008/2009 year.

## 1.2 Background

The Taranaki Regional Council has responsibility for navigation and safety functions within Port Taranaki and its approaches (Taranaki harbour), a responsibility contained within the Local Government Act 1974 and continued by the Local Government Act 2002.

These responsibilities are undertaken by appropriately qualified

persons who have been contracted to provide harbourmaster services for Port Taranaki and to implement relevant harbour bylaws.



*Port Taranaki*

The Taranaki Regional Council has further responsibilities for marine pollution control, specifically oil spill response. Under the Maritime Transport Act 1994, the Council prepared the *Taranaki Regional Council Marine Oil Spill Response Plan*. This Plan, was formally reviewed and approved by the Director of Maritime New Zealand in 2007/2008. Through the Plan, the Council directs an effective oil spill response and takes action to mitigate or remedy the adverse effects of any marine oil spills within the Taranaki region. The Plan also contains information and advice on equipment, personnel and organisation skills using the Co-ordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) method of emergency response for oil spills that occur within the region.

The Taranaki Regional Council is also responsible for approving and auditing the contingency plans for oil transfer sites and approving Maritime New Zealand contingency plans for offshore installations.

### 1.2.1 Objectives

The overall objective for Harbour Management, as set out in the *2008/2009 Annual Plan*, is to:

- Promote safe navigation for all users of the waters of Port Taranaki.

The overall objective for Pollution Incidents and Response, as set out in the *2008/2009 Annual Plan*, is to:

- Respond effectively to pollution incidents, reduce the occurrence and effects of pollution and other unauthorised incidents and, where necessary, undertake successful enforcement action.

### 1.2.2 Performance measures

In response to the objective for Harbour Management, the Taranaki Regional Council adopted the following performance measures in the *2008/2009 Annual Plan*:

- Provide harbourmaster and harbour warden services for Port Taranaki to implement relevant harbour bylaws and regulations.
- Review the *Navigation Bylaw for Port Taranaki and Approaches (2003)*
- Comply with the requirements of the *New Zealand Port and Harbour Marine Safety Code*, including the *Port Taranaki Harbour Safety Navigation System*.

In response to the objective for Pollution Incidents and Response, the Taranaki Regional Council adopted the following performance measures in the *2008/2009 Annual Plan*:

- Maintain and publicly report on 100% of pollution incidents in the Council's *Unauthorised Incidents Register*.
- Respond to 100% of pollution and other complaints within four hours of receipt, instigating control, clean up and enforcement procedures where appropriate.
- Administer and implement the *Taranaki Regional Council Oil Spill Response Plan* as agreed with Maritime New Zealand.



*Container ship leaving Port Taranaki*

## 2. Report on progress

### 2.1 Provision of harbourmaster and honorary enforcement officer services

The Taranaki Regional Council has contracted appropriately qualified persons to provide harbourmaster services for Port Taranaki and implement relevant harbour bylaws.

There were 1,560 vessel movements in Port Taranaki during 2008/2009. This was a decrease of 537 (25%) vessel movements from the previous year. The Council's harbourmaster has prepared an annual report for the 2008/2009 year, which is attached as an appendix to this report.

In October 2003, the Council made new harbourmaster and honorary enforcement officer appointments. "Honorary enforcement officer" is the title given to what were previously known as harbour wardens. Harbourmasters are appointed for the general purpose of ensuring navigation safety and enforcing navigation bylaws in accordance with Part 39A of the Local Government Act 1974.

Honorary enforcement officers promote navigation safety and compliance with the Council's *Navigation Bylaws for Port Taranaki and its Approaches 2003* by providing information on safe boating and educating the boating public on the content of the bylaws. The powers and duties of harbourmasters and honorary enforcement officers apply within Port Taranaki and its approaches.

The Council has appointed six people to the position of harbourmaster/deputy harbourmaster. Captain Ray Barlow holds the lead role, with the remaining appointees acting as his deputies. Michael Pryce, the harbourmaster for the Wellington Region, has been appointed to act in cases of conflict of interest where no other harbourmaster appointee is able to act.

There are thirteen honorary enforcement officers available to assist in the enforcement of the Council's *Navigation and Safety Bylaws 2003*.



*Nga Motu beach within Port Taranaki is a popular recreational area.*

## 2.2 Review of the Navigation and Safety Bylaw, 2003

The Council was required to commence a review of the *Navigation and Safety Bylaws for Port Taranaki and Its Approaches 2003* by 1 July 2008. The bylaws will be revoked if they have not been reviewed by 1 July 2010. This review commenced during this financial year.

Discussions were held with representatives of Maritime New Zealand regarding the operation of navigation safety requirements throughout the region including the requirement of Maritime rule 91 administered by Maritime New Zealand. In addition, the Council was advised that Maritime New Zealand was to review Maritime Rule 91 (which set national navigation safety rules) and that part of this review was to cover matters that the Council was to consider as part of its own bylaw review.

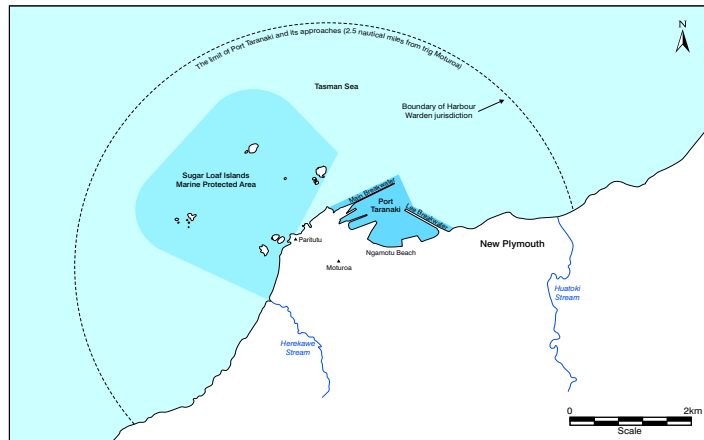


Figure 1: Extent of Port Taranaki and its approaches

Information was collected from other regional councils on the nature and scope of bylaws in other regions. A meeting was held (29 May 2009) with the Council's harbourmaster, deputy harbourmasters and honorary enforcement officers to obtain feedback on the effectiveness and general workability of the Council's current bylaw for the Port. Minutes of the meeting are available. The overall consensus from those applying the bylaws at the coalface was that the bylaws have worked well but that a review was timely given the increased use of the port.

Issues to be addressed through the review of the bylaws include: 1) clarifying that the purpose of the access lane is for towing skiers to access the central area of the Port where speed restrictions are uplifted; 2) establishing moving safety zones around large vessels moving or manoeuvring within the harbour limits; 3) restricting people from swimming, diving or playing in a manner that could be dangerous; and 4) minor amendments to up date certain terms.

The detailed redrafting and notification of new bylaws however was held up owing to the possibility of major developments at the Port that would have had significant implications for design of the bylaws, coupled with the impending review of Maritime Rule 91. This meant that the review of the bylaws was not completed in 2008/2009 as programmed, but will be completed early in the 2009/2010 financial year.

## 2.3 Compliance with the Port and Harbour Marine Safety Code

In August 2004, Maritime New Zealand adopted the *New Zealand Port & Harbour Marine Safety Code*.

The aim of the *Code* is to promote good practice in the conduct of safe marine operations in ports and harbours. It also seeks to clarify the respective responsibilities and accountabilities of central government, regional councils and port companies in relation to navigation safety.

The Council has complied with the *Code* through the undertaking of a full Harbour Risk Assessment (approved by MNZ in 2006) and adopting a *Harbour Safety Management System* (HSMS) and associated Risk Assessment System. These are both operational with all maritime activities continuously monitored. The HSMS was granted full approval in 2007. It underwent an interim audit by Maritime New Zealand in March 2009 and was commended.

A meeting was held with Port Taranaki staff on 19 February 2009. Matters discussed included the requirement for better signage and buoys to show the bylaws zones; upgrade of the navigation lights; requirement for more harbour wardens; the review of the bylaws; and the Port Taranaki safety management system. Minutes of the meeting, which is now scheduled annually, were taken and actions established.

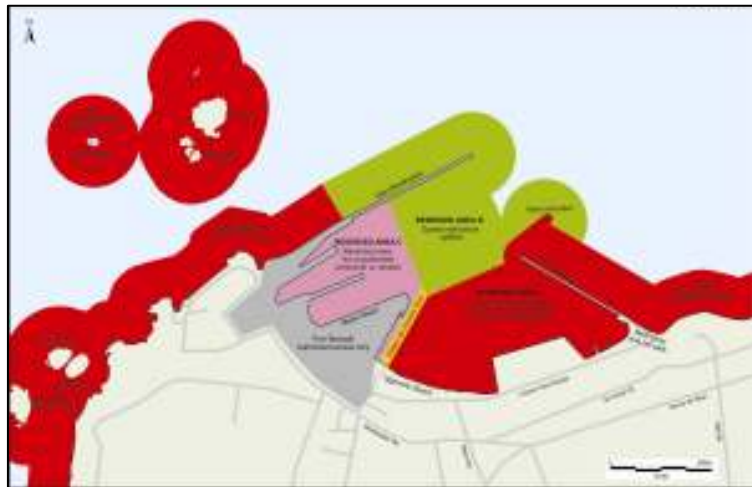


Figure 2: Information provided on new signs at the Port showing the speed restrictions

## 2.4 Administer and implement the Taranaki Regional Oil Spill Response Plan

The Council obtained programme and funding approval for the 2008/2009 year from Maritime New Zealand for a number of specific oil spill response activities. This included funding for:

- Equipment Storage
- Equipment Maintenance
- Exercises and Regional Training
- MNZ Training Costs
- Maintenance of the Oil Spill Contingency Plan.

### 2.4.1 Equipment storage and maintenance

The Council has continued to maintain a contractual arrangement with Port Taranaki Limited to store marine oil spill response equipment in a Port building on the corner of Breakwater and Ngamotu Roads. One Oil Wildlife Inventory Kit is also held at the Port.

The Council continues to maintain the oil spill response equipment stored at Port Taranaki. The Council undertook maintenance of this equipment on three occasions during the 2008/2009 year. On completion of each occasion, a maintenance schedule was forwarded to Maritime New Zealand for approval.

The Council also undertook an audit of the equipment with Maritime New Zealand representatives during the 2008/2009 year.

### 2.4.2 Exercises

The Council organised one two-day marine oil spill response training exercise and a one-day ro-boom deployment exercise during the 2008/2009 year.

The two-day marine oil spill response exercise was undertaken at Oakura on March 31-April 1 2009. The exercise involved up to 40 people from the Council and from across the region's oil and gas production and transport sectors. Observers from Maritime New Zealand were also present.

The aim of the exercise was to familiarise people with the oil spill equipment and the processes involved in oil spill response. The exercise also aimed to familiarise team members with each other, as well as the equipment and with the Council's recently reviewed *Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan*.



*Oil Spill Exercise at Oakura estuary*

The exercise was the largest regional exercise to be held in Taranaki, and was particularly valuable in enhancing working relationships with staff from the oil and gas companies and gaining better understandings of each other's oil spill response capability. This will be valuable information in the event of an actual oil spill.

Major elements of the exercise response included rapid planning and deployment, the use of dispersants to break up as much of the oil as possible before it washed ashore, deployment of booms to prevent oil getting into rivers, and clean-up operations along the coastline.

A full day ro-boom exercise was carried out off Blyth Wharf at Port Taranaki. All the ro-boom operators were brought together for this training to keep them familiar with the highly technical piece of equipment. One roll of ro-boom was deployed to sea using a contractors boat and then retrieved. The exercise was carried out in rough conditions, pushing the equipment to the limit of its capability, but also to simulate conditions likely to be encountered in a real oil spill.

### 2.4.3 Maritime New Zealand Training

The regional on-scene commander and alternative on-scene commander are current, with the regional on-scene commander being revalidated through a week's refresher training. The alternate on-scene commander was granted a one year extension to his warrant.

Six response staff trained to Field Operators level in oil spill response at Te Atatu.



*Deploying the ro-boom*

One response staff trained to Managers level in oil spill response at Te Atatu.

Maritime New Zealand's ability to train staff in the region has provided Taranaki with sufficient numbers of trained personnel to operate the large amount of equipment held in the region. The number of trained staff met guidelines set by Maritime New Zealand for the equipment held.

### 2.4.4 Oil Spill Response Plan Maintenance

The objectives of the Council's *Marine Oil Spill Contingency Plan* are to prevent further pollution from a marine oil spill; and to contain and clean-up the marine spill in a manner that does not cause further damage to the marine environment, or any unreasonable danger to human life, or cause an unreasonable risk of injury to any person.

Standard operating procedures for the four phases of oil spill response are set out in the Plan namely:

- 1) discovery, notification, evaluation, identification, activation;
- 2) development of a spill response action plan;
- 3) implementation of a response action plan;
- 4) response termination and demobilisation; and

5) post operations- document costs/litigation.

The plan was formally reviewed last financial year, but is continually updated each year.

#### **2.4.5 Minor oil Spills**

During the 2008/2009 year, five minor marine oil spills occurred within the port area. These incidents were subsequently reported to the Council and Maritime New Zealand. The spills were responded to in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Maritime Transport Act 1994 and the *Taranaki Regional Marine Oil Spill Response Plan 2008*. Costs were recovered either from the Oil Pollution Fund or the spiller.

### 3. Conclusion

In summary, all performance measures detailed in the *2008/2009 Annual Plan* have been addressed for the Council's Navigation and Safety and Marine Oil Spill Response functions:

1. The Harbourmaster, Deputy Harbourmasters, and Honorary Enforcement Officers for Port Taranaki have provided the relevant services at Port Taranaki and have implemented relevant harbour bylaws and regulations.
2. There were no reported incidents involving unsafe navigation practices in Port Taranaki.
3. The review of the *Navigation and Safety Bylaws for Port Taranaki and its Approaches* was commenced.
4. The Council responded to all pollution and other complaints within four hours of receipt, instigating control, clean up and enforcement procedures where appropriate.
5. The Council administered and implemented the *Taranaki Regional Council Marine Contingency Plan* as agreed with Maritime New Zealand.
6. This involved completing three oil spill equipment maintenance checks and one Maritime New Zealand equipment audit.
7. One two-day practical training exercise and one full-day exercise using the ro-boom equipment were carried out.
8. Training for officers in various roles was undertaken.
9. Appropriate response of the Taranaki Regional Council's Marine Oil Spill Response team to the five minor oil spill incidents at Port Taranaki occurred.

This activity contributed to sustainable, connected, and secure and healthy Taranaki outcomes where the staff preparedness for a potential major oil spill was tested, environmental quality in the Port was maintained, and no maritime navigation and safety incidents occurred.

This report will be forwarded to key interested stakeholders in navigation and safety.



## **Appendix: Report of the Harbourmaster for Port Taranaki 2008/9**

A total of 1560 vessel movements took place during the year, a decrease of 25% on the previous year. The level of offshore oil exploration and production activities decreased during this year.

### **Pilotage**

There are six pilot licences in force for Port Taranaki. One new licence has been obtained following the departure of Captain Gordon Franklin who has retired after 28 years as pilot and deputy harbourmaster. The system of regular peer review has continued. Port Taranaki Limited's programme for the training of pilots and masters for licences and exemptions continues to be approved by Maritime New Zealand.

### **Dynamic Under Keel Clearance (DUKC) System**

The annual audit of DUKC system operations has been undertaken by Captain Mike Pryce in his role as alternate Harbourmaster. This has shown that Port Taranaki Limited is operating the system in line with the procedures agreed with the Council. The system continues to provide the information required to operate Port Taranaki to its optimum safe capability.

### **Port and Harbour Safety Code**

The Safety Management System and associated Risk Assessment System are fully operational with all maritime activities being continuously monitored.

The Safety Management system underwent an interim audit by Maritime New Zealand in March 2009 and was commended.

### **Hydrographic surveys**

Port Taranaki Limited has undertaken regular hydrographic surveys and the results transmitted to LINZ for promulgation to mariners and are also available on the Port Taranaki website. A new edition of chart NZ4432 Plan of Taranaki Roads and Port Taranaki was published by LINZ in July 2008 incorporating all the changes made in and around Port Taranaki since the last new edition in 1997.

### **Pollution control**

Training exercises were undertaken at Port Taranaki with the deployment of the MNZ booms using both Taranaki Regional Council and Port Taranaki Limited staff. Significant experience has also been gained during the Capital Dredging Programme in certain areas of the inner harbour with natural oil seepage being controlled on a continuous basis using harbour boom and dispersant. A regular maintenance programme has continued.

## **Recreational boating**

The number of recreational and small commercial craft utilising the facilities at the Lee Breakwater remains high and facilities are very stretched in busy periods, particularly during the summer period. There has been an increasing number of Personal Water Craft (PWC or jet-skis) and Sea Kayaks using the harbour and each pose their own problems. PWC's are essentially 'go fast' machines and a lot of effort is spent educating owners and operators on the proper speed and conduct close to shore and other craft. Seakayaks are low in the water and not highly visible to other boats and in some circumstances a number of 'near miss' incidents have been reported anecdotally.

## **Swimming Areas**

5 new buoys have been established marking the speed restriction area off Ngamotu beach in an effort to provide further protection to swimmers using this area including those training for triathlons and long distance swimming events

3 new buoys have been established to replace those marking the water ski access lane to Ngamotu Beach. This lane is used by PWC's also and continuing education needs to be undertaken to ensure operators of PWC's understand that the uplifting of the speed limit of 5 knots is only for vessels towing Water Skiers and nothing else

## **Honorary Enforcement Officers**

The Honorary Enforcement Officers (Harbour Wardens) have continued to perform their duties in an efficient manner and I must express my thanks for their assistance in maintaining the high level of compliance and understanding. One meeting has been held (28 May 2009) with the wardens to assist in their training and update their knowledge of safety bylaws and to receive feedback on their concerns and experiences during the year. Navigation/safety issues were raised and discussed at the meeting and actions identified.

## **Search and rescue**

Both the Harbourmaster and Deputy Harbourmaster John Ireland, continue to be gazetted as Marine Search Advisers and to be involved in the Taranaki Marine Search and Rescue Organisation.

## **Harbour Bylaw Review**

The Harbour Bylaw review was initiated in 2008 and work over the next 6 months will lead to this task being completed.

R N Barlow  
**Harbourmaster**

July 2009

