

# Harbours Department Report

## Mike Pryce, Manager

October 1999

### 1. Harbour Navigation Aids

Planning is under way for conversion of Somes Island light to solar power.

Work has started on the repairs to Steeple Rock light. This should be completed within a few weeks, and will include the fitting of a new and more powerful light.

All other navigation lights operated as normal.

### 2. Oil Pollution Activities

Only one oil pollution report was received and no clean up action was required.

### 3. Departmental Activities

- Greg Meikle assisted the Wairarapa Division with water sampling on Lake Wairarapa on Thursday 30 September.
- The workboat *Tiaki Moana* had her hull repainted and two new outboard motors fitted.
- The Manager, Harbours gave a presentation to the New Zealand Coastal Society about the history of Wellington Port on 17 September at Te Papa.
- The Manager, Harbours attended a meeting of the Emergency Services Co-ordination Committee on 28 September.
- The Manager, Harbours attended the final Tory Channel Navigation issues meeting at Picton on 4 October.

### 4. General Events/Information

- The 206 page Final Draft Report of the Pleasure Boat Safety Advisory Group (PBSAG) (of which Manager, Harbour Department, is a member) was received on 29 September and has been forwarded to other harbour masters for their final comments. Other participants of the group have also received copies to permit discussion among group constituents. Final comments are due back to the Maritime Safety Authority by 5 November. A Final Report is to be sent to PBSAG members on 1 December, and the public release of the report is scheduled for 20 December. For the information of Councillors, a brief summary of this draft report is attached.

- A copy of the 1999 Review of the New Zealand Marine Oil Spill Response Strategy Invitation to Comment was received on 30 September, with comments due back to MSA by 12 November, 1999.

The major changes and additions to the previous 1996 document are:

- Clear recognition that, despite our best efforts, New Zealand can not be totally protected from the effects of an oil spill;
- More emphasis on the role international assistance will play in proving response capability greater than that which New Zealand hold domestically;
- A greater recognition of the role of prevention of oil spills;
- A change to the way risk of an oil spill is expressed in the Strategy's Aim;
- A greater reference to public expectations;
- A clearer explanation of the means by which spill response control can escalate from one response tier to the next, and who has responsibility for deciding that escalation is necessary;
- A clearer explanation of the need for Command and Control and how it will be implemented in oil spill response;
- Reference to the role and value of salvage in preventing or minimising oil spills;
- An explanation of the civil liability and compensation regimes that apply to the costs created by marine oil spills;
- A recognition that marine oil spill emergency response uses very complex and technical language, and that the MSA should look to proving more simple explanations of what it does and why, to assist public understanding and acceptance of the risks being managed.
- An explanation of the application of Net Environmental Benefit to oil spill response.

These changes are improvements to the previous Strategy and we shall be responding with a letter of support.

- The frigate *H.M.N. Z.S. Wellington* made her last visit to the port between 23 and 28 September. She returned to Devonport, Auckland to lay up and will be decommissioned early in 2000.
- The Dutch cargo ship *Edamgracht* loaded Army equipment in Wellington on 29 and 30 September destined for use by New Zealand soldiers in East Timor.
- The former Tranz Rail fast-ferry *Condor 10* sailed from Wellington on 9 September to provide an emergency relief for a broken down Bass Strait ferry. On completion of this work, *Condor 10* arrived at Hobart on 25 September to lay up.

## A Brief Summary of the Deliberations of the Pleasure Boat Safety Advisory Group

The Advisory Group was set up to answer this question:

### Is there a boating safety problem in New Zealand?

If so,

- What is the problem?, and
- What are the options for addressing the problem?

The Group investigated the current recreational boating safety situation in New Zealand, looked overseas for possible future trends and considered how a range of management options might impact on recreational boating safety. The Group was mindful of safety at reasonable cost, including the need to carefully weigh up any possible new compliance costs against the relative size of the problem.

Accident analysis indicated two problem areas:

- **Lack of safety equipment** – either it was not on the boat, or it was not used when needed (predominantly lifejackets, but also distress communication).
- **Insufficient operator knowledge** – most often poor judgement of the weather or sea conditions, inaccurate assessment of a boat's ability to cope with rough sea conditions, and taking inappropriate action when events turned risky.

Most fatal accidents occurred from vessels less than 8 metres.

The Group developed, and then consulted widely with the recreational boating community on nine interim recommendations. Almost, 10,000 people made their opinions known.

There was support for:

- **Boaters needing to know more about boating safety**, but a reluctance to accept this as a compulsory requirement.
- **Boaters being required to carry safety equipment** such as life jackets and distress communication.

This feedback, along with analytical tools such as a cost benefit analysis was used to refine the options and to formulate *draft recommendations* for implementation. It is recommended that:

- **MSA establish a formal network of groups involved in promoting boating safety education** so that regional promotions are nationally consistent and that duplication of effort is avoided.

It is additionally recommended that this national network undertake to develop the following topics as the subject of national safety awareness campaigns.

- Appropriate operating conditions for small vessels
  - Care and maintenance of boats and boating equipment
  - Vessel design issues relating to flotation and stability
  - Effect of alcohol when boating
- **MSA lobby central government for funding to support an increased level of boating safety education** which should include both public awareness and increased uptake of boating education courses. It was recommended that targets to measure the effectiveness of this strategy be set, and that if they are not met over a five year period, that MSA again consider a Maritime Rule to require compulsory boating education for all vessel operators.
  - **MSA develop a Maritime Rule which requires all vessels to carry sufficient personal flotation devices (PFD) for all persons on board, and that PFDs should be work in at least the following situations:**
    - When operating dinghies less than 4m and all types of PWC, kayak, and canoe
    - In all vessels crossing river bars
    - And in other situations which the skipper deems necessary, such as in rough sea conditions, or by non-swimmers
  - **MSA and Regional Councils develop the Launch warden network** into a nationally consistent and effective system.
  - **MSA oversee improvements in the type of recreational boating safety data collected and the way that information is analysed** to provide more useful information on the causes of boating accidents
  - **Local Government increase enforcement** of existing boating regulations
  - **MSA and Local Government monitor the effect of existing legislation on the management of Personal Water Craft**, including the use of district and coastal plans to separate boating activities to reduce conflict.
  - **Keep a watching brief on the likely impact and need for a boat identification and registration system**, particularly noting activities around the Americas Cup Regatta in Auckland.

For greater detail or more information, please refer to the report itself, in particular the Executive Summary.

These *draft recommendations* are from the Pleasure Boat Safety Advisory Group, and this summary is part of the consultation process.

Please provide feedback to one of the members of the Group or directly to the Group Secretary, Lindsay Sturt at Maritime Safety Authority, P O Box 27006, Wellington.  
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