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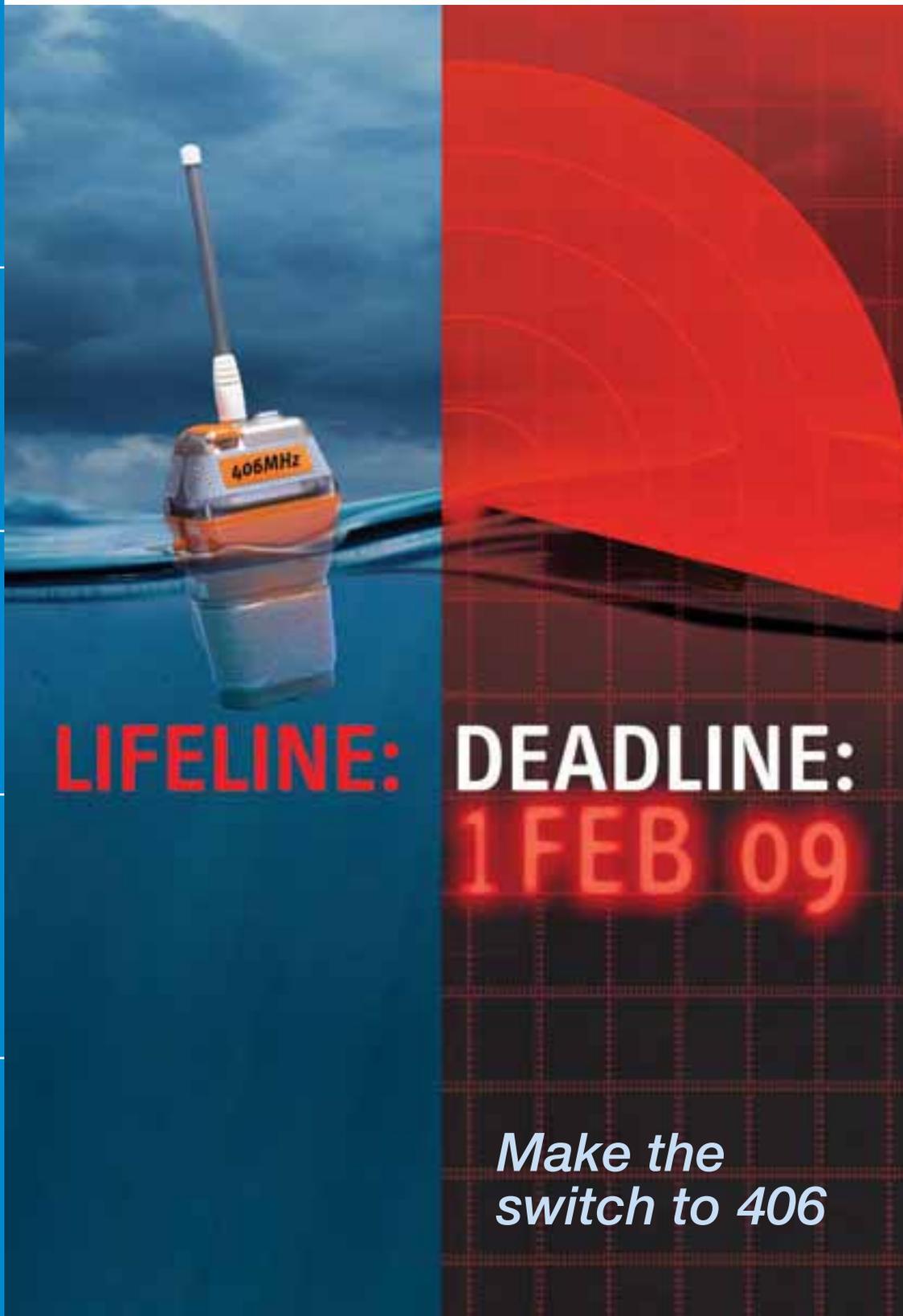
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**LIFELINE: DEADLINE:**  
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*Make the  
switch to 406*

# SAFE SEAS CLEAN SEAS

With the end of the year in sight, it's timely to reflect on developments over the last year, and look ahead to some of the work planned by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) in 2009.

Government approval to increase the Marine Safety Charge paid by most commercial vessel operators and lift seafarer licensing and vessel registration rates after many years without change, represents a significant step for MNZ. While we acknowledge no-one likes facing increased charges, the reality was that the fees and charges being collected by MNZ – some of which had not been altered for 18 years – were no longer adequate to cover the cost of providing various critical safety services to the maritime industry (see fuller story in this issue).

As always, it has been disappointing and saddening to see numerous fatalities for the year so far across the maritime sector. It is a sobering reminder of the need for all of us to take responsibility for safety on the water – and of the ongoing commitment and leadership MNZ needs to show in continuing to improve maritime safety.

On a more positive note, the review of the Safe Ship Management (SSM) system is making good progress. The creation of a new general manager position with responsibility for SSM and the recent appointments of a technical advisor to assist SSM surveyors and a technical trainer (see story this issue) to help operators better understand the system is an exciting step. However, it's clear we still have some work ahead of us, so SSM will continue to be a priority for 2009.

MNZ will also be continuing its range of work across other areas next year. This includes an increased focus on seafarer licensing and qualifications, and ongoing reviews of maritime rules.

Our "Stay on Top with Communications Equipment" television commercials will continue to screen over the summer. These are part of our public awareness campaign aimed at recreational boaters. Together with our recreational boating safety partners around the country, we will continue to push the four key messages: wear your lifejacket, carry at least two reliable forms of communication, check the weather before you go out, and avoid alcohol.

On behalf of all of us at MNZ, I wish everyone a safe, happy and relaxing holiday season.

**Catherine Taylor**  
Director of Maritime  
New Zealand



## SEARCH AND RESCUE

# "Make the

A critically injured hunter rescued after activating his 406 Megahertz (MHz) emergency locator beacon says he is "living testament" to the effectiveness of the life-saving device.

Mosgiel hunter John Adams was deer-stalking alone in the Nitz Creek area of Fiordland in April when he slipped and fell, landing chest first onto a log, cracking several ribs and puncturing a lung.

"Initially I thought things weren't too bad, and with a spell and a drink, I would be okay, but I had severe pain in the left side of my chest and ribs. After a spell of 30 minutes, I tried to put my pack on and descend to the valley floor...it was at that stage I started having breathing problems and also blood in my urine, and realised for the first time that I was in serious trouble."

Unbeknown to John, his lungs had begun filling with blood from the injury, which if left untreated, would be fatal.

"Even though it was a lovely warm day, my body was beginning to shiver and shake, and breathing was becoming increasingly difficult. I knew my condition was fast deteriorating."

Lighting a fire to keep himself warm and help alert rescuers, John activated his new 406 MHz personal locator beacon – a recent gift from his daughters.

"As I sat there watching the (beacon) strobe light...for the first time in my life after many years of hunting alone, I felt truly alone, and the only thing between me and my maker was that little beacon..."

Meanwhile, hundreds of kilometres away in Wellington, John's beacon signal was being detected by a team of Search and Rescue Officers at the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ), who swung into action and began a rescue mission.

Thanks to the beacon's registration details being up to date, a call to John's wife confirmed his location and the fact that the experienced bushman would only set off his beacon if in real trouble. RCCNZ then tasked Te Anau's Southern Lakes helicopters to fly to the area and begin a search, using direction-finding equipment to home in on the beacon's signal.

"When I heard the noise of the (rescue) chopper coming up the valley, and hovering directly above me, it's a feeling I will never forget," John says. "When Frank (the helicopter winchman) came down through the canopy, words cannot express how I felt."

John was then flown to hospital, where it was revealed he had three broken ribs and a badly



“John’s story not only highlights the value of carrying an emergency beacon, but is also a critical reminder of the need ... to make the switch to the newer 406 MHz type before February 2009.”

COVER STORY



# switch to 406”

punctured lung. He was operated on immediately, and his condition was successfully stabilised.

“The surgeon told me how lucky I was, saying that the reason I could not breathe was that the lung cavity was filling with blood, causing me to slowly suffocate – and that I would have died in the next 24 hours without treatment.”

John says without the “actions and bravery” of his rescuers, and the aid of the beacon, he was “a goner for sure”.

RCCNZ’s Group Manager, Nigel Clifford, says John is one of many people whose lives have been saved thanks to carrying the beacons.

“John’s story not only highlights the value of carrying an emergency beacon, but is also a critical reminder of the need for people with older style beacons which operate on the 121.5 frequency to make the switch to the newer 406 MHz type before February 2009. This is because beacons on the 121.5 MHz frequency will no longer be detected by international satellite systems from that date.”

Nigel says the beauty of the 406 MHz beacon is that it can usually be picked up within minutes, depending on geography and other factors, which means that a rescue plan can be developed more quickly.

“The 406 MHz variety of beacon has several major advantages over the old technology, in much the same way that new digital electronic equipment is superior to the old analogue gear. This includes a generally quicker detection time, more accurate positional data and the ability to link each beacon’s unique identification number to a registered owner.

“A key point is that if the 406 MHz beacon is registered with us and the ownership details are kept up to date – just like in John’s case – we can make contact with family or friends and gather important information about the beacon’s owner, which can greatly assist us in planning a rescue mission. Beacon registration doesn’t cost a thing and simply involves getting in touch with us and filling out a registration form,” Nigel says.

“The other big advantage of the 406 MHz beacon is that if it is a model fitted with GPS, this provides rescuers with even more accurate positional information which can greatly assist us in a search.”

Nigel says a key reason for the phasing out of the old 121.5 MHz beacons is because the frequency is very prone to interference, with about 90 per cent of the beacon alerts false alarms. This can put a strain on resources and take up valuable time that is better spent on genuine search and rescue activity.

However, he says it is also essential that the old beacons be disposed of properly.

“It’s simply not enough to just throw out your old beacon – the battery needs to be removed and the beacon deactivated – otherwise this can result in

the beacon remaining active, and RCCNZ having to waste valuable time tracking it down.

**More information on emergency beacons is available from: [beacons.org.nz](http://beacons.org.nz) or by contacting RCCNZ on freephone 0800 406 111 or 0508 406 111.**

## What do I do with my old 121.5 or 243 MHz beacon?

From 1 February 2009, old style 121.5 MHz and 243 MHz frequency emergency locator beacons will no longer be detected by satellite. This means if you have not replaced your beacon with the newer 406 MHz variety, we will not be able to rescue you.

- It’s important to dispose of your old 121.5 or 243 MHz emergency beacon properly. If you don’t, it could still be accidentally activated, causing an unnecessary search and rescue operation.
- Old beacons need to have their battery disconnected and then be disposed of in accordance with local regulations, as many contain hazardous materials.
- You can dispose of your old beacon by:
  - contacting the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) on 0800 406 111 to find out your nearest beacon disposal centre, or by sending it in to RCCNZ
  - handing it in to your nearest Police station
  - taking it in to the beacon retailer when you purchase your 406 MHz beacon
  - visiting your local beacon retailer and handing it in for disposal. For a list of suppliers who can help dispose of your old beacon safely, visit: [www.beacons.org.nz](http://www.beacons.org.nz). Some of these suppliers may also offer trade-in deals.
- DO NOT THROW YOUR OLD BEACON AWAY – this may lead to a helicopter search of your nearest landfill!
- Finally, REMEMBER to register your new 406 MHz emergency beacon with RCCNZ. This is FREE and provides rescue agencies with critical information which may help to save your life in the event of an emergency.



## Live exercise tests search and rescue response

Organisers of a live search and rescue exercise (SAREX) held in the Wellington Harbour area recently say the operation was a valuable experience for everyone involved in marine safety.

The SAREX involved more than 100 search and rescue responders who sprang into action after being told a large vessel had foundered near Worsler Bay.

The Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) coordinated the SAREX, which also involved Police, Coastguard, Ambulance, Wellington Airport, Centreport, Wellington Harbourmaster, Strait Shipping and rescue helicopter services.

The exercise aimed to test search and rescue agencies' preparation for a marine emergency anywhere in New Zealand waters, involving any type of large vessel.

The scenario involved helicopters and rescue boats converging on the scene to "rescue" injured passengers from the "stricken" vessel and from the water.

RCCNZ Training Manager Rodney Bracefield said the exercise had taken more than a year to organise and could not have happened without the support of many different organisations.

"The SAREX marks the first time a large-scale live exercise has been held in more than a decade, and the first time one has been run since RCCNZ was established in 2004. A huge thank you goes to all who were involved and who supported the exercise. In particular, we acknowledge the tremendous contribution made by Strait Shipping, without whose support the exercise would not have been possible."

He said RCCNZ aimed to hold similar exercises annually.



Search and rescue agencies in Wellington were given a valuable test during a recent live exercise. Photo: Courtesy Life Flight Trust.

## MNZ role in major security exercise

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) was among agencies to take part in one of the country's most significant multi-agency and multi-national maritime exercises recently.

During the week of 12-19 September, New Zealand hosted Exercise Maru, an international Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Exercise. The PSI is an international initiative under which participating countries cooperate, in accordance with international law, to prevent and disrupt illicit shipments of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials.



A boarding party prepares to intercept a vessel carrying components of "weapons of mass destruction" as part of Exercise Maru. Photo: Courtesy Royal New Zealand Airforce.

MNZ General Manager of Security, Renny Vandervelde, said the exercise had been a valuable experience for the MNZ staff who took part.

"This is the first time New Zealand has hosted a PSI exercise and, although not without its moments, the exercise coordinators received much praise for the planning and conduct of a very detailed and challenging exercise. Exercise Maru was widely considered to have been valuable in terms of progressing the aims of the PSI, and in building international links that will assist us when we are required to deal with a live proliferation event."

Almost 2 years in the planning, and led by the New Zealand Customs Service, the Auckland-based exercise saw delegates (including law enforcement, coast guard and military officers) from more than 20 countries participate in a live exercise, a tabletop exercise and plenary discussions. Ten New Zealand agencies, including MNZ, the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), Ports of Auckland, Police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade took part.

Two members from MNZ's Maritime Security Team represented the organisation in the exercise, one in the tabletop exercise response team, and the other as a Liaison Officer in Exercise Control.



# Changes to maritime fees and charges

New charges for providing essential safety services and other activities which benefit the maritime sector have been introduced, following Government approval of changes to the marine safety charge (MSC), ship registration and seafarer licensing rates.

Cabinet has given approval to Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) to change the way it collects the MSC from 1 December 2008, which apart from an adjustment for foreign vessels in 2005, has not been updated since its introduction in 1990. In most, but not all cases, this will mean an increase in the MSC paid by vessel operators. Similarly, MNZ's fees for seafarer licensing and ship registration have remained at current levels for the last 8 years, so have also been increased as of 1 November 2008.

"The revenue obtained through the MSC is used by MNZ to fund a wide range of maritime safety, monitoring and compliance services that benefit the maritime sector. This includes the maintenance of important services critical to vessel safety, such as aids to navigation, the distress radio network, investigation of maritime accidents, oversight of the Safe Ship Management system, and improving safety education and awareness," says MNZ General Manager of Corporate Services, Trevor Coad.

"Because the MSC has remained unchanged for almost 20 years, and registration and licensing fees unchanged for almost 10 years, they no longer take into account the true cost of MNZ providing these important services to the maritime sector."

Introduction of the new charges follows a lengthy consultation period with industry, which began in December 2007 with the release of a discussion document outlining the proposed changes. Feedback from industry groups and other representatives from the maritime sector was also considered by MNZ.

Seafarer licensing and ship registration rates were also increased on 1 November. Mr Coad says while individual fees vary depending on the type of documentation required, increases to both rates will be capped at maximum of 100 per cent for the 2008/09 year and capped at 20 per cent for the 2009/10 year.

All the increases are being phased in over a 2-year period.

"The intent of the new charges is to more fairly reflect the costs faced by MNZ to provide these safety-related services to the industry, not to create hardship for vessel operators. It also aims to address some of the inconsistencies created by the previous MSC structure, which was based on a 'one size fits all' approach and did not take into account the true carrying capacity of different vessels, or the higher risks and benefits that particular types of vessel activity generate."

**More detailed information about the new charges is available at: [www.maritimenz.govt.nz](http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz)**

## Clarification of passenger and charter vessel charges

Some commercial vessel operators are unsure of how the new Marine Safety Charge (MSC) – which came into effect on 1 December 2008 – and some other MNZ fees may apply to them.

### Passenger vessels

New Zealand charter boats and smaller passenger vessels within the Safe Ship Management (SSM) system, which carry fewer than 12 passengers, are less than 45m in length, and which do not proceed beyond restricted limits or embark on an international voyage, are NOT classed as passenger vessels under the new MSC rates. These vessels instead fall under the "other" category in the MSC regulations as per the table below. The "passenger ship" category in the MSC is for large passenger ships which do not fall under SSM.

Any commercial ship or commercial river raft not included in any other category	Greater of –	Greater of –
	a) \$18.25 multiplied by the overall length of the ship in metres	a) \$18.75 multiplied by the overall length of the ship in metres
	b) \$5.47 per unit of gross tonnage of the ship	b) \$5.63 per unit of gross tonnage of the ship

### Seafarer licensing

The new charges are payable when seafarers apply for a new licence or certificate, or when they seek to renew or revalidate their license or certificate. The new fee schedule for licenses is being phased in over a 2-year period, with the first part-increase starting from 1 November 2008, and a second part-increase from 1 July next year.

Those applying for recognition of foreign non-STCW certificates will be assessed for the issue of the equivalent New Zealand certificate. They will therefore pay the same fee for the issue of that New Zealand maritime document as set out in the relevant schedule of the regulations.



# Safe Ship

## MANAGEMENT REVIEW

### New roles support SSM delivery

Safe Ship Management (SSM) company surveyors and vessel operators are to receive additional support with the creation of two new specialist roles by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ).

MNZ Manager of Safety Management Systems, Arthur Jobard, says the decision to create the new roles of Technical Advisor Marine Surveying, and Technical Trainer, has arisen out of MNZ's ongoing review of the SSM system.

"The role of the Technical Advisor is to provide support and mentoring for SSM surveyors in their survey work on board vessels, with the aim being to help ensure consistency of standards across the board. Meanwhile, the Technical Trainer's role is purely educational and focuses on helping to improve all commercial operators' understanding of the SSM system and how they can get the best out of it," Arthur says.

The Technical Advisor's role has been filled by former MNZ Lyttelton Maritime Safety Inspector and career mariner Ken Wyatt, and the Technical Trainer's role by experienced commercial fisherman and industry safety advocate Darren Guard.

Says Ken: "I'm looking forward to the opportunity to work alongside SSM surveyors, boat builders and vessel owners as part of MNZ's commitment to ongoing improvement of the SSM system. The new role provides an opportunity to work right across the industry and in ports and marinas all over the country, and hopefully to make a positive difference by improving safety across the board."

Meanwhile, Darren believes his experience at the "coal face" as a vessel operator and fishing company director will stand him in good stead to help others better understand and get the best out of the SSM system.

"With my background I understand the pressures of running a small vessel and how hard it can be to balance viability with

compliance. But because there's no enforcement part to my new role, people don't need to be nervous, as this is about us helping them," he says.

A key part of Darren's role will be to run a series of workshops round the country on health and safety and SSM manual customisation, so that vessel operators can work out how to make the system work most effectively for them. Some workshops have already begun and will continue from January next year.

"I hope to be able to help as many people as I can to better understand the system and make it easy."



Former MNZ Lyttelton Maritime Safety Inspector and career mariner Ken Wyatt (left) is MNZ's new Technical Advisor Marine Surveying, while experienced commercial fisherman and industry safety advocate Darren Guard is MNZ's new Technical Trainer.

### Increased focus on safe operational plans

As part of its ongoing review of safety management systems, Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) is turning its attention to safe operational plans which cover a number of types of commercial vessels.

While the Safe Ship Management (SSM) system provides safety management plans tailored specifically to individual commercial vessels, safe operational plans (SOPs) cover an operator who may be operating a number of vessels. The SOPs broadly cover jetboats and rafts carrying passengers on rivers, under 6m fishing boats, and under 6m dive boats.

General Manager Maritime Safety Systems, Sharyn Forsyth, says the focus on SOPs is timely as MNZ moves ahead with its review of the SSM system.

"With the huge amount of work that is going into reviewing SSM, it's appropriate that we also turn our attention to ensuring that the SOPs are consistent with the vision we have for the SSM system," Sharyn says.



# Certification process strengthened

Vessel operators applying for or renewing SSM certificates are being urged to factor in adequate time for their new certification to be completed.

The Director of Maritime MNZ issues all Safe Ship Management (SSM) certificates, following a review of documentation forwarded to it by a vessel operator's SSM company upon completion of surveys and audits. "This means operators need to factor in adequate time for all requirements to be met, and their SSM documentation to be processed and signed off by MNZ," says General Manager Maritime Safety Systems, Sharyn Forsyth.

"Operators are also reminded that as of 1 September 2008, all applicants for SSM certificates, or those who oversee SSM operations, are required to undergo fit and proper person checks to ensure they are a suitable person to undertake this responsibility. This is similar to the checks currently undertaken of applicants for seafarer licences. Body corporates making applications must also identify exactly who will exercise control over the privileges of the SSM certificate in their application," Sharyn says.

"Depending on the complexity of the application and the type of documentation being sought, the process from initiation to issue of the certificate can sometimes take a considerable amount of time. This will generally include successfully completing vessel survey and audit requirements, along with time for SSM companies and MNZ to check all documentation for compliance. Operators therefore need to have realistic expectations and should allow plenty of time within which to renew or apply for the necessary maritime documents.

"There have been a number of recent occasions where operators seeking SSM documentation have expected their applications to be processed within a few days, which is simply not reasonable or realistic given the extensive nature of the checks that are required to be completed," Sharyn says.

"The control of issue of SSM certificates is perhaps the most essential step to ensure that vessels are safe and that operators are well-placed to maintain that level of safety in their shipboard operations. If we can be assured that everyone is starting with their boats safe, and with clear expectations as to how the operation will be carried out in a safe and effective manner, we should see reductions in accidents and injuries over time."

Says Sharyn: "MNZ is also taking a firmer line with operators seeking exemptions from holding an SSM certificate, which will in future only be granted where exceptional circumstances can be proved. We are therefore urging those operators who know their certificates are going to expire to ensure they plan well ahead, because they cannot operate without a valid SSM certificate. This in particular applies to those needing to book their vessels in for out of water surveys, as there is currently pressure on slipway availability in many areas."

"This includes having clear standards that are consistently followed by operators, having competent oversight of the system and ensuring that operators are aware of their roles and responsibilities. It's also important there is an independent audit process and that there is consistent monitoring and compliance within the system."

Under the SOP system, operators are also required to be inspected and audited by "Authorised Persons" rather than SSM companies, to ensure they are compliant with safety standards. Authorised persons operate under delegation from the Director of MNZ and act on her behalf. (Jetboats and rafts are treated slightly differently, with oversight in Queenstown falling to the Harbourmaster, while for the rest of New Zealand,

this duty falls to MNZ employees). Authorisation for diving and fishing activities falls to industry representatives appointed by the Director of MNZ.

"MNZ has been working with the various authorised persons to ensure that the principles and vision for safety management systems, initially developed through the review of SSM, is applied consistently across the SOP system as well," Sharyn says. "We will be continuing to work with these authorised people and with the wider industry sectors to ensure everyone is aware of what they need to do to continue to operate safely and in compliance with the regulatory requirements."

# NZ's national oil spill response commanders

What do a former Navy explosives expert and an ex-marine advisor in the Middle East have in common?

They are among the members of Maritime New Zealand's (MNZ) six-strong National On-Scene Commanders (NOSC) team, which is set up to lead and coordinate the response to any large-scale oil spill within New Zealand's waters. The team is supported by MNZ's Marine Pollution Response Service (MPRS), which provides leadership and overall coordination of oil spill response training in New Zealand.

Members of the team, who are appointed by the Director of MNZ, have a wide range of statutory powers, and are the only people with the authority to declare a "Tier 3" national level response to an oil spill. This includes any large spill in New Zealand waters out to the 200 mile limit of the exclusive economic zone. Smaller, more localised "Tier 2" spills are handled by local territorial authorities.

"The six NOSC's – comprising MNZ and regional council employees – are chosen for their extensive experience, expertise and ability across the maritime sector," says MPRS Manager of Planning and Training, Rob Service, also one of the commanders.

"Among the more significant spills the team members have been involved in include the **Dong Won 529**, the **Jody F Millennium** and the **Tai Ping**," Rob says. "Where called upon, we also provide support in other countries' spill responses, such as the grounding of the **Pasha Bulker** off the Australian Coast in June 2007."

## Ian Niblock

Ian's sea-going career began in the 1970s as an apprentice pilot in Liverpool. He has sailed on a range of vessels, including general cargo, bulk carriers, very large crude carriers and refrigerated container ships. He obtained his Master Foreign Going certificate in New Zealand in 1988 and was employed as a harbour pilot at Tauranga, where he cleaned up his first marine oil spill during the same year.

Currently Regional Harbourmaster for Northland Regional Council, Ian has retained his link to the national response system as a member of the NOSC team. He has responded to a diverse range of maritime incidents, including numerous marine oil spills in the Northland area.

## Alex van Wijngaarden

Alex has been Marlborough's Harbourmaster since 1994 after 25 years at sea. During his sea-going career, he served in a variety of roles on tankers, refrigerated cargo, general cargo, passenger and container ships in a number of companies and gained his first command at age 27.



(From left to right) Nick Quinn, Ian Niblock, Alex van Wijngaarden, John Dickinson, Neil Rowarth and Rob Service make up the National On-Scene Commander's team, set up to coordinate the response to any major oil spill in New Zealand waters.

Alex has been a regional On-Scene Commander for Marlborough since 1995 and an alternate National On-Scene Commander since 1996. In that time he has been involved in various spill response operations, including the **Dong Won 529**, **Jodie F Millennium** and **Sea Fresh**.

## Nick Quinn

Nick joined MPRS in 2004 after a 22 year career in the Royal New Zealand Navy. His specialist area was as a Mine Clearance Diving Officer, with 14 years spent focusing on explosives operations, demolitions and salvage diving – including a 10 year stint with the New Zealand national bomb team.

He was also seconded to the Royal Malaysian Navy, spent service time with the Royal Australian Navy, Royal Navy and United States Navy and commanded several New Zealand ships. Nick completed his career in the rank of Commander.

## Neil Rowarth

Neil joined MPRS in 2000, and is currently its Operations Manager. His career has been extremely varied, ranging from non-destructive metal testing in Queensland to captaining a dive boat in the Pacific.

After 8 years at sea, Neil joined the Auckland Harbourmaster's team where oil spill response and planning was one of his key responsibilities. During the last 8 years, Neil has been actively involved in all areas of MPRS including, planning, training and exercising.

## Rob Service

Rob joined MPRS 8 years ago as its Training and Exercise Co-ordinator, after several years with the Department of Conservation (DoC) as Auckland Area Manager. The DoC role included a significant maritime element with responsibility for marine reserves, the Inner Hauraki Gulf Islands, and a boats operation servicing the Gulf Islands and beyond.

Rob has also worked with the New Zealand Fire Service and had a parallel part-time 25-year career in the New Zealand Army.

## John Dickinson

John began his maritime career at 16 with the British Merchant Navy. After transferring and serving on passenger ships and refrigerated cargo ships trading to New Zealand John went on to work on various international cargo and container ships. His experience has also included stints on the high speed Boeing Jetfoil service from London to Belgium, as a master on supply ships and oil well test/flare vessels in the Persian Gulf, and as a "Marine Advisor" on gas projects in the Middle East.

John has been Deputy Harbourmaster in Wellington and Harbourmaster in Tauranga and he now heads up MNZ's licensing team and is its dangerous goods adviser.





# Seabird mitigation measures and vessel stability

Photo: Courtesy of John Cleal

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) is among agencies currently working to develop alternative measures to mitigate the risk of seabird bycatch during commercial fishing operations.

The move follows recent debate over offal retention on board trawlers and the potential impact of this on vessel stability.

An Initial Position Paper on seabird mitigation methods for trawler and longline vessels was circulated by the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) last year, in response to concerns over seabirds being caught or killed when attracted by the bait, offal or trimmings from fishing vessels.

The paper proposed a set of measures for mitigating seabird bycatch, including retaining offal and fish during line setting and hauling on longline vessels and during shooting and hauling on trawl vessels.

A number of submissions were made to MFish in November 2007, raising concerns over the impact on safety the measures could have, particularly in relation to the requirement to retain offal and fish on board during processing.

Potential safety issues arising from this included the impact on vessel stability, slippery decks and the lack of room on vessels under 28 metres.

To overcome potential safety issues, MNZ recommended an exemption clause be introduced into the Gazette Notice and MFish agreed that this was necessary to ensure vessel and crew safety.

MNZ worked with MFish and vessel operators in a series of workshops to develop a process and criteria for assessing and granting exemptions for cases when a vessel's safety would have been compromised.

In the lead up to the scheduled implementation date, it became clear this would not be possible within the timeframe available, and the Minister of Fisheries agreed to revoke the Gazette Notice to allow for further work to be undertaken.

The Minister of Fisheries has now established working groups involving MFish, MNZ, industry and environmental groups, charged with establishing effective alternative measures to mitigate the risk of seabird bycatch, including measures to manage offal and discards.

For vessels larger than 28 metres, the measures will initially revolve around an extension of the existing Vessel Management Plan regime to cover the discharge of offal and fish.

For vessels smaller than 28 metres, regional workshops are to be held to assess the risks involved and identify options to safely meet the targets set by the measures.

MNZ General Manager Maritime Safety Systems Sharyn Forsyth says while MNZ understands the need to address the issue of seabird bycatch, safety is always the highest priority.

"Without an exemption process in place, the measures had the potential to put fishermen's lives at risk."

Sharyn says meetings with operators have shown they are very happy to work with MFish to address issues arising out of the fishing industry.

"We're pleased to be working alongside MFish and the industry towards an outcome that is good for fishermen and seabirds."



MNZ is taking the lead with the support of the river boarding and sledging industry to improve safety standards for the popular tourism activity.

## Improving river safety

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) is taking a lead to improve safety in river boarding and river sledging activities, with the development of safety guidelines and additional safety training for commercial operators.

River boarding, sledging, surfing or “hydro-speeding” involves participants riding a flotation board down white-water rivers, with commercial tourism operators running trips on several New Zealand rivers.

MNZ Safety Auditor Colin Sonneveld says the developments are part of an industry-wide safety review that has been undertaken following the investigation into the death of English tourist Emily Jordan while river boarding on the Kawarau River in Queenstown on 29 April 2008.

“As part of the review, safety guidelines are being developed in consultation with industry, including commercial operators and guides, Tourism Industry Association, Qualmark and Water Safety New Zealand. The safety guidelines aim to improve safety for river boarding and river sledging operations, and help build consistency throughout the industry.”

Colin says the draft safety guidelines have been circulated to industry and are currently being finalised. It is hoped they will be in place by the end of 2008.

Meanwhile, a river rescue training workshop facilitated by the New Zealand Rafting Association and sponsored by MNZ for river boarding and sledging operators was held in Queenstown during November.

About 30 people took part in the workshop, which saw those involved in the river boarding and sledging community gaining valuable rescue training from some of the country’s top white water rafting experts.

The course involved on-water, scenario-based training, similar to which the rafting association facilitates for its members on both north and south islands each year. However, the workshop marked the first time such large-scale training has been undertaken by the river boarding or sledging community.

Colin says it is good to see industry working with MNZ to raise safety standards. It was also pleasing to see the river boarding and river rafting communities coming together to share their rescue knowledge.

“River boarding and river sledging are a relatively under-represented activity in New Zealand, but there have been commercial trips since 1989 on both islands. There are only a few operators on each island and up until now there have not been any formal guidelines, although each operation has had its own internal training system and operating plans.

“Tapping into the expertise held by the rafting industry – which is comparatively far more established – is a good way to build up rescue knowledge and skills within the river boarding community.”

### River boarding – what is it?

Also known as river surfing and river sledging – and in Europe as “hydro-speeding” – river boarding participants don flippers, wetsuit, buoyancy aid and helmet and propel themselves down white water rivers, using their board or sledge as a flotation device.

In New Zealand, the boards used on larger volume South Island rivers are ocean wave-riding body boards. On shallower North Island rivers, sledges are used, which are made of hard plastic.

The activity originated in Europe in the 1970s using hydro-speeds – a foam version of a sledge.

Commercial river boarding and sledging trips commenced in New Zealand in 1989, and there are operators currently running these activities in Queenstown, Rotorua and Taranaki.



## International role for MPRS manager

As nations around the globe celebrated World Maritime Day recently, there was an added bonus for Maritime New Zealand (MNZ), with the appointment Nick Quinn to chair one of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) important technical working groups.

In a first for New Zealand, Nick, who heads MNZ's Marine Pollution Response Service (MPRS) in Te Atatu, was elected chair of the IMO's Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response/Hazardous Noxious Substances Technical Group.

A previous Vice Chairman of this important working group, the group recognised Nick "as a great source of knowledge on issues related to oil spill preparedness and response and welcomed him in his new role as Chairman".

New Zealand has been an active member of the IMO since 1960 and is currently involved in various initiatives aimed at reducing the global environmental impact of shipping activity.



MPRS General Manager Nick Quinn has been elected chair of the IMO's Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response/Hazardous Noxious Substances Technical Working Group.

## Conservation award nomination

Restoration work on Southland's historic Waipapa Point lighthouse has earned Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) nomination for a conservation award.

MNZ Lighthouse Engineer Jim Foye said the nomination, made by the Southland Department of Conservation (DoC), recognised the work that MNZ and the local community had put into preserving the lighthouse, which was subject to damage from vandals and extreme weather.

"MNZ recognises the importance of the lighthouse to the local community and is continuing to work with agencies such as DoC, the Historic Places Trust and community groups to ensure the integrity of the structure is preserved."



Built in 1883 after the **SS Tararua** shipwreck claimed 131 lives, the lighthouse was manned until 1974, but is now run automatically.

MNZ has been nominated for a conservation award for its efforts alongside the Southland community to preserve the Waipapa Point lighthouse.

## Puysegur radio upgrade

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) is to upgrade equipment at the Puysegur maritime radio site located on Wednesday Peak in Fiordland National Park next year.

The Puysegur maritime site was commissioned in 1998, and the 2009 upgrade includes the radio equipment, linking equipment and antenna system.

MNZ Engineer Jim Foye says the key drivers for the upgrade are the age of the equipment and the opportunity to install more energy efficient radios to improve the reliability of the site.



An upgrade is planned for radio equipment at the Puysegur maritime radio site in Fiordland National Park next year.



# Boating education award

The outstanding efforts of Invercargill safe boating educator Tom Sawyer have been recognised in an award presented by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ).

MNZ General Manager of Strategy and Communications, Lindsay Sturt, recently handed over the award during the annual Coastguard Boating Education Awards in Auckland.

“The award is well-deserved and recognises the outstanding contribution Tom has made to recreational boating education in the far south,” Lindsay says. “Whenever there is a boat show in Invercargill, almost every visitor is approached and firmly ‘persuaded’ by Tom that they need to attend one of his coastguard education courses. Indeed, without his work over many, many years, the waters of Foveaux Strait would have exposed many boaties there to much higher risk.”

Lindsay says Tom’s efforts do not stop with education in the classroom – as a captain on the *Spirit of New Zealand*, he teaches young people the practical skills of being at sea. “Tom’s reputation also extends from the helm to the galley, where he regularly prepares dinner for the 50 people on board. There is never a shortage of food on board with Tom, who always manages to ‘persuade’ the locals to ‘donate’ much of the produce that goes on board.

“At Maritime New Zealand we know the importance of education and safety awareness and the part it plays in keeping people safe on the water. Through the efforts of

committed and hard-working people like Tom, this work is continuing in every corner of the country from Invercargill to Kaitiāia. Well done Tom.”



The outstanding efforts of Invercargill safe boating educator Tom Sawyer have been recognised in an award presented by MNZ.

## Feedback

Your feedback and ideas on *Safe Seas Clean Seas* are very welcome.

If you’d like a particular topic covered in our next edition, then please contact the publications team by email:

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or phone **0508 22 55 22**.



From 1 January  
to 27 November 2008

# 21

## MARITIME FATALITIES 2008

From 1 January to 27 November 2008, there were **21** fatalities – **eight** in the **commercial sector** and **13** in the **recreational sector**.



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