

SAFESEAS CLEANSEAS

Oil spill response
Subantarctic Islands

2

Key message
Safety a hot topic

4

Helicopter rescue
Record mercy dash

6

Got documentation?
MNZ clamps down

8

White water
boarding safety
guidelines
Available now

13



SAFE SEAS CLEAN SEAS

Welcome to the first issue of *Safe Seas Clean Seas* for 2009. It has been a very busy start to the year for Maritime New Zealand (MNZ), unfortunately in many cases for all the wrong reasons.

While the fantastic weather over the summer months has been good news for water users, sadly, the corresponding surge in boating activity has resulted in an unprecedented number of recreational boating fatalities and near misses on our waterways (see story later this issue).

The vast majority of Kiwi boaties are sensible, yet a number of people still aren't getting the safety message – despite the best efforts of MNZ, Police, regional harbourmasters, and other agencies. That message has also been echoed by the new Minister of Transport, Steven Joyce, who we welcome in this issue.

While various water safety initiatives targeting the recreational boating sector have resulted in a significant reduction in fatalities in recent years, the recurrence of accidents where the most basic safety precautions aren't followed highlights that there is still more work to be done. MNZ will continue to work through groups, such as the National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum, and alongside regional councils, to inform and educate boaties – and where necessary, prosecute those who flout the rules.

On a more positive note, a key priority for MNZ this year will be to begin a major review of qualifications and operational limits. The aim of the review is to ensure that domestic maritime qualifications, examinations, and training standards overseen by MNZ remain current and consistent with what is happening in the sector and continue to meet its needs – while reflecting the requirements of a modern maritime industry.

Because operational limits are also linked to domestic seafarer qualifications, it is appropriate that these are also reviewed, to ensure they align with any proposed changes to the qualifications and training framework.

The scope of the review will be wide-ranging and comprehensive, and will include assessment, evaluation, and ultimately recommendations for improvement relating to a range of maritime rules.

Industry input will be a critical part of this process, and we will be encouraging the sector to provide constructive feedback on the review as it progresses.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Catherine Taylor
Director of Maritime New Zealand



ENVIRONMENT

Oil spill response for Subantarctic



Rugged Campbell Island, with HMNZS *Te Kaha* in the background.

Two Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) oil spill experts recently visited the rugged Subantarctic Islands to help develop a special oil spill response plan for the area.

Listed as a World Heritage Area, the islands are home to vast numbers of birds and sea-mammals. Remote and isolated, many species of birds and plants are endemic to their own small island groups and extremely vulnerable to human disturbance.

MNZ has responsibility for oil spill response in the Subantarctic Islands, the furthest of which is located approximately 870 km south-east of New Zealand. MNZ has been working closely with the Department of Conservation (DOC), who manage the islands, to develop a special area oil spill contingency plan.

MNZ Environmental Analyst Alison Lane recently visited the islands as a guest aboard the HMNZS frigate *Te Kaha*, along with Marine Pollution Response Service (MPRS) Response Planning Officer Dayne Maxwell. "The contingency plan has been developed in response to the rapidly-growing cruise ship tourism industry in the area, which brings with it an associated increased risk of an oil spill," Alison says.

Response plan developed for Subantarctic Islands

The pair visited several of the islands, including Campbell Island, Enderby Island, and the Auckland and Snares Islands. They collected detailed information on shoreline types and looked at response issues for many of the highest risk sites. They also assessed areas where people and equipment could be staged, and the logistical support needed for any operation in such a challenging environment.

“New Zealand’s Subantarctic is an extraordinary place. It is notoriously windy, with extreme weather conditions that can change in a few moments. With limited charts, these are not waters to be taken lightly,” Alison says.

“The harbours and inlets where ships anchor are prone to fierce winds, and are surrounded by rocky cliffs and reefs. At times, large fishing vessels and recreational yachts also take shelter in and around the islands. There are also moves to develop sub-sea oil resources in the Great South Basin, which further increases the risk of environmental impact on the area.

“The information collected during the visit will be of great value in informing our spill response plans, and will provide far greater detail on sites and resources that may be vulnerable to spill impacts, as well as identifying the logistics needed to mount a response in such a remote and challenging location.

“The technical support of the **Te Kaha** crew and the knowledge and experience of the DOC staff were essential to the success of this work. We warmly thank the Royal New Zealand Navy and DOC for their exceptional support of the project, and the extraordinary opportunity to visit these incredible islands.”

Alison says MNZ staff will continue to work closely with DOC, who are also developing a coastal plan that will incorporate controls for ships visiting the islands, to further minimise the risk of a spill occurring.

[See page 15 for photographs of some of the flora and fauna Alison and Dayne encountered on their visit.](#)



Oil spill experts Alison Lane and Dayne Maxwell on Campbell Island, one of the remote Subantarctic Islands where MNZ has responsibility for oil spill response.



Safety a hot topic

A poor start to the summer boating season shows some are still not getting the safety message.



Despite 95% of boaties acting responsibly and taking basic safety precautions, such as wearing lifejackets, numerous fatalities and near misses on the water over summer show some still aren't taking safety seriously.

A spate of fatal accidents and near misses over summer has highlighted that some boaties are continuing to ignore basic safety precautions, says Maritime New Zealand (MNZ).

“Despite achieving a 50% reduction in the number of recreational boating fatalities over the past 7–8 years, a recent batch of accidents shows that some people still aren't getting the message,” says MNZ Manager of Recreational Boating, Jim Lott. Over this period an extensive amount of work has been carried out by the National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum (made up of 16 water safety agencies), using a combination of education and targeted legislation.

Jim says figures compiled by MNZ for the summer period from 1 December 2008 until 31 January this year show that there have been eight recreational boating fatalities – compared with one fatality for the same period last year.

“While around 95% of boaties do act responsibly, a common theme shared by those involved in accidents over summer was ignorance of basic safety precautions – such as failure to carry lifejackets and failure to carry reliable communications, as well not bothering to check the weather, and too much alcohol,” Jim says.



COVER STORY

Holidaymakers Harriet Savage (left), Clayton Hope and Holly Hope are geared up to stay safe on the water while camping at Turihau beach, Gisborne.



“The evidence gathered from fatal accidents shows that these are the four leading causes of people dying on the water – yet some people are continuing to ignore these basic, common-sense messages. Following these simple precautions is hardly rocket science – they have been proven time and time again to save lives.”

Excess speed and boaties failing to keep a proper lookout are among issues that kept local harbourmasters busy in many popular boating spots over summer. This prompted the issuing of infringement notices and warnings for risky behaviour, as the warm weather saw a multitude of craft taking to the water.

Over the summer the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand, Police and Coastguard were also kept busy – responding to a number of close calls where boaties had ignored the most basic safety advice. This included two Napier boaties, since charged by Police, who had to be rescued after a drinking session saw them take a friend’s boat out late at night, without telling anyone where they were going, and without taking any safety equipment.

In another incident late last year, a family group were fortunate to be rescued after breaking down in rough seas many miles off the Tauranga Coast – despite carrying no reliable form of maritime communication.

“All these incidents highlight the importance of being prepared before you head out onto the water,” says Jim. “Taking a little bit of extra time to check the weather and that you’ve got the right safety gear on board before going out could save your life and spare your loved ones a lot of heartache later on.”

Meanwhile, despite some calls for recreational boaties to be licensed, Jim says research carried out by the forum shows there is little evidence to support such a move. “The issue of licensing is one that was reviewed by the forum just last year, but analysis of accidents in overseas countries where licensing and registration are in place shows these have had little impact in reducing fatalities. This is because accidents are most often a result of complacency – not a lack of education.”

“There is already a significant amount of legislation covering recreational boaties, and ignorance of this is no excuse. However, these rules are basic common sense – practical steps that people should take to ensure their own safety – no different to when you’re driving on the road. This includes simple rules such as obeying the posted speed limits, carrying enough lifejackets for all on board, watching out for other vessels and people, keeping to the right, and operating at a safe distance from other water users.”

Jim says the warmer temperatures meant many more people were out on the water, with congestion also an issue in many areas – highlighting the need for people to be patient. “With fantastic summer weather, the urge to get out and enjoy the water is strong. However, with so many people wanting to enjoy the beach and water, and numbers increasing every summer, this can create congestion and frayed tempers. We ask that people try to be patient, so that everyone can enjoy themselves safely.”

Top safe boating tips for all seasons

1. **Wear your lifejacket.** Maritime law requires ALL skippers to carry enough lifejackets of the right size and quantity for all on board. Lifejackets MUST also be worn at times of heightened risk – for example, when crossing bars or in worsening weather.
2. **Check the weather forecast before you go.** If in doubt, don’t go out.
3. **Carry AT LEAST TWO reliable forms of maritime communication.** A handheld, water resistant marine VHF radio costs from \$200 (less than some cellphones), and is one of the most reliable forms of maritime communication available. If carried, cellphones should be inside a resealable plastic bag, but should not be relied on as your only form of communication.

Other forms of communication are a red hand-held flare and a 406 MHz EPIRB.

4. **Alcohol and boating don’t mix.** Alcohol impairs judgement and increases the risk of hypothermia if you go into the water.
5. **Be considerate to other water users.** The warmer weather means an inevitable increase in the number of people on the water, and this can lead to congestion and frayed tempers. Please keep a lookout, stick to safe speeds, and be patient so that everyone can enjoy the water.



Long-range mercy dash makes for record rescue

A 1,600 km round trip to rescue a seriously injured man from a cruise ship south of Campbell Island in January has broken records as the longest helicopter rescue mission conducted south of New Zealand.

The Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) began planning for the mission on 22 January 2009 after its Australian counterpart passed on a request for a medical evacuation of a crew member from the German cruise ship **Bremen**. At the time, the ship was in the Balleny Islands, on the fringe of the Antarctic continent, about 20 miles inside Australia's search and rescue region.

The man, a 40-year-old Filipino, had suffered a severe crush injury to his hand. The **Bremen** began making its way to Bluff, and RCCNZ accepted coordination of the rescue.

Two helicopters, from Dunedin and Te Anau, were tasked by RCCNZ to fly directly to the **Bremen**, meeting the cruise liner 111 kilometres south of Campbell Island, and about 800 kilometres from Invercargill – the furthest south helicopters have operated in a New Zealand-based search and rescue operation.

The patient was successfully winched on board one of the helicopters. Both helicopters returned to Campbell Island to refuel and then returned to Invercargill, where the patient was admitted to Southland Hospital. In total, each helicopter flew 8.5 hours.



Both rescue helicopters had to refuel at remote Campbell Island, 686km from Invercargill, during the record-breaking mission. Picture courtesy of Southern Lakes Helicopters.

RCCNZ Operations Manager John Seward said the marathon rescue had required intricate planning and careful consideration of weather and sea conditions. RCCNZ had worked closely with the helicopter pilots to plan the most effective approach.

"This was a critical mission. With the helicopters so far offshore, we couldn't afford for anything to go wrong," John said.

The rescue had been a "fantastic team effort", with rescue pilot Graeme Gale, co-pilot Stu Farquhar, and advanced paramedic/winch operator Doug Flett (all from Helicopters Otago) on one craft, and pilot Richard "Hannibal" Hayes and crewman/winch operator Lloyd Mathieson (of Southern Lakes Helicopters) on the other.

John said the rescue was the second-furthest distance covered in New Zealand history. Pilots Alexey Ostapenko and John Funnell made a 1,100km, 5 hour mercy dash to rescue five trapped workers after a volcano erupted on Raoul Island on 17 March, 2005.



A 1,600km round trip to rescue an injured crewman from the cruise liner **Bremen** in January is the southern-most helicopter rescue coordinated by RCCNZ – and the second-furthest in New Zealand's history. Picture courtesy of Helicopters Otago.



Two flight crews travelled more than 8 hours each in the marathon mission to rescue the injured crewman on board the **Bremen**. Pictured are Richard "Hannibal" Hayes (left), Graeme Gale, Stu Farquhar, Lloyd Mathieson and Doug Flett. Picture courtesy of Helicopters Otago.



Extension on fit and proper person requirements

Most commercial operators applying for maritime documents* will now have until early next year to complete the requirements to supply criminal and driving records. The checking of these records is part of the process undertaken by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) before issuing these documents.

In September last year, MNZ strengthened its fit and proper person checking requirements, following a review of its procedures against the requirements in the Maritime Transport Act. The Act's requirements for meeting the fit and proper person assessment cover all individuals and/or companies who are granted rights and privileges under a particular maritime document.

The improved checking process involves two phases. The first, introduced last year, requires applicants to answer a set of questions and complete a statutory declaration. The second phase, which was to have been introduced last month, but has now been deferred until February 2010, requires operators to provide criminal and driving records. While MNZ may still request this information from applicants before then, it will only do so if further investigation is required in a particular case.

"While it was originally intended to introduce the second phase requirement early this year, feedback from the sector indicates that more time is needed for people to understand what is required, and for MNZ to improve awareness around the process, so that is what we will be focusing on over the coming year," says MNZ General Manager of Maritime Safety Systems, Sharyn Forsyth.

Within the strengthened requirements, however, Sharyn says that each applicant's case will be judged on its merits. "This means that depending on the circumstances, someone with "historic" convictions won't necessarily be prevented from holding a maritime document. But because holding a maritime document is a privilege – not a right – we need to be satisfied that whoever has the document is going to act responsibly. This also brings the maritime industry into line with other commercial transport sectors, which have similar requirements."

Meanwhile, Sharyn says moves to strengthen the checking process have been supported by many in the industry. "We've received positive feedback from many in the commercial sector on the improved fit and proper person checking process, as they are as keen as we are to ensure that only the appropriate people hold maritime documents. They also recognise the importance that having a "clean" and professional workforce has on the industry's wider reputation."

* **Maritime document** – any licence, permit, certificate or other document issued by the Director of MNZ under s241 of the Maritime Transport Act, including certificates of competency, SSM Certificates, surveyor recognition and safe crewing documents.

New Maritime New Zealand website coming soon

A website upgrade project is underway at Maritime New Zealand (MNZ), which aims to improve access to our web-based information and services.

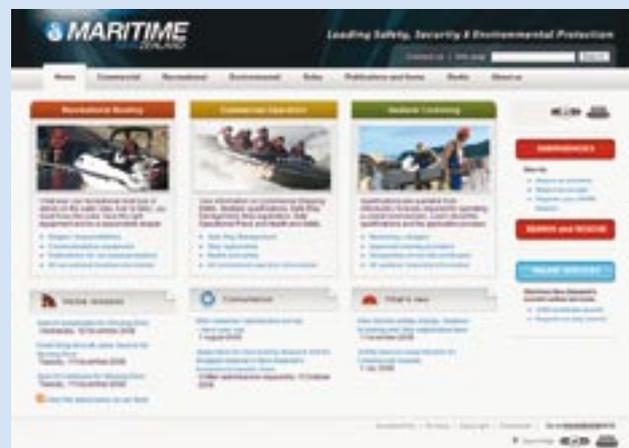
In addition to a major change to the website's look and feel, all web pages have been edited to better suit an online environment, so finding and understanding our web-based information will be easier.

Some of the other changes include:

- a better search engine, providing improved search results
- a new home page, which will have a different, updatable look or state when a major incident is occurring
- pathways to information based on a topic or type of information need
- better visibility of the latest news, developments, publications, and areas of consultation.

The website upgrade project should be completed by June 2009.

Visit the Maritime New Zealand website at www.maritimenz.govt.nz.



A taster, showing the new look and feel of the MNZ home page.



Safe Ship

MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Clampdown on skippers operating without proper documents

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) is taking a hard line against commercial vessel skippers operating without the proper maritime documents, following a recent increase in this unsafe practice.

MNZ General Manager of Maritime Safety Systems, Sharyn Forsyth, said MNZ had prosecuted 12 skippers since 2000. These prosecutions were either for operating vessels beyond the limits of their certification, or for operating without having the proper documentation in the first place – with half of the prosecutions occurring in the past 3 years.

This included skippers operating without a valid Safe Ship Management (SSM) Certificate, which was designed to ensure safety. “All skippers have a responsibility to ensure their SSM Certificate is valid before going out, as the certification covers a number of areas critical to both vessel and crew safety. This should not be confused with a Fit for Purpose Certificate, which is issued by SSM surveyors and is only one of the requirements to be met.

“Essentially, any skipper operating beyond the safe limits of what their qualification allows, or without the necessary documentation in the first place, places all on board at greater risk, because the additional skill, knowledge and ability required to operate in those conditions is either missing or unproven.”

Sharyn said in a recent case, the skipper of a commercial fishing vessel was convicted and fined \$1,000 after admitting a charge under section 68(1) of the Maritime Transport Act 1994, of acting without the necessary maritime document.

The charge was laid as the result of an investigation, which was launched after the vessel ran aground in Northland, in March 2008.

Sharyn said the skipper involved did not have a New Zealand Offshore Watchkeeper's Certificate endorsement on his Inshore Launchmaster's Certificate – documentation that was required before he could operate outside the 12 nautical mile limit.

“Despite the skipper not having the correct safety endorsement allowing him to operate safely outside the 12 mile limit, MNZ's investigation revealed that he had done so knowingly a number of times before the accident,” she said. “This was supported by analysis of electronic data taken from the ship's GPS system.”

Sharyn said skippers engaging in this type of unsafe practice were also at greater risk of something going wrong and of rescue assistance being required, due to not carrying the required level of safety equipment. This was of particular concern if someone was operating a long way offshore, where the chances of being rescued were more remote.

All of the other skippers convicted of various breaches relating to maritime documents have faced fines – ranging from \$500 to over \$3,000. “The simple message to all commercial skippers is that this dangerous practice puts lives at risk and won't be tolerated.”

SSM certification process improved

Streamlining of Maritime New Zealand's (MNZ) Safe Ship Management (SSM) certification process has resulted in an improved turnaround for most of those seeking certification.

The Director of MNZ is responsible for issuing all SSM Certificates. Certificates are issued following a review of documentation, which is forwarded to MNZ by a vessel operator's SSM company upon completion of surveys and audits.

MNZ General Manager of Maritime Safety Systems, Sharyn Forsyth, says the introduction of changes to MNZ's procedures has resulted in a more efficient certification process, meaning a generally shorter wait for those applying for or renewing SSM Certificates – once all the relevant information has been provided by the SSM company.

“Streamlining of the SSM process has meant that most applications can be turned around within 1 to 2 days, once all the appropriate information is supplied by the applicant and their SSM company,” Sharyn says. “Since the introduction of

the changes in September, up until the beginning of February, MNZ has issued a total of 513 SSM Certificates to operators.”

Despite the faster processing of SSM Certificates by MNZ, Sharyn warns that operators still need to build in sufficient time to complete the process. “Operators still need to allow at least 20 working days for the SSM process to be completed – in case any matters need to be clarified. Those who do not allow sufficient time risk being in breach of the rules if their SSM Certificate lapses in the interim.”

Sharyn says if operators have any questions about the process, they should contact their SSM company, or MNZ's Technical Trainer, Darren Guard. Darren, who was introduced in our December issue, is available to provide practical advice to operators keen to ensure they are working within the requirements of SSM.



Views sought on Maritime Rules Part 35(2) – industry-specific training

Feedback from vessel operators working under Maritime Rules Part 35(2), which focuses on industry-specific training, is now being sought as part of an ongoing review of the implementation of maritime rules.

Maritime Rules Part 35(2) allows organisations approved by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) to develop their own workplace-specific training and examinations standards for staff who use small commercial craft as part of their work, but that work must be on a very limited basis and secondary to the staff members' main tasks. The vessels must be 6 metres or less in length, or less than 5 metres if a non-passenger vessel (and not a fishing vessel) operating within restricted limits.

MNZ's Murray Fairweather, who is managing the review, says the beauty of the system is that it is organisation-specific and flexible enough to allow approved agencies to work with MNZ to develop competency-based maritime training within the rule.

"As long as the training meets MNZ's requirements, the approved organisation can go about its work without having to go through a more formal and lengthy process to train and certify staff who may be operating a small vessel periodically for only a limited amount of time each year," says Murray.

Murray says the application of the rule has been largely successful to date, with 46 approved programmes operating, and 10 applications currently being considered by MNZ.

Among approved organisations working under the rule are government departments, regional councils, marina operators, research organisations and universities.

"Given the number of programmes now operating, MNZ believes it's timely to conduct a review of Part 35 to determine how well it is working for the approved organisations.

"As part of reviewing the current status of all existing programmes, we are keen to obtain comment from all those involved on how well it is meeting their needs, as well as any suggested improvements that may be made, and any other feedback from end-users."

Murray says MNZ welcomes constructive feedback on the application and functioning of Rules Part 35(2).

Comments must be addressed to Murray, **in writing**, either via email – murray.fairweather@maritimenz.govt.nz, post – PO Box 27006, Wellington 6141, or fax – 04 494 1263.

Upcoming SSM events and activities

April

- Early April – Naval architect seminar in Wellington.
- A new surveyors' newsletter to be published by Maritime New Zealand.
- Meeting of FishSAFE/SSM mentors to be held in Dunedin.
- April–June, industry workshops/one-on-one visits in the Nelson, Tauranga, Auckland, Napier, Picton and Greymouth regions.

For further details or to book a time to work with one of the industry advisors, contact Darren Guard on 0508 22 55 22, or email darren.guard@maritimenz.govt.nz.

- April–June, surveyor visits.

For further details, contact Ken Wyatt on 0508 22 55 22, or email ken.wyatt@maritimenz.govt.nz.

May

- Full FishSAFE meeting to be held in Wellington.
- 20 May – SSM forum to be held in Wellington.
- "Target B" (passenger and non-passenger) meeting to be held in Auckland.

June

- Target for formal consultation on SSM service delivery and rule amendments.



Darren Guard, Technical Trainer (left), and Ken Wyatt, Technical Advisor Marine Surveying.

Community partnership behind Lake Waikaremoana safety improvements



New 5 knot marker buoys and signage have been installed around Lake Waikaremoana as part of recent safety improvements made by MNZ in partnership with DOC and the local community.

A partnership between Maritime New Zealand (MNZ), the Lake Waikaremoana community and the Department of Conservation (DOC) has resulted in a raft of recent navigational safety improvements on Lake Waikaremoana.

MNZ has responsibility for navigational safety on the lake, which is a very popular trout fishing and boating destination, and is favoured by water skiers, kayakers and small-trailer boaties. As part of its role, MNZ has been working alongside the Lake Waikaremoana Boating and Fishing Association and DOC over the past year on safety improvements, which include new signage and speed buoys.

Alistair Thomson, MNZ Small Craft Safety Advisor for the North Island, visited the lake in late January to assess the improvements, and to explore options for the replacement of the Rosie's Bay sector light, which reports indicate has not been operational for some years.

"Among the improvements is new safety signage, which has been installed at all boat ramps on the lake and at the motor camp, reminding the many boaties who use the area of the requirement for sticking to safe speeds when close to shore, and around other vessels and people in the water.

"Before Christmas, the Lake Waikaremoana Boating and Fishing Association, with advice from MNZ, also installed two new 5 knot buoys at the lake in the Whanganuioparua Inlet. These are on a transit bearing, across the inlet from Whaitiri Point near the main DOC motor camp."

Jeff Adams, skipper of the Home Bay Water Taxi and a MNZ Volunteer Safe Boating Advisor, has noted a significant

improvement in boating behaviour since the installation of the 5 knot buoys and the new safety signage dotted around the lake, and at strategic points around the motor camp.

"With so much signage around reminding boaties of their obligations on the water, it's hard to avoid – and that leaves no excuse for reckless behaviour."

Jeff says that boaties on the lake are generally well behaved, with only "one or two pushing the boundaries". However, because the lake sits at an altitude of 2,000 ft in Te Urewera National Park and is extremely deep and cold, it can be a very hostile environment, he says.

Some people only survive a few minutes if they end up in water that cold, and even the fittest are at very high risk from drowning and hypothermia. "With no cellphone or VHF radio coverage, other than patchy coverage locally using channel 6, boaties are pretty well on their own and have to take that into account when heading out onto the lake," says Jeff. Carrying a locator beacon such as a PLB or EPIRB is a very good option, and red flares are a very effective method of signalling to others on the lake that you need help.

Meanwhile, Alistair says MNZ will assess options for the re-instatement of the Rosie's Bay sector light, and will continue working in partnership with DOC and the association to improve safety on the lake.



Aussie exchange experience



MPRS Planning and Training Strategy Manager Rob Service.

In January, Marine Pollution Response Service (MPRS) Planning and Training Manager Rob Service visited the Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre (AMOSOC) in Geelong, Victoria, to assist in the development of a new training programme.

AMOSOC was established in 1991, and is funded primarily by nine participating oil companies. The centre manages Australia's major oil spill response equipment stockpile, which is on 24-hour standby for rapid response anywhere around the Australian coast.

The centre also operates a training facility and is currently in the process of developing a competency-based training programme for government and industry oil spill responders in Australia. Rob said he was asked to review the proposed

programme structure, and to assist in the development of the assessment criteria and performance standards, which are crucial to any competency-based training.

There are similarities between the AMOSOC training and that conducted by MPRS, with both involving courses that range from equipment operation right through to their equivalent of our On-Scene Commanders course. Rob said it was a worthwhile visit – “it was good to see what they're doing and to gain a better understanding of the proposed changes to oil spill response training in Australia”.

It was also a good opportunity to touch base with counterparts over the Tasman. “There is excellent cooperation between Australian spill response agencies and our own. It's important that we work together, as, in the case of a very large spill, we may need to share resources.” Rob said the general manager of AMOSOC will be attending a Maritime New Zealand Tier 3 exercise in April, and would also be an assessor on the On-Scene Commanders course to be held at MPRS in June.

“Search called off for missing crew...”

Don't add to the stats ... plan for emergencies

- ▶ do radio skeds
- ▶ practise safety drills
- ▶ maintain safety equipment
- ▶ plan for weather

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 **MARITIME**
NEW ZEALAND



Only 406 MHz emergency locator beacons (pictured) will be heard by rescue agencies in an emergency, following changes to the worldwide satellite beacon detection system on 1 February 2009.

Old beacons now obsolete

Anyone still using a 121.5 or 243 Megahertz (MHz) emergency locator beacon or EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) will now no longer be heard by rescue authorities. This follows recent changes to the worldwide satellite beacon detection system, which makes these beacons obsolete.

Since 2005, a major publicity campaign has been encouraging trampers, boaties and other outdoors people to make the switch to the more modern 406 MHz beacon, which, as of 1 February 2009, is now the only type of beacon that will be detected by satellite.

The Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) has responsibility for detecting and responding to all New Zealand beacon alerts. "The key message is that if anyone is still carrying the older-style 121.5 or 243 MHz emergency beacons, they need to dispose of them NOW and make the switch to the newer 406 MHz variety," says RCCNZ Search and Rescue Officer Neville Blakemore. "This is because, as of 1 February this year, the international COSPAS-SARSAT satellite system used by RCCNZ and other rescue agencies around the world to respond to emergency beacon signals no longer detects beacons operating on the 121.5 or 243 MHz frequencies."

“Quite simply, this means that if you’re in trouble and set off your old beacon – we won’t hear you and you won’t be rescued. That’s why it’s critical to make the switch to 406 MHz now.”

"The key reason for the switch is that the new 406 MHz beacons are vastly superior to the older models, which were responsible for a huge number of false alarms. The 406 MHz beacons can also be detected much more quickly, and provide RCCNZ with a much more accurate search area – around 20 square kilometres, compared with a search area of more

than 1,000 square kilometres for the now obsolete 121.5 and 243 MHz beacons.

"If the 406 MHz beacon is a model fitted with GPS this is even better, as it reduces the search area down to only a few square metres," says Neville.

“Carry a 406 beacon, make sure it’s registered, and if you need us, we can find you.”

Registration of 406 MHz beacons with RCCNZ is also critical – this free service provides rescuers with important contact information that can assist greatly in an emergency. Registration with RCCNZ is free and can be done online, or by phone, email or fax.

The 406 MHz beacon message is echoed by Police Search and Rescue Liaison Officer Sergeant Bruce Johnston, who says people need to be realistic and recognise that no matter how experienced they are, anyone can get into trouble at any time.

"The bottom line is, if you can't tell us you need help, we can't rescue you. And that's a realisation you don't want to hit you when you are lying at the bottom of a remote gully with a broken leg," says Bruce.

To register a 406 MHz beacon, contact RCCNZ on 0800 406 111 or 0508 406 111. This service is free.

For more information on 406 MHz emergency beacons, visit www.beacons.org.nz.



River boarding and sledging safety guidelines are being implemented.



White water boarding safety guidelines now available

River boarding and sledging safety guidelines developed by Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) with the commercial white water industry have been published, following positive feedback from the sector.

Development of the guidelines arose out of an industry-wide safety review, undertaken following an investigation into the death of English tourist Emily Jordan, who died while river boarding on the Kawarau River in April 2008.

The guidelines, developed in consultation with the white water industry, have now been circulated to the sector and are being implemented.

“These guidelines represent an innovative and contemporary approach to the safety management of what is potentially the smallest definable “ship” in maritime legislation,” says MNZ Adventure Tourism Safety Auditor Colin Sonneveld.

Colin says MNZ will be working with the New Zealand Whitewater Boarding Association (NZWBA) and with operators to implement the guidelines, which will also support the development of a national qualification structure for white water boarding guides.

“Over the coming months, I will be working with white water boarding operators to further consolidate these safety practices to make them specific for each river and each operator. These practices will be documented into a template format, which will be held by MNZ, the NZWBA and Qualmark. This process and any amendments will then be managed by MNZ, in consultation with the interested parties.

“With ongoing guidance, it is anticipated that the national qualification structure will be consolidated prior to the 2009/10 summer season, in conjunction with a white water boarding rescue workshop on the North Island, which coincides with the second AGM of the NZWBA.”

Colin says MNZ will also continue to work with commercial operators to ensure they understand and are compliant with the requirements outlined in the safety guidelines.

These guidelines are available on the MNZ website:
www.maritimenz.govt.nz/adventureactivity



Safety guidelines will include safety practices specific to each river and each operator.



Lake Kaniere navigational safety plan to be trialled

Excellent support from the West Coast community has been instrumental in finalising a navigational safety plan for Lake Kaniere, which is to be trialled later this year. Lake Kaniere is a popular spot for fishing, walking and recreational boating, and is located about 20 km south-east of Hokitika.

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) and the local community have been working together since mid-2008 to develop and finalise the navigational safety plan, with the aim of ensuring that the lake remains safe for all users, while meeting their varying needs.

“Thanks to a fantastic level of community buy-in, and with support from individual local residents, the Lake Kaniere Property Owners Association, and the young people of Lake Kaniere, MNZ has been able to take into account a wide range of user interests and incorporate these into the navigational plan,” says Jim Lilley, MNZ’s Small Craft Safety Advisor for the South Island.

“The next step is that we hope to have a finalised plan in place by this Easter, and barring any major issues, to then trial it over the next two summers to ensure there are no last minute problems. If all goes well following those trials, the plan will then be formally gazetted.”

Jim says development of the Lake Kaniere navigational safety plan follows implementation of a similar plan on nearby Lake

Brunner, which he says has been working successfully to help manage usage of the lake, so that all can continue to enjoy it.

“The aim of developing these navigation plans is to recognise the various different needs of water users in popular areas such as Lake Kaniere, while ensuring that these places remain safe and enjoyable for everyone,” says Jim.



Local community support has been instrumental in developing a navigation safety plan for Lake Kaniere, to be trialled next summer.

GONE FISHING?

DON'T GET CAUGHT OUT

- ✓ wear a lifejacket
- ✓ carry emergency communications
- ✓ check the weather
- ✓ stay sober

For more safety tips and info www.maritimenz.govt.nz or 0508 22 55 22

Life in the Subantarctic Islands

Maritime New Zealand staff recently visited the Subantarctic Islands to help develop an oil spill response strategy. Pictured are some of the unique flora, fauna and environments that need protection.

Royal Albatross on Campbell Island.



Sea lion in the shoulder-high tussock.



Yellow-eyed Penguins on Enderby Island.



Minister's message

One of the best things about the New Zealand summer is that so many regular Kiwis get out and enjoy the water. People from all walks of life hit our beaches, lakes and rivers in droves – in pleasure craft of all descriptions.

And while the vast majority of Kiwi boaties are responsible, the eight fatalities and numerous near-misses on the waterways over the holiday season show that too many New Zealanders are not heeding the water safety message.

I urge all boaties to act responsibly on the water. As you will know, it is the skipper's responsibility to ensure the safety of those aboard and to be aware of other water users. Please encourage your mates to act responsibly as well.

Maritime New Zealand is currently looking into recommendations to strengthen the rules around lifejackets on vessels under 6 metres, and carrying communications equipment on board all recreational vessels. They expect to see this go out for public consultation later this year, with changes in place as soon as possible.

We know that the majority of pleasure-craft-related fatalities are the result of basic safety errors – alcohol, failure to carry

communications equipment on board, failure to carry or wear lifejackets, and failure to check weather conditions.

Please be careful on the water, and let's keep the number of boat fatalities down.



Steven Joyce
Minister of Transport

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, please contact the publications team by email: publications@maritimenz.govt.nz or phone **0508 22 55 22**.

From 1 January
to 31 December 2008

26

MARITIME FATALITIES 2008

From 1 January to 31 December 2008, there were **26** fatalities – **10** in the **commercial sector** and **16** in the **recreational sector**.



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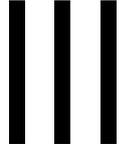
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