

Safe **SEAS** Clean **SEAS**

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RCCNZ works with US Coast Guard to free ship

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SafeSEAS CleanSEAS

Keith Manch
on Wellington's
waterfront.

Welcome to the first edition of Safe Seas Clean Seas and *LOOKOUT!* for 2015.

Our Rescue Coordination Centre of New Zealand had a busy start to the year, working closely with the United States Coast Guard to free an Australian-flagged toothfishing vessel from its ice-bound position near Antarctica – right at the eastern edge of our search and rescue region.

We include some exciting photos taken from the US Coast Guard icebreaker that plowed through ice to tow vessel and crew to safe waters; and closer to home the rescue account from a possum trapper, thankful he was able to alert RCCNZ to his plight. His story is a telling reminder that a personal locator beacon can be a life-saving investment for anyone heading to remote locations on land or water.

It's been a year now since the Maritime Operator Safety System (MOSS) was introduced – heralding the largest change to New Zealand's commercial domestic shipping sector in 15 years. Sanford's Tauranga in-shore fishing operation and Queenstown's TSS Earnslaw operator, Real Journeys, were among the first to enter MOSS – which puts the onus on the operator to develop a safety system covering not just their vessels but their entire operation.

We are constantly monitoring what is working well, and could be improved, during the on-going implementation of MOSS across the sector. As a result of feedback received, and our assessments over the first year of operation, Maritime NZ is streamlining the process for operators wherever possible.

Around 2,000 commercial operators are required to transition by 2018. To date 120 operators have received their Maritime Transport Operator Certificates, covering 400 vessels. In this issue we have further operators new to MOSS, including the television show hosts of *Big Angry Fish*, who share their experiences of what the transition involves.

Over summer, the country heard of kayakers around New Zealand having to be rescued following rising winds – including a couple stranded near Whangarei, a group rescued from a wind-change in Lyttelton harbor, and a pair lucky to be alive after being winched out of the sea near Taieri Island, Dunedin. In *LOOKOUT!* we recount valuable safety learnings from an evening paddle by a waka-ama crew, which was caught out by deteriorating weather and fading light.

Overloading a transom bracket with an over-sized spare outboard motor had fatal consequences for one of three crew crossing a lake in a runabout. And an untested dinghy, missing its bung, and lack of life-jackets, are among factors that resulted in a harbour tragedy.

These cases show why we need to keep spreading safety messages to operators of New Zealand's estimated 900,000 pleasure craft.

In fact there is a large gap between what people know to be safe behavior and how they actually behave when boating, as shown by the results of a Maritime NZ research commissioned last year (page13–14).

Commercial operators must also ensure there is thorough safety planning and implementation in their day-to-day business, as shown in another of our *LOOKOUT!* articles – about a stevedore who suffers serious injuries while unloading a container ship.

I welcome any assistance in spreading safety messages. We can all play a role in keeping work colleagues and fellow boaties safe. If you see anything that puts safety at risk, whether at work or in a recreational environment, take the initiative to raise the matter – whether it be with your supervisor, the skipper, friend, or another recreational boat user ... whoever it applies to.

Keith Manch

Director of Maritime New Zealand

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Safe Seas Clean Seas ISSN: 1175-7736
LOOKOUT! ISSN: 1177-2654

NewZealandGovernment



RCCNZ works with US Coast Guard to free ice-bound ship

Toothfishing trawler **Antarctic Chieftain** – ice-bound at the eastern edge of New Zealand’s search and rescue region. Photos: Courtesy of the United States Coast Guard.

The Rescue Coordination Centre of New Zealand worked in unison with the United States Coast Guard to successfully rescue a 26-person crew, trapped aboard their ice-bound fishing vessel in Antarctica, in February.

Thirteen New Zealanders were among the crew that was freed from the ice five days after having to call for assistance. The US Coast Guard icebreaker **CGC Polar Star** steamed several hundred nautical miles to reach their position.

An Australian-flagged vessel, the **Antarctic Chieftain** got into difficulty after damaging three of the four blades of its propeller. Although it was immediately surrounded by clear water, the vessel became boxed in by ice floes about 900 nautical miles (1700 km) northeast of McMurdo Sound; at the eastern edge of New Zealand’s search and rescue region.

Polar Star Commanding Officer Captain Matthew Walker says the conditions were more formidable than expected, with heavy snow and large icebergs.

After breaking the ice around the 63-metre **Antarctic Chieftain**, the crew of the cutter deployed an ROV (remotely operated underwater vehicle) to assess the vessel’s propeller.



The **Antarctic Chieftain** is towed to clear waters by the US Coast Guard icebreaker **CGC Polar Star**.

Mike Hill, Manager RCCNZ & Safety Services, says the hull of the boat had remained undamaged, there was no spill of oil from the vessel, and the crew were well-provisioned.

The **Polar Star** towed the stricken vessel back to clearer waters, where the RCCNZ had also coordinated with shipping companies to have a former sister ship, **Janas**, standing by in case further assistance was required.

Both vessels were toothfishing in the region for the summer season.

Once clear of the ice, the **Antarctic Chieftain** managed the return journey under its own power over the next two and a half weeks, reaching its home port of Nelson, New Zealand, for repairs on March 3.



Crew in action on board the **CGC Polar Star**.

Les Scott, the Managing Director of the vessel's owner, Australian Longline Pty, says "we would like to offer our most sincere appreciation of the quick and professional response given".

"We'd especially like to thank RCCNZ for managing the operation; along with the Master and crew of the *Polar Star* for the professionalism and support given to the *Chieftain* in getting it to a safer position. We are also very grateful to the crew and owners of the *Janas* for providing the *Chieftain* with the escort back towards NZ.

"Based on what we have heard from the crew of the *Chieftain*, it is apparent that the freeing of the vessel was skilfully undertaken by the crews of both vessels thereby avoiding a situation which could have become significantly more concerning."





Summer campaign targets risky behaviour

Nineteen at-risk youth completed a series of maritime training certificates in February, as part of a wider multi-agency campaign targeting potential hazardous behaviour by holiday makers in the Coromandel area.

Maritime NZ funded the training, delivered as part of the Safe Summer Coromandel campaign. This initiative draws on the expertise and resources of 14 agencies and emergency services – including St John’s Ambulance, New Zealand Police, the Fire Service, Surf Life Saving NZ, ACC, Coastguard, Thames Coromandel District Council, Waikato Regional Council and Maritime NZ – to try to stem the seasonal rise in avoidable deaths and injuries in the area during the summer holiday period. At this time, the region’s population surges to up to four and a half times the usual resident population of 26,000.

Safe Summer Coromandel encourages people to stay safe on the roads and water, and in their own homes and communities, by making sound decisions – driving to the conditions, wearing a lifejacket, controlling their drinking, and so on.

Under the expert tuition of the former Navy diver and sea survivor Rob Hewitt and Whitianga Harbourmaster Mat Collicott, and using resources provided by Coastguard Boating Education, the group of 19 young people from Whitianga, Thames and Coromandel completed the Day Skipper and Maritime VHF Radio Operator certificates, and Basic Sea Survival. They also earned Level 2 and 3 NCEA credits.

Mat shared his knowledge of the area and explained the Waikato region’s bylaws, while Rob, who survived three days floating in the sea off the Kapiti coast in 2006, explained the vital importance of wearing a personal flotation device on the water.

Now a tutor with Coastguard Boating Education, Rob says the young people who took part in the three-day course already had water awareness, but no previous formal training. As well as providing an introduction to the marine industry, he says the training offered those who were interested the chance to explore future employment opportunities.

On the second day of the course, the news filtered through that two men had been adrift at sea in and around Papamoa for three hours, clinging to a chilly bin after their boat was submerged. Rob says this event gave the students a powerful sense of reality about what they were learning, reinforced by the police saying the men had averted a tragedy because they were wearing lifejackets.



Beacon ‘best money I’ve ever spent’

Possum trapper Jacob Gollan says the personal locator beacon he set off while in severe pain in Bay of Plenty bush is the “best money I’ve ever spent in my whole life”.

Jacob, 32, was half-way through setting out his possum line on February 24 when pain forced him to return to Wahaatua Hutt, between Opotiki and Gisborne, six hours walk in.

After having a lay-down, and with pain and infection spreading, he decided to pull the beacon that evening, while there would hopefully still be day-light for a chopper crew to handle the “tricky landing”.

The Bay Trust Helicopter from Rotorua turned up in less than two hours, around 9pm, and flew him and his only companion – a mate’s young pig dog – to Tauranga

Hospital. Jacob was discharged with medication the next day.

Jacob says nowadays he always leaves details with registered contacts about his whereabouts when going into the bush – which enabled the Rescue Coordination Centre of New Zealand to arrange promptly to airlift him out after his beacon signal was detected.

However, Jacob has only carried a beacon with him for a couple of years, having gone trapping and hunting without one throughout his 20s. His decision to buy a beacon was for “peace of mind for his family”, and because he was starting to trap in different, more remote, locations.

He says of his \$700 purchase: “I was in a great deal of pain; it’s the best money I’ve ever spent in my life.” Jacob hopes his story encourages others to buy a beacon: “If it helps them that would be great”.



More New Zealanders on the water

The number of New Zealanders heading out on the water is increasing, but they're not doing everything they can to keep safe, the latest research commissioned by Maritime New Zealand shows.

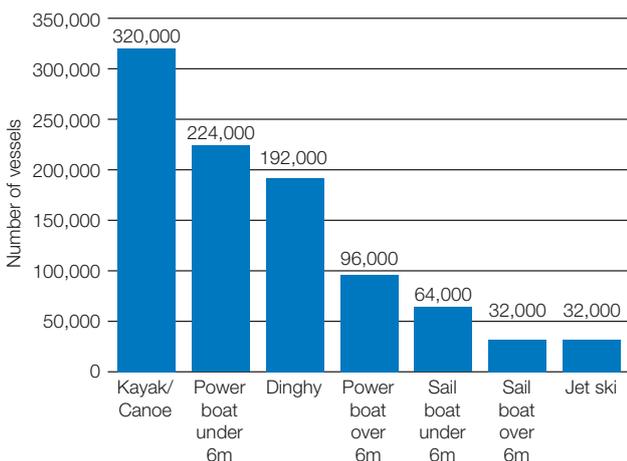
The 2014 Research New Zealand survey found nearly one in three (29%) of New Zealanders aged 18 and over are involved in recreational boating – up from around one in four at the last survey.

This means approximately 930,000 adult New Zealanders skipper or spend time on recreational vessels.

The current estimate of the total number of recreational vessels owned in New Zealand is around 960,000, with over half of these being kayaks/canoes and power boats under 6m.

Kayaks/canoes are the most popular recreational vessel (320,000 reporting owning or using a kayak or canoe), followed by power boats under 6m (224,000) and dinghies (192,000).

Recreational Vessel Usage



Source: Research NZ 2014

Attitudes and behaviour towards recreational boating safety

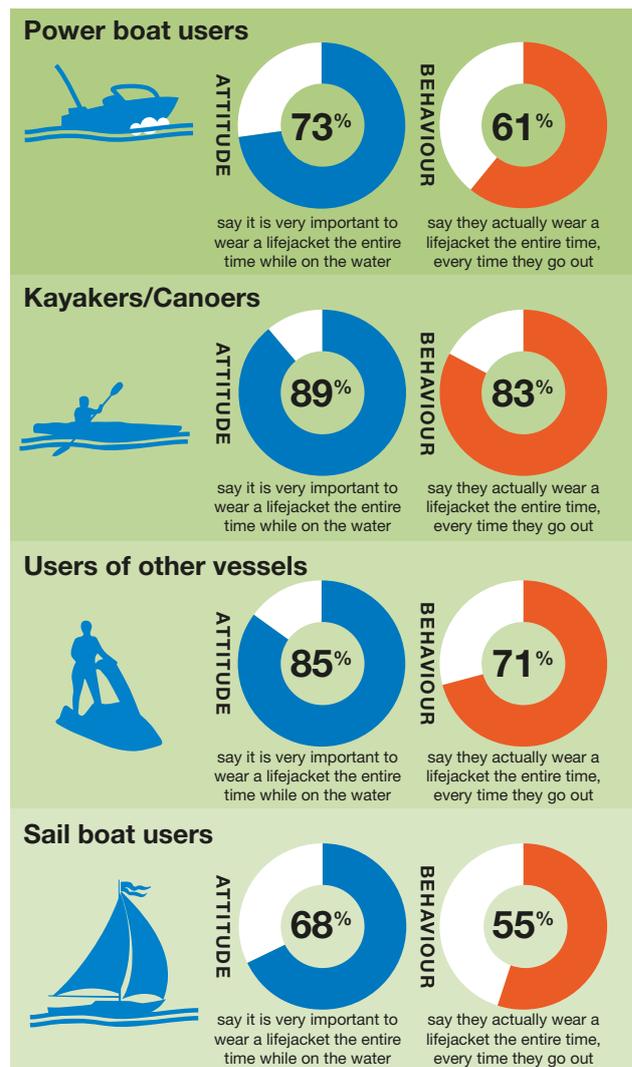
Maritime NZ Deputy Director and New Zealand Safer Boating Forum Chair, Lindsay Sturt, says the study shows a large gap between what people know to be safe behaviour and how they actually behave.

“The research found 88% of all New Zealanders believe lifejackets should always be worn on recreational boats, and 80% of boaties share that view.

“When it comes to actually wearing a lifejacket, 70% of boaties say they do all the time – but on-water surveys show it’s more like half.

“Boaties need to start walking the safety talk,” says Lindsay.

“We know that around two-thirds of people who die in boating accidents might have been saved if they wore lifejackets.”

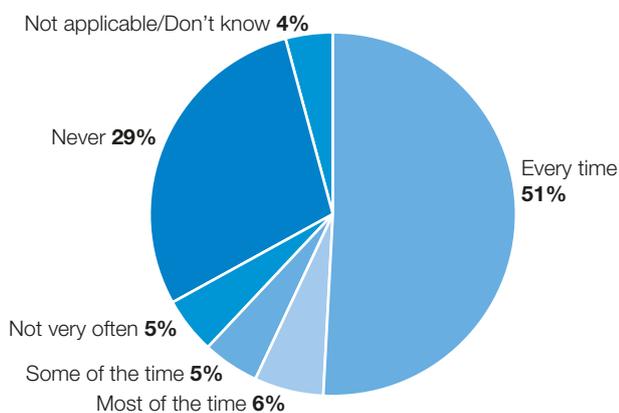


Source: Research NZ 2014

Lindsay says there is a similar discrepancy when it comes to carrying communications equipment to call for help.

“Two-thirds of boaties believe it’s very important to carry two ways to call for help, such as a marine radio or distress beacon – this is what we urge boaties to do at all times. However, only half say they actually do.”

Almost one-third (29%) said they never carried two ways to call for help when they went boating.



Source: Research NZ 2014

A cellphone in a waterproof bag was the most commonly carried communication device (56%), followed by flares (41%), a cellphone not in a plastic bag (29%), a distress beacon (27%) and a marine radio fixed to the vessel (26%).

Larger vessel users were significantly more likely to carry at least two forms of communication than smaller vessel users (81% of power boat users and 66% of sail boat users, compared with 37% of other vessel users and 20% of kayakers/canoers).

Lindsay says this is particularly concerning given that smaller vessels are at higher risk of capsize than larger vessels.

“You are simply more vulnerable in a smaller boat,” he says.

“The vast majority of fatalities take place in vessels of 6m and under, and so it is even more important that you have reliable communications equipment, that works when wet, when you are in smaller boats.”

Marine weather

The research found 73% of all recreational vessel users said it was very important to check the marine weather forecast before departure while only 64% actually do this every time they go out.

Alcohol

More than three-quarters (76%) of people said they never consumed alcohol while boating. The rate of people who abstain from alcohol was highest for kayakers and canoeists (90%) and lowest for users of powered vessels and sail boats (66% and 62%, respectively).

www.maritimenz.govt.nz/recreational-boating/Research.asp

NZ to ratify Convention for seafarers’ rights

New Zealand is set to ratify the Maritime Labour Convention – to help ensure fair treatment of seafarers, create conditions of fair competition for shipowners, and protect the reputation of New Zealand exports.

The Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC) is an international treaty adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) that sets minimum standards for the health, safety and welfare of seafarers on larger commercial vessels.

New Zealand is aiming to be a party to the Convention by the end of the year. It would then enter in to force for New Zealand a year later.

The Convention will apply to about 890 foreign commercial cargo and cruise ships visiting New Zealand annually, and 31 New Zealand ships. It covers commercial vessels of 200 gross tonnage or more, and operating outside the in-shore limits.

Ratifying the Convention will give New Zealand the power to inspect and verify that crew on foreign ships carrying

New Zealand goods are treated fairly and within internationally accepted standards.

Maritime New Zealand is currently preparing draft Maritime Rule amendments that will give effect to the Convention requirements not currently reflected in New Zealand law.

New Zealand law, which applies to New Zealand registered ships, is already largely consistent with the Convention.

In adopting the Convention the ILO recognised that while many flag states and ship owners take pride in providing seafarers with decent conditions of work, they can face unfair competition when undercut by those operating substandard ships.

The decision by the ILO to create the MLC was the result of a joint resolution in 2001 by the international seafarers’ and shipowners’ organisations, later supported by Governments.

As shipping is the “world’s first genuinely global industry”, it was decided the shipping sector needed a more effective enforcement and compliance system that would help eliminate substandard ships.

Alamo leads the way down south

“You just start at the beginning and finish at the end.” That’s the straight-forward advice from Susanne Smith of Alamo Fisheries on putting together a Maritime Transport Operator Plan (MTO) as part of MOSS.

Susanne and husband Craig bought the 14m crayfishing vessel **Te Wai** in 2005. Craig operates the vessel with a single crewman out of Milford Sound, also taking in Charles and George sounds.

Susanne is Alamo’s shore manager and developed the MTO after a MOSS workshop and advice from Maritime NZ staff.

Susanne says the key point she has taken from the workshop is that MOSS is designed to be tailored to specific operations.

“It’s about your boat and your operation. Everyone has a different operation and does things a bit differently, and the plan needs to reflect that.”

While the application may initially appear daunting, Susanne says “it’s not the scary process some people expect it to be”.

“It’s been straightforward really; there was just a process to go through and we followed that, using the (Maritime NZ) template as a starting point. We sat down and talked about all the things that are done on board and how they are done. You need to make sure everything you do is in your plan, and you’re doing what you say in the plan.”

Susanne says rather than identifying new issues, the MOSS application process had formalised safety processes that were largely already in place. “We had a good handle on safety and risks before – Craig knows what he is doing – but we now have everything written down.

“We feel like we’ve got to be just a bit more aware of managing records and keeping them up to date. It’s been a good check on how we do things.”

She has appreciated working directly with Maritime NZ: “We’ve had a lot more feedback, which is helpful”.

Alamo’s boat, **Te Wai**





Big Angry Fish television show host Nathan O'Hearn:
"You are telling Maritime NZ what you do."

Big Angry Fish hosts endorse MOSS

Big Angry Fish co-host Nathan O'Hearn advises other operators to embrace MOSS, and treat the process as a "simple matter".

The fishing show host and keen recreational fisherman says he wishes he had approached the new safety system in a different way.

"It wasn't as hard a job as I thought it was when going through it. It's pretty easy when you know how to do it."

Operators about to do their Maritime Transport Operator Plan should contact their local Maritime officer or the Maritime NZ website, and use the guidance provided. Nathan says he presumed he had to replicate or recreate the template, and considered his computer skills not equal to the task. In the end he asked his surveyor to complete that part of the process.

Now he realises he could have used the template on the Maritime NZ website as a base document, and amended it to suit his own operation.

The benefit of MOSS, he says, is that it encompasses an operator's whole operation.

"It's your system. Everybody knows their own operation. You know what you do; your problems and hazards. It's your plan, and you are telling Maritime NZ what you do."

As an example, **Big Angry Fish** tow their two vessels by road around the country to get the boats in the water in different locations for filming. Therefore their plan needed to include safety procedures for loading, towing and launching grunty aluminium fishing vessels – including their latest addition the Techno Viking, an Extreme Boats 750 Game King.

Nathan says 'being safe on the water' is important to their business, and they have been glad to role-model safe boating behavior on their popular fishing show.

His advice to other operators entering MOSS, is to take a good look at their safety systems, see what's needed, then "fill in the template and send it back".

"It's as simple as filling in the form. If you know your own operation, it's really a simple matter."

MOSS education assists fisherman

Bluff crayfisherman Jayce Fisher is putting his new maritime diploma to good use coming to grips with the MOSS process.

Jayce completed a diploma at Nelson Maritime School recently: Master of a Deep Sea Fishing Vessel. This diploma is among the requirements for a Skipper Fishing Vessel – Limited Certificate, issued under the new seafarer qualification framework, SeaCert. The certificate is one of the replacements for the former New Zealand Offshore Master ticket, with the school's curriculum now covering the Maritime Operator Safety System (MOSS), instead of SSM training.

Jayce has recently taken over as skipper of his family's Hellfire Enterprises fishing vessel X-S, and is readying it for the crayfishing season starting in August.

His recent learning helped in working out what was needed under his deemed Maritime Transport Operator Certificate (MTOC); when Maritime NZ contacted him about a scheduled audit.

Having looked into the process, Jayce says that, with the assistance of Maritime Officer (MO) Matt Owen-Eales, he has decided to push on for full transition into MOSS.

"I want to get into MOSS earlier than I need to – to save on the cost of another deemed MTOC audit conducted by Maritime NZ prior to entering MOSS in 2017."

Maritime operators need to apply to enter MOSS at least three months before the expiry of their deemed MTOCs. All operators are required to be in MOSS by 2018. In the meantime those who have not transitioned, and held a valid SSM Certificate on 1 July 2014, are "deemed MTOC holders", and have entered MOSS under transitional provisions until their certificate expires. Their vessels will be subject to the audits previously scheduled under SSM, which are now undertaken by Maritime NZ maritime officers; usually at the two-year mid-point of their deemed MTOCs.

Jayce says that gathering together what is needed under MOSS has been "pretty straight-forward". While it may have been more daunting if he was not freshly out of 'school', Jayce acknowledges there has been a lot of "scaremongering" about MOSS.

He attributes the work of MO Matt in reassuring local fishing operators, and helping them with planning and paperwork, to a changing perception about MOSS.

"A lot of people are generally feeling a lot more relaxed, and much of it has to do with having somebody like Matt out and about talking to fishing operators."





150 years of light

The light was first exhibited ... on the 1st of January, 1865, and it had scarcely been lit an hour before the barque 'Meteor' sighted it at a distance of twenty-six miles, which at once determined the vessel's position and course. Captain Verney reports that the light appeared beautifully clear and bright, even at such a great distance.

So read the news report in the Daily Southern Cross on 10 January 1865, announcing that the Tiritiri Matangi lighthouse in the Hauraki Gulf had begun broadcasting its one-million-candlepower light across the water, marking the approach to Auckland Harbour about 2 kilometres to the south.

For 150 years, while Auckland grew from a modest 12,500 residents to the 1.4 million-plus residents it has today, the light from Tiritiri Matangi's 21 metre cast-iron tower has illuminated North Shore homes and, on clear nights, picked out the city's highest points. As the clock ticked over to its sesquicentenary on New Year's Day, New Zealand's oldest working lighthouse remained firmly entrenched as a much-loved landmark and a key part of our maritime safety network.

The milestone birthday was celebrated with lighthouse open days on the 1st and 2nd of January, hosted by the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi community organisation.

Mary-Ann Rowland, who manages the island's shop and 180 volunteer guides, described the festivities as "an amazing couple of days". Hundreds of visitors crossed from Auckland by ferry, with an extra sailing on New Year's Day.

The guides, all volunteers, were flat out marshalling the crowds and satisfying the public appetite for information and advice about Tiritiri Matangi's history, as well as the island's more recent role as a conservation site.

Four hundred people had the rare opportunity to go inside the lighthouse – there is normally no public access. Ray Walter, the last lighthouse keeper on the island and Jim Foye, Maritime NZ's representative, hosted the tours and answered questions. Another highlight was the chance to view the partially restored Cuvier Light, recovered from a storage shed in Pureora Forest several years ago and transported to the island. The 8 tonne first-order dioptric light had been housed in the Cuvier Island lighthouse for almost one hundred years, and is one of only a few remaining in the world.

Four former lighthouse keepers shared tales of their life and times working on the island, and as night descended one of their number, Kevin Wilson, piped everyone from the visitor centre up to the lighthouse. A lightshow turned the white tower a deep red, restoring it for a time to the colour it was up until 1947. The deep boom of the diaphonic foghorn, resonating at intervals throughout the day, added to the atmosphere. The last visitors left by ferry at 10.30pm,

the white light flashing every 15 seconds from the tower accompanying them across the water.

As well as being New Zealand's oldest operating lighthouse, Tiritiri Matangi was the first to be built by the government. It was prefabricated in England, then assembled onsite and painted red. Despite the significant physical challenges presented by the offshore location and steep and muddy terrain, the lighthouse construction was completed in just over two months for a total cost of £5,747.

Its light was fuelled first by colza then paraffin oil, and modified again to burn kerosene. An automatic acetylene-burning revolving light was installed in 1925, and around this time the keepers left Tiritiri. In the 1930s a radio beacon was fitted to the light. Keepers returned to work on the island after the Second World War, and in 1955 the light was converted from oil to diesel-generated electricity.

A decade later, a new xenon light of 11 million candlepower, donated by Auckland businessman Sir Ernest Davis, was installed. It was the brightest light in the southern hemisphere, able to be seen from 93 kilometres out to sea and considered by some mariners to be too intense. In 1966, an underwater power cable supplied mains electricity to the light, and by 1984 improved shipboard navigational aids meant the light could be reduced to a strength of 1.6 million candlepower.

In 2002, a modern rotating light beacon was installed within the original lighthouse and fitted with a 50 watt tungsten

halogen bulb. This light is powered from battery banks charged by solar panels and has a range of 18 nautical miles (33 kilometres).

When the lighthouse was fully automated in 1984, the last lighthouse keeper, Ray Walter, stepped down – but he stayed on as conservation officer for the island's newly established wildlife sanctuary and then served as a Department of Conservation ranger until 2006.

Since the wildlife sanctuary was established, the island's 220 hectares, stripped of native bush over 120 years of farming, have been rid of predators and unwanted vegetation. Volunteers from tramping clubs, the Forest and Bird conservation organisation, schools and the general public have replanted hundreds of thousands of native trees. The Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi was formed in 1988 to raise funds for the island and, working with the Department of Conservation, has introduced endangered birds, insects and reptiles.

Apart from the tower, the island's built structures include three keepers' houses, the restored signal tower, three foghorns and the former workshop, where the museum is now located. A new building houses the visitor centre.

Thousands of people make the day trip from Auckland each year to see the native wildlife up close and explore the lighthouse complex. Tiritiri maintains an enduring role in protecting New Zealand's fauna and flora and keeping mariners safe at sea.



Poor watchkeeping contributes to *Rena* grounding – TAIC report

Maritime NZ implements recommendations

Work has begun on implementing three recommendations made to Maritime New Zealand by the Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC), in its findings about the grounding of the container ship *Rena*.

TAIC found in December that the *Rena* grounding, off the Bay of Plenty coast in October 2011, occurred due to poor watchkeeping by the crew, and a failure to follow best practice guidelines for making and following passage plans. A further cause was the crew's failure to follow company procedures for monitoring the progress of the ship's passage in relation to known navigational dangers.

TAIC has recommended Maritime NZ:

- Promote through the International Maritime Organisation, the transparency of the system for auditing countries' seafarer training systems.
- To consider the use of virtual aids to navigation, and work with regional councils and port companies to control the use of virtual aids until they have been fully assessed.
- Collects sufficient data on shipping movements around the New Zealand coast that will enable Maritime NZ and local government authorities to monitor the potential need to introduce ship routing of some form.

Maritime NZ is considering the second two recommendations through its Coastal Navigation Safety Review, which is currently being consulted on. Maritime NZ staff are working with the maritime industry, interest groups and regional council harbourmasters to gather information on risk factors and existing mitigation measures – that will inform the review's analysis phase, expected to be completed around August.

TAIC is clear in its report that the introduction of ship routing for all coastal New Zealand is not justified at this time. However it has identified a lack of available data on shipping around the coast, and the review aims to collate a wide

range of data – focusing on ships of 500 gross tons or more, 45 metres long or more, and fishing vessels of 45 metres or larger.

Currently an Automatic Identification System (AIS) provides information on where commercial vessels are at any given time around the New Zealand coast, but it is not practical to monitor all vessels at all times. In the 2013 year there were 32,264 movements of ships of 500 gross tons or more, in and out of port, compared to 35,043 movements in 2004 and 38,346 in 1999. These figures do not include the large number of recreational vessels using New Zealand's coastal waterways.

The use and effectiveness of aids to navigation, such as beacons identifying hazards to shipping, will be assessed as part of the coastal navigation review. TAIC has indicated that while virtual aids may be one alternative for highlighting dangers to navigation, they should not be introduced before research and development of performance standards has been completed.

Maritime NZ is including the first TAIC recommendation – the improvement in transparency of the current Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 – into the work programme underpinning its strategy for New Zealand engagement with the International Maritime Organisation.

The worst environmental accident in New Zealand's maritime history, the *Rena* ran aground about 2.20am on October 5, 2011, on Astrolabe reef, near Motiti Island, as the ship was nearing its destination of Tauranga, spilling bulk oil and containers. The wreck broke in two during stormy weather three months later. Four commissioners have been appointed this year to decide whether resource consent should be granted to allow part of the *Rena* wreck to remain on the reef.

For more information on the Coastal Navigation Safety Review : <http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/Consultation/Coastal-navigation/>



The **RENA**, foundered on Astrolabe Reef off Tauranga in October 2011.



Eastern Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Coordinator, Jim Tetlow, leads an exercise.

Oil spill training hones response

Oil spills came thick and fast in February, when regional council representatives gathered for the Regional On-Scene Commander (ROSC) training course, held by Maritime NZ's Marine Pollution Response Services (MPRS) team at the office in Te Atatu.

The course, one of two held this year, involves a small amount of class work but is primarily exercise-based, with attendees taking turns to act as ROSC for a series of increasingly complex scenarios. The pace is hectic, with up to 10 exercises over five days.

The exercises aim to create situations that are as realistic as possible, with the responsibility on the ROSC to direct the early phases of a Tier 2 (regional) oil spill response. A range of factors must be considered, including the trajectory of the oil spill, resources and equipment available, and the impact on wildlife and the environment.

To add to the pressure, a number of interjects add unexpected elements part way through each exercise, and ROSCs must front up for a filmed interview.

Practical exercises and interaction with the other participants was a really effective way to learn, says Eastern Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Co-ordinator and ROSC trainee, Jim Tetlow.

“The course helped me refine my leadership style and put into practice the processes that I spend most of my time teaching others to do. It offered a great opportunity to learn more about the operational detail of an oil spill response and gain knowledge from all the people involved.”

Exercise Leader and National On-Scene Commander, Mick Courtneil, says the most valuable part of the training was watching a group of individuals ‘gel’ into an effective team.

“They’re all talented guys who are experts in their day-to-day roles, but at the end of the day oil spill response is a team effort. It’s great to see that element fall into place as the participants become more comfortable with each other and their responsibilities.”

Under the Maritime Transport Act 1994, Maritime NZ is responsible for providing and coordinating training for those involved in oil spill response, and the regular assessment and review of the overall regional response capability.