

THE GOOD OIL

ISSUE 15 MARCH 2008

Welcome to *The Good Oil* – an E newsletter designed to keep people in touch with what's happening in the oil spill response area of Maritime New Zealand. Contributions/feedback are welcomed and can be emailed to julia.lang@maritimenz.govt.nz.

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Welcome to the first edition of *The Good Oil* for 2008! The team at MNZ's Marine Pollution Response Service (MPRS) hopes you're back into the swing of things recharged and refreshed following the holiday period.

This year is shaping up to be another busy one as we continue to train and refine our skills at regional and national response level.

In this newsletter you'll read about key priorities for MPRS, as well as content about regional response happenings (of which there have been many) including a marriage proposal!

Enjoy the read!

Stockpiling dispersants

New Rules

Many of our readers will be aware that the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) introduced new dispersant stockpiling regulations which take effect from 30 June.

What do these regulations mean? Essentially stockpiles of nearly all the dispersant stocks stored in NZ now come under the new compliance regime that requires either bundling or reduction in regional stockpiles.

As discussed during MNZ's regional council workshop in 2007, this poses some problems with the existing methodology behind dispersant storage. We are tending to favour three or four major dispersant stores around NZ with small (and compliant) "ready use" quantities held in each region as before. This will also include the Tier3 stockpile currently held at MPRS in Te Atatu.

For more information contact Neil Rowarth or Mark Cavanagh at MPRS on Ph: (09) 834 3908.



National Response Team

Around 50 people nationwide are on MNZ's National Response Team – a group that is pulled together to help lead any national Tier 3 response.

A series of specialised workshops are due to be held for our national response team members. These include:

- 1) Incident Command teams – learning how to use a new IT "WebEOC" tool that will now be utilised for Tier 3 response.
- 2) Field deployment teams – developing skills in the areas of mobile booming and remote oil collection and storage techniques.
- 3) Upskilling those trained in Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Techniques (SCAT) into the next stage of data collation and compilation.

Workshop dates to be advised.

Oiled wildlife responder training

Our partners in wildlife response, Massey University, will shortly conduct a course designed to create a team of around 30 nationwide oiled wildlife responders.

Those who are already identified as regional wildlife response coordinators will be involved.



MPRS General Manager [MNZ's Alison Lane training at Massey](#)

Nick Quinn says that due to the historical low oiled wildlife numbers involved in NZ spills, it was important that Massey University wildlife specialists kept responders up-to-date with the latest techniques.

Nick says the intention is that Massey University will rebuild a team of oiled wildlife responders and provide ongoing training and exercises.

What's happening in New Plymouth?

As mentioned in the last edition of *The Good Oil*, the Taranaki region experienced an offshore oil spill that ended up impacting along 15 km of coastline in October last year.

The investigation process continues by MNZ's maritime investigations team and we will keep you posted.

In the meantime, the dedicated Tier 2 team at Taranaki Regional Council, led by Regional On Scene Commander Bruce Pope, continue to work with key stakeholders as they monitor and respond to remobilised quantities on the beaches west of New Plymouth.

We hope Bruce will present this case study at our annual regional council workshop which will be held in Wellington this year.

Offshore discharge plans

Rule Part 200

For those readers interested in offshore regulations, MNZ's Rule Part 200 requires offshore oil exploration and production platforms to submit a discharge management plan for potential oil spills, environmental issues and engineering configurations.

MNZ conducts regular inspections and audits of these installations. See the related article, *Offshore Inspection*, from MNZ's Dayne Maxwell.

Offshore inspection

Maui A and **B** platforms and the floating production storage and offloading vessel (FPSO), **Umuroa**, were inspected during February against Maritime Transport Act and Marine Protection Rule requirements.

The inspection team consisted of two MNZ staff, Dayne Maxwell (MPRS) and Maritime Safety Inspector Ken Wyatt together with Ken Edwards, an offshore installation inspection consultant and engineer from Perth.

Dayne says the visit was hugely beneficial for him personally in terms of familiarising himself with operational processes involved in offshore installations.

"It will be extremely beneficial when working with these operators in the future and assessing future discharge management plans," he said.



[Production water inline analysers on board Umuroa](#)

Dayne explained that during their visits, the inspection team witnessed a wide variety of wildlife living on and around the three installations, with seals sighted lying on the infrastructure of **Maui A**, swimming around **Maui B**, pictured below, and the floating off-take pipeline of the **Umuroa**.

"We also observed a large shark and huge ball of baitfish under Maui A including a large school of kingfish around Maui B."

The inspection program, which will occur on a regular basis, involves a visit to the Maari field installation off the coast of Taranaki later this year. The Maari field is currently under construction and will consist of a production platform and FPSO.





A slick proposal...

We've had our first internet wedding, first radio wedding . . . could this be NZ's first "oil spill" wedding?

Just over 4 years ago, national (and international) media converged on Milford Sound as news (and diesel!) leaked out about the sabotage of a Real Journeys vessel, moored in Milford Sound. Someone had deliberately put a water hose into the fuel tank, spilling thousands of litres of diesel into the pristine waters of Milford Sound.

The resultant emergency response and clean up - by Environment Southland, Real Journeys, DoC and Red Boats - was true collaboration at its very best - everyone working tirelessly together to ensure the best environmental outcome.



The happy couple, Nikki and Dave

It was hardly a romantic job - but once the clean up was complete, staff from the various organisations involved in the response met for a debrief. Usually an opportunity for finger-pointing, the tension at this debrief was of a very different kind. . . Environment Southland's communications officer at the time, Nikki Waghorn, met Real Journey's CEO Dave Hawkey for the first time . . . and over a cup of tea and a sausage roll their romance began . . . Dave proposed to Nikki in March and they're planning their wedding for Feb 2009 - on the 5th anniversary of the Milford Sound spill.

Police have not apprehended anyone in relation to the sabotage and a reward is still outstanding for any information about the saboteur . . . as well as an invitation to the wedding!

Spiller fined

Environment Southland had a victory in court recently, following a spill in Bluff Harbour last year.

Pantas Corporation, which owns the fishing trawler *Pantas 1*, was fined \$15,000 in the Invercargill District Court after spilling hundreds of litres of oil.

About 400 litres of oil was sucked from the top of the water.

Action stations up north

Ian Niblock and his team at Northland Regional Council have been absolutely flat out over the past few weeks and we're sure many of our readers would have followed a couple of the stories in the media.

We asked Ian if he would kindly submit some words about the goings on so that our readers could get an insight into the incidents from an operational point of view. Thanks Ian for providing the editorial. Here's what he had to say...

Grounding of Seawyf

Incident background: *The fishing vessel, pictured below, became stuck on Fair Way Reef in the Far North in bad weather during the early hours of Tuesday 4 March and began leaking oil.*



"Initial attempts to assess the damage to the vessel and the extent of the oil spill were frustrated by the strong south-easterly wind and rough sea. However, the diesel slick was breaking up within 2 km of the vessel, removing the risk of the oil coming ashore at Doubtless Bay or on the Karikari Peninsula, both of which hold high conservation values.

Once the weather moderated the NRC team was able to work closely with the salvage team and remove the remaining 1,200 Litres of diesel oil from the vessel's tanks.

We have an experienced and well trained team, who were assisted by a new oil extraction pump the Council purchased after a similar incident in 2004.

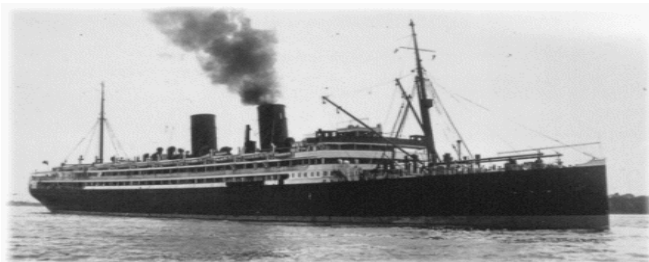
Now that we have minimised the risk to the marine environment, we are talking with the vessel's owners and their insurers about its final fate.

"Murphy" must have been in Northland that week as the NRC team was severely stretched dealing with this complex incident on top of a busy cruise ship visit schedule in the Bay of Islands."

Action stations continued...

Oil sample collected from war-time casualty

Incident background: Cruise ship, **RMS Niagara**, was sunk off the Hen and Chicken Islands by a German mine in 1940, with a cargo full of gold worth millions. Since sinking, the ship has been slowly leaking oil, and in mid March, NRC were able to collect the first ever sample of the oil following a report from a recreational fishermen who noticed slightly more oil coming to the surface than normal.



"The heavier than normal release of oil provided us with a sample for analysis and prompted NRC and MNZ to assess their joint response strategy that was established in 2000.

Subsequent analysis of the oil indicates that we are dealing with old HFO with a high pour point. This would explain the pattern of heavier releases during the summer when the sea water temperature is raised. The slow release of oil is being handled satisfactorily by the marine environment, but we intend to revise the existing joint response strategy in light of the oil analysis results.

There are still pieces of information that have been unknown since its sinking, such as exactly how much oil was on board at the time of it sinking, and how much was lost when it sunk."



Farewell Hanafi

MPRS farewells Hanafi, *pictured left*, who is the last of the spill response specialists from Singapore's East Asia Response Ltd (EARL) to join our team as part of the MNZ/EARL secondment programme.

Hanafi gave us an invaluable insight into real spill incidents. He has worked at EARL since 1993 and has attended several major spills, most recently spending a week in South Korea after the **Hebei Spirit** Incident.

Hanafi shares these response pictures with our readers!

Incident background

On 7 December 2007, a crane-carrying barge hit the Hong Kong-registered tanker **Hebei Spirit**, which was anchored approximately 8 km off Malipo in the Taaen district. A wire linking the barge to a tugboat was cut.

Three of five containers on the **Hebei Spirit** were punctured, releasing roughly 10,500 metric tonnes of crude oil into the sea. The **Hebei Spirit** was carrying a total of 260,000 metric tonnes of crude oil.



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New Zealand Government