

19 May 2025

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Level 11, 1 Grey Street, Wellington 6011
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New Zealand

s 9(2)(a)

Our ref: F36816
By email

Dear s 9(2)(a)

Response to request for information regarding reports of sewage/oil discharges from cruise ships

I refer to your request to Maritime NZ under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 9 April 2025, as follows:

“Under the Official Information Act, I request the following:

1. All reports (2019-2024) of sewer/oil discharges by cruise ships in New Zealand waters, including Royal Caribbean vessels.”

Maritime NZ only holds information on non-compliant discharges, and the requirements around reporting these are outlined below.

The international system does not require ships to report *all* discharges to their Flag nor New Zealand (via Maritime NZ or regional councils), and this is reflected in New Zealand legislation. This means that the reporting of compliant or permitted discharges is not required, however ships are required to report non-compliant discharges.

The Marine Pollution Regulations contained within the Resource Management Act (RMA) sets discharge standards within the 12 nautical mile (nm) limit and are implemented by regional councils. Maritime NZ regulates these under the Maritime Transport Act (MTA) and the Marine Protection Rules outside the 12 nm limit. All sewage and oil discharges that meet the standard are compliant discharges and do not need to be notified.

Any discharge not in compliance with discharge standards must be reported to either the regional council or to Maritime NZ in accordance with sections 227 and 228 of the MTA. Reports to regional councils should also be shared with Maritime NZ and vice versa if within the 12 nm limit.

Maritime NZ received one report of a bilge water spill (quantity unknown) from a cruise ship during the period covering 2019 to 2024 inclusive. I have attached the report for you. I am withholding the name of the vessel under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act on the grounds that the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person/organisation who supplied the information.

Maritime New Zealand has not received reports on any other discharges (compliant nor non-compliant) from cruise ships.

With regard to the information that has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding the information at this time are not outweighed by public interest considerations that would make it desirable to make the information available.

I trust this fulfils your request. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response (with your personal details removed) may be published on Maritime New Zealand's website.

If you wish to discuss this decision, please feel free to email us at ministerial.services@maritimenz.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Ross". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted.

Christine Ross
Manager, Communications and Ministerial Services

Incident/Spill Summary

Spill Incident Date	Region	Spill Ref No.	Spill Source Type	Spill Type	Spill Activity Type	Response Tier	Site Information	Did Oil Enter the Water	Est Volume of Spill	Est Final Volume of Spill	Spill Source Name	Spill Vessel Type
Dec 2024	Auckland	3685	Vessel	Bilge	Unknown	Tier 1	While the (vessel name withheld s9(2)(b)(ii)) was alongside in Auckland, NZ, the Port FRC was lowered in the water for draft Survey and MOB exercise. Unknown quantity of bilge water was released in the water resulting in an oil sheen on the ship side.	Yes	0.00 Litres		Vessel name withheld s9(2)(b)(ii)	Passenger

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982