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Media release

Access to webcams improves public safety in Anchorage and Awaroa

Access to imaging of Project Janszoon webcams in Anchorage and Awaroa by the Tasman District Council's harbourmaster has resulted in improved public safety.

Tasman District Council Harbourmaster Dan Cairney says that Council presence in the area wasn't possible day and night, which is why the Council approached Project Janszoon in July last year to ask for access to the cameras to help monitor public safety.

Cairney says he had received many complaints from boats anchoring in those areas about the speed and wake of passing boats causing safety concerns.

"Wake from speeding boats has been an issue for the up to 100 boats anchoring in the Anchorage Bay for many years. The main problem being that the boats are in an anchorage sheltered from most of the prevailing sea and wind conditions and the occupants of the boats get surprised when their boat is hit by a one meter-plus wake from a large vessel.

"This has led to incidents and accidents where occupants of anchored boats have been thrown overboard, suffered from burns and scalds from tipped over stove top contents, fallen over on board and been otherwise injured."

Cairney says the Department of Conservation was also approached to ask for their backing of the proposal to use the existing Project Janszoon cameras.

"We received great support for the idea and now we have 24 hour access to the imaging.

"At this stage we have set up the system such that we receive 30 second screen shots of Anchorage that are time and date stamped so even if we are not watching the camera we can go back through the footage to look for and identify any potential safety concerns which we may need to follow up on."

Project Janszoon director Bruce Vander Lee says the four webcams in Abel Tasman National Park are hugely popular with hundreds of people viewing them every week through their website.

"We are delighted they can also be used to promote safe boating at Anchorage and Awaroa. We know residents and visitors were concerned about boat speed in these popular spots and the feedback we are getting is skippers are behaving in a safe manner so that is great to hear.

“Project Janszoon is using technology through our solar powered Wi Fi network to support the ecological transformation of the Abel Tasman and to connect with visitors; sharing the park’s conservation story through the Abel Tasman app and engaging with the communities that enjoy the park.”

Project Janszoon is a privately funded trust set up to restore and preserve Abel Tasman’s rich wildlife for all to enjoy. It is a team effort involving conservationists, iwi, locals, scientists, tourism operators and volunteers.

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For more information contact: Harbourmaster Dan Cairney on 03 543 8400.