

STAFF REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Committee

FROM: Jean Hodson - Regulatory Manager

REFERENCE: C651

SUBJECT: **REGULATORY MANAGER'S / HARBOURMASTER'S REPORT - REPORT EP09/04/02** - Report prepared for meeting of 23 April 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the key issues / items of interest in relation to the Regulatory section of the Environment & Planning Department. A statistical summary report on workload and timeframes over the past six months is attached.

2. KEY ISSUES/ ITEMS OF INTEREST

2.1 Building Control

2.1.1 Accreditation Update

We are working towards the November 2009 date for our re-assessment for Accreditation and also our assessment under Regulation 17, which is the "quality assurance" phase of accreditation. Internal audits and reviews are being programmed and undertaken to enable us to have the data necessary for IANZ. We have received information from Hurunui District Council regarding the outcome of their visit from IANZ in January. This is interesting as it is likely that other councils can expect to have their systems reviewed in a similar manner, and similar issues may arise. IANZ have clearly been "raising the bar" on councils' performance as time goes by.

2.1.2 Building Trends

A review of the statistics for the last six months reveals a few surprises. Although the current economic situation has resulted in a decrease in the number of applications for new dwellings since January 2009, prior to that, the monthly figures were higher when compared to the previous year! The number of new dwelling applications in January 2009 was down by 25%, compared to the 2008 figure, February 2009 was down by 33% and March 2009 was down by 31%. Note that the only months when the total number of applications dropped in comparison with the previous year is October 2008 and February 2009.

It is pleasing to see that our figures are holding up better than some other regions, some of which are experiencing a substantial drop in numbers. Nationally it is reported that consents for new dwellings have fallen by more than 50% since the most recent peak in June 2007. It is difficult to forecast the future as there are many forces at work, but we intend to use the “quiet time” well to prepare for the forthcoming accreditation review.

I am very happy to report that the processing times are improving and we are almost achieving 100% of consents processed within timeframe. The challenge for us is to improve the standard of plans which are submitted to us, so we can reduce the number of “further information requests” which are both time consuming and somewhat frustrating for everyone.

A summary report is attached for the Committee’s information. Note that the format has changed slightly as a result of a new reporting module “Yellow Fin” being added to NCS. Any feedback on presentation and content of the statistics gratefully received.

2.1.3 Inspection Workload

The inspection workload has remained steady, in the range of 530 to 600 inspections per month. It is noted that inspection staff are devoting more time to the “older” Code Compliance Certificate work.

We are intending to do a “trial” with two inspectors using laptops in the field for their recordings, file and information access. These are increasingly seen as being advantageous for inspection work.

2.1.4 Potable Water Supply Requirement

There is a legal requirement for all new dwellings to have a potable water supply and recently we have been liaising with the local Health Department representative and our Environmental Health Officers to establish clear advice for those in areas where there is no reticulated water supply. This is not a new requirement. (Refer Health Act 1956 and Building Act 2004). In general terms, the impact is that if the water supply is proposed to be stored rainwater or from a surface or groundwater supply which is likely to be contaminated, then the normal requirement is for a first flush diverter plus a 1 micron filter and UV treatment. If the quality of the water is unknown or in doubt, tests can be done to measure potability, which staff can facilitate.

2.1.5 Earthquake Prone Buildings- Progress on Assessments

The Council’s Policy requires that those buildings which have a “special post disaster function” (Importance Level 4) should be identified and assessed by December 2008. Most of these buildings are Council owned and the assessment work has been contracted and is nearing completion. An assessment of any upgrading work will be provided within the timeframe set by the policy (15 years). Building owners will be advised of the assessment outcomes.

The next phase of this work is to identify buildings of Importance Level 3 (those that contain crowds or contents of high value) and go through a similar identification process by December 2009 with the timeframe for any necessary upgrades being 20 years.

2.1.6 Development Contributions

There have recently been several requests for reviews of the Development Contributions assessed for building projects. This process involves the more “testing” cases and the Subcommittee’s time is acknowledged in undertaking these reviews.

2.2 Animal Control

2.2.1 Dog Pound Project

The project is being managed by the Jennie Kaye-Woods (Senior Property Officer). The building consent application has been approved and tenders for the work have been received and are being assessed. It is hope that work will be able to be started in the near future. The adjacent property owner has been contacted and is keen to see the corner of Beach Road be tidied up as part of the project.

2.2.2 Dog Control By-Law and Policy Review

This matter is discussed in detail in a separate report to the Committee.

2.2.3 Dangerous Dog Classification- Hearing of Objection

In March there was a hearing regarding an objection to a Dangerous Dog Classification in Motueka. The outcome of the hearing was that the Classification remains. These objection hearings are very infrequent; the last one being more than five years ago. In our District we currently have five “dangerous” dogs, only two of them are classified and 72 “menacing” dogs, most of these are menacing because of their breed, not as a result of an incident.

2.3 Environmental Health / Maritime/ By-Laws

2.3.1 Maritime

Harbourmaster, Steve Hainstock will speak to his report on summer season activity. (see Appendix 1)

2.3.2 Food Safety / Food Stalls

Environmental Health Officer, Peter Harcom has recently done the Food Verification course, so now all EHO staff have completed this course.

Staff have been working with other “top of the south” councils to develop consistent protocols for dealing with mobile food stalls and other occasional food-related operations. There has been pressure from businesses for a “level playing field” in terms of licensing and operating standards between those running fixed, mobile and occasional kinds of operations. It is anticipated that staff will contact event / market organisers in the near future.

2.3.3 Liquor Licensing

There are various bills working their way through the parliamentary process which would amend the Sale of Liquor Act 1989. Proposed changes include; requirements for new liquor outlets to do a “social impact assessment”, allow for any person to object to an application for an on or off license and provides grounds for limiting the location, size and number of outlets in a region.

There has been noise monitoring undertaken due to complaints about loud music from a local hotel, enforcement action has been taken and monitoring is on-going. The renewal of the license has received objections from the public and the renewal will be determined by the Liquor Licensing Authority in due course and the outcome will be reported back.

2.3.4 Illegal Camping Enforcement

This issue has been raised in various ways over the summer season by not only members of the community who are concerned about litter and other unsuitable and unsanitary behavior, but also by camping ground owners and staff.

Council has a policy which is intended to enable overnight stopping in suitable areas by visitors in self-contained motorhomes and caravans. The policy has effect over Council owned land only. Certain locations are identified as being “prohibited” and some advisory signage exists in some locations. Over the summer period, it is normal for our District to receive a high number of tourists in both self-contained and non-self-contained vehicles. Visitors in non-self-contained vehicles should always use camping grounds. However, the popularity of non-self-contained vans and associated “freedom camping” has lead to a significant increase in the education/enforcement effort required of staff and contractors. Generally such visitors are co-operative and move on when approached, but in some cases they simply move to another location or are soon replaced by the next van. Advice letters have been sent to all the van rental companies informing them of our policy and asking them to pass this information onto those holidaying in rental vans. However, clearly the letters have not solved the problem.

This issue is a national one in the sense that a similar environmental and social impact is occurring throughout all regions and is challenging local government across the country. No “instant fines” are currently able to be used because there is no by-law that is being infringed. However, it is a growing problem for both the community and staff.

The summary of complaints lodged as “service requests” indicates that in the last six months (October to end March) 38 complaints about illegal camping have been received, which are roughly evenly split between Richmond, Motueka and Golden Bay.

The question is: "Does Council wish to review the current policy?" This question has resourcing and work programme implications.

2.4. Biosecurity

2.4.1 Ants

A review of the annual programme of surveillance and baiting for Argentine and Darwin's will be presented in a separate report.

MP Nick Smith had a meeting with staff following concerns raised by a rural landowner.

Landcare Research has announced that the two invertebrate research positions in Nelson will be disestablished as from 1 July. This is a real disappointment for our work on expanding baiting options and improving control methods for invasive ants in urban and rural areas. Ants are considered by some to be the "Sleeping Giant" of Biosecurity threats!

2.4.2 Marine Fouling Prosecution

The outcome of the prosecution of Diamond Offshore Drilling for biofouling was a disappointment. The judge had ruled on a legal technicality that the case was outside the six months specified for lodging information under the Summary Proceedings Act, but there is serious doubt is the relevant section of the RMA was correctly drafted.

2.4.3 Crack Willow

Crack willow was added to the National Pest Plant Accord following the last major review in 2008. As this has been widely planted along the lower reaches of all our stream and rivers, its long-term replacement will provide a major challenge for Engineering Sections in the different councils.

2.4.5 Didymo

Didymo has continued to spread slowly through Tasman District, mostly moving short distances from infested main stems into clean tributaries upstream. It was disappointing to discover it in the Waimea River by the Appleby Bridge. The nearest infested waterway is the Motueka River.

3. STAFF

Glen Buckley started on 6 April, he replaces Wayne Edmonds, Building Inspector.

Due to an internal transfer, we have had to replace one of our Administration Officers (Building).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That this report be received.

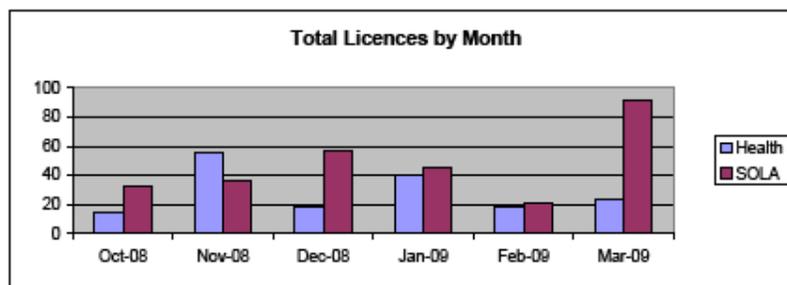
- 5.2 That the Committee indicate if a review of the *“Policy on Promoting Safe and Environmentally friendly overnight camping for self-contained Motorhomes and Caravans”* should be undertaken.
- 5.3 That the Committee notes staff will seek a review of Maritime New Zealand’s administration of temporary in-shore aids to navigation. (Refer to paragraph 9.1 of Harbourmaster’s Report.)



Jean Hodson
Regulatory Manager

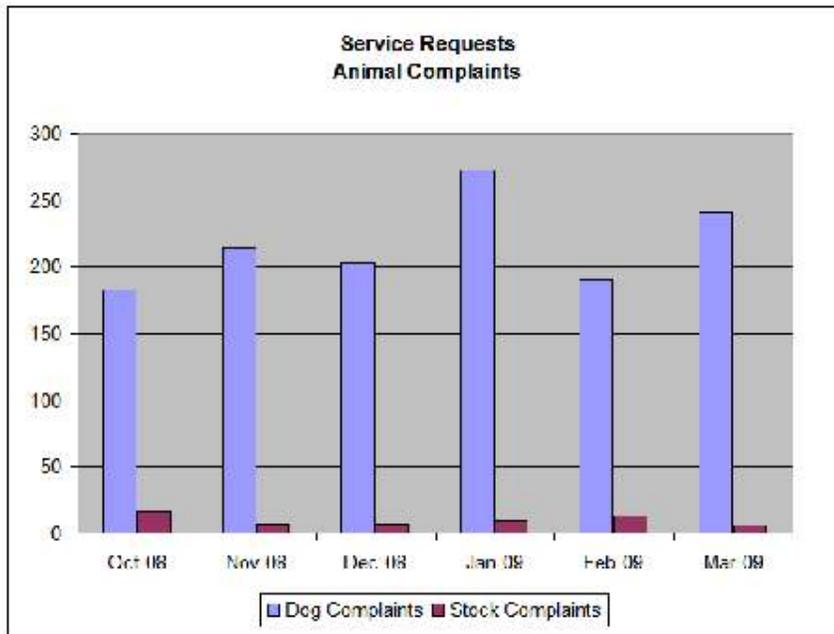
Environmental Health
Licences Issued
Oct 08 to Mar 09

	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
HEALTH						
Food Premises	14	49	13	25	14	20
Other	0	6	6	15	5	3
Total	14	55	19	40	19	23
SOLA						
Club	0	0	0	1	0	1
Manager's Cert	8	16	17	24	5	50
Off Licence	2	2	2	3	0	14
On Licence	4	3	4	3	1	7
Special	13	5	21	6	6	10
Temp Authority	6	11	13	8	9	9
Total	33	37	57	45	21	91



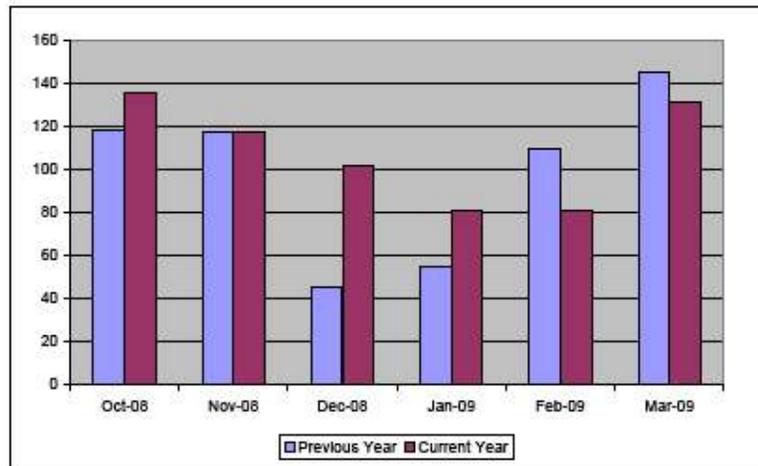
**Animal Control Statistics
Oct 08 to Mar 09**

Animal Control	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
<i>Dog Infringements</i>						
Failure to Register	142	2	0	0	0	2
Failure to Control/Confine	2	0	0	0	0	0
Failure to Microchip	19	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	163	2	0	0	0	2
Dogs Impounded	10	5	7	6	10	16
Dogs Rehomed	1	3	1	1	1	2
Totals	11	8	8	7	11	18
<i>Service Requests</i>						
Dog Complaints	183	214	203	272	190	241
Stock Complaints	17	7	7	9	13	6
Totals	200	221	210	281	203	247



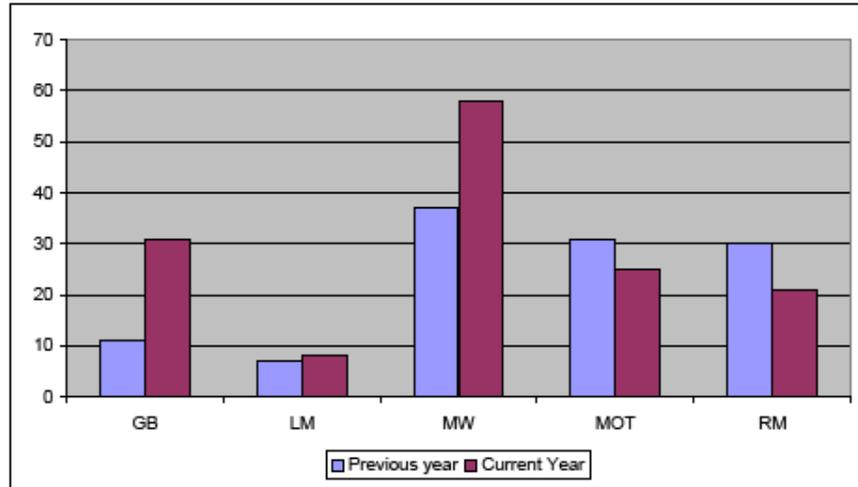
Building Consents
Yearly Comparisons
Nov 08 to Mar 09

All Building Consents		Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
Previous Year		118	117	45	55	109	145
Current year		135	117	102	81	81	131
New Dwellings							
Previous Year		23	20	8	12	20	26
Current year		30	24	18	20	15	32
Alterations							
Previous Year		25	28	12	16	33	27
Current year		39	36	23	20	15	22
Garages and sheds							
Previous Year		60	56	28	23	34	39
Current year		39	46	42	30	34	28
Heating							
Previous Year		6	7	6	2	16	41
Current year		12	4	7	8	14	41
Commercial							
Previous Year		4	20	3	1	5	10
Current year		7	24	10	3	2	6
Certificate of Acceptance							
Previous Year		0	1	0	1	1	2
Current year		8	0	2	0	1	0



Building Consents
New Dwellings by Ward
Yearly Comparison
Oct 07/Mar 08 - Oct 08/Mar 09

New Dwellings by Ward	GB	LM	MW	MOT	RM	Total
Previous Year	11	7	37	31	30	109
Current Year	31	8	58	25	21	143
Total	42	15	95	56	51	252



GB Golden Bay
LM Lakes Murchison
MW Moutere Waimea
MOT Motueka
RM Richmond

SUBJECT: Harbourmaster - Summer 2008-2009 report

FROM: Steve Hainstock, Harbourmaster

1. INTRODUCTION

The following is a report outlining the activities of the Harbourmaster since assuming the role in November 2008.

2. OVERVIEW OF STAFF ACTIVITY

November and December were largely occupied with maintaining, preparing and deploying seasonal aids to navigation, familiarisation with the role and coast, vessel maintenance, brochure preparation and distribution and issuing warrants to honorary launch wardens.

Steve Hainstock or Graham Strickett undertook daily patrols at sea between 27 December and 2 February, except for three days when patrols were shore based due to maintenance or pressing business. Patrols were also undertaken on random days before and after this main period. Patrols did not occur on two of the Statutory Holidays, as permission to work was declined. Various inland waterways were patrolled in conjunction with other business on eight days.

Office time during January and February was largely devoted to incident and enquiry investigation and response, and commercial vessel operation licensing. Field trips were made for brochure drops, inventory of assets and structures and inspection of all potential marine fuelling and vessel launching sites between Richmond and Westhaven.

Liaison meetings with DOC regarding vessel tracking and Torrent Bay access were attended, as was a meeting facilitated by Water Safety New Zealand for a Safe Boating initiative in the Nelson area.

3. COASTAL ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Settled weather over the summer period resulted in consistent and significant boating activity around the Tasman coast, particularly the Abel Tasman National Park, Tata and Waimea Inlet areas, keeping the new Harbourmaster satisfactorily occupied.

Anecdotal observations suggest a shift in behaviour towards less fuel-intensive uses of vessels, although an increase in use of Jet Skis was noted by some. Consideration of providing more for jet skiers and less for water skiers may be indicated during the Bylaw review due within the next two years.

No fatalities occurred. One injury was reported, due to vessel wake at Anchorage, and several vessels there reported significant disturbance from wakes. A sinking and a capsizing are known of, although not formally notified. Multiple founderingings were observed during the Tata Beach Titanic cardboard boat race however! A sailing catamaran suffered considerable damage after dragging anchor at Kaiteriteri.

4. NAVIGATION SAFETY ENFORCEMENT AND INCIDENTS

Steve Hainstock patrolled on 26 days between 19 November and 13 March, and Graham Strickett on 13 days.

A spreadsheet has been developed as an interim measure to manage and record incident reports and enforcement. Formal verbal warnings (after presentation of Warrant and collection of contact details) were issued to recreational craft for:

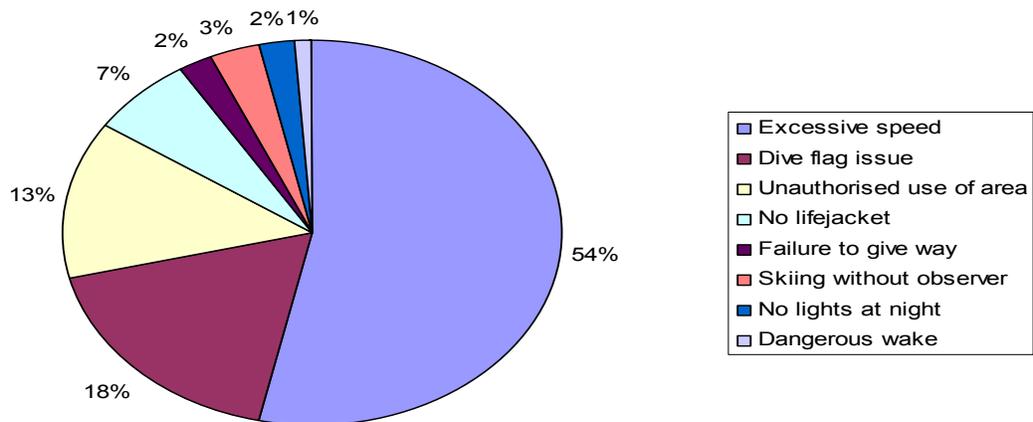
- exceeding speed limits in various circumstances (45)
- failing to show A-flag when diving (16)
- unauthorised use of an access lane or reserved area (9)
- failing to carry approved lifejackets (5)
- failing to give way (2)
- failing to be appropriately lit after dark (1)
- skiing without an observer (2)

Warnings were issued to commercial operators for eight observed incidents. Three involved speeding, one for failing to show a light, one for dangerous wake causing injury and three for anchoring in an access lane or otherwise reserved area. Non-specific allegations of Bylaw breaches by commercial vessels have been responded to by advising the relevant operations managers, who have warned their staff as appropriate. These were not recorded in the figures reported. It is intended to call an end-of-season meeting with commercial vessel operation licence holders to air any issues arising.

Two infringement notices were issued, both of \$200 for exceeding 5 knots within 200 metres of shore. No name and shame yet !

A breakdown of the offences for which formal warnings were issued, which includes those subsequently issued an Infringement Notice, is presented in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1: Formal Warnings issued November 2008 – March 2009



Observed infractions where the suspect could not be apprehended, or where an informal chat and provision of education was deemed sufficient, were not recorded.

Vessels failing to navigate at a safe speed within proximity of shore, other vessels or persons in the water continue to be the driver of the majority of complaints received, and the infraction most commonly observed. Very few skippers spoken to were unaware that speed limits apply, but many had a distorted idea of how slow 3 knots or 5 knots is, or considerably underestimated 50 metres or 200 metres.

Awareness of the need to carry lifejackets is very high, with only six vessels (two of which were kayaks) out of hundreds inspected failing to carry appropriate floatation aids for everyone on board. Given the amount of media attention to this issue, it is intended to issue Infringement Notices on the spot in future to any person not complying with the lifejacket rules, as there is no excuse for not being aware of the requirement.

Poor compliance with dive flag requirements, particularly the minimum size, was of concern this season. A notice to clubs and dive shops has been promulgated regarding this, and any breach is likely to result in an Infringement Notice next season.

This season, small chocolate bars were carried, and were distributed to those found to be complying with regulations when spoken to. This initiative appears to have been popular, and positive feedback has been received. It has also resulted in one incident of a water taxi driver approaching to ask for a Milky Bar, claiming to have taken extra care to observe the rules!

The launch warden employed by the Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve Board was present over most days of the busy period, but tended to wait until he next saw the patrol boat before reporting incidents. We will investigate how this situation might be remedied.

The Honorary Launch Wardens were issued with temporary warrants at the beginning of the season. Formal debrief meetings have not yet been undertaken, but several of them made contact with me during the season regarding their activities, and I see value in continuing to develop the network.

The following concerns have been raised or noted, in no particular order:

- Diving without a buddy or observer and diving without an A flag
- Failure by skippers to report accidents and incidents to Harbourmaster or MNZ
- Failure of vessels to monitor VHF channel 16
- Speed of vessels around Honeymoon and Breakers Bays and Tata Beach
- Almost universal failure to observe 3 knot limit at Motueka marina
- Speed of commercial vessels to and from beaches, especially at Totaranui
- Separation of boat launching/retrieval from other users at Totaranui and Stephens Bay
- Direction of travel by commercial operators around Split Apple Rock

- Wake issues into The Anchorage from commercial traffic
- Unauthorised moorings in The Anchorage (both pro and con)
- Congestion at Torrent Bay and traffic through Glasgow's Bay mooring area. Need for commercial access lane under discussion between DOC and residents
- Inconsistency between signage and Bylaw at Adele Island ski area
- Out of date signage at Lake Rotoiti and various less-used coastal access points
- Inadequate channel marking at Motueka, Waitapu and Riwaka
- Fishing in otherwise reserved areas at Rabbit Island and Mapua
- Scouring of unformed launching points
- Kaiteriteri – various aspects especially ski landing area location and conflict with swimmers, and crowded anchorage/lack of moorings leading to collisions
- Fishing guides transporting passengers in vessels that are not part of a safe-ship management system and without a Council licence

Another issue that was raised but is outside of my jurisdiction was that of waste. Occupiers of the Anchorage mooring area state that they have been charged by Kaiteriteri Motor Camp for depositing rubbish in their bins, which they consider unfair because they usually pick up rubbish from other boats on the way as a favour. They suggest that a skip be placed at Kaiteriteri for rubbish from vessels, or better yet that Council provide a boat to do a rubbish run around the various mooring areas once a week during the Christmas period.

5. RESPONSES TO CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

- Out of fuel. Provided fuel from tote tank to get back to shore.
- Tow from Pinnacle Island to Kaiteriteri.
- Dragged anchor, broaching on beach at Taupo Point. Tow vessel through heavy surf to safe water.
- Lost propeller. Tow vessel to ramp at Kaiteriteri (Note: This vessel later presented for a safety check and advice at the Safe Boating Day on 28 March)
- Flat battery. Tow to nearest jetty (Lake Rotoiti).
- MayDay. Missing diver. Directed by RCC to Croiselles Harbour. Stood down en-route.
- Report of unattended dinghy and oars anchored off Torrent Bay for some time. Grid search. Not located, presumed to have been solo diver without flag.
- Report of semi-submerged drum off Adele Island. Grid search. Not located. Issue "securite" notice by VHF radio.

- Set net dragged out to sea, possible navigation hazard. Retrieve net and large shark, tow to Motueka.
- Beach ball blown offshore. Return it to some very happy kids.
- Semi-submerged logs located and towed to shore on three occasions. Warning to mariners issued on one other occasion for log off Mapua.

6. PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS OR AGENCIES

- Marine Farm inspections – transport for Compliance staff (two days/nights)
- Environmental Health – transport to Awaroa (one day)
- Biosecurity – transport to Torrent Bay (three days)
- Coastal Scientist – transport from Totaranui to Torrent Bay (one day)
- Councillor, staff and DOC – transport to ratepayers' association meeting (one day)
- Coastal Permits – advice provided to Consents Planner (various)
- DOC – inspection and cleaning of Marine Reserve marks (one day)
- MNZ – inspection of Tier-1 fuelling sites (two days)
- LINZ – field check and comment on new chart of Abel Tasman coast (two days)
- Water Safety NZ – Inspect 17 craft at NCC safe boating event (one day)
- NCC – oil spill (costs recovered, one day)
- Fire Service – traffic management at large fire (voluntary, one evening)
- Police – respond to request for assistance following vandalism of mooring lines at Nelson Marina (secured loose yachts and maintained watch overnight)

7. BYLAW ACTIONS AND COMMENTS

Temporary reservations and/or speed upliftings were granted, notified and supervised for the following events:

- Waka Ama racing, Kaiteriteri – November 2008
- Jet boat slalom, Waimea River – December 2008
- Tata Beach swim, Tata – January 2009
- Waka Ama racing, Lake Rotoiti – February 2009
- Antique and Classic Boat Show, Lake Rotoiti – March 2009
- Power Boat racing, Lake Rotoiti – March 2009

A statutory review of the Navigation Safety Bylaw is required to commence within five years of the date of the existing Bylaw. Advice is being sought as to whether this is in relation to the January 2005 date or the amendment date of September 2006.

Preliminary consideration of recommendations for changes to the Bylaw is underway, and some of the matters identified by the Harbourmaster or suggested by members of the public are presented below.

7.1 Considerations for changes to Bylaw

- **Kaiteriteri**
 - Suggestion of narrower access lane with flare at beach only for landing, to give more skiing room
 - No swimming at estuary outlet, or move skiing beach area to Little Kaiteriteri
- **Torrent Bay**
 - suggestion to make entire inner area of Torrent Bay (from a line between eastern point of Anchorage to Ballon Rock) a 3 knot area except for existing waterski reservation, due to ongoing wake issues from access lane
 - motion from TB ratepayers to have water ski access lane available for longer period at each tide.
- **Tata Beach**
 - suggestion to create a swimming reservation
- **Otuwhero Inlet**
 - Prohibit use of powered craft in excess of 5 knots, to allow for safer passive recreation
- **Ramps and Wharves**
 - No swimming or kayaking within 30 metres of a formed ramp or wharf if vessels or vehicles are manoeuvring. No launching or retrieval at unformed ramps if it may endanger
- **Rivers**
 - Align speed upliftings in tidal stretches so that they do not overlap with whitebait season, to reduce risk to persons wading and to whitebaiting structures.
- **Moorings**
 - require all surface floats to have sufficient buoyancy and line to remain clearly visible in any tide or current
 - require all surface floats to be labelled with name and contact details of owner or agent

8. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Due to lack of time, the usual boating and water-ski brochures were reprinted based on last year's format with only minor changes, and distributed from mid-December. The brochures account for the majority of the spending on education. They will require a significant review and redrafting following the upcoming Bylaw review in a couple of years. Vandalised brochure holders were replaced at Hunter Brown and Mapua, and a new one installed at Monaco.

An article (TDC Harbourmaster Update) was published in The Fishing Paper in January, which focussed on the issue of navigation lights and day-shapes. DryCrust are negotiating with this publication for this to be a regular feature, but it is understood that there is some resistance from the publisher to printing the information at no charge for the public good.

This office has been involved with a pilot Water Safety NZ-driven Safe Boating Day at Nelson. The event may be rolled out regionally or nationally next season.

In response to the observed poor compliance with dive flag regulations, a joint notice with the NCC Harbourmaster has been produced and distributed to all dive clubs and shops in the region.

9. AIDS TO NAVIGATION

9.1 Seasonal Aids to Navigation

This season a 3 knot buoy was installed at Motueka marina upon request of the Motueka Yacht and Cruising Club. Requests have been received from residents for 5 knot buoys at Patons Rock, Honeymoon / Breakers Bay and Stephens Bay. These are under consideration. A need is perceived for more signage or buoys at Totaranui, and at Awaroa, on the basis of complaints received regarding excessive speed.

The seasonal buoys and signs were removed from Lake Rotoiti and Tukurua in March. The change in daylight savings has resulted in the remainder staying in the water about a month longer than in the past. They are scheduled for removal during April.

Discussion with Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) has revealed that Council's seasonal placement and removal of aids to navigation has not been performed under authority as required by the Maritime Transport Act 1994. The officer at MNZ responsible has advised that Council is required to apply for consent to place temporary aids to navigation two months prior to deployment, using a separate form for each buoy or aid, and pay a consent fee (currently \$53 per aid). Another form is required to be submitted upon removal of the buoys. Submission of a spreadsheet to MNZ is not satisfactory, as each aid requires a separate consent and identification number, and must be notified individually to mariners. This is going to add significant expense and administration time to the project in future. The matter has been raised with colleagues at other Councils, and will be a subject of discussion with MNZ at the annual Harbourmasters' meeting.

This is a gross example of bureaucratic overkill. To have to apply separately for each of our 142 aids to navigation is an unjustified “cash cow” for MNZ. But to have to apply when the purpose of the aids are to assist navigation is disproportionate to the risks being managed. Just think if every land based directional sign had to be signed off by NZTA.

The options of permanent installations (with attendant maintenance costs) or reducing the number of aids, are not feasible. Even convincing MZN to accept one bulk application for installation and removal is unjustified.

We propose to write to the Director of Maritime New Zealand and will take it through to the Harbourmasters’ Forum.

9.2 Permanent Aids to Navigation and Signage

New signs have been erected on the Buller River regarding jetboating; at Kina, Hunter Brown and Mapua in response to scouring by jet wash; and at Parapara regarding the five knot rule and boating safety.

Most ramps, signboards, lead-light towers and other similar assets have now been inspected, photographed and inventoried, with a view to creating a layer on the GIS system, Engineering are co-operating with the data entry, and undertaking urgent repairs that were identified during these inspections. A number of out-of-date signs have been identified, and the intention is to update or remove these, and clean the rest, before next season. A close assessment of the lead-light towers at Mapua and Waitapu in particular is scheduled, as they are approaching dereliction.

Field checks of beacons and marine farm lights from sea were undertaken on the nights of 14 January and 25 March.

9.3 Charts

A new chart, NZ 6144, focussing on the Abel Tasman National Park coastline is near publication by Land Information New Zealand. This project was promoted by this office and is the culmination of five years lobbying to get better charts. It is a good outcome.

Steve Hainstock
Harbourmaster