

# PORTAL

FEBRUARY 2024



## UP FRONT



Kia ora, and welcome to the first Portal of 2024.

It's been an energetic start to the year, with a spate of cruise ship visits interspersed amongst our regular shipping, and plenty of recreational activity taking place in the harbour as the community enjoys the warm summer.

It's been a thrill to watch our cruise business develop through the implementation of the Taranaki Cruise Strategy, which we've worked on alongside Te Puna Umaga Venture Taranaki, iwi and hapū, and other key stakeholders. We hope that the seven cruise visits this season are just the start of a sustainable increase in cruise visits for the region, culminating in '28 for 28' – that's having 28 cruise ships visit in the year 2028.

The region's growing reputation as a cruise destination has created media interest, with TVNZ's Seven Sharp doing a fantastic piece on the skill of our team to bring

these vessels to port and safely send off the passengers to discover Taranaki.

It's also fantastic to see the community getting behind these visits by not only offering a warm welcome but also, on occasion, acting as de facto tour guides!

Unfortunately, it has been a more sobering season for trade, with energy, forestry and dry bulk volumes all down in recent months for a variety of reasons.

Last year, we produced our annual report with the theme 'The Future is Now'. This was recognition that as we move towards a net-zero emissions future and our port's traditional energy trade reduces, it's important we utilise our facilities and skills to capture and support new trade.

We've known for some time that we'd need to change and adapt to the new environment and we feel the moment has arrived.

In the past six months, we've seen some real evidence that this reduction in gas production is beginning to take place and the forecast is for it to continue.

The gas market is constrained, and is affecting everyone in our region in some way. We are seeing it in reduced offshore activity and in reduced methanol volumes moving across the port. While upstream investment has been made by gas suppliers, gas production has been lower than expected.

At the same time, the big alternative industries, such as offshore wind, remain

uncertain and potentially many years away. Investment in port infrastructure is necessary for us to be able to support this future industry, but developers need assurance and the green light to get moving on projects through the rapid drafting and adoption of policy and regulations. We believe the new Government understands this, and will work quickly to enable the next steps for this potentially exciting industry.

With trade down and inflation high, we're having a challenging financial year, which is forcing us to look closely at our business and make adjustments to reduce costs. We're not alone, with every business dealing with inflation-driven cost increases.

Our mission is to make trade easy for our customers, particularly during these tougher times, and we're constantly looking at ways to serve our customers better – understanding their challenges and their needs, being responsive, and providing services where we can be competitive.

Through supporting our customers we help support the community, which remains a key focus of our business.

Ngā mihi nui

Simon Craddock  
Chief Executive

# CUSTOMERS

## Windthrown wood a windfall for port

*Just over a year ago, Cyclone Gabrielle cut a swathe through large parts of the North Island, causing devastation to lives and livelihoods.*

It also laid waste to hectare upon hectare of export forestry plantations – thousands of pine trees in various stages of their growth cycle brought down prematurely and in one foul swoop.

And while the economic and social impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle have been wide and remain ongoing, there has been a silver lining, of sorts, for many North Island ports, including Port Taranaki – the injection of windthrown wood into the export market.

On the back of the cyclone, forest owners and exporters worked quickly to salvage as much wood as possible and get it to the international market. That urgency has seen a rush to get the logs to ports before they're not of export quality, with Port Taranaki, along with Napier, Tauranga, and Centreport (Wellington), receiving windthrown wood from the Taupō-Turangi area.

The numbers are striking.

For the first six-and-a-half months of the 2023-24 financial year, Port Taranaki had received 48,000 JAS (Japanese Agricultural Standard) tonnes of logs from the Taupō-Turangi region, accounting for 10% of the port's total log volume during that period.

This compares with the full 2022-23 year, when just 8,000 JAS in total came to Port Taranaki from the Taupō-Turangi area – only 0.07% of the port's total full-year log volume. In general, most of Port Taranaki's regular log volumes come from the eastern Taranaki and Whanganui areas.

"It's utterly devastating what occurred on the East Coast, Hawke's Bay, and through the central North Island," says Port Taranaki bulk cargo co-ordinator Stuart Watson.

"Many primary industries were impacted, including forestry, which has had a difficult time in the past year with the cyclone and a downturn in the Chinese market, which has impacted at wharf gate log prices and has reduced log volumes.

"We hope that this movement and delivery of windthrown wood is, in some small way, helping the sector – from the forest owners and logging gangs on the ground, to the trucking and marshalling companies and exporters at the ports."

Stuart says the volumes of windthrown wood coming through Port Taranaki are greater than had been forecast and the deliveries are set to continue longer than anticipated.

"We had forecast to get about 3,000 JAS per month, but we're getting more than double that, and we had expected the deliveries to end just after Christmas.

"The extra throughput has been a real boost for the port, as our volumes have been down because of the international market conditions."

Stuart says while the wood is windthrown, it "looks like any other wood" that comes to port.

"Like all the wood we get, there is a mix of grades – from the top grades used for clear wood panels to lower grades for construction, such as pallets and boxing."



# TECHNOLOGY

## Upgrade launches security into the future

*Port Taranaki has carried out a major technology upgrade of its security system to help better protect the port and its customers' assets and trade into the future.*

Since the Maritime Security Act 2004, ports have been required to have extensive security, including fencing off operations to the general public, allowing only authorised access, and monitoring the gates and boundary.

"Security at the top end is very, very important. If you don't have security, you don't have a port because you're not meeting your international obligations," explains project manager for the upgrade Mark Stewart.

Port Taranaki decided to combine a move of the security control room from the port's Newton King Tanker Terminal (NKTT) to the main Port Taranaki Centre, with a major investment in state-of-the-art security technology.



Auckland company Nextro, which has produced security systems for the likes of Auckland Airport and Eden Park, designed the system that supports additional tech enhancements in the future.

The upgrade has included the addition of ultra-high definition, or 4K, monitors to support the on-port camera system; the inclusion of the NKTT's distributed control system, so that the likes of the firewater system, gas pipelines, and alarms can be accessed remotely; and 'soft radio' that

enables the comms and security officer in the control room to talk to incoming ships, the NKTT, and the port's other channels over the internet, rather than on a traditional radio system.

"We had only three screens previously, but we'll have 14 once complete, and this will include one with weather conditions, and another for our ShoreTension mooring system," says Mark.

"We can monitor the feed from multiple cameras at any time, and there's also the ability to review footage from the past 30 days."

Mark says the upgrade has been remarkable.

"It's a massive step forward from where we were. All the operations of the port are now monitored from here, including our customers', and it gives us more control, knowledge and visibility. The comms and security officer role is a very responsible position, so this upgrade really assists them with their work, which is fantastic."

# COMMUNITY

## Port puts focus on harbour safety

*As a 200m long, 36,000 gross tonnage log vessel slips cautiously into the harbour, the ship's captain and Port Taranaki marine pilot Guy Mexted keep a close eye on the mix of recreational fishing boats, kayaks, yachts and windfoils zipping around the harbour.*

Suddenly, a kayaker not wearing a lifejacket and in dark clothing, approaches too close, unaware of the danger they're in. With five short blasts of the ship's horn, the pilot and captain signal to the kayaker that they need to move well away, quickly.

Luckily, on this occasion, the kayaker is seen but, as Guy points out in one of four harbour safety videos Port Taranaki has posted on its social media channels during summer: "You may be able to see the ship, but the ship might not be able to see you!"

Safety has become an increasingly important issue in the harbour as more

and more people enjoy the water 'playground'.

The port's summer media safety campaign has emphasised the need for harbour users to know and follow the rules, particularly regarding port exclusion areas, harbour speed limits, and keeping a safe distance from cargo and port vessels. Harbour users have also been urged to do the basics of wearing a lifejacket and bright colours, flying a flag if diving or on a small craft, such as a kayak, and using a light or torch from dusk to dawn.

"The Port Taranaki harbour is a very busy mixed use space, and during summer we understandably see a rise in public use of the harbour, which results in an increase in close-call incidents between vessels and the public, and instances of watercraft and people being inside the off-limits port areas," explains Port Taranaki general manager operations Alex Park.

"It's important to remember cargo vessels are very large and heavy, and it's impossible for them to move quickly to avoid small boats and watercraft, many of which they can't see."

Signs that clearly display the Port Taranaki harbour restricted areas and speed limits are dotted along Ngāmotu Beach and the Lee Breakwater, while more detailed harbour safety information, including vessel clearance rules, can be found on the Port Taranaki website:

[www.porttaranaki.co.nz/news/keep-safe-in-the-harbour-this-summer](http://www.porttaranaki.co.nz/news/keep-safe-in-the-harbour-this-summer)



# OFFSHORE

## Final Tui work under way

*The final work to decommission the Tui oil field is under way, with Port Taranaki again providing key support.*

The Sapura Constructor, a 117m multi-purpose diving and subsea operations vessel, has started a short campaign to retrieve the four midwater arch systems and the last two wellheads from the field, 50km off the coast of Taranaki.

The midwater arch systems each include an arch, which supported the flexible lines and cables that rose from the seabed to the floating production, storage and offloading vessel Umuroa, two tether chains, and a gravity base, which restrains the arches to the sea floor.

The Sapura Constructor has a clear deck area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup>, enabling it to carry the large items.

All the recovered equipment is being brought to Port Taranaki across four visits and offloaded by the vessel's heavy-lifting crane. Nikau Group then transports the



equipment to a laydown and storage area in the port, where it is dismantled before being transported out by truck.

"We've provided berthage, laydown and storage support for the previous phases of the decommissioning campaign, so it's great to be part of the completion of the project," says Port Taranaki project manager Tasha Northcott.

"Our mobile harbour cranes and equipment may also be used throughout to assist with lifting and moving the large items, such as well severance equipment, and our pilots are guiding the Sapura Constructor in and out of the port on each visit."

The vessel can accommodate up to 120 crew, workers and project staff. Many have come with the vessel from Henderson, Western Australia, while others joined when it arrived in Port Taranaki.

With the successful completion of the decommissioning project, which has been led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the seabed will be clear of any equipment and restored to its natural state.

"It's been a complex project across the decommissioning phases, but it's satisfying to now be in the final stages and for Port Taranaki's skills and facilities to have been used throughout," says Tasha.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE



**Kim Daine likens logistics to juggling.**

"When people ask what I do for a job, I respond 'I'm a professional juggler'," laughs Port Taranaki's cargo and wharf services manager, who leads a mooring and cargo team of 20 across operations that run 24/7.

"That's what I do, there are so many areas to consider – shipping schedules, cargo movements, rosters, fatigue ... the brain never stops. It's really important to work as a team across planning and operations to ensure we are streamlined and working safely."

Kim has been a mainstay in the port operations area for the past 15 years.

Originally from Whakatane, she moved to Taranaki and milked cows before getting her teeth into logistics as Tegel warehouse manager, distributing chicken throughout the North Island and into the South.

After 20 years of service, broken by having children, she joined Port Taranaki in 2008 as the Blyde Container Terminal supervisor.

As systems have changed, and trade has come and gone, Kim has transitioned to her current role.

"I amalgamated the cargo and mooring teams, transitioning guys from mooring to cargo duties. I've also overseen changes in mooring procedures that I'm quite proud of, such as our ShoreTension system, which has massively improved safety."

Kim's also a fine juggler outside of work, finding time for her three adult children, three grandchildren – with another on the way – her 70kg rottweiler Tāne, and her Harley-Davidson motorbike.

"I've also got a pushbike, which I like to ride. So life's busy, but I like it like that."

**What does your role involve?**

I lead a team that provides a raft of services across the business – mooring operations, ship-side services, lifting operations using our cranes, Hiabs, and other lifting devices, to name a few. I also have overarching responsibility for the operational side of the dry bulk, project cargo and log businesses. Another key aspect is managing MPI and NZ Customs requirements for cargo movements.

**What do you like about the role?**

Every day is different and I like to be busy and to work under a little pressure. I really enjoy the teamwork environment and working with other businesses in the port.

**What are the challenges?**

Shipping and shipping activity is fluid, so the key is to make sure the team have everything they need to do the best and safest job. We want everyone to go home safely every day – that's my No 1 focus.