

# PORTAL

FEBRUARY 2026



## UP FRONT



Welcome to 2026!

It's difficult to believe more than a month of the new year has already been crossed off the calendar.

While for many of us, January was about enjoying time off with family and friends, and catching some summer sun between the rain showers, at Port Taranaki the focus remained on the important work of keeping trade flowing across the wharves.

A big thank you to the port team who worked through the busy holiday period to enable our customers to get their products where they're needed. Mixed January weather at times made this difficult, so I'm particularly grateful for the team's continued commitment to maintaining the supply chain and ensuring operations are carried out safely.

It's been a big start to the new year, with completion of the first half of our 2026 financial year, and the Government's announcement that it will contract to build a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in Taranaki.

As you can read in the story *Volumes*

*increase in first half of 2026* in this edition of Portal, we had a strong six months to 31 December, compared with the same period the previous year, led by an increase in dry bulk products, export logs, and bulk liquids through the port.

With trade up and operating costs down, net profit after tax has improved. While we're pleased with this result, we are preparing our business for future lower trade volumes, with the continuing decline in gas reserves and possible closure of the Maui gas field expected to result in marked reductions in bulk liquids production.

This uncertainty is driving us to focus our efforts on cost control and debt repayment to enable us to continue to operate sustainably beyond these events and continue to provide our region with dividends through our shareholder the Taranaki Regional Council.

Part of this is the launch of a business transformation programme that presumes future annual trade volumes of about 2.5 million tonnes – well down on the circa 5 million tonnes annually just a handful of years ago.

This transformation spans the breadth of our business and services, and is focused on using our talent, skills, services, marine assets, and infrastructure to attract new business, improve efficiency, and support existing customers; using technology more effectively to improve our data quality, which in turn will help improve our services and performance; investing in assets and infrastructure that have long-term benefits

and attract new business; and reducing our costs to align with the drop in trade volumes.

A key focus is seeking new business opportunities to help fill the gap created by future reduced bulk liquids volumes.

LNG is one opportunity, and we're encouraged the Government has decided to proceed to commercial contracting for an LNG facility, with a contract possibly being signed mid-year.

Although no location in Taranaki has been confirmed, here at Port Taranaki we're ready to play a supporting role if required, utilising our wharves, energy infrastructure, marine services, and skills and knowledge. You can read more about it in the story *LNG decision a 'boost for Taranaki'*.

Beyond LNG, we continue to plan for our port to become a multiuse energy and logistics hub, supporting possible offshore wind projects and other new energy projects, decommissioning of oil and gas assets, forestry and agriculture imports and exports, heavy lift project cargo, and possible roll-on roll-off services.

We have much on the go, and 2026 is shaping to be another dynamic year for Port Taranaki.

Ngā mihi nui

Simon Craddock  
Chief Executive

# COMMUNITY

## Ports take rivalry to the sports field

*There's no 'i' in 'team', but there's certainly plenty of 'ports' in 'sports' as the long-time Inter-port Sports Tournament displayed earlier this month.*

Run annually by the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ), the tournament is open to union and non-union port workers past and present from across New Zealand. Originally including bowls, snooker, darts, and cricket in the early 1950s, the tournament now focuses on golf and fishing.

The tournament alternates between North and South Island ports, making hosting rare – every 8-10 years.

This year it was Taranaki's turn, with Port Taranaki sponsoring the event that saw 44 golfers from Whangārei, Auckland, Tauranga, Wellington, Lyttelton, Timaru, Bluff and Taranaki take part. Some have been competing in the tournament for more than 50 years.

Fittingly, Taranaki had the honour of



defending the handcrafted wooden Kerekere Waka golf trophy on home turf, having lifted the coveted trophy in Invercargill last year. The waka was donated by the Kerekere family in the 1960s.

And the home team once again came out on top – the Taranaki team (pictured) of Dan Manu, Warren Powell, Tom Neil, Ross Whitmore, Nev Rowlands, and Robert Koot victorious, and now looking to complete the three-peat next year in Lyttelton.

"Everyone had a fantastic time enjoying

the spirit of camaraderie that has defined the tournament from the beginning," says Taranaki tournament liaison and Port Taranaki wharf services operator Brent Whittle.

"Special thanks to Port Taranaki's generous sponsorship, which ensures this tradition of comradeship and bonding continues for years to come."

There's the possibility the tournament will expand next year, with Australian unions having been invited to take part, adding a bit of trans-Tasman rivalry to the tournament.

# CUSTOMERS

## Light shines on log operations

*A towering addition to a log customer's operations is getting glowing reviews.*

Port Taranaki recently installed a new 10-lamp, 30m light tower in the scaling and storage yard of log marshalling and stevedoring company C3.

The installation was part of the port's ongoing programme to improve safety during night operations across the site, and to reduce energy consumption by improving lighting technology.

"Loading of ships can happen at any time day or night, so it's really important that yards and operations areas are well lit for good visibility when work is taking place," says Port Taranaki project manager Dougal Morris.

"We're also mindful of our energy usage and light spill, so we've been upgrading our towers to LED lamps, and all the lighting in the operations area is connected to the distributed control system, which uses sensors to turn on and off the lights.

"They automatically turn on at dusk to the minimal, security-level illumination. If operations are taking place, then a request is made to place the lights in operational mode, switching them to maximum output."

The tower project was carried out by a wide-ranging team – Whitaker Civil Engineering dug and poured the large concrete foundation, Pace Engineering assembled the tower on-site, and Titan Cranes lifted it into place. Port Taranaki led the project management, engineering, and IT, the port's wharf services assisted with logistics, and the maintenance team carried out the electrical work and control connections.

With the tower arriving in 12 sections, two rows of logs were moved to a Port Taranaki surge yard to allow it to be assembled on-site.

"C3 were very understanding and accommodating throughout, working with us to ensure we could get the project



completed safely around log operations."

The tower was erected in January and has been lighting up log operations since.

"It has significantly improved our log operations – enhancing visibility and safety during our 24-hour vessel loading operations," says C3 New Plymouth branch manager Shannon Wells.

"It's made it easier to conduct pre-start checks on all our plant, improved accuracy in log handling and sorting, and significantly reduced operational risks by providing clearer sightlines across the work area.

"There was strong coordination among all the stakeholders, which ensured that the work was well planned and carried out safely with minimal impact to C3 operations," Shannon says.

## LNG decision a 'boost for Taranaki'

Port Taranaki chief executive Simon Craddock says the Government's green light for a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in Taranaki is a "fantastic opportunity and a great boost" for the region.

The Government has confirmed it is progressing to commercial contracting for an LNG facility, with Taranaki the chosen location. A contract may be signed by mid-2026.

While it is yet to be determined what shape a project will take, including where in Taranaki it will be located, Simon says the port is ready to be involved.

"We're very pleased with this decision. Port Taranaki has played a key role in support of the energy sector over many decades, so we're keen to continue that support through this new development, utilising our energy facilities, experience and skills, berthing and marine expertise, should they be required," he says.

"As gas reserves decline, LNG imports



shape as an important part of the overall energy solution. In addition, the availability of [LNG] fuel for firming will ultimately support the build-out of more renewable generation projects, allowing the time for these projects to progress.

"We're aiming to develop a multipurpose facility here that can support a range of energy solutions, including renewable energy projects, such as the Kapuni renewable energy project and, eventually, an offshore wind industry," he says.

Simon says an LNG project located in the region is a timely fillip.

"This is a fantastic opportunity and a great boost for Taranaki, which has weathered several challenging years through the decline in oil and gas reserves and activity.

"We have a skilled and experienced engineering and fabrication sector in Taranaki that has developed in support of the energy industry, so there's the opportunity for this skillbase to be tapped into for an LNG project, providing economic benefits for the wider region."

The port now awaits confirmation of a chosen project and location.

"We've been working constructively with the Government – providing information and promoting the region's capability. We'll continue to work collaboratively as needed, to ensure we're ready to support a project should we be required."

Safety and engagement will be priorities for an LNG project.

"Health and safety are paramount for any development that includes the port and its facilities, and our relationship with the community is incredibly important, so we would work with Government and the developer to engage with the community and work alongside iwi and hāpu."

# TRADE

## Volumes increase in first half of 2026

*It's been a busy first six months of the financial year at Port Taranaki, with more dry bulk products, export logs and bulk liquids passing across the wharves.*

For the six months to 31 December 2025, total trade through the port was 1.74 million tonnes, which was an increase of 260,000 tonnes on the same period in the 2024-25 year.

Liquid bulk trade was up 25,000 tonnes to 717,000 tonnes, dry bulk was up 143,000 tonnes to 512,000 tonnes, and export log trade was up 95,000 Japanese Agricultural Standard (JAS) tonnes to 505,000 JAS.

With the increase in volume has come an increase in vessel visits, with seven more vessel visits compared with the first half of the 2024-25 year.

"It has been a pleasing first half with gains across the key sectors that utilise the port," Port Taranaki chief executive Simon Craddock says.

High milk solids prices and reduced

interest rates led the increase in dry bulk volumes, while improved weather conditions enabling trucks to access forest sites, more stable log pricing, and an increase in volume coming from outside the port's traditional hinterland boosted export log volumes.

The increase in bulk liquids volumes was led by a small increase in methanol volumes, but Simon says it should be recognised that this is in comparison with the previous year, when there were lower methanol volumes because the Motunui plant was taken offline for a period to provide gas to the electricity market.

"The nature of trade through the port means we are exposed to the variances of weather, supply, demand and trade trends. Throughout these ups and downs we remain focused on working with our customers to make trade as easy as possible – helping make businesses successful and fuelling regional growth," he says.

Total revenue for the period was \$30.93 million, an increase of \$5.02m on the previous year. Total operating expenditure was down \$385,000 to \$19.18m.

As a result, net profit after tax was \$7.84m, up \$3.97m on the corresponding six months in 2024-25.

"We're expecting trading in the second half to be lower given it is likely methanol production will again be idled to allow gas to be used for electricity production during peak winter demand."



## New roles highlight port's growth from within

*They might come from different backgrounds, but their equalled drive for development and growth is leading to professional success and helping shape Port Taranaki's future.*

Ben Martin, 41, and Amy Wilson, 40, have recently taken up important new roles at the port – Ben as business development manager and Amy as operations manager marine.

Having shown enthusiasm to learn and an appetite to be challenged, both have risen through Port Taranaki, taking advantage of the port's strategy to develop its own people and invest time in their professional growth to create a strong, experienced, multi-skilled and well-rounded team.

"I take the view that if we're not learning we risk stagnating. And I want to keep learning," says Ben, who has moved from operations, as marine manager, to commercial, in the newly created role developing new lines of business for the port.

Amy agrees, having progressed from an administrator position three years ago to, now, a management role overseeing a team of 20.

"It's easy to get stuck in your own lane, but it's much more interesting when you stick your hand up and get involved in things. This leads to more opportunities," she says.

In her new position of operations manager marine, Amy is responsible for the management of the tugs and launch teams, and the marine pilots.

"A large part of the role is people management, including rostering – making sure the teams are running smoothly so they can make the critical decisions for the port's operations."

It's been a circuitous journey for Amy, who has always had a focus on learning and improving.

"I had my two daughters when I was relatively young, and I was passionate about being home with them and not missing out on those early years. But I still wanted to grow, so I became involved with a few committees, got stuck in, and learned a lot."

Jobs in banking and retail management



followed, while at the same time she completed a Bachelor of Applied Management.

"I've been very lucky – Port Taranaki has been really supportive providing opportunities and training to progress. While here I've completed a Certificate in Port Management, and I'm about to start a Diploma in Port Management.

"The new position is exciting. I don't necessarily have the depth of marine knowledge that others previously in this role have had, so it's fantastic the team are happy to support me and teach me. In return, I try to look after them and make sure that their workplace is a safe, happy place."

Ben is playing a leading role as Port Taranaki searches for new business opportunities as the types of trade across the wharves changes, in particular the reduction in oil and gas products, and the possibility for liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports, business improvement, and offshore operations, among others.

"The commercial team needed extra help to develop new lines of business, so my job is to go and hunt new commercial opportunities – from identifying an opportunity for the port and developing relationships with potential clients, through to working internally and

Port Taranaki business development manager Ben Martin and operations manager marine Amy Wilson.

externally to realise the opportunity and executing contracts," Ben says.

Ben came to Port Taranaki via the Royal New Zealand Navy, having had a busy career navigating vessels and leading the navy bomb disposal and diving team as a navy diver. His final role with the navy was as commander of HMNZS Otago.

Wanting to settle down with his young family, he secured the fleet manager position at Port Taranaki, then was seconded into a temporary general manager operations position, before becoming marine manager.

During his time at Port Taranaki, he has also completed a Master of Business Administration (MBA), and is in the process of training to be a marine pilot.

"It's really exciting to change from the operations to commercial team, I am enjoying bringing a different perspective to the team.

"There are great opportunities for Port Taranaki on the horizon and I'm passionate about the region, so I'm keen to help it grow, develop and continue to play a key role in Taranaki."