

PORTAL

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UP FRONT



Energy, its shortage and potential remedies, have dominated media in recent months, as the Government and business grapple with a worsening situation.

Reduced supply and higher gas prices are impacting a greater range of businesses than previously understood – from market gardening to wood processing – which was starkly illustrated by the latest GDP figures that show the economy contracted by 0.9% in the June quarter.

We announced our 2024-25 year-end financial result in September, and while we were very pleased with a net profit after tax (NPAT) of \$9.50 million, it came with a caveat of forecast long-term reduced trade volumes through port.

Total trade through the port for the 2024-25 year was 3.10m tonnes, which was 810,000 tonnes, or 20.7%, down on 3.91m tonnes the previous year.

The pressure on the overall energy sector of reduced gas resulted in Methanex idling methanol production for periods during winter 2024 and winter 2025 to sell gas for electricity production.

It's a reminder that not only does our port face a very difficult outlook, forcing us to focus on reducing our costs, so do many of our customers. This flows through to the Taranaki economy and impacts employment, opportunity, and growth.

Therefore, we welcomed the Government's announcement early in October of a range of reforms aimed at ensuring long-term energy security, resilience and affordability.

For some time, we've been promoting our port's potential as a multiuse hub for energy developments, including offshore wind production, new energy solutions, renewed oil and gas exploration and production, and liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports.

The Government's launch of a formal procurement process for an LNG import facility in New Zealand is very encouraging.

We believe Port Taranaki is the right fit – utilising our existing energy infrastructure, including wharves, pipelines, and storage areas, and our connectivity to national transmission pipelines and storage facilities.

Our port is in a strong position to quickly and efficiently support the development of a small-scale, low-cost LNG project for the winter 2027 deadline, or a larger facility that would meet future energy demand needs.

We understand there may be some hesitancy in the community regarding LNG and its safety. The technology has advanced considerably in the 20 years since Port Taranaki was last considered as an import location, and any facility would be tightly regulated, with operators submitting a

strict safety case covering hazard analysis, prevention, and emergency response before any development got underway.

Like our Newton King Tanker Terminal energy wharf, modern terminals incorporate multiple layers of protection – automatic shutdown systems, gas and fire detection, and engineered containment – and we would work with developers, regulators, operators, and emergency services on best-practice design, hazard analysis, prevention, and emergency response.

We now await December, when a decision by the Government of whether it proceeds with the next stage will be made following parties' registration of interest.

Lastly, trade for the first quarter of the 2025-26 year has been encouraging. There's positivity in the dairy sector, which has been reflected in increased dry bulk products through the port, and we're recording increased log volumes. To ensure we can best support the export log supply chain during busy periods, we've developed a new 'surge' log yard, which you can read about in this edition of Portal.

With winter now behind us, hopefully we can look forward to a brighter forecast, and a sunny, relaxing Christmas and New Year.

Ngā mihi nui

Simon Craddock
Chief Executive

Gauge fills gap in tsunami monitoring

Port Taranaki is playing a key role in helping strengthen New Zealand's ability to monitor and respond to tsunami threats and, ultimately, help protect the public.

Earth Sciences New Zealand's GeoNet programme has installed a tsunami gauge at Port Taranaki, which fills a critical gap in coverage in New Zealand's Tsunami Monitoring Network along the west coast of the North Island.

"This installation is a vital step toward improving our national resilience to tsunami hazards," says Dr David Burbidge, tsunami scientist at Earth Sciences New Zealand.

"The gauge gives us a clearer picture of what's happening in real time and helps us better understand tsunami behaviour during and after an event."

The gauge will serve two key functions:

- Monitoring: Delivering real-time data to assess current conditions and support emergency response and de-escalation.

- Post-event analysis: Providing detailed information on wave arrival times, amplitudes, and propagation to improve scientific models and forecasting.

"This isn't just about collecting data, it's about protecting people. Accurate, timely information can save lives and help communities recover faster after a tsunami," Dr Burbidge says.

"To get the best data, we look for locations with deep water, simple seabed topography, easy access, and proximity to population centres or critical infrastructure," Dr Burbidge explains. "Port Taranaki meets these criteria well, making it an ideal site for this installation."

As well as providing an area near the end of Blyde Wharf for the tsunami gauge componentry, Port Taranaki has also led the on-site project management.

"As a lifeline utility, Port Taranaki has a key role to play prior, during and post natural events, so having technology on-site that will help give our community



The stainless steel pole that houses the tsunami monitoring equipment is lifted and placed in the water and secured to Blyde Wharf.

vital information and contribute to time critical advice should a tsunami occur is invaluable," says Port Taranaki chief executive Simon Craddock.

Summer sun, fun and harbour safety

With longer and warmer days approaching, Port Taranaki is reminding the community to 'stay safe on the water this summer'.

The summer months are extremely busy in the harbour as commercial and port vessels operate alongside recreational boats, watercraft and swimmers.

"The Port Taranaki harbour is a great place to play, but it's also a busy working harbour," says Port Taranaki chief operating officer Alex Park.

"During summer, in particular, there's a real mix of activity from yachties, kayakers, and waka ama to boaties, swimmers and wind foilers. And when you add in 200m long cargo vessels, with port vessels assisting them during arrivals and departures, it can become very congested and hazardous."

Alex says it's incredibly important all harbour users look out for each other, and know and follow the harbour rules, particularly the speed limit areas, the port operations restricted areas, and the safe distances from cargo and port vessels.

"There are signs at the Lee Breakwater carpark and along Ngāmotu Beach that clearly show the harbour bylaws, while it's important to remember that large commercial vessels move faster than they appear and can't easily stop or turn, so those in or on the water must keep at least 50 metres away from the sides and stern [rear], and 300 metres from the bow [front]."

Alex recommends harbour users avoid shipping movements altogether by checking the shipping schedule on the Port Taranaki website before they head out. The schedule can be found at: www.porttaranaki.co.nz/shipping-and-sea/shipping-forecast/

"When you're on the water, please also remember to always wear a lifejacket, wear bright colours, fly a flag, and use a light or torch from dusk to dawn. If you're diving or swimming, use floats and dive flags, and wear bright headgear if you can," Alex says.

Port Taranaki is again running a series of harbour safety videos on social media this summer, this time highlighting safety messaging from some of the key harbour users.

"Different harbour users have different areas of focus regarding safety, so it's important the messaging reflects that. We want everyone to have fun and stay safe on the water this summer."

The Port Taranaki harbour bylaws are displayed on signs along Ngāmotu Beach and the Lee Breakwater.



ENVIRONMENT

Data key to enhancing water quality

Increased testing and a detailed study are helping Port Taranaki get a clearer picture of the quality of water in the harbour.

As part of its stormwater discharge consent with regulator the Taranaki Regional Council, Port Taranaki must ensure that sampled water released into the harbour through its stormwater system falls within limits for total suspended solids (TSS).

TSS are solid, non-dissolved particles in water, including sediment, algae, bacteria, and organic matter, such as log bark and particles.

In recent years, Port Taranaki has installed a number of vortex separator systems in log yards to capture log particles and help clean the water before it enters the harbour.

"The harbour plays an integral role in our community and for our business, so we want to make sure we look after it as best as possible," says Port Taranaki environmental manager Kevin Lehrke.

"The nature of log yard stormwater means that you can take a sample and get one result and take another sample 10 minutes later and it will be totally different."

Because of this variance, when applying for its current consent, which was granted in August 2024, Port Taranaki requested some flexibility and for a more scientifically robust sampling and assessment process.

As well as an increased allowable TSS limit, Port Taranaki was permitted to meet the TSS threshold 95% of the time, which is an approach that is consistent with many other ports that handle logs.

"Because the assessment is done statistically, we need to have a whole lot of data to analyse whether we are compliant 95% of the time. So we engaged testing company SGS to carry out more sampling and testing than has ever been done before - aiming to get 100 TSS results over a 12-month period."

TRC continues to carry out its own sampling, along with site inspections and auditing of SGS' testing.

"We provided a stormwater monitoring report to the TRC in September for the past year, and were pleased the report showed our TSS results were within the 95% allowable limit," says Kevin.

Port Taranaki is also carrying out a study to determine stormwater variability, involving the use of auto sampling machines to take multiple samples throughout rainfall events, from which the port can get an event mean, or average, of TSS.

The data will be used for future consent consideration and to further help protect the harbour.



A DAY IN THE LIFE



Willie Southorn

If anything's likely to make you reconsider your career choice, then clambering up an external ladder to repair a light fitting at the top of a soaring 35m light tower is probably it.

But the nerve-wracking ascent doesn't faze Port Taranaki apprentice electrician Willie Southorn.

"I generally don't mind it – just clip the harness on, climb up, and try not to look down or notice the tower swaying in the wind!"

It's just one of the 21-year-old's many and varied jobs as he nears the end of his

three-year apprenticeship, which grew from work experience as part of the Gateway workplace training programme while at Francis Douglas Memorial College, to a fulltime job and a promising electrical career.

The port's maintenance team has been a strong supporter of the Gateway programme, giving a number of school students a career taste. Willie impressed with his attitude and ability, and was the first able to transition the opportunity into a fixed-term apprenticeship.

"I'd tried different trades at school, including building, but I really liked the electrical work. I did some residential electrical work experience and then came to Port Taranaki, which I found more interesting as it was working on a range of things, such as motors and transformers, and working on the tugs and pilot launches."

Although he clearly has a head for heights, the Ōkato native, who enjoys spending time surfcasting along the Taranaki coast, going to the gym, and playing piano and guitar, has his feet firmly on the ground.

"I've got my final exams at the end of the

year, so I'm focusing on those and am excited about becoming qualified."

What does your role involve?

Day-to-day it's working alongside a qualified electrician and learning as much as possible. We work on a range of things, such as preventative maintenance and fixing breakdowns, and new projects as well, such as recently installing new sector lighting for vessel navigation, and wiring new light towers. Lately, I've also started doing some jobs independently, which is nice.

What do you like about the role?

I like that it's interesting work and there's a good mix. I'm getting industrial electrical experience, but also some residential-type experience through the likes of installing power points and light switches. You get puzzled fairly often too, so you have to work through the problem and find a solution, which I like doing.

What are the challenges?

When breakdowns happen, it gets pretty busy rushing around trying to get things back going so they don't hold up port operations.

CUSTOMERS

New log yard eases storage demand surge

An industry-wide forum to understand how Port Taranaki can better help the export log sector has had immediate results, with a new log yard developed that will keep the supply chain moving during busy periods.

Port Taranaki initiated and hosted the meeting of exporters, trucking companies and marshallers in June, from which a number of solutions were developed to optimise the port's available land areas and existing yards for log storage.

"Sometimes weather conditions or other factors can mean a log vessel can't come to port when scheduled, which results in logs sitting on log yards longer without being cleared and greater demand being put on existing log storage," explains Port Taranaki operations planner Kurt Biesiek.

"This can then impact the whole supply chain. If all available space has been used, the truck companies aren't able to bring their cargo to port, which means the exporters can't ship their product, and production slows or halts at the forest site, impacting the logging companies.

"Our company mission is 'Enabling trade, fuelling regional growth', so it's incredibly important we listen to our customers and work with them to make trade easy, which was the focus of the forum."

While a number of the proposed longer-term solutions will be investigated and implemented over time, Port Taranaki moved quickly to ease immediate demand pressures with the development of a new 'surge' log yard.

"A surge yard is an area that is outside the log storage allocation model for exporters. It's controlled by Port Taranaki, and we assign its use to a particular exporter when space is constrained and their vessel is due," says Kurt.

The concrete pad on the site of the former Moturoa store, which was removed in 2022, was identified and assessed as being suitable.

"It took a real cross-port team effort," says Kurt, who was the project co-ordinator.

"Our engineering team carried out strength assessments to ensure the pad could withstand heavy log loaders and the logs; maintenance installed a border around the site for safety and connected the pad to the stormwater system; and a safe, workable traffic management plan was created by operations in consultation with the marshallers."

Once complete, the yard was put into operation, initially as a trial.

"It went very well. During the trial we had 2,000 JAS (Japanese Agricultural

Standard) tonnage in the yard, which equates to about 60 trucks – a substantial amount of cart-in wood.

"The marshallers enjoyed using it – it's easy to navigate – and the exporters were pleased to have the additional capacity at times of storage constraints."

The yard is now officially in use and is likely to take more wood when some final work is carried out.

Now the cross-port project team is looking into some of the other longer-term solutions to further improve log storage space.

"We're looking at every log yard and every piece of port-owned infrastructure and thinking 'what can we do to be more efficient from a storage point of view?'. "

"Small things, like the realignment of the edge of log rows, can actually result in a large yield, so it's not all about creating and sealing new areas – you can get quite a bit of extra space out of making sure you get the most from your existing yards," Kurt says.

"And it aligns with one of our long-term strategic aims of having flexible use for all our laydown areas."

Project co-ordinator Kurt Biesiek says the new 'surge' log yard is a key addition to the port.

