



PORTLAND

JULY 2018

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UP FRONT

Taranaki Rugby's 2018 season motto is Strongfor18 – an incredibly prescient slogan considering the news in recent weeks that Yarrow Stadium has been deemed an earthquake risk and the future of the iconic rugby ground is, literally, on shaky ground.

It's also a fitting battle cry for Taranaki as a whole this year, following the Government's unexpected announcement in April that no further offshore oil and gas exploration permits will be granted.

While the Government's decision and its repercussions are still being digested and determined, there's little argument it has been a massive blow to the industry and the Taranaki region, which is the home of oil and gas in New Zealand. The industry plays a large and important role in the prosperity of our nation and, of course, the wellbeing of our province – Port Taranaki included.

Port Taranaki is a key cog in the supply chain and it's no surprise the industry is the biggest source of revenue for our business, with Waitara-based Methanex our largest customer. Our business, like many others in Taranaki, will be greatly impacted by this decision. Every rate payer in the region will in time be indirectly affected via lower dividends to our owner the Taranaki Regional Council.

Being strong and holding together is vital at such a difficult time, and it's been heartening to see, read and hear the support of people from all walks of life, both within Taranaki and further afield, many of whom are concerned that the Government's move is short-sighted, uninformed and unlikely to have any positive impact on its aim of tackling climate change.

What this announcement also doesn't do is change our support of the oil and gas industry, which is resolute. We will offer assistance to our partners in any way we can as they consider the way forward.

We're an intelligent, hard-working, industrious bunch here in Taranaki, and I'm confident we will hang tough in the coming months and years.

Strongfor18, and beyond, we must be.

Guy Roper
Chief Executive



GAS KEY TO 'RESPONSIBLE' TRANSITION

Energy supply will become unreliable and costs will increase unless the Government "acts responsibly" and recognises gas as the key transition fuel for a net carbon zero New Zealand by 2050, Port Taranaki chief executive Guy Roper says.

"Gas is the enabler, not the impediment, for achieving the Government's goal," Mr Roper says.

"We support tackling climate change, but if New Zealand is to move to a new energy supply then gas is the crucial link for maintaining reliable and affordable energy for our homes, businesses and industries."

In April, the Government announced that no further offshore oil and gas exploration permits will be granted.

Some onshore permits will be offered to the industry for the next three years.

Mr Roper says it is vital for energy supply reliability, longer term confidence within the industry, and the investigation of potential alternative fuel solutions, that onshore exploration is on-going.

"Gas provides over 25% of New Zealand's primary energy needs but proven gas reserves are the lowest they have been since 2003 and are forecast to reduce in a relatively short period. New resources are far from guaranteed and need on-going investment, so continuing onshore gas exploration is essential and the absolute minimum.

"We need to get the transition right. If we don't there will be domestic shortages, which will drive up energy costs and

increase imports, there will be increased use of higher carbon fuels, such as coal, and the closure of the oil and gas industry, resulting in job losses."

A large part of Taranaki's economy and prosperity is tied to the oil and gas sector, with nearly 6000 of the 8500 industry jobs based in Taranaki. Including related industries, the number of jobs linked to the industry is about 11,000.

Port Taranaki is a key part of the supply chain, with 2.5 million of the company's five million plus trade tonnes being in bulk liquids, including methanol and LPG. Methanol producer Methanex is the port's largest customer.

"The consequence of the Government's lofty goals could be the halving of throughput at the port. This will put pressure on jobs and the port's ability to support the region through dividends that are paid to our owner the Taranaki Regional Council," Mr Roper says.

He says the Government must be responsible, have a credible plan and work with the industry to ensure a 'just transition'.

"As a company we have to be responsible across a range of things, including health and safety, major hazards and climate change, so we expect the Government to act responsibly as well to achieve a balanced outcome when discussing the future of an industry that annually contributes \$2.5 billion to the economy," he says.



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WHARFIES ADAPT TO CHANGING INDUSTRY

They're something of the worker bees of the port industry – busily toiling away to ensure the ships in port are loaded or unloaded quickly, safely and efficiently.

Stevedores, also known as longshoremen, dockworkers, and wharfies, provide the key link between the port and the vessel. Multiskilled, they operate a range of machinery from cranes and forklifts to grabs and on-ship excavators in all weathers and at all times of day and night.

Andy Matuku has been a stevedore for close to 15 years, starting off as a casual before working his way up to foreman and now operations manager for SSA New Zealand Taranaki.

SSA, an international stevedoring company, has had a presence at Port Taranaki since the early 1990s when it took over Southern Cross Stevedores. It was most recently known as New Plymouth Stevedoring Services.

Like the name, the job has changed markedly over the years as the types of cargo has evolved and the way it is carried has adapted to new technology and new markets.

"There have been huge changes. We have people working for us who are the second or third generation of a family to

work as stevedores, right back to when there used to be 200-300 wharfies," Andy says. "Now we have a permanent staff of 17 and as many casuals."

Containerisation did away with the manual sorting of most ships, and in the process did away with a large proportion of the wharfside workforce. Now, with container services having ended at Port Taranaki, logs and animal feed and fertilisers dominate.

"The skills have had to adapt. With logs being a big part of the business, we've had to become skilled in operating on-ship excavators to load logs neatly. There's a real knack to it so we train as many staff as possible," Andy says.



Time is money in shipping, so Andy works closely with SSA Taranaki's cargo clients and shipping agents to ensure stevedores are on-hand as soon as a ship arrives in port.

"Once we've started there's no stopping – it's 24/7 until the ship is loaded or unloaded. Staff generally work 12 hours on and 12 hours off or rolling eight-hour shifts."

It's a tough job, but also rewarding, Andy says.

"Every day is different. The job is the same but the dynamics change depending on the weather, the people and the cargo. So if you don't mind shift work and working in the rain, it can be a job for life."

OUR TUG

KĪNAKI BEGINS LONG CAREER ON SEA



Grant Squire's 'baby' is all grown up and out on the water.

For three years, the commissioning, design and build of Port Taranaki's new tug Kinaki has dominated the waking – and sleeping – hours of the port's marine engineering manager.

But now that Kinaki is on the water and into work, Grant can take a breath and reflect on what has been a successful project.

Grant has worked at Port Taranaki for 42 years and been involved in a number of the port's big marine projects, including as operational tug engineer during the construction of

the tug Tuakana in 1996, and project lead for the build of the pilot launch Mikotahi in 2014.

But being project manager of Kinaki tops them all.

"It's definitely the highlight. It was a step up for me to take control at this level, as I've always had another person to bounce ideas off," he says.

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"But it was a great opportunity, and it's been pretty incredible to take something like this from concept to completion, which I've really enjoyed. It has been three years of my life so has very much been my 'baby'.

"What has made it more special is that it was the first build of this design, so we had quite an influence on the design and changes that were particular to our requirements."

The Kinaki is a 25m in-harbour tractor tug, which has the propellers at the front allowing for better handling in the rugged West Coast conditions. It was built by experienced tug builders Sanmar Shipyards, of Turkey, and is based on a

design by leading tug designer Robert Allan, of Canada. Among its state-of-the-art features are Caterpillar engines, Rolls-Royce propellers and an electric towing winch by DMT.

Most importantly it has a bollard pull in excess of 60 tonnes – now the industry norm as vessels get larger. Kinaki replaces the Kupe, which is 47 years old and has a bollard pull of just 28 tonnes.

"The Kupe was at the end of her life so we needed a vessel that was fit for purpose, simple to maintain, reliable, user-friendly, and would provide long-term security of shipping operations through increased bollard pull," Grant says.

That led him to Turkey and Sanmar, who were a clear standout when tendering for the Kinaki project. Grant built up a close relationship with the company, making six trips to Istanbul during the process.

"They were quick trips – six day turnarounds with just two days on the ground over there. But Sanmar made the whole process run smoothly. They were very easy to deal with and very professional and accommodating."

The nine-hour time difference between the countries did make for some late nights in New Zealand, however.

"Because of the time zones, I would often start getting emails from them



about 7pm in the evening through till about 11pm, so it was almost a 24-hour-a-day project – my wife was very tolerant," he laughs.

Now complete, he says he is

extremely proud of Kinaki, and the tug has exceeded his expectations.

"We were wholly reliant on Sanmar's systems and integrity during the project, and we couldn't be more

pleased. During sea trials all the criteria were ticked off and exceeded, so we believe Kinaki will be a great long-term addition to our fleet."



TUGS THE PORT'S QUIET ACHIEVERS

They have been the subject of many a children's story – think Little Toot and Scuffy the Tugboat – but tugs are far from child's play.

"They slip in and out quietly and do their job of mooring the ships safely, but most people don't really get a true appreciation for the work they do," Port Taranaki marine supervisor Chris Musgrave says.

"Ships aren't designed for close quarters manoeuvring, so the tug masters are very skilful at operating the tugs to safely move the vessels to the berth – it's a very pressurised job."

Port Taranaki has three tugs – Rupe, Tuakana and the Kinaki, which has replaced the 47-year-old Kupe. Each has a skilled crew of tug master, tug engineer and deckhand.

"Most vessels need two tugs to moor, so most ports have at least two tugs. We have three, which ensures it's business as usual should one be out of service. This also allows us to support the offshore oil and gas industry." Chris says. And meaning a happy ending for all. Toot, toot!

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WOMEN'S RUGBY ON RAPID RISE



Glenn Noble hopes there comes a time when women's rugby isn't singled out as something special.

"That's our aim," Taranaki Rugby's community rugby manager says. "We don't want it to be 'women's rugby' and 'rugby', which tends to refer to the men's game. We just want the women's game to be part of 'rugby' – no differentiation." Taranaki Rugby is working hard to achieve that, with the union having established various girls' and women's teams and competitions across all ages as part of a three-year strategic plan to grow the game. The focus has exceeded expectations, with a 24% increase in female player numbers last year, and Taranaki Rugby expecting a further increase of at least 10% this year.

Long-time Taranaki Rugby supporter Port Taranaki, whose three-year principal sponsorship of the men's Mitre 10 Cup team finished this year, has noticed the commitment and growth, and has signed on as a key supporter of the women's game. Port Taranaki is now the naming

rights sponsor of the Taranaki women's team, the Taranaki women's sevens team, and the girls' secondary schools competition through until 2020.

"We saw women's rugby as a great fit with our company," Port Taranaki chief executive Guy Roper says. "It is gaining in popularity and strength locally and nationally, and there are now clear pathways developing for female players to make a career in the game, which is exciting and aligns with our values to ensure people have the opportunity to develop and grow."

The Port Taranaki girls' secondary schools competition is in full swing, with six 15-a-side teams playing home and away matches, culminating with the final on August 11.

Glenn says the girls' secondary schools competition has come on leaps and bounds in just its third year.

"We've gone from a three-team combined schools competition, to a six-team competition, with eight schools involved. We've got more than 120

secondary school age girls now playing regular competitive rugby, which is fantastic," he says.

"The standard is improving quickly and there are some great skills on display."

The increased player depth and numbers means that for the first time since 2013, the Port Taranaki women's rugby team will compete in the Farah Palmer Cup national provincial championship – the highest level of women's rugby in New Zealand – in September and October.

"We're really excited to be back," Glenn says.

We want to foster a life-long love of the game, from five-year-olds through to adults, and having a team in the Farah Palmer Cup gives the young players a clear pathway to representing Taranaki and maybe even the Black Ferns.

"Port Taranaki's support is tremendous and is great recognition of how the community sees women's rugby and where women's rugby is heading," Glenn says.

HELPING TO KEEP SUGAR LOAF SWEET

Port Taranaki is playing an important role in an ambitious project to eliminate pests threatening the region's birds and wildlife.

Taranaki Mouna is a 20-year, \$24 million conservation project which, through intensive pest and weed control, aims to restore the ecological vitality of more than 34,000 hectares of Taranaki.

It includes Egmont National Park, the peaks of Kaitake, Pouakai and Taranaki, and extends to the Ngā Motu/Sugar Loaf islands – which is where Port Taranaki joins the fight.

The islands are just off the port and are a haven for birds and sealife. They host about 10,000 seabirds of 19 species, they are a breeding site for fur seals, and the waters around the islands host about 90 species of fish. A rare plant, Cook's scurvy grass, is also found on the islands.

Keeping predators, such as mice, rats, feral cats, stoats and weasels away from the islands is a conservation no-brainer.

"As a port, we are a first point of entry for grain, which attracts rodents," explains Port

Taranaki environmental manager Bridget Harrison. "Our boundary is the biggest launching pad and the shortest swim to the islands for these predatory pests so we have an important role in protecting them."

Operating along a coastline that is a breeding ground for little blue penguins and home to native plants and birds, Port Taranaki already has an extensive trapping regime in place.

But through its involvement with Taranaki Mouna, Port Taranaki has added another 30 traps, particularly around the nearest points to the islands – the former power station site and the Main Breakwater –

bringing the total to 200 traps stretching from the tip of the Main Breakwater to the end of the Lee Breakwater.

It's a collaborative effort, with Taranaki Regional Council, Department of Conservation and local schools making and installing traps, the Ngā Motu Marine Reserve Society recording pest trap data, DOC looking at pest types, and Port Taranaki extending its trapping network and making its pest data available to Taranaki Mouna.

"We're not driving the project, but by doing a little bit hopefully we are able to make a big difference," Bridget says.



TWO 
THUMBS UP!

Port Taranaki is now on Facebook, keeping you up-to-date with the latest happenings on, in and off the water.

So spread the word, invite your workmates, friends and family to 'like' the page, and help get our busy port thriving online.



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