

Report No.	21-60
Information Only - No Decision Required	

## HARBOURMASTER'S REPORT

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the **Manawatu River Users' Advisory Group (MRUAG)** with an update on matters relating to navigation and safety on the Manawatu River and its tributaries.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee recommends that Council:

- a. receives the information contained in Report No. 21-60.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 3.1. There is no direct financial impact arising from matters discussed in this item.

### 4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. This is a public item and therefore Council may deem this to be sufficient to advise the public.

### 5. SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS RISK IMPACT

- 5.1. There is no significant business risk from matters discussed in this item.

### 6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1. This report covers the period December 2020 to May 2021.

### 7. RIVER EVENTS

- 7.1. The annual meeting and BBQ for Honorary Enforcement Officers and support organisations was held Tuesday 8 December 2020 at the **Manawatu Marine Boating Club (MMBC)**. Another good turn out to this annual event, and a great opportunity for all those involved to get together and reflect on the year.
- 7.2. The Welly Paddlers are holding an event on Sunday 22 August 2021, starting from the boat ramp on Harbour Street Foxton. This event is due to start at approximately 10.00am and finish at 12.30pm. Chester Burt, organiser, has been in contact with the MMBC and has Coastguard assisting with traffic coming out of the loop and back in to it again. Participants will be using the area opposite Wharf Street so the boat ramp will not be required to be blocked off for public access. The organiser has been directed to liaise with the Horowhenua District Council regarding any requirements that they may have.
- 7.3. Due to unprecedented low river conditions, JetBoat NZ have had to postpone a number of events.
- 7.4. Over the next 3 – 4 months they are hoping to hold planned events on the upper and lower Oroua and upper Manawatu, as well as a few runs planned on the mid-section of the Manawatu river through the city reach.
- 7.5. The Harbourmaster has not received notification of any further events planned at this time.

01 June 2021

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**8. GENERAL COMMENT**

- 8.1. Horizons Regional Council has recently worked with NZTA regarding hazard signage at the Ashhurst Bridge and Ferry Reserve to warn public of the Manawatu river bridge works for Te Ahu a Turanga.
- 8.2. The signs are located at the Manawatu river access in Ashhurst and the Woodville Ferry Reserve. The pictures below show the locations of the signs, and the signs themselves.





- 8.3. Over the summer months the Coastguard team again installed the speed restriction buoys 200 metres upstream and downstream of the boat launching ramp at Foxton Beach. These buoys have now been removed and will be installed again next summer.
- 8.4. Applications are now open to apply for funding from Maritime NZ to deliver recreational boating safety programmes. Horizons is currently working through the funding application

01 June 2021

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process and delivery options of the programme. The focus will be on monitoring, education and compliance.

## **9. MONITORING OF SURFACE WATER ACTIVITIES ON LOWER MANAWATU RIVER**

- 9.1. During December of last year Horizons Regional Council received multiple reports and enquiries from members of the public regarding behaviours of water users in the Manawatu Estuary and Whirokino areas.
  - 9.2. In response to this Ross Brannigan, former Harbourmaster and employee of Horizons, was engaged to undertake on-site monitoring and education services of the water users in those areas particular areas.
  - 9.3. Overall, Mr Brannigan's presence and discussions with river users was well received and acknowledged. In addition Mr Brannigan distributed material to support the monitoring programme such as bylaw summary brochures. Maritime NZ promotional items such as waterproof cell phone pouches, floatable key rings, dry bags, and 3 PFD's (Personal flotation devices) were also issued to users who were observed conducting excellent adherence to Maritime rules.
  - 9.4. Mr Brannigan's observations were that there was a large increase in water users in comparison to previous years, and this was mainly Jet Ski users.
  - 9.5. Some of the common concerns raised and confirmed via the monitoring activities were:
    - Excess speed within 50 metres of other people in the water;
    - Excess speed within 50 metres of another watercraft;
    - Non-adherence to 5 knot speed restrictions where these are set;
    - Children under 15 years of age having control of a watercraft (jet skis);
    - Vessels towing water skiers/flotation devices not using an observer;
    - General unsafe use of a watercraft;
    - A lack of educative Bylaw and Maritime Rules signage at the locations;
  - 9.6. A positive that was identified throughout the monitoring activities was that there was 100% compliance in PFD use.
  - 9.7. Aligned to the findings of the monitoring programme, measures are being undertaken to update the Bylaw and Maritime rule signage at Foxton boat ramp and Whirokino boat ramp.
  - 9.8. As discussed in 8.4, the funding from Maritime NZ will focus on monitoring and education around the other concerns noted above.
  - 9.9. Brendan Tootell (AFC Motorcycles) and a MMBC member, are leading the process to get a Jet Ski adjunct formed within the Manawatu Marine Boating Club. Brendan is being assisted by a number of other local Jet Ski enthusiasts. The intent of the group is to monitor and educate other Jet Ski users around navigation safety and adhering to the Maritime Rules, and in providing a forum where they can link in and work with statutory authorities to prevent injuries on water. It will be useful for us to link into this group.
- ## **10. CENTRAL DISTRICTS JET BOATING NZ MANAWATU RIVER USERS GROUP REPORT**
- 10.1. Central Districts Jet Boating Club would like to thank Rangitāne, Horizons and Palmerston North City Council for their support in celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our branch and 40 years of Jet Sprinting.

01 June 2021

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10.2. The weekend was a success both on the Saturday, with a poker run held between Fitzherbert Bridge and Ashhurst, with approx. 40 boats on the water, and Sunday, with spectators able to view the on-water action from vantage points along the river.

10.3. There was a good variety of the old pre-1962, and the latest 1500 HP super boats.

**Richard Anderson, Central Districts Branch**

## **11. REVIEW OF NAVIGATION SAFETY BYLAW**

11.1. The review of the navigation safety bylaw is now underway with meetings being held with iwi partners and river users in February and March of this year.

11.2. Following on from extensive discussions with these groups it became apparent that some parties believed that there were other areas outside of navigation safety that should be considered as part of the bylaw review process.

11.3. As a result of this, and to provide clarity around the scope of the bylaw review, a legal opinion was sought regarding the following:

- The status of the current bylaw and timeline before it lapses;
- To clarify the intent of the legislation (Maritime Transport Act) in regards to making of navigation bylaws;
- With the intent of the Act in mind, confirm its suitability (and the ability) to manage wider matters under the Navigation bylaw such as potential environmental effects resulting from surface water activities;
- To seek advice as to Councils ability to enable external agencies outside of Council to carry out enforcement activities under the bylaw, and any inherent risk in that.

11.4. At the time of writing this agenda the final legal opinion had not been received, however it is expected by late May. Once the legal opinion is received we will be in a position to recommence the review process and the associated engagement with iwi and other stakeholders. Members will be further updated at the June meeting of the User Group.

11.5. Given the pause in the process due to the legal opinion being sought, a draft bylaw is still to be created for iwi and river users to review. Once this process is complete we are required to send it to the Director Maritime New Zealand for review before it can be publicly notified.

11.6. Subject to the Directors approval of the draft bylaw, Horizons will then publicly notify it for a period of 20 working days to give the public an opportunity to provide submissions.

11.7. Once the public submission period is over a hearing date will be scheduled, if required.

## **12. SIGNIFICANCE**

12.1. This is not a significant decision according to the Council's Policy on Significance and Engagement.

Jeanie Boost-Turner  
**HARBOURMASTER**

Ian Lowe  
**MANAGER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Ged Shirley  
**GROUP MANAGER REGIONAL SERVICES  
& INFORMATION**

## ANNEXES

There are no attachments to this report.