

**BEFORE THE DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEE
AT AUCKLAND**

IN THE MATTER of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf
(Environmental Effects) Act 2012

AND

IN THE MATTER of an application for a marine dumping consent by
Coastal Resources Limited to dump dredged material at
a deep-sea site east of Great Barrier Island

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF MARK EDWARD THOMPSON
ON BEHALF OF DREDGING NEW ZEALAND**

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Mark Thompson and I am currently the General Manger at Dredging New Zealand (“DNZ”). I have held this role for 4 years. Prior to this, I was a Maritime Officer at Maritime New Zealand for 4 years, undertaking Compliance Audits & Inspections under the Maritime Transport Act. Prior to this I spent my working life in the Maritime sector in a number of different roles, and currently hold a New Zealand Certificate of Competency as a Commercial Master & lead auditor for ISO 9001:2008 International Safety Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and Pollution Prevention 2010.
2. My role is to manage the overall running of Dredging New Zealand. I deal directly with key stakeholders, regulators, consultants, CRL and marinas on the day-to-day management of their dredging requirements. I have a team of 12 that assist in the Dredging operations.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

3. My evidence today will:
 - a. Provide an overview of current marina dredging operations
 - b. Provide a list of those other organisations which have expressed an interest in using the CRL site
 - c. Provide an overview of DNZ current Dredging Equipment
 - d. Provide an overview of Dredging Methodology
 - e. Provide an overview of Dump Trip Compliance
 - f. Provide my view of the critical role the CRL site plays in accepting dredged material and the need to increase its capacity.

Current Dredging Operations

4. **The following marinas are current clients of DNZ, with the annual consented dredging approvals.**
 - a. Hobsonville Marina consent for 20,000m³
 - b. Henderson Creek consent for 5,000m³
 - c. Hobsonville Point consent for 230,000m³ (Note – this is a total and not annual allocation)
 - d. Pine Harbour Marina & Channel consent for 13,000m³
 - e. Bayswater Marina consent for 5,000m³
 - f. Bucklands Beach Marina consent for 1,800m³

g. Whitianga Marina consent for 3,000m³

Interest in using the CRL Site

5. The following organisations have expressed interest in using our services for dredging, with the dredged material to be disposed of at the CRL site.

- a. Orams Marina
- b. Sandspit Marina
- c. Whitianga Water Ways
- d. Te Atatu Boating Club
- e. Panuku Development

DNZ Current Dredging Equipment

6. DNZ's equipment consists of the following:

Name	MNZ Number	Type	Size
Soundcem II	MNZ 132384	Powered Split Offshore Hopper Barge	43m x 8m – 347m ³
Soundcem III	MNZ 133019	Powered Split Offshore Hopper Barge	43m x 8m – 347m ³
RHR	MNZ 133694	Bottom Dump Barge	40m x 12m - 439m ³
Mina Campbell	MNZ 134051	Coastal Tug	18m
Brick 2	MNZ 133937	Inshore Tug	8m
UB40	MNZ 135544	Digger Barge	16m x 8.5m - 60m ³

DB3	MNZ 135543	Digger Barge	24m x 8m - 100m ³
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7. All DNZ equipment is fully certified under the Maritime Transport Act 1994 and administered by Maritime New Zealand. DNZ currently holds an operator’s Certificate of Compliance until April 2025 and have being audited by Maritime New Zealand as low risk.

Dredging Methodology

8. The dredged material will be either capital or maintenance dredging, and the material will change from site to site. Its composition is generally made up of marine sediment, clay, sandstone or mud or a combination of all. The material is removed from the sea floor by Hydraulic Excavators (Backhoe) and transferred into the Digger Barge’s hopper were any excess water will run off the top leaving 90% dredged material, to then be transferred to an Offshore Hopper Barge, then transported to CRL’s offshore dumpsite.
9. The dredging that we transport has a density of 1.5 to 1.8 tonne per m³ with a less than 10% water content, with this reduced water content we have no dredged material slop out of the hopper bins on the way to the dump site. The material has the consistency of thick porridge. When we dump the dredgings the material disappears and goes straight to the sea floor, which is backed up with Hydrograph surveys at the dump site.

Dump Trip Compliance

10. DNZ is responsible for compliance with the disposal consent including any monitoring and reporting requirements to CRL & EPA for each trip that DNZ undertakes. Below are a number of requirements that DNZ meets per trip:
- a. Marine Mammal Monitoring Method

Monitoring for Marine Mammal activity is to be carried out 30 minutes before the vessel reaches the disposal site, a photo of the GPS will be taken, at the start of the monitoring. A crew member will observe the surrounding area visually during the monitoring period to ensure no Marine Mammals are in the area, This is undertaken using binoculars or night vision.

No dumping shall occur until at least there is 1.5 kilometres separating the Offshore Dump Barge and the marine mammal or 30 minutes has passed with no mammal activity being observed by the crew.

The crew are trained by our Senior master to identify or spot marine mammals. This training is refreshed annually.

From our experience we would be lucky to see any marine mammals. Over the last four years we have only had two marine mammal sightings at the disposal site.

We also have to undertake a hydrophone sounding for 30 minutes prior to dumping. This information is submitted to CRL and EPA after each trip.

b. Harbour Masters Notification

The Master will lodge a passage plan with the following information 12 hours before each trip departs by email to the Harbour Master, EPA, DNZ & CRL:

- Vessel name
- Permit number
- Departure date/time
- Disposal date/time
- Arrival to Port date/time

c. Trip Records

The Master will take photograph evidence during the trip as follows and are submitted to CRL within 12 hours of return to Port:

- Harbour Masters Notification
- Loadline
- Bin load
- Start of Mammal watch (GPS)
- Disposal site (GPS)
- Ships logs
- EPA Acknowledgement form

The Critical Role of the CRL Site to the Maritime Sector

11. Put quite simply, in my opinion the CRL site is critical to the future of the Maritime sector in Auckland, and the Coromandel area – those areas use this disposal facility. Without the ability to dump dredged material into the NDA my experience is that many of the marinas in the above areas and likely the

port areas, will in a short time cease to be able to function. For most of these locations sedimentation of the berthage areas and often the approach channels are a serious and ongoing impediment to safe navigation and berthage.

12. We have been fortunate in the Auckland region for example over recent years that there have been significant reclamations under way, and in particular around the Port Company's holdings. Large amounts of maintenance dredging material have been deposited within these reclamations. Unfortunately for the dredging disposal industry this is now coming to an end. Further, the Auckland Explosives Dumping Ground was available for disposal for many years as well and this is not now the case.
13. I do not have the detailed figures on the material to be dredged over the next few years but with my knowledge of the sector it is apparent to me that the current 50,000m³/annum available at the NDA is significantly less than is required. The application is to increase the capacity of the site to 250,000m³ per annum. I believe this is realistic and will be needed. For example, the Hobsonville Point consent alone provided for 230,000m³ to be dredged. The Port Company carries out significant dredging annually. In my view it is not appropriate to "undersize" the disposal site. My understanding is that the applicant company has undertaken extensive technical investigations of the NDA site and have concluded that with careful management the effects will not be significant.
14. Managing the effects is something that Dredging NZ has partial responsibility for. In my evidence above I have bullet pointed methods, monitoring and records we must comply with when using the NDA site. I have referred to these so the Committee is aware of the efforts we make, as required by the CRL in using their site, to ensure the impacts of our operations are kept to a minimum. All parties have a role to play in minimising the effects of disposal at the NDA site.
15. I have considered other means of disposing of dredged material at the request of clients. The most obvious of these in disposal to land. However, land disposal is always significantly more expensive – up to three to four times the cost – of marine disposal. These high costs are caused by the multiple handling needed, by the transport costs with each truckload only handling around 7m³, and landfill fees. An additional cost is the cost of time. At the moment our barges can carry up to 430m³ per load out to the NDA site. The time it would take to unload this material, dry it and load it back onto trucks for land-based disposal would be significant. Instead of taking weeks to dredge a marina, it would in my estimation take months.

Conclusion

16. From the perspective of a dredging company I support the application by CML to increase the capacity of its NDA site. In my opinion the current consented 50,000m³ per annum is inadequate and will not meet the needs of Auckland region and parts of the Waikato region. This is a serious issue and there is the potential for some marinas for example to lose their ability to retain safe navigational access.
17. I accept that there is the potential for there to be environmental effects including effects upon local fin fish and marine animals. However, I believe that with the continuation of stringent dumping conditions these impacts can be minimised.

Mark Thompson

1 November 2018