

Practitioners Workshop - 24 July 2018

Present: Chair: Jono Underwood (Marlborough District Council)
Don McKenzie (Northland Regional Council)
Sophia Clark (Northland Regional Council)
Paul Sheldon (Tasman District Council)
Kathy Walls (MPI)
Jonathan Miles (Auckland Council)
Eugene Georgiades (MPI)
Peter Lawless (TOS Marine Biosecurity)
Ross Archer (Fabdock)
Ken Wright (Tasman District Council)
Samantha Happy (Auckland Council)
Hamish Lass (Bay of Plenty Regional Council)

Jono Underwood (MDC) explained that the discussion was about opportunities to be more effective at the front line, sharing experiences, moving forward as practitioners and using opportunities to work better together.

Peter Lawless (TOS) asked “what do we need to be more effective at the front line of marine biosecurity?”

Don McKenzie (NRC) said we need rules, rules are a great changer of behaviour. We need infringement fines under the Biosecurity Act - this changes behaviour. We work with boaties, and you have to front them and keep fronting them. It would be a great step for all of our rules that we have in place, national plans included to be available in one place.

Jono asked what are some of the steps from finding an issue, what operational process do you go through?

Sophia Clark (NRC) replied that when we consider what might be a situation for an infringement fine, we take into account all relevant factors - do they know what they were doing, was it a clear breach of the rule, what behaviour did they take immediately, what has their reaction been since we informed them. We take it to an Enforcement Committee, the same as any infringement. We have situations where people have taken all reasonable steps that they could to mitigate the risk, and in that situation we saw that an infringement notice wouldn't help the situation and would be a penalty without any gain.

Kathy Walls (MPI) said I would like to see all slips having a clear understanding of the requirements, whatever it takes to ensure that an effective hull clean is carried out. We know there are issues with the bottom of the keel not getting cleaned and I think the other issue is to somehow grapple with the lack of infrastructure. There are not enough facilities for slipping vessels in many regions, and some of the slips are not adequate for different types of vessels.

Jono asked what are the potential steps for this room of practitioners?

Paul Sheldon (TDC) replied we need to look at the whole certification process and how to best manage it. whether it's in-water cleaning or goes wider to cleaning standards. Through Tasman and Nelson there's a paucity of cleaning facilities. He suggested councils and Port Nelson get together and talk about how this can be organised structurally. He will get a meeting with members of Nelson City Council and Port Nelson to start talking about the facilities.

Don McKenzie asked whether we ever thought that the community or rate payers might provide a floating dock system on a swing mooring that could be used but managed by the community who could regularly clean hulls. Rather than antifoul, that boating club uses

one Fabdock in a communal way to treat their vessels. The community takes ownership and it's a low cost treatment facility.

Sophia said we're dealing with an aging community who can't get into the water.

Kathy said that fabdocks should only be used for an urgent situation. Because of the issue of heavily fouled vessels that have hard bodied organisms which create a surface for a very flexible organism like *Sabella* to hold onto.

In the context of preventing fouling on recreational vessels and the use of isolated docks, Eugene Georgiades (MPI) said that either you have a dock that has freshwater in it or the dock is raised from the water (i.e., no contact with the marine environment). Data regarding the efficacy of treating a slime layer with chlorine would be required as would the purpose of the treatment (see [comments](#)).

Don said there are boaties who want to take leadership, if they had a facility like that they would use it.

Kathy said that in Waikato, in Coromandel harbour there is a slip with a trailer that takes a yacht up to about 15 metres long, they drive it up and antifoul it. There is another who has bigger trailers that can lift larger vessels. There are some low tech options that are more palatable.

Paul said that cleaning down hulls at the beach is far from ideal.

Kathy replied that you could start working the standards.

Jono asked what looking forward, what the implications would be of a national pathway plan?

Peter said you have to know there's an issue entering your area. Putting effort into collective work and intelligence gathering even where we don't have any rules.

Ross Archer (Fabdock) said that lack of vessel registration was an issue. Maybe it's a time to start boat registrations.

Kathy replied that's a massive issue aside from biosecurity.

Jono asked how might we get heads-up information flow on vessels moving between regions?

Don said Northland has a database of over 2,000 hulls and that will grow so the data will be there. We have boat names and sometimes a photo.

Sophia said we have funding to develop a database with pictures of boats, what moorings they are on etc and will be moving to a platform that can be accessed by the vessel owner to get that information back to them. We want to do a database that would be a two-way access point for us to put data on and for boat owners to put their data on about when they cleaned their boats, and that other councils can use. It sounds like vessel registration, but essentially it's data sharing. There could be privacy issues and boat owners need to be happy to share that information. Marina operators are on board with it.

Peter said in a practical sense it's 3 or 4 of the most active areas getting together, what do you observe, what data do you gather from people - it's not all the same.

Don said he thought it was possible, there's not an endless amount of vessels in New Zealand.

Someone said that he liked Don's idea about fines - if you had a Warrant of Fitness (WOF) that lasted for 12-18 months you don't have to worry about it for a while. If you fail to clean when it's due again you get a fine.

Kathy said some individuals anti-foul their own boats would they would have to have a standard?

Jonathan Miles (NRC) said there needs to be consistency around rules so it's not confusing, and for LOF as well.

Don said people understand the WOF system for cars. What if you said you need a WOF so whoever you are, wherever you are, your hull needs to be clean full stop. It's just a cost of owning a boat. He thinks people would understand that. You would need to have a clean hull anywhere in New Zealand.

Kathy said a lot of work has been done on facilities currently available in a number of regions. It can be useful to have a directory so people see where they can have their boats cleaned around the rest of New Zealand. It would be great to be collated as a national picture and electronically available so it can be updated. Others said there could be issues around how do you manage the amount of traffic wanting to be cleaned and a good idea would be keeping an inventory of where other fab docks or skill sets lie, so you can see where everything is available.

Sophia said we have a volunteer antifouling declaration - it's not a clean vessel pass and we will see what the uptake is.

Ross said use a fab dock - boat owners drive their boats in, there's no growth on the boat or in the waterways. We are starting to eliminate the problem and stop the travel of the pest.

Jono replied we are generating the demand for things like that.

Kathy said there is a wide range of fab docks in Australia, I notice they have heavy biofouling in the enclosure system. What do you think about that? If the marina structure has all these species on it they are going to wind up growing in the enclosure system.

Ross said it is an issue. With the fabric system, the growth breaks away and doesn't stay for long.

Kathy asked whether there a risk of a vessel sitting in a dry dock - should you do something about biofouling in the marinas?

Paul said cleaning a vessel is reasonable, cleaning a marina is not.

Don said marina managers want clean structures, but haven't invested in it. If we had a rule that hulls had to be clean then the finger would be pointed at the structures needing to be cleaned. He thought we need those clean structures alongside clean hulls, but marina managers haven't been incentivised enough. If boaties have a choice, they will go to the clean marina. Someone said it was a similar argument in the aquaculture space, it's someone else's fault. If vessels keep themselves clean the marinas may find some economic benefit.

Don asked what could we do tomorrow? I'm not clear what regions have rules or what they are. If we had another status check on what rules are where, going into summer that would be wonderful collectively. It would be good to put alongside the craft risk management standards.

Peter asked are you thinking we might publish that for all the boaties?

Don replied yes that would be fantastic. There is a possible key message - everyone has a responsibility and a role to play in managing their own risks.

Jono said if you get good information those messages need to be in tune and cohesive.

Sophia said we need to have more of a profile in marine biosecurity. We're a very small group dealing with a huge boating community. We're dealing with an aging population of boat owners. We need to improve on our community engagement with that particular demographic.

Jono said there is a risk of being a bit flimsy because you have so many little things happening, it needs to be really solid.

Ken Wright (TDC) said every year we do a survey of recreational boat users, talking to people about why we're doing the survey, Barrie diving to find information, so it helps for us to get an idea of where fouling is coming from, a bit of an audit annually.

Don said awareness is important, we need more momentum together. The Americas Cup will be an opportunity for Top of the South and Top of the North and other regions to make a collective statement to the Americas Cup fleet and that will get a message to the rest of the world. A great global stage. We shouldn't miss that opportunity.

Kathy said those yachts are coming to New Zealand and will come earlier and stay longer, they will be going to a lot of nice places around New Zealand, so we do need to pull together on this as there's quite a lot at stake.

Jonathan Miles discussed all of the biosecurity requirements above and below water; and used the most recent example of a Plague Skink incursion at Havelock due to spat lines being brought down from the Coromandel Peninsula in bags, those bags opened and skinks running out. To be linked to a broader awareness campaign of pest species associated with industry, that have the potential to be moved around.

Next Steps:

Jono asked people to look at the Bionet website (www.bionet.co.nz). There's a marine biosecurity forum - register for that. Use that for intel. Go away and talk around vessel haul-out facility infrastructure capacity, cleaning vessels and how they go about it. Keep plugging away with an approach bigger than just your region. TOS and TON continue to talk on databases etc - if we could share a platform that could only be of benefit. Formalise the intelligence gathering and sharing. It would be worthwhile to get all councils with rules and assembling in an attractive package.

Don said MPI and DOC should be included in those rules.

Jono thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting closed at 5.00pm

[Comments from Eugene Georgiades: Couple of further thoughts for consideration - Managing vessels beyond a slime layer is not considered practical/feasible given that microfouling (bacteria, microalgae and cyanobacteria) can attach to surfaces within hours of re-emersion. Callow, M. E., & Callow, J. A. (2002). Marine biofouling: a sticky problem. Biologist, 49(1), 1-5.

What are the ramifications of having a domestic standard set at a more stringent level than an international standard? i.e. the CRMS let's in vessels with a slime layer - see: Georgiades E, Kluza D (2017) Evidence-based decision making to underpin the thresholds

in New Zealand's CRMS: biofouling on vessels arriving to New Zealand. Marine Science and Technology Journal 51: 76-88.

Given our learnings from the recent Cawthron study circulation within internal pipework will be an issue. This treatment only manages a subset of vessels - i.e. those that can fit the enclosure.

If this were to go ahead - What is the consideration of length of time a vessel can remain in the original area following treatment prior to movement to the new area?]

What we need

Rules/fines (infringement)

Take into account:

- Did they know of rules?
- What did they do immediately?
- Location of home port.

Effective hull cleaning register

- Facilities (not enough or adequate).
- Standard of antifoul.
- Cleaning of niche areas.
- WOF - certification and recording of information.
- In-water cleaning
- TOS specific meeting.
- Community floating dock (cleaning).
- Inventory.

Pathway Plans

- Need intelligence.
- Communication.
- Registration of vessels.
- Requesting of information.
- Consistency and LOF.
- What rules and where in New Zealand.
- Carrot and stick approach.

Regulatory status NZ

- Including RMA.

Americas Cup opportunity

www.bionet.co.nz