

PORTAL

MAY 2023



UP FRONT



It's about this time every year, when the colder weather sets in, that you start to consider whether you made the most of summer – walks on the beach, swims in the ocean, BBQs and evenings on the deck ... did I really take all those summer opportunities?

Grasping opportunities is also important for our business to ensure we have 'no regrets' in the future.

Offshore wind energy is one such opportunity and as it gathers momentum in Taranaki, we're getting alongside the developers who have shown a genuine commitment to establishing an offshore wind energy industry in New Zealand.

Formalising this partnership, we have signed an agreement with NZ Super Fund and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners' Taranaki Offshore Partnership, and BlueFloat Energy, to work together to assess how the port can serve as a hub for offshore wind development.

The study will help build an understanding of how our assets, infrastructure and land can support the industry, and also determine whether particular port upgrades and investments are needed.

It's sensible and encouraging that the key

players are working on this together – we share a common goal of helping New Zealand decarbonise, while, from our perspective, we also want to help Taranaki remain the No 1 energy province in the country and to prosper economically in a low-emissions environment.

The recent 2023 Offshore Renewable Energy Forum was further evidence of our region's commitment to utilise the energy skills, knowledge and infrastructure – developed over decades – in a new energy environment. We found the forum to be encouraging and invigorating.

In February, we reported a net after-tax profit of \$6.53 million for the first six months of the financial year, to 31 December 2022 – a 28% increase on the previous year. This was a pleasing result, although influenced by non-recurring items, such as a tug charter and offshore support work at the Māui gas field.

Trading remains uncertain given the inflationary environment and although second-half trade is expected to improve, annual total trade is expected to be below five million tonnes.

We continue to change and adapt our port to support our customers, with a focus on helping make trade as easy as possible. We are repurposing two areas for additional on-port log storage, and are looking to develop additional storage to assist with windthrow timber from the central North Island as a result of Cyclone Gabrielle.

Activity in the offshore industry continues, and we were pleased to have assisted with the move of the Valaris 249 jack-up rig from the Māui B gas field to Admiralty Bay, in the Marlborough Sounds, and to have

hosted specialist well intervention vessel Helix Q7000 as it prepared to head to the Tui oil field to work on the third stage of the Tui decommissioning.

While financial performance is incredibly important, operationally, health and safety remains our top priority. In line with our business-wide policy of continuous improvement, we have recently classified our high hazard areas, such as the wharves and log yards, as Restricted Areas.

A Restricted Area means an individual must gain permission before they can enter, and these areas are clearly marked with improved signage and road markings. These changes apply to everyone operating on the port.

The Government-initiated review into port safety and resultant action plan have put increased focus on port health and safety, and we're pleased and proud to be making changes to help improve safety and ensure everyone working on the port goes home safe every day.

Lastly, it was very special to have HMNZS Aotearoa in port recently on her second visit to her home port. The ship's company attended Anzac Day commemoration services around the region, which was very much appreciated by each community.

Summer may be a distant memory but there's always something to enjoy and appreciate.

Ngā mihi nui

Simon Craddock
Chief Executive

Grand arrival kicks off Tui decommissioning

The third stage of work to decommission the Tui oil field began with an impressive arrival recently.

On a bright, crisp May morning, the Helix Q7000 arrived off the New Plymouth coast from Perth, before Port Taranaki pilot Captain Adam Eager was transferred by helicopter onto the vessel and eased her into port, accompanied by Port Taranaki tugs Kinaki and Tuakana.

The specialist well intervention vessel, a state-of-the-art unit that specialises in decommissioning projects, was in port to carry out a crew exchange and to load supplies for the campaign – to plug and abandon the field wells – which is expected to take about three months to complete.

Port Taranaki head of commercial Ross



Dingle said the port was pleased to be of support, having also provided berthing services and laydown facilities for the first two stages of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment-led project.

“The well abandonment is the most

important part of the project, so we’re very pleased to assist,” Mr Dingle said.

New Plymouth-headquartered energy consultancy and developer Elemental Group is providing project management assistance of New Zealand operations for Helix Energy Solutions during the campaign.

“All up, there will be a team of more than 100 on the Q7000, over half being Kiwis and Aussies in operations roles working alongside the Helix crew, as well as several specialist roles, such as wireline and cementing,” Elemental Group director Nick Jackson said.

“We’re excited to be a part of the project. I worked on some of the original Tui exploration wells, so it’s nice to be involved in restoring the mauri of the area.”

COMMUNITY

Kiwis rule the world in cup’s return

Kiwi dominance capped a fantastic day of action as the world’s best triathletes returned to Port Taranaki for the World Triathlon Cup at the end of March.

After an absence of four years because of COVID-19, the New Plymouth stop on the World Cup circuit was back, with athletes eager to earn early-season points in the race for Paris Olympics 2024 qualification.

That meant for a strong field, and for the expectant and parochial Taranaki crowd, there was a brace of perfect results, with a Kiwi one-two finish in both the women’s and men’s elite races – Nicole van der Kaay led home Ainsley Thorpe in the women’s race, while Hayden Wilde dominated the men’s race and Tayler Reid prevailed in a photo-finish to claim second.

“It was a fantastic day and we’re really proud and pleased to be able to again support this great event by hosting it here, and having some of the world’s

best triathletes back in New Plymouth racing,” says Port Taranaki chief executive Simon Craddock, who presented the placegetters with a pounamu.

“Ngāmotu Beach and the surrounding port area is a perfect spot for this event and we always have great feedback from the athletes that they love racing here – not only for the challenging course, but also the fantastic community support leading up to the event and on raceday.”

The World Cup was one of a number of events on the day, where hundreds of athletes of all ages and abilities competed in the Tri Taranaki Festival. Included was the New Zealand Sprint distance age-group championships, the Taranaki Tri-er for first-timers, and a Taranaki Secondary School Sports

Association race. Port Taranaki also hosted the Weet-Bix Kids’ TRYathlon at Ngāmotu Beach.

“Logistically, it is quite a big undertaking for us, with roads being closed around the port to facilitate the event, but it’s important for our region to be able to attract and retain these top events, so we’re thrilled Tri Taranaki Festival and World Triathlon are keen to come back every year.”



Photo: The NZ Team

Momentum builds for offshore wind

From developers to policy makers, iwi to investors, and infrastructure proponents to environmental watchdogs, the large number gathered at the 2023 Offshore Renewable Energy Forum was evidence of the increased interest in low-emissions energy production in New Zealand.

"Momentum is really building," says Port Taranaki chief executive Simon Craddock, who attended the New Plymouth event along with Port Taranaki staff across commercial, engineering and marine.

"It was the third such forum, and there was a lot more energy this time. There was a bigger gathering, and more detailed discussion about what is needed to get these projects underway."

The 2023 forum focused on understanding what barriers remain to commercialising offshore technologies, and how these can be overcome, as well as ensuring the greatest possible benefit

for the community, local supply chains and service providers.

As the closest port to at least two of the proposed offshore wind sites, its energy industry experience, and the land, facilities and berths on-hand, Port Taranaki is expected to play a vital supporting role in the development of an offshore wind energy industry.

Recently, Port Taranaki signed an agreement with NZ Super Fund and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners' Taranaki Offshore Partnership, and BlueFloat Energy, to study how the port's assets, infrastructure and land can support the industry, and whether particular port upgrades and investments are needed.

"Port Taranaki was discussed regularly – the importance of the port's infrastructure and facilities in supporting offshore renewable energy production," says Simon.

"The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment emphasised the

importance of connecting with the port and the industry, and the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission discussed the need for ports to be supported in regards to infrastructure investment."

In December, the Government released its 'Enabling investment in offshore renewable energy discussion document', with the aim to develop regulatory settings by 2024.

"There was a general theme from speakers, industry and infrastructure experts at the forum that if we are going to meet our renewable energy targets, the Government needs to move on this quickly and consenting will need to get much, much faster," says Simon.

"Iwi and hapū must be front and centre, and environmental considerations need to be investigated and evaluated. Developers are moving ahead and investing in the early stages, and the Government needs to get the policy settings right, be clear around what it wants and why, and then let the private sector deliver it."

Photo: Nicholas Doherty on Unsplash

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Sayamung Simphalivanh

Although just a young child at the time, Sayamung (Mung) Simphalivanh has vivid memories of fleeing communist and civil war-ravaged Laos in the 1980s.

"Mum and Dad didn't want to stay in Laos under communist rule and wanted to give us kids a better life. It was early in the morning, and my younger sister, my parents and me, along with another family were jammed like sardines into a banana boat to cross the Mekong River, the border between Laos and Thailand.

"Basically, it was a case of if you got caught you were shot – it could have gone either way. Thankfully, we reached Thailand and a refugee camp."

With grandparents already in Wellington, the Simphalivanh family chose New Zealand for their better life and arrived in Tawa as refugees. Now 43, Sayamung is a Kiwi citizen and has a family of his own – wife Maree, and daughters Skye

(15) and Indie (12).

A qualified builder, Sayamung, or 'Mung' to his friends and work colleagues, joined Port Taranaki as a carpenter 10 years ago.

He has since taken on the new role of port specialist – a diverse role that utilises the multiple skills of the carpenters, electricians, engineers and mechanics across a variety of jobs and work areas.

What does your role involve?

Anything from maintenance work inside and outside the port, bollard replacement, fender swapouts, and making akmons, to helping wharf services and the security team. I might start my day on bollard replacement, then help with a cleanup on the port, then get an urgent call to operate a Hiab or a forklift. We also provide security support and relief, monitoring the port perimeter, and support wharf services such as with vessel mooring lines.



What do you like about the role?

I love it – it's varied, so you're doing something different every day, sometimes four to five jobs. And I love the people I work with, they're from all different walks of life.

What are the challenges?

Changing from working in one area to another can be challenging, as each requires different skills, and has different responsibilities and procedures – you have to switch quickly into another area's way of thinking and operating.

OFFSHORE

Tuakana crew display a fine touch

Expert navigation and a steady hand were required when the crew of Port Taranaki tug Tuakana tackled a monster job recently.

Tuakana was helping remove the 19,000-tonne Valaris 249 jack-up rig from the Maūi B gas field off Taranaki, and loading it onto a heavy lift vessel for transportation to its next job in the Caribbean.

Along with offshore supply vessels Skandi Emerald and MMA Vision, Tuakana was first tasked with safely towing the 94m long and 92m wide rig to Admiralty Bay, in the Marlborough Sounds.

"There was quite a big swell at Maūi B, which made the initial preparation a bit challenging," says Tuakana master Joe Govier.

"But the three vessels did a great job – Skandi Emerald pulled the Valaris away from the platform, and the MMA Vision and Tuakana pulled on either side to hold it steady while the legs were jacked clear of the sea bed."

While Skandi Emerald did the main towing to Admiralty Bay, Tuakana remained connected to the rig in case of an emergency.

"The trip took 30 hours and went really

well – it was a beautiful trip down there," says Joe.

Once the rig was in place, Tuakana then anchored in a sheltered bay as they awaited suitable weather conditions to carefully load the rig onto the 224m long semi-submersible Blue Marlin – a job that required precision navigation and a bit of engineering wizardry.

"The main deck of the Blue Marlin submerges and then the rig is carefully steered into position over the vessel. We were on the starboard aft, and pretty much steered the rig, and then pulled and pushed to hold it in position and bring it to the vessel.

"It was brought to within about 50m of the vessel and then ropes were connected from the Blue Marlin to the rig and it was winched into position over the submerged deck – there was just 600mm clearance between the top of the vessel deck and the bottom of the rig.

"Once in position, the Blue Marlin was deballasted so that the deck rose and cleared the water, and the rig sat in place on the deck. It was then welded into place for the journey," Joe says.

"It was definitely out of our normal scope of work, but it was great to see an

operation with such massive equipment completed with such precision."

All up, the Tuakana and her crew of Joe, mates Neil Armitage and Jack Cameron, and engineers Michael James and Ashley Clough spent 18 days at sea.

"You get to know your crewmates pretty well when you spend 18 days on a 30m vessel living in each others' pockets," laughs Joe, who's just clocked up 15 years working at Port Taranaki.

"But we had a good crew and all got on well – we all had our watches to do, and maintenance during the day, so we were busy.

"We all took our turns cooking, and the boys did a bit of fishing over the side, which supplemented the odd meal – a bit of blue cod and gurnard.

"It was a long trip, but it was a good experience."

Port Taranaki marine manager Ben Martin says the crew did an exceptional job.

"The job was completed well and safely. The team pulled out all the stops – a couple of the guys deferred leave and most of the crew worked over their off time as well, so everyone definitely put their hand up to get the job done for the company, which was fantastic," he says.

