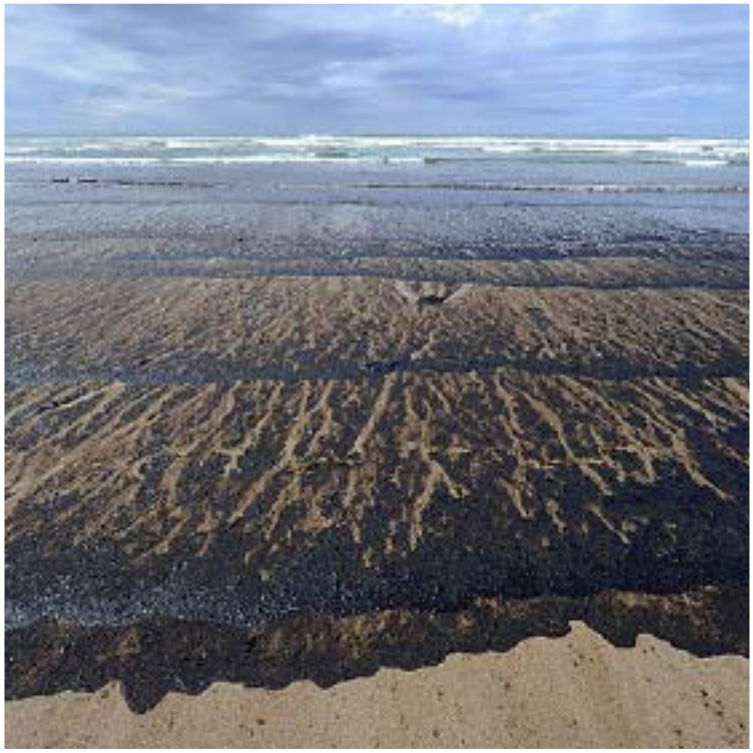
FLASHPOINT

Spring 2012



Rena:

"This is not an exercise."

NZ INSTITUTE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES MANAGEMENT

USEFUL ORGANISATIONAL CONTACTS

NZ Institute of Hazardous Substances Management
(formerly the Dangerous Goods Inspectors Institute)
www.nzihsm.org.nz
The official home of professionals committed to the safe management of hazardous substances and dangerous goods.

The NZIHSM is a 'not for profit' industry association specialising in improving safety, health and (site) environmental performance, particularly the safe management of hazardous substances in the community.

Responsible Care NZ
www.responsiblecarenz.com
Box 5557 Wellington 6145
Responsible Care NZ works closely with industry partners to successfully implement the Hazardous Substances legislation. This is achieved by implementing and promoting the international SH&E protection initiatives. The NZIHSM works alongside Responsible Care NZ to enhance professional knowledge and capability.

Environmental Protection Authority
www.epa.govt.nz
The Authority administers the HSNO Act.

Ministry for the Environment
www.mfe.govt.nz
The Ministry develops the HSNO Act, and provides policy, publications, technical reports and consultation documents

Department of Building and Housing
www.dbh.govt.nz
The Government agency that maintains the Building Act and the Building Code.

Local Government NZ
www.lgnz.co.nz/lg-sector/maps/
Local Authorities have responsibility for policing building controls. Some local authorities are contracted to Department of Labour to provide enforcement of the Hazardous Substances legislation.

NZ Fire Service
www.fire.org.nz
Provide practical advice to premises for dealing with the HSNO requirements under the Fire Services Act.

If you know of other agencies which could be useful to members, please let us know at office@nzihsm.org.nz.

Spring – A Time of Change!

Spring is sprung, and things are changing. With this in mind, we have a number of interesting articles on changes that have occurred throughout our Winter edition.

We have a major and in-depth feature on the Rena 'this is not an exercise' maritime incident. On the fireworks front, we get an insight into the practicalities of the industry and regulations.

Who can forget or ignore the Olympics? We have a brief look at the Olympics from a hazardous substance viewpoint and the effect of drug enforcement on the wonderful sport show.

The Earth summit from Rio 2012 came and went, with little fuss on this occasion and we ask 'What did it achieve and were there useful outcomes?'

On the local front, the Environmental Protection Authority has reorganised, restructured and now relocated into new premises. We have an article from the EPA outlining some of the changes.

On the certifier and enforcement front we have a number of items of interest including current topics that have haunted our 'hazchat' line and, of course, we will ignore Archie! The chief coroner stated that there have been over 50 deaths of our youth in 10 years from the 'huffing' of hazardous substances such as butane. Perhaps similar controls as for alcohol or solvent supply to youth need to be considered.

NZIHSM Practice notes have been launched over the past few months with a generalised list and linkages for relevant HSNO legislation, standards and Codes of Practice now being available on *www.nzihsm.org.nz*. Further areas of professional practice to be considered include developing professional guidelines on 'reasonable monitoring levels', 'fee guidance levels vs complexity of HSNO review', 'standards availability for members' and many other items raised on hazchat.

It is good to see that the HSNO regime is still progressing and we hope that you enjoy the read!

John Hickey President NZIHSM

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Getty Images and 3News

Flashpoint

Flashpoint is the official journal of the NZ Institute of Hazardous Substances Management.

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"This is not an exercise"

The last thing anybody wants is a ship with a substantial cargo of hazardous substances aboard hung up on an offshore reef. But that's the challenge Maritime New Zealand faced when the Rena inexplicably drove onto the Astrolabe Reef. The major incident training scenario was suddenly very real – and serious.

Maritime New Zealand has on call around the country, trained staff and contractors, ready to react to major oil spills at short notice. Apart from the regular training exercise, the previous incidents this team had been required for was back in 2002 during the grounding of the Jody F Millennium in Gisborne (25 tonnes spilled) and the successful re-floating of the Tai Ping in Bluff without oil being released.

Phone calls in the dead of night always used to signal bad news. These days it is likely to be a text.

Neil Dobbs got such a text at 4.25 am on 5 October, 2011, telling him the container ship *Rena* had grounded on Astrolabe Reef off Tauranga. Within hours he was en route to Tauranga to join Maritime New Zealand's Tier 3 National Oil Response Team as its health and safety co-ordinator.

The Rena was a totally different proposition, given the sheer scale of the ship, and its position. At twice the length of a football field and tens of thousands of tonnes, the Rena is a big ship. Aboard were more than 1000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil and 300 tonnes of diesel to run her engines – in addition to potentially hundreds of tonnes of hazardous substances amongst the cargo.

"During the first days," said H&S co-ordinator Neil Dobbs, "significant efforts were made to identify and assess these hazardous substances. Most were held in containers below deck and were all but impossible to access during the entire event.

"Listed in the ships manifest were substances such as ferrosilicon, potassium nitrate, hydrogen peroxide, all of which are potentially highly hazardous. Most were in quantities of around 20,000 kg and located deep within the vessel. The vessel carried a number of empty containers that included some marked as Hazardous as deck cargo."

The Environmental Protection Authority provided key technical information and a 24-hour offer of assistance to the response safety team assessing potential effects of the hazardous substances in those first days. "Our risk assessment looked at issues such as the likely effects a large amount of sea water would have on them, issues if they become mixed together as the vessel broke up and the possibility of exposure to the public and oil recovery teams if it came ashore.

"As well as the hazards of the Rena, the response needed

While this photo was taken after many containers had been lost oveboard or lifted from the Rena ***had broken in two, rough conditions like this were not unusual and frustrated retrieval and containment operations.*** Photo source unknown.

A volunteers' forward station that provided PPE, decontamination, briefing and essential services.

to establish and maintain its own safety systems, including the need for an Induction programme for the hundreds, and later thousands of responders coming in from New Zealand and overseas. More than 1700 individuals undertook safety induction training to work in the incident command centre with many, many more thousands being given safety training as part of field clean-up safety briefings."

Neil said he understood the public's frustration at an apparent lack of immediate 'oil response' response from the team, but the Rena's distance from shore, heavy weather conditions and significant depth of water off the reef, meant effective booming operations were not possible, and the response essentially became an extensive beach clean-up operation covering almost 150 km of coastline.

While it was not his team's prime concern, a host of other pollution came off the Rena, including barely submerged containers that were potentially a hazard to shipping, cargoes of gradually rotting food, plastics and household goods.

"Providing sufficient personal protective equipment was of the utmost priority," said Neil.

To ensure the supply of the right PPE at the right place and time, all field operations used a simple, but formal, process allowing the following day's PPE needs to be packed and delivered from stocks held within the incident command centre's HSE stores and

White jump suits as far as the eye can see: volunteers spread out over several kilometers of beach to assist in the clean-up.

Waves of oil wash ashore on Bay of Plenty beaches. Photo: Reuters.

delivered by army helicopters or four wheel drive vehicles.

"Most of the demand for PPE was within the first three weeks (not including beach cargo recovery) consuming more than 70,000 pairs of coveralls, 100,000 disposable gloves and 4000 pairs of gumboots. In addition, significant amounts of sunscreen, sunhats and rain coats were needed to protect from climatic extremes."

Surprisingly, with the number of people involved, the worst incident involving the volunteers was one case of back strain to a 4x4 driver, but Neil said heat, dehydration, sunburn and wind chill all had to be carefully managed in the variety of weather experienced on the long, sweeping beaches.

Special locations for the retrieval of oil waste, decontamination of people and equipment were established to limit the spread of oil into the community and recycle PPE for reuse when practicable.

While oil was continuously lost from the vessel during much of the response, most was lost in the first spill shortly after grounding. In total, approximately 350 tonnes of heavy fuel oil was lost during a second spill when the Rena came off the reef and sank. "It's unclear what amount of black oil actually covered the beaches. It was described as being like marmite and honey mixed together," he said.

Up until the *Rena* incident, previous clean-up operations had used contractors to recover oil managed directly by the National Oil Response Team. "Given the scale, and the reaction of local residents, this changed giving the response team and the local council the

The other pollution: formerly frozen food from broken containers scattered on the beach. Photo source unknown.

Dressed for the job, volunteers listen to the day's briefing.

opportunity to organise a highly successful volunteers' beach clean-up.

Overall, the response recovered more than 1000 tonnes of oil and oil debris off beaches over three months without serious incident or a time loss injury.

The response has been scaled back to a Teir 2 response and managed at a local council level. How long this situtation continues depends on the weather and salvage operations to recover the relatively small amount still remaining in the vessel, said Neil.

Maritime New Zealand's National Response Team (Tier 3) is made up of skilled professionals in oil recovery on a large scale.

Its members are regularly sent to assist with spills in other parts of the world. The most recent event attended by NRT members was the Gulf of Mexico BP deep-water rig disaster.

Within the NRT are experts in fields such as wildlife recovery, the deployment of booms, and modeling of oil movement, to name but a few.

Neil Dobbs has been with the team for just over 14 years. As the National Response Health and Safety Co-ordinator, his role is to establish and maintain an overall safety plan.

Its goal is to create a system and safety culture that would have no harm incidents (greater than trivial), meet legislative safety requirements and assist the oil recovery operations effectiveness.

Alex McKenzie RIP

We are saddened that our friend and certifier Alex McKenzie passed away recently after a long illness.
Alex was very active in the reformation of the NZIHSM from the previous 'Institute of Dangerous Goods Inspectors' and was an early President and Life member of the Institute. We will miss you Alex, thank you for all your efforts and Rest in Peace.

John Hickey & the NZIHSM.

Fireworks in NZ:

A miniscule industry

by Anthony Lealand

Only 190 test certificates are issued for firework shows in New Zealand yearly, according to EPA's Simon Buckland, reinforcing just how miniscule the industry is.

Even allowing for Kim Dotcom to whom money is no object, and the size of show he bankrolls are rare and completely out of the ordinary. If the average show was $10,000, a figure I think is on the high side from our experience, a calculation places the total yearly spend in the sector as somewhere around $2 million, just daily small change on an industrial scale.

When a firework show may have a total fireworks budget of $1500 as many small shows do, the cost of the test certification is hardly value for money, from the client's point of view. As has been said to us: If the crew firing the show don't do it safely, then why are we in the business?

Currently two test certifiers have left the business and more may do so. Lack of steady, consistent income from Class 1 of it is one reason, along with no work most of the time and then very high peak demands.

If we look at the fees charged by test certifiers varying from $50 up to $200 for a test certificate, we can see there is scarcely the business there for one person in all of New Zealand.

There would be a gross income of $38,000 a year if $200 was charged for each test certificate. One of the test certifiers who recently left the business charged $50 for a test certificate and was quite happy with this figure for the amount of work involved.

He said if all the information is presented clearly and cleanly, test certification of fireworks is a simple tick-the-box exercise, as he had extensive practical knowledge of the field of fireworks. He was solely devoted to this and gave a very efficient service as he had no other time-conflicting work.

We also have the problem of how to get the test certifiers trained in the field. The requirements to spend a year under training another test certifier are clearly unworkable as there certainly is not the level of business to employ a trainee.

There is also the matter of being knowledgeable about what actually happens on

"Sufficient mortars to fire about 20% of NZ shows. This lot would not even half fill in the area of your average supermarket wine section," says Anthony Lealand.

a firework show. Until one is knowledgeable and has considerable experience of firework shows, the regulatory framework is somewhat of a mystery.

It doesn't help that this regulatory framework was written in a hurry without recourse to knowledgeable people in the industry. I personally worked on the regulations for over a week and then realised that there was months of work in analysing and recommending rewriting regulations. Unfortunately there was no payment available, and I could not continue the work pro bono.

Curious factors

As a result we have a regulatory framework which in some areas is quite inconsistent with the level of risk as the size of fireworks increases. An example is that as the size of fireworks increase, the safety distances drop. This is because separations from dangerous goods in certain classes are measured to the discharge zone, not the exclusion area perimeter. So one can increase the firework size without a commensurate increase in distance.

Another curious factor was the audience may be at 50 metres but classes of other dangerous goods were to be at 250 metres, which seems to indicate that people are less important to protect than DGs.

Is there any way forward for a tiny, very regulated industry which has no chance of becoming a growth industry? Firework show budgets are not going to increase, test certifiers need detailed experience, and many test certifiers for fireworks are at retiring age. It is not a good outlook with all these conflicting factors taken into account.

If we look at the electrical industry, it uses a completely different model which provides regulation, creation of regulations, self-certification and enforcement in a very tidy and efficient package. It is best summed up in this paragraph taken from the EWRB website: "The Rules of the Board carry the same authority as Regulations and must be adhered to. This section of the EWRB website lists all 'Rules of the Board' so far approved by the Board. Further Rules of the Board will follow as they are approved and published by the EWRB."

However, there is one crucial difference here – with the exception of two people on the board, all the rest have an extensive background in the industry in a very practical fashion.

Declaration of interest: I am a test certifier, with electrical registration. I also own Firework Professionals Ltd, and Nonex NZ, an explosives technology and importing company.

The HAZCHAT files

The NZIHSM has an online forum available to HSNO practitioners where issues can be raised and discussed with other HSNO professionals. The address for this 'blog' is *http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/hazchat/* and you are welcome to correspond by sending a request to *office@nzihsm.org.nz*.

Recent and current topics include:
Testing Rooftop Fire Shows – Are adequate controls in place?

NZIHSM Practice Notes – A variety of 'hot' topics here:

- NZIHSM website has listed and easy search list for relevant HSNO Legislation, Regulations and Codes of Practice
- Should NZIHSM look at an agreement with Standards NZ for reduced cost standards for members? - NZIHSM has obtained a 20% discount for members but would there be interest in purchasing a reduced annual cost arrangement for common standards?

Are Test Certifiers charging enough to provide adequate professional service? A good question but considering recent commission complaints we certainly hope so.

Quantity ratios – How to use these?

IBC COP – Should IBC be treated like stationary containers when used as such?

DOL – Draft Policy on Hazardous substances in the Workplace

We have made progress on some of these issues while others are still progressing!

If you want to send your comment, you can send it to *http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/hazchat/*

What's a few regulations?

There can often be a bit of fresh air between between a list of requirements and the reality of a site, but on occasion, technical specifications and local reality don't even look in the same direction, Anthony Lealand and his team were attempting to set up for a mid-harbour display in the Pacific Islands recently and encountered several conflicts between the demands of the secure zone for rigging and firing fireworks, and all of the other functions that occur in the area.

Part of the issue was created by the regulatory authorities insisting on a particular protocol, but others were total oversights by regulatory authorities completely out of our knowledge and control, he said.

For both venues the team had requested a quiet wharf, to have the barge alongside so it could be kept secure. A barge moored in a harbour needs a constant patrol boat and work must stop if it leaves as the crew have no way of escaping. So alongside the wharf is much more practical.

"However, our barge was also the only way to get the crew on an off the many adjacent fishing boats. The dories were so low they were unable to come alongside the wharf, so they came alongside our barge, and the crews marched across the end of it to the shore."

On leaving the venue, the authorities insisted that when the container carrying the fireworks and equipment was taken to adjacent island, it could not travel on a substantial fishing boat, but had to travel on a larger ferry. "Not only was the ferry loaded with many passengers contrary to the IMDG code, but also the ferries arrival time only gave 24 hours to rig an enormous firework show. These passengers then had to wait until the container was removed from the ship before they could disembark. Somehow, I would have done it in the opposite order."

The next excitement was early the next day when the same ferry was being loaded with fuel tankers. "Although we had not any direction to cease operating, we naturally shut up shop for the duration," said Anthony.

All these delays put enormous stress on the crew getting the show ready in time, creating another safety issue.

"Even now, viewing this from a distance, and knowing the facilities available there, I can't see any way to manage this more safely, given multiple use of the site and minimal facilities.

"For instance, the motorised barge we used as a fireworks site for the second show could not be left anywhere but alongside a wharf, as it could not be grounded and there was no room for a swinging mooring in the harbour," said Anthony.

Above: ***Sudden unathorised arrival alongside a fireworks rigging zone – why not?***

Below: ***Fuel tankers on the ferry – firework operations were shut down for the duration.***

Olympics – a chemical cocktail?

What a wonderful fortnight, the Olympics in all its glory!

Running, jumping, riding, rowing, fighting, hurdling: always Faster, Higher, Stronger!

Who could not enjoy it, and enjoy it we did!

If there could have been any cloud over these games it was perhaps a cloud of chemicals. The Olympics prides itself on the provision of natural human endeavour in the field of sports with emphasis on the word natural!

It should be part of the Olympic spirit in the same manner as the HSNO Act to protect people and the environment against the adverse effects of hazardous substances.

This is where we are all hopeful the Olympics represent the true competition of athlete against athlete and not chemist against chemist, as was evidenced with some of the doping allegations that arose prior to and during the London games.

As reported in the media recently, one example of a 'doping' programme became evident through the 1970s and 1980s from documents left in the offices of the Stasi (East German's secret police), after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989. Drugs, dates, doses, side-effects were all detailed.

In this case, a chemical programme began in the late 1960s with athletes of each sex and as young as 10. It met immediate success. The country of 17 million collected nine golds at the 1968 Olympics, 20 four years later and in 1976 doubled it again to 40.

Its IOC-approved laboratory in Dresden checked to ensure the drugs could not be detected before athletes left for competition abroad.

A few were caught, however, including the shot-putter who still holds the Olympic record, Ilona Slupianek. She was banned for a year in 1977, three years before she set the Olympic mark. Even more remarkable is that Slupianek reportedly weighed 93kg, compared to NZ Valerie Adams' 120kg.

The side-effects of loading young women with male steroids was severe. Heidi Krieger, unwittingly doped from the age of 16, eventually had sex-change surgery. He is now known as Andreas Krieger and is married to a former swimmer from the same doping programme.

The fall of the Berlin wall and revelation of the state-run doping programme led to serious action against this mis-use of hazardous substances. Improved methods of detecting steroids and the introduction of out-of-competition testing followed.

Distances fell. The world record (22.63m) was set in 1988. Only four throws from the 1990s make the top 200 on the all-time list.

There were also instances in the West of allegations and admissions of drug enhanced results from some of the world's top performers, such as Marion Jones.

But possibly the sad news is the statistically early deaths and disabilities of former top-performing world class athletes which many attribute to drugs. In addition, the 'clean' athletes can be strongly tempted to partake if there is not a significant chance of being caught or competing on a level playing field.

Our youngest, strongest and fastest should be protected against the dangers and misuse of chemicals.

For this reason we should approve of a rigorous enforcement and testing regime as adopted in the London games, even if this might slightly alter the Olympic motto to 'not quite as Faster, Higher, Stronger' while our athletes are protected against the adverse effects of hazardous substances while enjoying real human competition.

Sources: John Hickey, chemical engineer 0800 854444, NZ Herald, Olympic news 2012

"The future we want"

Did we get it?

Rio 12 – What were the outcomes?

Rio 12 was lauded as our latest effort towards creating a sustainable future for the human race and our planet 20 years after the initial global 'Earth summit' on this topic. How did it go and what were the results?

Perhaps the results can best be summarised from the first three items from the 283 items in the summary document as follows:

THE FUTURE WE WANT

Our Common Vision

1. We, the heads of State and Government and high level representatives, having met at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20-22 June 2012, with full participation of civil society, renew our commitment to sustainable development, and to ensure the promotion of economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations.

2. Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. In this regard we are committed to free humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.

3. We therefore acknowledge the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognising their interlinkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.

There were a further 283 items summarised by the delegates under the following general headings:

I. Our Common Vision.
Reaffirming Rio principles and past action plans.

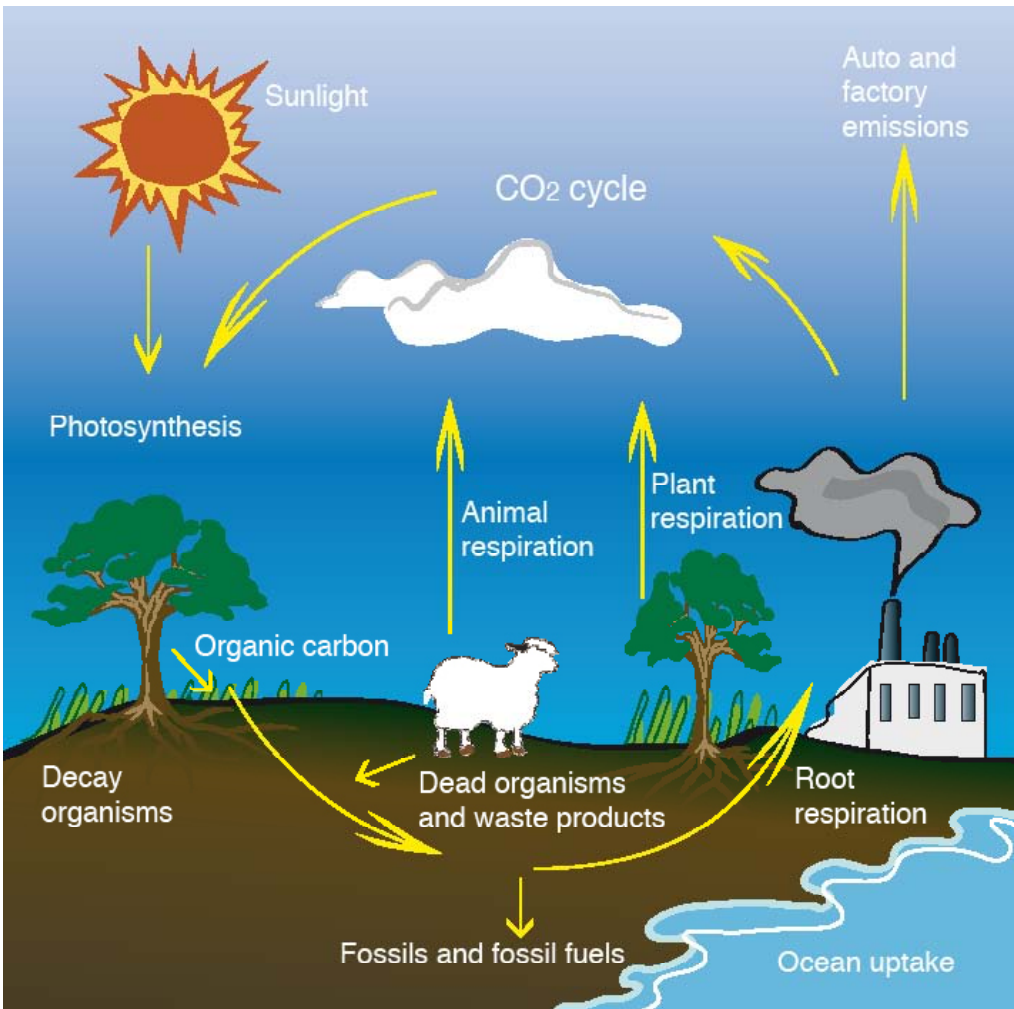
II. Renewing Political Commitment.

III. Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

IV. Institutional framework for sustainable development.

V. Framework for action and follow-up.

Thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues:
A. Poverty eradication.
Food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture
Water and sanitation.
Energy.
Sustainable tourism.
Sustainable transport.
Sustainable cities and human settlements.
Health and population.
Promoting full and productive



employment, decent work for all, and social protections.
Oceans and seas.
Small island developing States (SIDS).
Least developed countries.
Landlocked least developed countries.
Africa.
Regional efforts.
Disaster risk reduction.
Forests.
Biodiversity.
Desertification, land degradation and drought.
Mountains.
Chemicals and waste.
Sustainable consumption and production.
Mining.
Education.
Gender equality and women's empowerment.

B. Sustainable development goals

VI. Means of implementation.
Finance.
Technology.
Capacity building.
Trade.
Registry of commitments.

Clause 283: we welcome the commitments voluntarily entered into at Rio+20 and throughout 2012 by all stakeholders and their networks to implement concrete policies, plans, programmes, projects and actions to promote sustainable development and poverty eradication. We invite the Secretary-General to compile these commitments and facilitate access to other registries that have compiled commitments, in an internet-based registry.

The registry should make information about the commitments fully transparent and accessible to the public, and it should be periodically updated.

As is evident from the above summary of items discussed, there were a large number of items discussed and by their nature these were complex. Most of the 283 items started with the words 'we reaffirm', we recognise', we emphasise' and similar phrases.

If many scientists are to be believed, under our present mode of operation, the planet is in great risk from a rise in carbon emissions altering the nature and weather patterns of our planet. This could possibly make much of the planet uninhabitable for humans and other existing species over the next 60 years if we don't act swiftly to reverse current global emissions.

If this scenario is correct, and consideration of item No 283, it is possible that the current arbitrary and voluntary commitments towards future actions will not be enough and more urgent action is required to have a real chance at achieving the long-term sustainability for the human race that has been suggested!!

Source: Rio 2012 conference report.

Planet report bleak reading

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF), recently released its ninth Living Planet Report. It makes for bleak reading with main points as follows:
Planet Earth is not able to keep pace with humanity's demands nor cope with its wasteful by-products. And the gap – the 'ecological overshoot' – is growing.
* Biodiversity – the number and range of species – is in freefall, especially in tropical regions where human demands and land use changes are cranking up.
* Birds, fish, mammals and other vertebrates are taking such a hammering they are shrinking in average size – about one-third smaller than in 1970.
* And unless we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80% of their 1990 levels very quickly, large regions will experience temperature rises of more than 2C above pre-industrial levels by 2040. This spells more extreme storms, flooding and droughts and sea level rises - and devastating effects on wildlife.

We all hope that they are wrong but if there is any chance that this is correct some action may be required.

Old and new faces in EPA's compliance group

by Lesley Meadows

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has established a new Compliance Group focussed on educating and helping stakeholders understand how to comply with environmental laws.

The EPA was established with staff from the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry for the Environment and the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) New Zealand.

With staff coming from a number of organisations and the EPA being responsible for a wide range of environmental legislation, the organisation needed to review its structure to make use of the different skill sets across the organisation and allow staff to develop skills in legislative areas they had not previously worked in.

As a result, the EPA now has six groups within its organisation:

- Corporate Services,
- Kaupapa Kura Taiao,
- Emissions Trading Scheme,
- Policy and Legal,
- Compliance,
- Applications and Assessments.

While many people in the Compliance Group will be familiar to readers of Flashpoint as members of the previous ERMA NZ Compliance Co-Ordination Team, the new Compliance Group has a much broader set of functions under the new EPA structure. The group is no longer solely focussed on compliance with the hazardous substance regime but has expanded to include compliance around the imports and exports of hazardous waste, and compliance coordination activities for new organisms.

The group will also pick up the compliance and enforcement functions of the Exclusive Economic Zone Bill when it comes into force.

Old and new faces

The group has some old faces and some new faces. You will recognise Andrea Eng, the General Manager of the Compliance Group and Simon Buckland, Manager of Compliance Co-Ordination from the hazardous substances team at ERMA NZ.

A new face is Sharon Oxley who is the Manager of Compliance Information. Sharon brings a range of communications and environmental experience to the Compliance Group from her experience working in government and non-governmental organisations in the United States and New Zealand. These skills are much needed as the Compliance Group will be more proactive in providing information to stakeholders.

"I am delighted that the EPA is investing more resources to provide New Zealanders with much-needed practical information on how to comply with environmental regulations. You'll see us reaching out to our stakeholders in a variety of ways over the coming year. Watch this space!" says Andrea.

The team is also reviewing and updating a number of old ERMA NZ publications. Engaging with both users and suppliers of hazardous substances is also going to play an important part of the work of the Compliance Group as this will allow them to gain some idea of the practical challenges faced by industry.

Environmental Protection Authority
Te Mana Rauhī Taiao

Uncle Archie

Rena Update

We lamented the lack of 'driving lessons' for some local ships in our last edition. If the reported costs of $50 million to date and a period of 10 years before the Rena damage is rectified are correct, then driving lessons and adoption of HSNO Act type controls would have indeed been a cheaper option.

However, on the positive side a great clean-up effort to date and without the volunteers even more cost could have resulted from the unfortunate Rena incident.

Olympics

What a great spectacle we all enjoyed recently as the world's finest athletes showed us what is meant by the Olympic motto of "Faster, Higher, Stronger" It is just a pity that a few athletes misunderstood the 'higher' if reports on some of their drug tests are to be believed.

Pike River Commission of Enquiry

The third stage of the Pike River Mine Accident, Commission of Enquiry has been completed with media reports highlighting potentially unsafe practices with limited safety systems as the mine moved fast to try unproven technology and achieve profitability.

Correction

Archie has been reminded that the Environmental Protection Authority is an Authority and not an Agency. For the record, the Oxford dictionary has useful definitions.

Rio – What?

The outcomes from the Rio 12 Earth Summit are deafening in their SILENCE! Hopefully all of Earth's problems have gone away! Unfortunately probably not!

Cheap Certs?

Recent *Hazchat* comments have questioned whether certifiers are charging enough?

Other anecdotal reports have some renewals done by phone and email. Without visits the rates are good but can you check that the brakes are actually working?

Good Samaritan causes chaos in Wellington

At 5.20am on Thursday, 2 August, a petrol tanker driver saw a car crash on the other side of the Hutt Road (SH2), one of the two main thoroughfares out of Wellington. He did the decent thing and stopped his tanker, put on his hazard lights, and went to the aid of the stricken driver.

Unfortunately, a vegetable truck did not see the hazard lights and crashed into the back of the tanker spilling about 5000l of diesel and one tonne of potatoes onto the motorway.

The Transport Agency said 15,000 vehicles could have been delayed, for over three hours while the regional council estimated 850 bus passengers were caught in the chaos.

There is no moral to this story except to remind us all that bad luck happens and it is nice to be prepared.

If you want to send your comment, you can send it to *archie@NZIHSM.org.nz*.
The ideas expressed in this column are not necessarily the views of the NZIHSM or Flashpoint and in some cases the NZIHSM frankly does not approve!

www.nzihsm.org.nz

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