

RENA INCIDENT – MASTER Q&A DOCUMENT

Last updated: 1 November 2011 – please note this situation changes quickly. We've made every effort to ensure the information is correct but we do ask that you check with authorities for the latest information.

THE RENA

WHAT IS THE LATEST INFORMATION ABOUT THE RENA?

At 1 November, the Rena is still positioned on the Astrolabe Reef. Salvage and clean-up attempts are progressing well with over 1000 tonnes of oil removed so far and 360 tonnes of heavy fuel oil still to be pumped from the starboard no. 5 tank. A total of 350 tonnes have been spilt so far and cleaned up quickly – mostly within 24-48 hours of landing on shore.

Sea swells of up to 5 meters are forecast for today and Maritime NZ is monitoring the situation constantly, with the worst of the strong winds expected to hit tonight.

Cranes for removing the containers are being assembled to start work shortly.

The oil recovery operations are heavily weather dependant and the situation can change quickly. Maritime New Zealand's website www.maritimenz.govt.nz/ is updated regularly and is the first place to go for latest information on the salvage efforts, clean-up operations and any closures that may be in place.

IS OIL STILL MAKING ITS WAY ONTO THE BEACHES?

There are reports of oil coming ashore now from the release of heavy oil a few days ago, with clean-up operations focused on Matakana Island, Papamoa Beach and Maketu. Oil that washes ashore on the beaches is being removed quickly and the volume of oil coming ashore has reduced significantly.

Volunteer teams, under the management and direction of Maritime NZ have been on the beaches every day collecting the oiled waste for disposal and cleaning the beaches. We're confident that the salvage and clean-up efforts, together with the passion and commitment of the local residents and volunteers, will return our coastal beaches and waterways to their former beauty as quickly as possible.

This is the first time that volunteers have been used to clean up an oil spill and the results are truly impressive. As at Thursday last week, more than 3000 volunteers have worked 8000 hours alongside defence personnel and other government employees working to restore our beaches.

WILL THE RENA STILL BE SPILLING OIL AT CHRISTMAS TIME?

At this stage, the beaches should be clean for summer. If the oil recovery process continues as planned, the Bay of Plenty will be fully operational during the busy summer season. However this is a rapidly changing situation and, while we can't guarantee all beaches will be open, it's looking good.

While Tauranga and the Bay of Plenty is well known for its beautiful beaches, there are numerous other attractions and activities on offer for people holidaying or visiting the region. For those people planning to come to the Bay of Plenty for summer, you should be confirming your booking and travel plans now.

THE BEACHES

HOW MUCH OF THE BAY OF PLENTY COASTLINE IS AFFECTED BY THE OIL SPILL?

Beach access is now open from Mount Maunganui to Tay Street. Restrictions are still in place from Tay Street to Maketu Point, including the Maketu Estuary, to enable Maritime NZ to carry out oil spill response activities in these areas.

The Rena incident has impacted a narrow and contained stretch of our coastline and the community is committed to restoring the beach and the environment to its pristine pre-spill conditions as soon as possible. You may have seen our “world-first efforts” where two tides containing spill have been cleaned up within 24 hours by our passionate and motivated community.

People who want to help with the clean-up can register as a volunteer with Maritime NZ or Bay of Plenty Regional Council. Volunteers will be trained and briefed. It is vital that the beaches are cleaned up in a way that minimised further risk to the environment. This is the first time volunteers have been used to clean up an oil spill – New Zealand once again leads the world!

ARE ALL THE BOP BEACHES CLOSED?

No! Some restrictions have been lifted as beaches affected by the spill are cleaned up and beach access is now open from Mount Maunganui to Tay Street, with restrictions still in place from there to Maketu Point, including the Maketu Estuary.

We expect more beach areas to be opened to the public as the clean up continues. A full list of affected beaches can be found at www.maritimenz.govt.nz/incident.

The affected beaches account for only a small percentage of the Bay of Plenty beach area and there are still plenty of other areas of the Bay of Plenty to explore and experience.

We are confident that the salvage and clean-up efforts, together with the passion and commitment of the local residents and volunteers, will return our coastal beaches and waterways to their former beauty as quickly as possible.

WILL THE OTHER BEACHES BE OPEN IN TIME FOR SUMMER HOLIDAYS?

At this stage, we expect the beaches will be back to normal by summer. We are confident that the salvage and clean-up efforts, together with the passion and commitment of the local residents and volunteers, will return our coastal beaches and waterways to their former beauty as quickly as possible.

Some of the local beachfronts affected by the oil spill have been re-opened to the public and we expect more beach areas to be opened to the public as the clean up continues. A full list of affected beaches can be found at www.maritimenz.govt.nz/incident.

HOW DO I REGISTER AS A VOLUNTEER? CAN I VOLUNTEER TO ASSIST WITH THE CLEAN UP JUST FOR A DAY?

Yes, you can volunteer for just one day and Maritime New Zealand is running four-hour shifts. Maritime NZ is looking for more volunteers and an ongoing effort will be needed to keep the beaches clean. To register as a volunteer, call 0800 OIL SPILL (0800 645 774) or visit www.boprc.govt.nz/oilspillvolunteers

PUBLIC HEALTH

For the latest public health information, visit http://www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz/rena_oil_spill, www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz/rena_public and www.boprc.govt.nz

CAN I SWIM ON ANY OF THE BEACHES?

Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service advises not to swim at any beach that has been closed to recreational activity and to be cautious when swimming – ie don't swim if you can see or smell oil.

However this situation can change quickly and we recommend you visit Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service's website regularly for the most up-to-date public health information

<http://www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz/>

CAN I GO FISHING? AND CAN I EAT MY FISH?

Health authorities have advised not to fish in the exclusion zone or in areas with known or visible oil contamination or areas that have had oil contamination.

This situation can change quickly and we recommend you visit Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service's website regularly for the most up-to-date information <http://www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz/>

CAN WE STILL COLLECT SHELLFISH?

People are being asked not to collect or eat any shellfish, crayfish, crabs, kina and seaweed from local beaches where oil has come ashore or where there is a high risk of oil contamination. The red zone includes Waihi Beach in the west to Ohiwa Harbour in the east and includes Matakana Island, Whale Island and all inshore islands, rocky outcrops and estuaries in those areas. The amber zone goes from the Ohiwa Harbour entrance to Cape Runaway and includes areas where there not yet confirmed reports of oil but there is a high risk of possible contamination.

The green zone includes the east coast of Coromandel north from Waihi Beach and shellfish may be taken from this area. However if you see any signs of oil contamination, please don't collect shellfish from that area.

BOATING

WHERE ARE THE CURRENT MARINE EXCLUSION ZONES?

The Marine Exclusion Zone was reduced around the Astrolabe Reef on 21 October. The new coordinates of the exclusion zone are from Rabbit Island (Motuotau) at Mount Maunganui in position 37° 37.8'S 176° 11.7'E to:

1. 37°28.5'S 176°20'E to
2. 37°28.5'S 176°30'E to
3. 37°38.6'S 176°30'E to
4. Coast at the Kaituna Cut 37°44.8'S 176°24.6'E

CAN I TAKE MY BOAT OUT?

Yes - just not in the Marine Exclusion Zone.

The Harbourmaster also asks that boaties keep a good look out for any debris or containers that might be floating around, stay well away from oil and keep clear of oil spill booms. For more information, visit www.maritimenz.govt.nz and www.boprc.govt.nz

ARE THE BOAT RAMPS OPEN?

Yes. Tauranga City Council re-opened all recreational boat ramps on 18 October. Visit www.tauranga.govt.nz for the latest information on boat ramp access.

I'M COMING IN WITH A SAILING GROUP NEXT MONTH AND AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE OIL SPILL. WILL WE BE ABLE TO GET INTO THE HARBOUR AND WILL THE OIL AFFECT OUR BOATS?

The Navy and the Port of Tauranga is continuing to monitor the shipping channel by sonar and air. Visit www.maritimenz.govt.nz/incident for information of the exclusion zone and information on avoiding the oil.

ARE CRUISE SHIPS STILL COMING IN TO THE PORT?

Yes - the Port of Tauranga is open and cruise ships are arriving as usual. The Navy and the Port are working together to monitor the shipping channel by sonar and air to ensure it is clear and that shipping channels are fully operational. There have been no reports of any further containers lost overboard from the Rena.

There will be nine cruise ship visits to the Port of Tauranga in November, and 77 cruise ship visits are due in over the next six months. These ships bring more than 200,000 visitors to our region over the season.

ACCOMMODATION AND VISITOR INFORMATION

SHOULD I STILL COME TO THE BAY OF PLENTY?

Yes, absolutely! In the coastal Bay of Plenty it's '**Business as Usual**' and we're continuing to welcome visitors and holiday makers. While Tauranga and the Bay of Plenty are well known for its beautiful beaches, there are numerous other attractions and activities on offer for people holidaying or visiting the region.

Almost all Bay of Plenty accommodation, activities and attractions are operating as normal and we encourage people to come to the region and experience the best that the Bay has to offer, now and during the upcoming summer holiday period.

Local infrastructure, such as roads and the Tauranga airport, are unaffected by the Rena incident and the Bay of Plenty is still completely accessible.

ARE ANY OF THE SUMMER BEACH EVENTS CANCELLED?

No! All our planned events are going ahead as planned at this stage. This situation is being monitored on a daily basis and will depend on the circumstances but the clean-up operations are progressing smoothly. There are only 350 tonnes left to remove from the Rena and 370 tonnes have been completely removed from the beaches so far, so we're looking good for summer...

For up to date information please go to the following websites:

www.maritimenz.govt.nz

www.bayofplentynz.com

www.tauranga.govt.nz

www.sportbop.co.nz

www.tauranga.org.nz

I'M COMING DOWN FOR THE ROUND THE MOUNT SWIM IN JANUARY, WILL IT STILL BE ON OR SHOULD I CANCEL MY PLANS?

All our events are on track to take place as planned. We are liaising closely with health authorities and monitoring the situation closely so check www.sportbop.co.nz for regular updates on sporting events.

I'M THINKING OF CHANGING MY ACCOMMODATION TO SOMEWHERE AWAY FROM THE BEACH, CAN YOU HELP ME DO THIS?

Most of the accommodation providers in the Bay of Plenty region are unaffected by the Rena incident and are operating as business as usual. If you have any questions about the accommodation you have booked, you should contact them directly or make contact with the Tauranga *i*-SITE visitor information centre on +64 7 5788103 who can assist you with all of your accommodation requirements.

WHAT ELSE IS THERE TO DO IN THE REGION APART FROM BEACH ACTIVITIES?

There are over 500 tourism operators in the Bay of Plenty Region. Some of these are well established in the region with significant capital investment. Please go to the following website to find out more information www.bayofplentynz.com.

Tourism operators include:

- Tourist attractions and activities
 - Kiwi 360, Springloaded, Waimarino, Blokarts, Classic Flyers, White Island, Hot Pools, Kayaking, Hot Pools, rafting
- Arts and crafts and cultural events and activities
- Aviation activities including flight-seeing
- Dining and entertainment providers

CAN I STILL WALK AROUND THE MOUNT?

Yes, all the walking tracks on the Mount are open as are the walkways along the beachfronts and around the Mount Maunganui and Papamoa districts.

OUR HOUSE IS RIGHT ON THE BEACH, WILL WE BE AFFECTED DURING SUMMER?

The clean-up operation is well under way, by summer we expect that everything will be back to normal. For up to date information please go to the following websites:

www.maritimenz.govt.nz

www.bayofplentynz.com

www.tauranga.govt.nz

www.sportbop.co.nz

www.tauranga.org.nz

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

- For the latest information about the Rena: www.maritimenz.govt.nz/incident
- To register as a volunteer, call 0800 OIL SPILL (0800 645 774) or visit www.boprc.govt.nz/oilspillvolunteers
- To report any oiled wildlife, call 0800 333 771
- For international visitors travelling to New Zealand, information about Tauranga and the Rena: www.tourismnewzealand.com/news-and-features/information-about-tauranga/ :
- For public health advice: www.toiteorapublichealth.govt.nz/rena_oil_spill
- For information about tourism activities and events in Tauranga and the Bay of Plenty: 0800 LOVE BOP (0800 5683 267) or visit www.lovebop.co.nz