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Maritime Qualifications Review Underway

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) has started a fundamental, two year review of its qualifications and the operational limits (QOL) linked to them. The QOL Review aims to develop a clearer and more logical framework for qualifications and operational limits to meet the needs of New Zealand's commercial maritime sector, now and in the future.

"The current qualifications and operational limits framework is confusing and out of step with industry needs," says MNZ Director Catherine Taylor. "With widespread input from the maritime community we want to take a fresh approach and design a new framework that supports a modern maritime sector while meeting MNZ objectives for safe, secure and clean seas.

"We recognise that operational limits are critical to many people's ability to earn a living and that the sector requires a skilled workforce with competencies that are relevant to the job. We want to update and streamline the certificates issued by Maritime New Zealand and align them better with operational limits, so that commercial operators can function effectively."

The review is underpinned by an extensive engagement and consultation programme. The first stage is underway. Over the next four months QOL Review Project Manager Bridget Carter is visiting nine regions across the country to interview more than 150 representatives of the maritime community including commercial operators from fishing, shipping and tourism industries, passenger and non passenger services, port companies and harbour masters, training organisations and industry groups.

First port of call is Auckland this week, then Bay of Plenty, Wellington, Marlborough, Nelson, Canterbury, Northland, Otago and Southland.

"Bridget will be talking to people about what works and what doesn't work with the current system and what they would like to see in the new system," says Catherine Taylor. "We want to get a good understanding of the issues from different points of view and welcome new ideas."

The key findings from the interviews will be released to the industry for comment early next year. This feedback will direct the development of a proposed, high level framework which the maritime community will be consulted on.

The review will deliver a new qualifications and operational limits framework in 2011, along with recommendations for implementation, including proposed changes to relevant rules.

"There will be a gradual transition to the new framework," says Catherine Taylor. "The rules process means that it will be at least 2013 before any changes to qualifications or operational limits are introduced."

Existing qualifications will be transferred to the new framework with appropriate recognition of skills and experience.

MNZ will keep the maritime community updated on the progress of the QOL Review. For further information about the review including the timeline for the Maritime Community Engagement Programme or to download and complete the QOL Review Maritime Community Engagement Questionnaire, go to www.maritimenz.govt.nz/quals-limits

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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