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### Lifejackets for life: Safer Boating Week



Waikato Regional Council has kick-started promotion of Safer Boating Week by fitting two iconic Hamilton statues with lifejackets.

#### COUNCIL MEETINGS

##### October 2014

[Franklin Waikato Drainage Subcommittee](#)  
 Friday 3 October 2014 – 10.00am

[Regional Transport Committee](#)  
 Monday 6 October 2014 – 9.30am

[Regional Public Transport Plan Development Committee](#)

Preventing drowning is one of the main aims of Safer Boating Week, which runs from 17-24 October and is an initiative from the National Pleasure Boat Safety Forum.

An average of around 15 boaties a year die in recreational boating accidents and **all boaties are being urged to wear their lifejackets all the time** to help avoid drowning when mishaps occur.

"Our maritime services team is determined to help prevent tragedies and injuries on the water," says the council's maritime services programme manager, Nicole Botherway.

"We urge all boaties and other water users to follow relevant safety rules. Wearing appropriate lifejackets is one of the best ways people can keep themselves, and their families and friends safe. The risks of

Monday 6 October 2014 – 1.00pm

[Aka Aka Otatau Drainage Subcommittee](#)

Friday 10 October 2014 – 9.00am

[Hearings Appointment Subcommittee](#) (if required)

Tuesday 14 October 2014 – 9.30am

[Strategy and Policy Committee](#)

Tuesday 14 October 2014 – 10.00am

[Audit and Risk Subcommittee](#)

Tuesday 14 October 2014 – 1.00pm

[Integrated Catchment Management Committee](#)

Wednesday 15 October 2014 – 10.00am

[Central Waikato Liaison Zone Subcommittee](#)

Tuesday 28 October 2014 – 10.00am

[Council](#)

Thursday 30 October 2014 – 10.30am

[Upper Waikato Liaison Zone Subcommittee](#)

Friday 31 October 2014 – 10.00am

drowning or injury are too great to be complacent about doing the right thing,” says Mrs Botherway.

The council has been working closely with others in recent years to make it easier for boaties to keep themselves safe, launching a free smartphone app called Marine Mate and **producing five films for boaties on how to safely make bar crossings.**

“The app and bar crossing films are really great tools for Waikato boaties. We strongly encourage people to use these freely available resources,” says Mrs Botherway.

“Skippers have a responsibility to keep everyone safe on their boat and there’s no excuse for not being able to access the wide range of relevant safety information to help them do just that.”



Captain Hamilton in Civic Square: No matter how old school you are, if a lifejacket's not on it's no good.

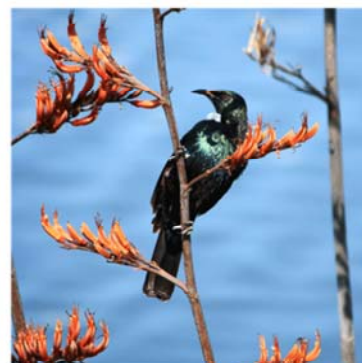


Regional council harbourmaster Richard Barnett checks the lifejacket is fitting Riff Raff correctly.

## Annual report: Read it online

Our **annual report for 2013/14** has been signed off and is out now, with information on what we've achieved during the past financial year.

Our focus has been on controlling and reducing costs, with improvements to our efficiency and effectiveness reflected in our positive year-end budget results. We achieved just under 90 per cent of



ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14



performance targets, and cost savings delivered a total surplus of \$2.7 million.

## Kudos to council ecologist

Waikato Regional Council ecologist Dr Bruno David has won a prestigious science award for innovative projects to protect native fish and control populations of invasive species.

The Kudos – Hamilton Excellence Awards held in Hamilton last Thursday are an annual celebration of science research and discovery from the Waikato.

Dr David (pictured) took out the 'New Zealand National Fieldays Innovation Award' for a number of projects he's been leading – from the protection and restoration of native fish habitats to developing an automated system to control invasive fish, in particular koi carp, in the lower Waikato catchment.



"It's been exciting to develop innovative ideas which are about dealing with problems and turning them into positive environmental outcomes," Dr David said.

[Read more about the projects here.](#)

## MOU signed to target invasive legume plants





This sea of yellow may be attractive to bystanders, but it's one of three pest plants eight organisations have agreed to protect the Desert Road landscape from.

"It's been fantastic to have the many varied landowners and land managers willingly sign up to work together to protect the iconic Desert Road environment from the landscape-changing impacts of broom, gorse and lupin," said Peter Russell, Waikato Regional Council's biosecurity operations manager.

"We've agreed to continue working collaboratively until at least 2025 to eradicate where possible or at least significantly reduce the density of these invasive legumes," Mr Russell said.

"It's early days, but we are also looking at ways the public can get involved in working with the agencies," he said.

The Central North Island Desert Road tussock-lands contain unique landscapes and ecosystems that are highly valued. Much of the landscape is legume-free, but there are some large infestations particularly along road verges and in some more remote areas out of sight of State Highway 1.

"The good news is that this collaborative project has been going strong for almost a year and already there are some good synergies and conversations happening," said Mr Russell.

A **memorandum of understanding became fully operative this month**. It's been signed by the Department of Conservation, Waikato Regional Council, NZ Defence Force, Horizons Regional Council, Lake Rotoaira Forest Trust, NZ Transport Agency, Genesis Energy and Transpower.

## BUSIT customer satisfaction rises

Changes made to BUSIT services over the past year have been welcomed by passengers, with overall customer satisfaction hitting 96 per cent.

Customer Care Limited was contracted by Waikato Regional Council to survey 1000 passengers on buses across the region over two weeks in August and September this year.

"The results are incredibly pleasing and show that while we're not perfect all of the time, we are delivering a



network that meets the needs of our customers,” said Ben Barlow, the council’s public transport operations manager.

“A range of improvements we’ve made in response to feedback during last year’s survey has seen the number of customers satisfied with their bus trip rise by 1 per cent to 96 per cent.

“We have also worked hard with our operators to make the Hamilton bus fleet fully accessible to wheelchairs and prams – that’s been welcomed by our passengers, with 95 per cent satisfied with how easy it is to get on and off the bus, up 3 per cent on last year,” Mr Barlow said.

“There’s also been a huge jump in the number of people heading online to plan their BUSIT journeys, with 39 per cent of people surveyed visiting [www.busit.co.nz](http://www.busit.co.nz) for timetable and bus route information – up 10 per cent. And more people are satisfied with the website, up 2 per cent to 93 per cent.”

Mr Barlow said cost was an issue for 20 per cent of passengers surveyed – this will be looked at during a comprehensive review of fares to be carried out by the council next year.

## Karakia for Lake Waikare



Check out [our video clip of a karakia](#) performed recently by tangata whenua and local kaumaatua to acknowledge the significance of Lake Waikare and the nearby Whangamarino wetland to Waikato-Tainui and local hapu.

The event at Lake Waikare was related to Waikato Regional Council’s work to refine its management plan for the lake and wetland, in consultation with Waikato-Tainui and other stakeholders.

This will include looking at how to better manage the discharge of water from Lake Waikare through the flood control gate while maintaining the viability of the local flood protection scheme.

Local iwi representatives and kaumaatua at the karakia ceremony were joined by councillors and staff from the regional council, Waikato District Council, Genesis Energy and other organisations.

“We’re committed to working together with Waikato-Tainui and other stakeholders to develop a management strategy for the future. It’s great to see the many parties interested in this work joining together for this karakia in a spirit of co-operation,” said the regional council’s lower Waikato zone manager Michael Duffy.

The karakia also blessed Waikato Regional Council staff and consultants who will undertake investigations on the lake. “Those investigations are part of seeking future solutions to address ongoing sedimentation issues within the Whangamarino wetland,” said Mr Duffy.



### Didn't get your copy? Read it online!

The printed issue of *Your Waikato* arrived in letterboxes in September with lots of news about some great environmental projects we're working on with a number of people, groups and organisations in our community.

Didn't get your copy but want to read it?

[Click here to download the the eight-page PDF version or flip through our online book.](#)



### Group following national process

The Collaborative Stakeholder Group is working its way through the National Policy Statement (NPS) for Freshwater Management 2014.

Under the Healthy Rivers: Plan for Change/Wai Ora: He Rautaki Whakapaipai project, the multi-stakeholder CSG is charged with developing a regional plan change related to the Waikato and Waipa rivers for consideration by the Healthy Rivers Wai Ora Committee. The Healthy Rivers Wai Ora Committee will then recommend the plan change to the Waikato Regional Council.

The amended NPS came into effect on 1 August 2014 and provides greater direction on how regions are to go about setting objectives, policies and rules to maintain or improve overall water quality.

The NPS directs regional councils to establish freshwater management units and then identify the values, such as irrigation, mahinga kai or swimming, communities have for water in these areas.

The CSG has not yet decided on freshwater management units for the Waikato and Waipa river catchments. But since March 2014 they have been hearing and understanding values from a range of different people, groups and perspectives and have developed a working list of values.

The working list will be used at the Healthy Rivers/Wai Ora stakeholder forum on 23 October 2014 to involve stakeholders in identifying values for different parts of the rivers and catchments.

Once stakeholders and communities have chosen values for freshwater management units, the NPS directs councils to decide the water quality objective for each value chosen by the community. The economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts to that community must be taken into account.

## That's stink!

Waikato Regional Council is backing calls from the Ministry for Primary Industries for people to report any discovery of the brown marmorated stink bug.

This bug eats virtually any fruit or vegetable and is a threat to our primary industries and environment. It has a voracious appetite, so can cause extensive damage. For example, this bug caused \$37 million worth of damage to apple crops in the US states of Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and Delaware in 2010.



On top of the damage it can do, it can survive very hot summers and very cold winters, and outside of its native China it doesn't have any natural enemies.

There's no known established population of these bugs in New Zealand. But the Ministry for Primary Industries has recently recorded a spike in the number of brown marmorated stink bugs arriving in containers.

So far, it has been stopped at the border. But if you've been overseas or received parcels or shipments from overseas, the Ministry for Primary Industries is keen for you to check for this bug.

It has six skinny legs, is around 2cm long, and is just about as wide as it is long. It's a dark, mottled brown colour with a brown-grey underside. And its abdominal edges – which extend beyond its wings – have alternating dark and light banding. Its antennae also have white bands.

This bug emits a really unpleasant and long-lasting odour when it's disturbed or crushed.

**If you spot one, catch it and call the Ministry for Primary Industries' exotic pest and disease hotline: 0800 80 99 66.**

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