



WAVE RAGE

Dear Sir

All too often, as ferry masters in the Tamaki River in Auckland, we are accused of all sorts of misdemeanours and wrongdoings. On this occasion we had this young fellow towing another young fellow on a skipboard playing around in our bow wake and stern wash dangerously close to the stern and our propellers. We were observing the speed restrictions on the river as required by the Harbourmaster.

When told by the deckhand to get away, the torrent of language was colourful to say the least, and he overtook us, cutting very close on our bow before heading off. Had the boardrider fallen off or the RHIB faltered, both young lads would have been at risk of injury.

Yes you guessed it! If the unfortunate happened it would have been us who got the blame. Was it a close quarters situation we should report to Maritime New Zealand, or is it a matter for the Harbourmaster?

I have enclosed a photograph of the person in command of the other vessel, in a hope that you might publish it and his parents may recognise him.

Professional Skipper remains a must-read magazine and a credit to your efforts.

Name withheld on request. Ed...

PIRATE OPERATOR

Dear Sir

We write to *Professional Skipper* magazine, the voice of the industry, as a last resort. We know as a professional seaman yourself that you will understand and respect our concerns and seek your assistance in this matter.

Please find enclosed a number of photographs of one of the Bay of Plenty's most active and blatant pirates. The owner of the *Happy II* has been operating commercially for some time as a workboat, towing barges locally for the new reef construction in front of Maritime New Zealand officials, with our many complaints falling on deaf ears.

Local operators have even complained to the Harbourmaster, but it would appear that he has no delegated authority and is powerless. The photographs show the out-of-survey *Happy II* towing her barge and digger to Whitianga. This in turn has upset the Coromandel operators. The master/owner of the *Happy II* is recognised as a bit of a rough character, so much so that when other local commercial operators complain, they run the risk of repercussions and vessel damage from the pirate because of a lack of respect for confidentialities from officials.

This pirate operator is the same one whose barge washed ashore last year at Mount Maunganui and required outside help to recover the vessel. Even with this all in the news, Maritime NZ appears to have done nothing about him.

Rules are rules, and if Maritime NZ cannot enforce its rules then it should get rid of them. All too often we see the inspectors giving



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the legitimate operator a hard time, while the pirates just thumb their noses.

We hope you can stir some action, as we are collectively becoming frustrated with officialdom and its unfair approach to small operators.

MALAYSIAN ACTION

Name withheld

Dear Sir

Well, you certainly have developed a way with words, and I frequently wonder where you find the time to do all that you do. I believe our industry knows very little about the extent of work you do on behalf of its participants.

Professional Skipper remains the highlight of the month and a must read. I loved the article on Malaysian yachting, in particular how some governments can make things happen for the benefit of the people in such a short time. Pity those in the Beehive don't take a page out of the Malays' book.

Our politicians need to take a long, hard look at the Resource Management Act and when they tire of looking, dump it. Until then we will never see good progress and investment. New jobs and future opportunities will continue to be lost because of procrastination and do-gooder touchy touchy - feely feely syndrome.

Keith, keep telling it as it is. You are one of the few who has the knowledge and balls to do so.

Bob Sanders, Bay of Plenty

Dear Sir

I recall sending you an "excellent read" mail when you first started *Professional Skipper*, and despite work pressure I managed to find time to read the January/February issue cover to cover and say once again, great stuff Keith. I especially enjoyed the article on Malaysian yachting.

Peter Williams, Ministry of Fisheries, Mt Maunganui

HONEST APPRAISAL

Dear Sir

Thank you very much for going to the trouble to respond to my request regarding anchors, and to provide a very useful perspective. It can be a bit confusing at times for someone like myself when different manufacturers are making all sorts of claims which are sometimes of doubtful accuracy.

However, I regard comments and tests by you and your publication to be extremely valuable and thank you immensely for them. Keep it up!

Allan Drew, Sydney, Australia



O B I T U A R Y

RICHARD ANTONY PERKINS

JANUARY 24, 1950 - DECEMBER 12, 2005

Richard Perkins, or "Perks" as he was often referred to, died at his home on the Sunshine Coast, Australia, on December 12 after an eighteen-month struggle with cancer.

I first met Richard when he joined the Royal New Zealand Navy as a trainee radio communicator. In those days the Navy required new recruits to fit in between a minimum and maximum height and weight. Willing hands were a sought-after skill.

While this scrawny blond lad easily met the weight restrictions, he was fast approaching the maximum height. But surgeon commander Doc Frew, in giving him a good prod, "Bend over and touch your toes, say Arhh," medical, decided that Richard in all probability was nearing his maximum height and would probably only peak at 188cm, or 6ft. Wrong! The good doctor failed to take into account the effects of fresh air, fine food and plenty of exercise, as Richard grew to 2.04m or 6ft 6in before he started to fill out.

While this was good for the Navy's basketball team, he was to develop a serious health problem with his constant close association with ships' deckheads, pipes, fan-trunkings, watertight bulkhead doors and the like, and not to mention the length of the ships' bunks, which were not designed for someone of Richard's stature.

After a number of years of fine service, the Navy and Richard mutually agreed to end their association.

On leaving the Navy, Richard never really left the sea, for the Auckland Volunteer Coastguard was to play a big part in his life over the next few years, first as its president and then its first chief executive. Richard played a significant part in taking this volunteer rescue group on its first steps to becoming the professional organisation it is today.

But the job was not without its problems, as the old salts of the core rescue cutter group showed their resistance to change. Richard's ability to pick up an idea and run with it, making up the rules as he went, while often proving successful, frequently upset

Richard never really left the sea, for the Coastguard played a big part in his life

the conservative-minded. But this never deterred him as he strove to do what he believed was best. Internal petty politics would, however, beat him, and the Coastguard lost an excellent advocate.

All was not lost, as Richard returned to maritime matters and took on the role of national secretary for the New Zealand Marine Transport Association, where he gave excellent service to the inshore shipping fraternity.

Richard also kept his hand in as a contract skipper and established a marine-based employment consulting business. But his love of the sea and maritime events took its toll on his marital life, and after two failed marriages he headed for the Sunshine Coast with his new love, Ann.

In association with Workboats New Zealand they established Workboats Australia. Life was shaping up well for both of them as they established good contacts and strong business leads. When *Professional Skipper* expanded its circulation into Australia, Richard was on hand to assist. Such was his willingness to help anyone in our industry, an industry he remained proud of and proud to be associated with until the grim reaper dealt him a cruel hand.

Farewell to a good mate and a sad loss.

Keith Ingram