



Vessel Biosecurity Quarterly

Message from the editors

Welcome to the first 2023 edition of Vessel Biosecurity Quarterly, a newsletter from Biosecurity NZ which discusses the management of international vessel related biosecurity risk.

2022 was a challenging year as the shipping industry was still dealing with the impacts of Covid-19, combined with disrupted global supply chains and an increase in fuel prices. The start of 2023 has brought its own challenges, with extreme weather events including cyclone Gabrielle hitting the North Island causing devastation to many communities. MPI are closely watching the related disruptions to port schedules and will work through the issues that may arise with industry as a result. Our thoughts are with those who have been affected by this disaster.

Biosecurity NZ would like to thank the shipping industry for your commitment to managing biosecurity risk by taking proactive steps and working through difficult circumstances to stop pests reaching New Zealand. We would also like to thank you all for continuing to provide valuable insight that has and will continue to be used to improve Biosecurity NZ's practices.

As our border fully reopened to all vessel type, we welcomed back cruise lines and recreational vessels for the first time since early 2020. This year there were several media reports about cases of non-compliance amongst cruise vessels arriving in New Zealand. This edition will include some information on the current season, as well as updates on the review of the vessel biosecurity requirements and the new vessel biofouling inspection provider approval scheme, information about the upcoming IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR), and more.

To find past editions of the Vessel Biosecurity Quarterly newsletter, please visit the MPI [website](#). Please feel free to pass on this newsletter to anyone and everyone who may be interested. If this has been forwarded to you and you would like to subscribe, click [here](#) or contact us at Standards@mpi.govt.nz

Proactive Biofouling Assessments

Biosecurity NZ is glad to see vessel operators taking proactive measures and sending us their biofouling documentation weeks or months in advance of their arrival to New Zealand. They do this to determine whether their vessel will require biofouling management before arrival. This has a great outcome for New Zealand's biosecurity, and means operators can avoid delays down the track.

While we are glad to see vessels utilising this service, we encourage vessel operators to conduct their own assessment and take the necessary biofouling management actions before proactively submitting biofouling documentation for a compliance assessment.

Our [Biofouling Management webpage](#) contains a '[self-assessment tool](#)', '[FAQ page](#)', and a '[dive inspection template](#)' which are helpful resources for vessels preparing for a New Zealand voyage.

Due to heavy demand, Biosecurity NZ would also like to remind operators and agents of when it is appropriate to use this tool. Going forward, we ask everyone to please ensure that:

- Biofouling documentation is only sent through for proactive assessment when the vessel is confirmed for a New Zealand voyage
- An ETA is given along with the documentation
- The following documents are submitted together:
 - Current antifouling certificate
 - Biofouling management plan
 - Biofouling record book
 - The most recent inspection report of the hull and all niche areas (see our dive inspection template above for a list of areas)

Our Vessel Target Evaluators may request further confirmation of intended arrival if this is not indicated when the documentation is sent. Depending on volume, the documentation may not be able to be processed for up to 10 days. We must prioritise clearance of imminent arrivals over proactive submissions. Biosecurity NZ need everyone's help to ensure our team can process vessels in a timely manner.

Self-assessment tool for biofouling

The risk of a vessel being fouled depends on a combination of indicators, such as the age of the antifouling coating, the time the vessel has been laid up, etc. MPI uses these indicators to assess the risk a vessel may pose.

On our website you can find our [flow chart](#) to self-assess the biofouling risk of your vessel. If your vessel is likely be assessed as high risk, consider reducing your risk by carrying out an in-water inspection or hull cleaning.

Please note, this information is guidance only and should not be regarded as legal advice or confirmation of compliance status. If you need any help assessing your vessel, please email vessels@mpi.govt.nz.

Private recreational vessels

Busy yacht season

It's been a busy yacht season, with more recreational craft arriving to New Zealand shores than expected after the lifting of pandemic-related travel restrictions.

According to our latest figures, approximately 382 yachts were cleared by our officers between October and early January. That included more than 220 yachts at Opua – a significant increase on the projected 160 yachts. Marsden Cove also had relatively high numbers, with about 70 yachts while in Auckland (Westhaven, Silo and Viaduct marinas), about 40 yachts were cleared. In comparison, officers cleared 158 yachts in total in the 2021 season. An especially busy week saw an almost record number of daily arrivals, which made for some long, hot days and saw a large number of seizures.

The usual food, plants, animals, equipment and personal items needed checking, but we also had some more notable discoveries. Giant clam shells and coral heads concealed under cabin floorboards had to be referred to the Department of Conservation to be checked against the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species](#). Termite infestations were found on two yachts and needed to be treated, and biofouling required a yacht to be hauled and cleaned.

This season saw a higher number of animals arriving on board, which we believe is due to pets being able to return for the first time since the pandemic. Animals on board yachts need to arrive at certain PoFAs approved for both yacht and animal clearances, require documentation, and need to be seen by our officers. If they meet requirements, they are transferred to an approved facility for quarantine.

One unfortunate moggy didn't have the necessary pre-arrival documentation so had to remain at a secure berth while awaiting clearance. These animals are fed and checked every day and any waste is collected and disposed of in an approved manner.

Overall, we've been impressed by the general cooperation of crew, and their awareness of and compliance with biosecurity requirements, the clearance process, and best practice maintenance for biofouling.

Thanks to our Northland and Auckland teams, who worked together to get the job done. Special thanks for the invaluable support of New Zealand Customs' Northland team, Bay of Islands Marina and Far North Holdings' team.

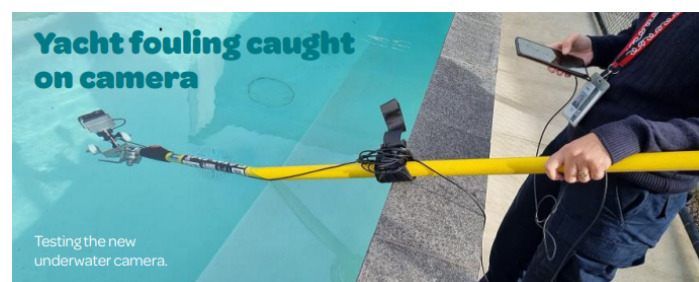
Yacht fouling caught on camera

A new underwater camera prototype is helping our officers spot biofouling on yacht hulls. The camera has been in action at Opua during the current yacht season. It features a well-known action camera brand mounted on a pole.

As wi-fi doesn't work well underwater, a cable connects the camera to a standard smart phone, allowing officers to view and record hull images. We have used underwater cameras to detect biofouling for some years. Previous versions, however, have been prone to technical issues, including battery failures and difficulties getting clear images in murky water conditions.

The new camera is still a work in progress. We are looking at making some improvements, such as permanently fixing the cable to the camera. If all goes well, we expect to have at least three units available for next year's yacht season.

The images inform our officers' risk management decisions. Dirty yachts can be directed to dry dock to undergo cleaning. Ultimately, excessively fouled vessels can be ordered to leave New Zealand waters.



Cruise season updates

New Zealand's biofouling requirements within the Craft Risk Management Standard for Biofouling apply to all commercial vessels, including cruise vessels, and have not changed since 2018.

Often cruise vessels will need to meet the "long stay" category because they visit places that are not approved ports of first-arrival or are protected areas, such as Fiordland. In most circumstances, due to the vessel's unusual operational profile, a cruise vessel operator may not be able to meet the requirements of the Craft Risk Management Standards. In such cases, cruise lines may choose to apply for a Craft Risk Management Plan (CRMP) that is tailored to their individual profiles. Most cruise vessels use this as a method to comply with our requirements.



A condition of their approved CRMP is that cruise vessels are assessed prior to their first arrival for the season. This ensures they follow the approved risk management measures. Some vessels were able to qualify as “short stay” vessels (and didn’t require a CRMP). However, these vessels were overdue for an assessment due to the length of time since their last visit to New Zealand. This meant that every vessel arriving for the 2022/2023 cruise season was assessed.

This summer there were numerous media reports around the world on the cruise season in New Zealand, as several cruise itineraries were interrupted and, in a few cases, New Zealand ports of call were cancelled. Reports indicated that New Zealand had changed its requirements and how they were enforced leading to vessels suddenly being non-compliant. We would like to take this opportunity to confirm that our biofouling requirements have not changed nor have we changed how we enforce them.

There have been a several factors that have led to some of the non-compliance in this cruise season. Border closures caused the previous two seasons to be cancelled in New Zealand, which led to long lay-ups during the pandemic and change in personnel. Long lay-ups are a big factor that contribute to the accumulation of biofouling on a vessel and reduce the effectiveness of the antifouling coating. In addition, the cruise lines faced a short turn-around following confirmation of our maritime border re-opening and the cruise season commencing. With itineraries usually booked out beyond 12 months, this created a logistical challenge of re-joining the Australia-New Zealand loop and lining up biofouling service providers along the way to ensure their hulls were prepared.

In some cases, communicating to service providers the high standard required of cruise vessels aiming to go to sensitive areas proved to be difficult. This resulted in cases where evidence was presented which was not of a quality to allow for accurate risk assessment, or biofouling was not removed to a level which complied with the thresholds.

Biosecurity NZ is continuing to work closely with the cruise lines and service providers to remedy these issues. We will continue to support both cruise lines and the underwater service provider industry to prepare them for the next cruise season at the end of this year.

If you want to know more, feel free to contact us at: Standards@mpi.govt.nz

Craft Risk Management Standard and Supporting Documents Update

Following the processing of public submissions on both the proposed Craft Risk Management Standard for Vessels (the Standard) and the Operational Code: Vessel Biofouling Inspection Provider Approval Scheme (Approval Scheme), MPI has been working to finalise the documents.

As the start of 2023 has already proved to be a difficult time for many in our communities here in New Zealand, the Standard and Approval Scheme have been delayed beyond our initial target. However, we are still aiming to publish in the first half of the year.

In the mean-time, please continue to keep an eye out for updates and notifications regarding the Standard and Approval Scheme. Following the issuing of both documents, MPI intends to reinvigorate our engagement with industry to ensure upcoming changes are well understood and prepared for.

If you have any ideas on what engagement and resources you might like to see over the course of 2023, please reach out to us at standards@mpi.govt.nz. Input from our stakeholders is important to us for ensuring we provide clear and useful information.



Biofouling CRMS - The Figures

Please note that the biofouling statistics and graphs in this issue have been altered to align with the beginning of the month as we are transitioning to monthly reporting to make the figures more accessible to stakeholders. Statistics in this issue run from 1 October – 31 December.

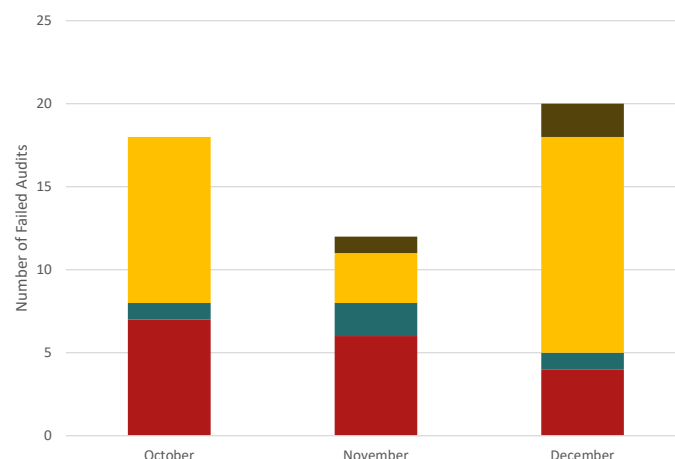
Biofouling Assessment

Biofouling documentation assessment commenced in 2018, after a four-year lead in period of the Craft Risk Management Standard for biofouling. Following this, vessels visiting New Zealand were moved onto an assessment schedule. Biofouling assessments are triggered by:

- time elapsed since last audit
- increase in risk level e.g. long lay-ups since previous audit
- vessel's first arrival to New Zealand
- internal audits after the receipt of new paperwork
- vessels returning with active NODs or previous audit failures are reassessed on return

It's important to be aware that a failed audit does not mean a vessel will be denied entry into New Zealand. Biosecurity NZ's response will always be in proportion to the biofouling risk of the vessel. There are many steps you can take to increase the likelihood of passing your audits. Email standards@mpi.govt.nz for advice or have a look at the previous issues of this newsletter for tips.

Reasons for Biofouling Audit Failures 1 October 2022 - 31 December 2022



- Under active NOD since previous voyage
- Insufficient documents AND biofouling above CRMS threshold
- Biofouling above CRMS threshold
- Insufficient documents

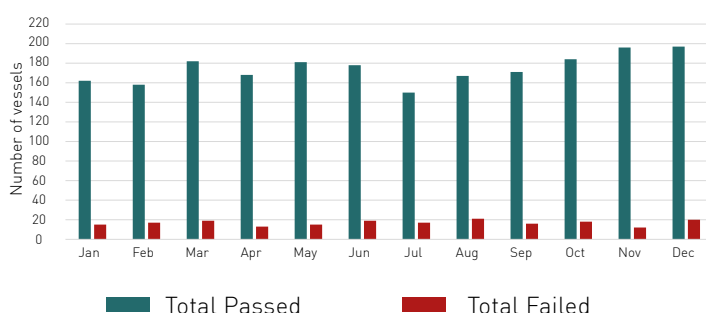
Compliance Actions

A Notice of Direction (NOD) is issued by MPI when a vessel fails to show compliance with the Standard. NODs list the compliance actions a vessel must follow to manage the biofouling risk that they pose to New Zealand. These will always be in proportion to the risk the vessel poses. For instance:

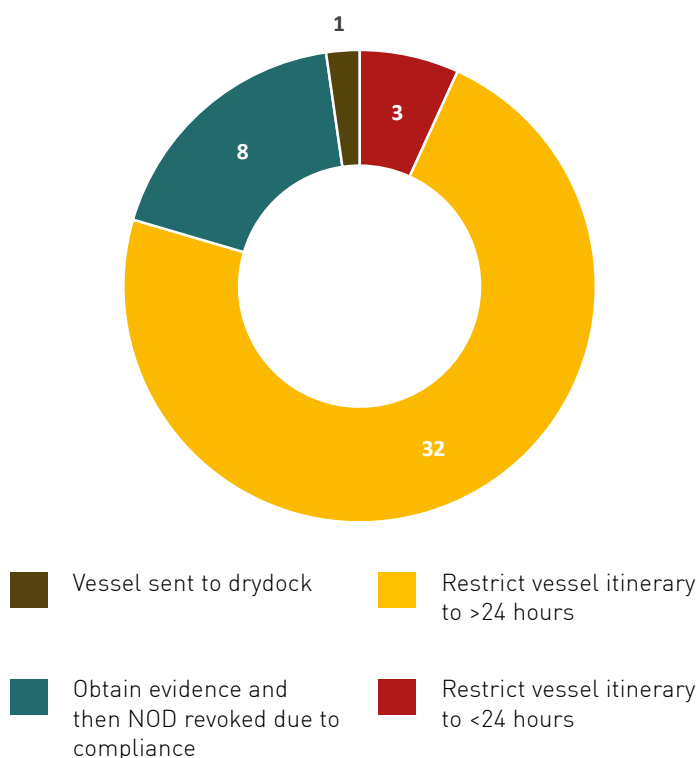
- lower risk vessels may be allowed to complete their declared itinerary
- high risk vessels may be directed to leave NZ in less than 24 hours
- in circumstances where the risk is unclear, a vessel may be directed to undertake a hull inspection.

There has been a small decrease in the number of NODs issued when comparing the number issued this quarter to those issued last quarter. This reflects the hard work everyone has put in to meet the requirements. We hope to see this continuing throughout 2023. If you would like any assistance, please feel free to contact us at: standards@mpi.govt.nz.

Total Vessels Passed vs Total Vessels Failed 2022



NODs issued between 1 October 2022 - 31 December 2022 (by compliance measure)



The total number of NODs issued since 2020 is 431 (up to 31/12/22)

- remember to manage your biofouling risk before you return to New Zealand. Vessels on active NODs will be subject to further, stricter, compliance actions if they return without managing their risk. This can include denying entry to New Zealand in extreme cases.
- ensure that you submit any new evidence of biofouling management to vessels@mpi.govt.nz along with your pre-arrival paperwork. You can do this in advance to ensure your evidence meets the conditions of the NOD.
- if you have departed NZTW with an active NOD and are not clear on what actions to take before returning, please contact us at standards@mpi.govt.nz, we can offer you tips or set up a meeting.

Requirements for species of the *Lymantria* complex

The new requirements for species of the *Lymantria* complex (formerly known as Asian Gypsy Moth, hereafter commonly known as Flighted Spongy Moth Complex) will come into force in time for the beginning of the next flight season (May 2023). These changes are to align with the North American Plant Protection Organisation's recently implemented revisions. The new requirements involve an extension of some risk periods and merging of some risk areas. From May 2023, certificates of freedom must be provided by vessels visiting risk areas inside the updated risk periods.

Species of the *Lymantria* complex risk areas and periods for 2023 season

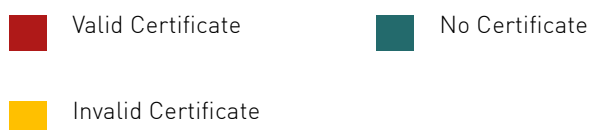
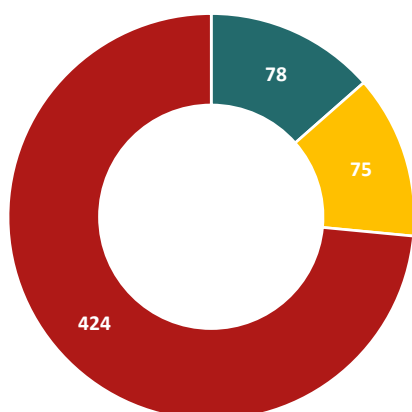
Risk Area	Requirements apply where visited any ports	Specific Risk Period
Russian Far East	South of 60 North and West of 147 longitude (excluding those ports on the Kamchatka Peninsula)	June 15 to October 15
China	North of latitude of 31 15' N	June 1 to September 30
Republic of Korea	In all areas	June 1 to September 30
Japan - Northern	In prefectures of Hokkaido, Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Akita, Yamagata	June 15 to October 30
Japan - Central	In prefectures of Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui, Ibaraki, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie	June 1 to September 30
Japan - Southern	In prefectures of Wakayama, Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo, Tottori, Shimane, Okayama, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Kagawa, Tokushima, Ehime, Kochi, Fukuoka, Oita, Saga, Nagasaki, Miyazaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima	May 15 to August 31
Japan - Far Southern	In prefecture of Okinawa	May 25 to June 30



Lymantria Update: The Figures

73% of vessels that required a certificate of freedom arrived with a valid certificate in 2022 (as of 31/12/22). This remains in line with the percentages seen in previous quarters.

Vessels arriving from Risk Areas inside Risk Periods (2022 up to 31/12/22)



The Vessel Target Evaluation team is growing!

Biosecurity New Zealand have approved four new Vessel Target Evaluator positions. This will help to ensure Vessel Target Evaluation continues to strengthen biosecurity processes and communications as well as providing a timely and reliable service.

If you need any help assessing your vessel, please email vessels@mpi.govt.nz

Biofouling and the International Maritime Organisation

The 10th IMO's Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR 10), will be held face to face for the first time since the pandemic. The meeting will be held in London this upcoming April.

This year's agenda items include safety and pollution hazards of chemicals and the development of an operational guide on the response to spills of Hazardous. Another important agenda item is the revision of the *2011 Guidelines for the Control and Management of Ships' Biofouling to Minimize the Transfer of Invasive Aquatic Species*. MPI has led the New Zealand team contributing to this work for the past three years, offering advice and expertise derived from our own requirements.

New Zealand's position has always been to work toward realistic improvement of vessel biofouling management across the globe, which ultimately results in minimising the transfer of invasive aquatic species. MPI will continue to contribute to the review of the Biofouling Guidelines and offer its expertise and advice.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements or a topic you would like us to include in our next issue?

Would you like a meeting to discuss how best to meet the standards?

Drop us an email at standards@mpi.govt.nz

