

# Challenging Time Ahead

The Taranaki Harbours Board's new chairman, Mr Stuart Hayton, sees his job rather like that of a captain taking the helm of a well-run ship.

While the seas — the Taranaki. We must be confident of supporting this traffic in the interests of the port, New Plymouth, Taranaki and the whole country," says Mr Hayton.

Very much a team man, yet firm and capable when he presides over the board meeting, Stuart Hayton is always ready to recognise the parts other people play in the efficiency of the port. "The management of the Taranaki Harbours Board is the responsibility of the executive officers. We're very fortunate to have a very efficient executive staff in Mr Boddy, the general manager, Mr Holmes, the chief engineer and Captain Flett, the harbourmaster.

"As I see it, it is their function to run the port, and assist and advise the board on planning and policy. "My job is really to preside over the board — to act as pilot, or referee over the policy making. I believe in working with people, talking with people, not at them, sitting alongside them," not opposite."

## Role

Mr Hayton regards his role in the harbours board as an extension to a desire to serve the community. He says he has always been interested in community service, has been a Justice of the Peace for more than 30 years, and a keen Rotarian.

When he returned from World War II, he took over E. C. Hayton and Co Ltd, a plumbers' suppliers established in New Plymouth by his father. From this he developed an appreciation of importers' requirements, and felt he had some knowledge in this sphere when he became a board member in

1958, and deputy chairman in 1970. He describes himself as "basically a Taranaki man, always a great supporter, always an enthusiast for Taranaki."

Though Port Taranaki will not see so many physical changes as the last 10 years, it will go through a consolidation period. The Newton King wharf is nearing the end of its economic life, says Mr Hayton, and within five years an "in-service" replacement programme will be underway, rebuilding one side of the wharf at a time, while the other side remains in use. Other construction planned is covered storage facility for fertiliser, to streamline present methods.

## Sheds

Cargo transit sheds will be kept under "careful consideration," too.

The board is also "looking into the question" of roll-on, roll-off facilities, which Mr Hayton thinks could be well accommodated on the Blyde Wharf.

The Taranaki Harbours Board realises, as do all other boards, that high labour costs in the future will compel the cutting of unnecessary handling of goods. The emphasis is shifting towards containerisation, palletisation and roll-on, roll-off treatment.

## Environment

It is showing increased concern for the environment, and was aware of the need to reconcile the transport needs of the people with long-term maintenance of ecological resources, he said. A research firm will be hired to establish ecological data of the port and surrounding waters.

The port is fulfilling an increasingly important link to an extent which many people do not realise, says Mr Hayton.

Last year, for the first time, Port Taranaki topped the million-tonne mark in trade, and has tallied record tonnages over the last five years. Last month a record number of overseas ships arrived and departed.

Mr Hayton also draws attention to the watersiders' "exceptionally good record" — the rate at which they unloaded car cargoes this year was double that of any other New Zealand port, and Port Taranaki still holds the record for unloading fertiliser.



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THE EDITOR