

# SHIPPING GAZETTE™

## Cement carrier makes last Buller call

### Warren Head

The cement carrier Westport made its last voyage from the port of Westport on Wednesday, slipping across the Buller River bar before dawn carrying a cargo of cement from Holcim's now closed Cape Foulwind cement works.

Although the Westport works officially closes at the end of the month, the huge kilns were switched off last week.

The Westport will deliver its shipment at Centreport, Wellington, before proceeding to Onehunga where it will be laid up, pending its sale. Should the vessel not be sold it would most likely be exported for scrapping.

Remaining quantities at Westport wharf silos will be uplifted by another Holcim vessel, the Milburn Carrier II on July 25-26.

Captain John McKenna who has been the ship's master for seven years told *Shipping Gazette™* from sea that the ship has been sailing from the Buller for 40 years. "It made its 1100th call at Onehunga on March 27, 40

years to the day of its first call."

Captain McKenna added that the ship has a crew of 12. Its chief engineer has spent 36 years on the ship, its Chief IR ('bosun') 34 years.

The Westport is 94.65m in length, with a 14.25m beam, draft of 5.85m and has gross tonnage of 3091 tonnes. It can load 3500 tonnes of cement. The vessel's keel was laid in July 1975 and it was launched in January 1976. It is powered by two 6 cylinder engines and has a service speed of 13 knots. There is a 300hp bow thruster.

"It's been a very versatile ship, and has a rounded stern so that it can turn in river channels," said Captain McKenna. "It has handled the run of the river, the Buller River bar and the bar at Onehunga, both of which can be challenging in rough weather. It has done very well navigating Westport, Nelson, Wellington and Onehunga in its 40 years."

Captain McKenna said the demise of the Westport will adversely affect the ports of Westport and Onehunga.

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Material dredged by CentrePort in Wellington harbour (above) may be used by the city's airport.

## Possibility of utilising Wellington dredgings

### Iain MacIntyre

A sizeable quantity of material which would be dredged in CentrePort Wellington's proposed channel-deepening project could potentially be used in Wellington Airport's proposed runway extension project.

Such was the confirmation provided to the *Shipping Gazette™* this week by Wellington Airport communications general manager Greg Thomas, as the companies progressed resource consent applications for their respective developments.

Mr Thomas estimated that "two million cubic metres of the eight million cubic metres" that would be dredged could be used in the runway extension, in a move that would potentially benefit both parties.

"Our alternative is quarry fill that is either trucked or barged to the site," he said.

"There would be a minor saving from the dredge project relative to the entire extension budget, however, it would [also] remove the need for trucking."

In terms of the logistics of such a proposal, Mr Thomas confirmed that the two projects "would need to be aligned".

"Hence the airport is also seeking consent for all possible fill source options including quarry and trucking the fill in and/or a combination of dredge material."

Mr Thomas also emphatically dismissed concerns reported elsewhere that the dredged material might not be fully suitable for the runway extension.

"The dredged material has been tested and evaluated in the Aecom construction report. It is in [an] appendix on fill sources and is an excellent source of fill material."

CentrePort chief executive Derek Nind appeared reluctant to be drawn

on the possible use of the dredgings at this stage, emphasising the port's consent application was "completely independent of any other proposed infrastructure project".

"CentrePort's focus remains the deepening of the shipping channel in Wellington harbour," he told the *Shipping Gazette™*.

"Our focus on the shipping channel is vital to the economic wellbeing of the central region, with thousands of businesses dependent on our ability to provide efficient trade and transport links to Wellington."

"Without our investment in the shipping channel, the supply chain will move north, creating higher inland transport costs and longer transit times for the central region's importers and exporters, which would hamper growth and jobs."

As reported previously, CentrePort is seeking a 34-year consent to progressively dredge from its current all-tide draught of about 10.3 metres and high-water draught of 11.3 metres to an all-tide draught of 14.5 metres.

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The Westport bulk cement carrier sailing up the Buller River.

## Final 'Blue Economy' seminar in Auckland

### Iain MacIntyre

Auckland is to host the third and final seminar in the two-year "Managing the Blue Economy: Future of Port and Shipping in the Asia-Pacific" project of the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC).

Following seminars in Papeete and Busan, the December 5-7 Auckland event at the University of Auckland's Owen Glenn Business School Building will be themed "Technology Innovation and Integrated Services at Ports".

According to a statement from the PECC's New Zealand office, the seminar will consider the critical place that ports hold in supply chain management, examine impacts of the trend towards integrated port services and review vital safety and security considerations.

The event is also expected to

highlight the likely effects of emerging mega-regional agreements on regional trade flows and examine the technological and policy innovations being increasingly adopted by ports to maximise energy-efficiency and economic-competitiveness.

"This cluster of very important factors will bear heavily on how port management structures evolve in the PECC region and determine the size and scope of long-term investment strategies that public and private sector owners and operators decide to pursue," it stated.

According to organisers, the seminar series is proving of strong appeal to the government sector within PECC economies, relevant private sector institutions and business agencies, as well as civil society groups that "have a serious concern for how sensitively the blue economy is managed".