



## LONGCAST

25 December 22 – Christmas Day

26 December 22 – Boxing Day

27 December 22 – Christmas Day observed

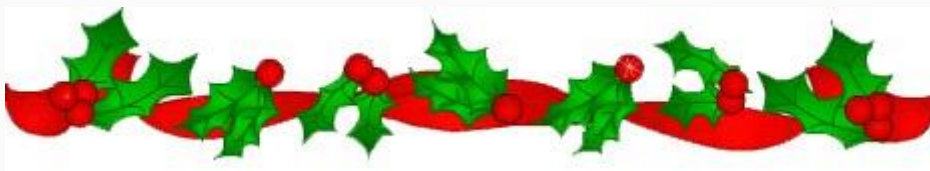
Hi Folks



**SEASONS GREETINGS**

**from**

**HMNZS NGAPONA ASSN**



**CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

**We held our annual Christmas Lunch last Friday at the Birkenhead RSA. The lunch was once again a great success and was enjoyed by all who attended.**

**Thanks to the Birkenhead RSA for their hospitality and the great meal.**

### **NEW BOEING P-8A POSEIDON ARRIVES**

**The Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) has welcomed the first of our four Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) to Aotearoa New Zealand on 13 December 2022. Minister of Defence Peeni Henare marked the arrival of the first of Aotearoa New Zealand's P-8A Poseidon aircraft at the Royal New Zealand Air Force's Base at Ohakea. This is the first of four new P-8A Poseidon aircraft purchased by the Government through its historic investment to modernise New Zealand's defence force. "Since coming into office we've focused on ensuring our Defence force personnel have the support, tools and capability to serve on behalf of all New Zealanders and play our part in providing security and stability to our region," Peeni Henare said. "We have invested a record \$2.53 billion to upgrade our Defence capability in Budget 2018 and that included \$2.3 billion purchase to replace the aging P-3K2 Orion which have been in service with the RNZAF since the 1960s. "The P-8s will replace the Orions, conducting maritime surveillance, resource protection, natural disaster support and search and rescue operations as we work alongside our Pacific partners to support the security and stability of the region. "Indeed, one of the primary security concerns of the Pacific is that of climate change which is also one of my top priorities as Defence Minister. "With the ability to travel faster and with greater reliability than the existing aircraft the P-8A will be a key capability to support national and international disaster responses as a result of climate change. "To help move into a new era of maritime surveillance and in**

order to ensure we focus our efforts on the training and maintenance required of the new aircrafts we are reprioritising our workforce to allow for the safe transition to the four P-8A Poseidons. “An important part of this launch is seeing the mahi so far on a purpose-built facility to house the new aircrafts. Built right here at Base Ohakea it measures 180m long, 26m high and 80m wide with an average of 250 workers onsite each day,” Peeni Henare said. The official welcome ceremony for the first P-8A was attended by 450 guests including Ambassadors, local community members, and Defence personnel. “New Zealand’s first P-8A aircraft marks a major milestone in the decisions taken since 2018 to replace those Defence Force capabilities that have served the country’s interests, and those of our friends and neighbours, for more than three generations,” Peeni Henare. “To the current, and future generations of Royal New Zealand Air Force personnel who will operate the P-8A, thank you for your commitment to continuing this record of service,” Peeni Henare said. The remaining aircraft are scheduled to arrive by mid-2023. New Zealand has yet to place an order for weapons systems (torpedoes and anti-ship missiles) for these aircraft. Their mission will initially be limited to ISR. They won’t be able to conduct anti-submarine warfare missions.





### **RNZN SHIPS IDLE DUE TO PERSONNEL SHORTAGES**

Three of New Zealand's nine naval ships are sitting idle in port as higher civilian salaries lure personnel out of the military, the country's Defence Force said on Wednesday, even as tensions in the Pacific rise between China and the U.S. and its allies. The HMNZS WELLINGTON, an offshore patrol vessel, headed back to New Zealand early from what was meant to be a three-month

deployment in the Pacific and was taken out of operation in November because of shortages, the New Zealand Defence Force said. The WELLINGTON is the third ship to be put into “care and custody”, with two other vessels - another offshore patrol vessel and a smaller patrol vessel for operating close to shore - pulled off the line and their crews reassigned last year. The vessels have crews of 24 to 42. The bottom line is “workforce issues are impacting ship availability to deliver naval outputs,” an August note from the Chief of the Defence Force Air Marshal Kevin Short to the Minister of Defence said. “Risks remain to Naval output delivery if attrition and hollowness cannot be addressed in a timely manner.” NZDF has just over 15,000 personnel, including civilian staff, and about 2,800 are in the Navy. The Defence Force said in May that it would spend 90 million New Zealand dollars (\$57 million) over four years to raise the salaries of the lowest-paid workers. Officials hope personnel figures will significantly improve by 2026-2027. Having so few ships available makes it harder for the navy to handle multiple challenges at once, a New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) spokesperson said. The problem is especially acute as the U.S., Japan, Australia and other countries in the region square off against China and strive for influence. New defence spending plans, driven by lessons learned from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, are also taking shape. New Zealand, which spends roughly 1.5% of its GDP on defence, this year announced it would review its own defence policy in light of regional geopolitics and climate change. The review is not expected to be completed until 2024. In July, after China signed a security pact with the Solomon Islands, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said the Pacific region could manage security issues on its own. The number of people leaving the defence force is at its highest level - the Navy attrition rate was about 16.5% in the year to November - in decades as staff have quit for jobs in the private sector, where salaries have risen due to a tight labour market. New Zealand’s Defence Force is also



dealing with ageing equipment and a large number of personnel being assigned to border quarantine facilities. Minister of Defence Peeni Henare acknowledged in an email that staff losses were hurting the Defence Force, but said the government was committed to rebuilding it. "There is more still to do," he said. The country is replacing its fleet of C-130 cargo planes and P-3 maritime patrol aircraft (MPA), and the first of four Boeing P-8A Poseidon MPA arrived this month. Plans for a new military vessel built for Southern Ocean and Antarctic conditions were shelved this year.

*Source : Reuters - Reporting by Lucy Craymer. Editing by Gerry Doyle)*

### **THE LASTING EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON SHIPPING**

The 24,004 TEU EVER ATOP transited the Suez Canal recently on its maiden voyage to North Europe, apparently less than three-quarters full, evidencing the severe contraction in demand impacting the tradelane. The ULCV was the final ship to be delivered of an order of the ten A24 series design for Taiwanese carrier Evergreen, and along with sister ships Ever Aria and Ever A lot holds the title of largest containership afloat, in terms of nominal capacity. The newbuild is being phased into an Asia-North Europe Ocean Alliance loop, but the PR interest of a call at a port hub by the biggest containership afloat will be lost with the arrival of a vessel that is visibly extremely light on deck. An ocean carrier will make every effort to maximise the load on a vessel's maiden call, even topping up the deck with empty containers to give a fully laden effect, so the sailing of the ship under-utilized, among a raft of other blanked sailings, shows how badly the market has deteriorated in just a few months, according to London's The Loadstar. Indeed, the earlier arrivals of Ever Atop's sister vessels were greeted with all the normal ceremony surrounding the world's largest containerships, when they arrived at their first port of call in North Europe, laden to the gunnels. But

a few months on, carriers are racking up some serious voyage losses on ships that do sail, and bleeding from high overheads with no revenue from the sailings they blank. Notwithstanding that several carriers still have some tailwind from the boom period that is seeing some shippers honouring contract pricing and continuing to pay rates three or four times higher than the spot market average, the revenue shortfall in Q4, compared with carrier pared-down budgets, is likely to be significant. And this could oblige the publicly listed carriers to downgrade their earnings forecasts for Q4. Meanwhile, a UK-based carrier contact told The Loadstar recently they were at a stage where discounting rates seemed to be having little impact on bookings. "The volume is just not there at the moment to support the network as it stands, and we are already blanking over a third of our sailings," he said. The severe contraction in demand on the route has already caused the demise of new entrants, left with expensive charter vessels and daily hire rates they can no longer service. "We need to somehow get over the Christmas holiday period and, hopefully, the orders will come back in ahead of the Chinese New Year," said the contact. Nevertheless, the positive effect of the collapse of imports into North Europe has given overstretched terminals breathing space to better organize their facilities.

### **NEW SCAMPI VESSEL FOR SANFORDS**

New Zealand seafood company Sanford Limited (NZX:SAN) has announced it has signed a contract with Netherland's based Damen Shipbuilding Maaskant for the design and build of a new scampi vessel for operation in the Southern Ocean. The vessel will contribute to Sanford's target of reducing the carbon footprint from its direct operations by 25% between 2020 and 2030. Sanford Chairman Sir Robert McLeod says "this exciting new vessel build signals our intention to invest in our core business, to improve our efficiency and environmental performance of our fleet. It strengthens our ability to supply



exceptional New Zealand seafood both domestically and to the rest of the world.”



## ROYAL NAVY SHIPS IN NEW ZEALAND

### HMS BLANCHE

Eclipse class wooden screw sloop built in Chatham Dockyard in mid 1860s for the RN

Armament: 6 guns

2, 7inch muzzle loaders

4, 6.3 inch muzzle loaders

Length: 212 feet

Beam: 36 feet.

Complement: 180

Speed: 12 knots on one shaft

*HMS Blanche* joined the Australian Station in April 1868, arriving in April 1868. She undertook a punitive action against Solomon Island natives in September 1869. During 1870, she joined in the search for the schooner *Daphne*, which was unsuccessful. Under the command of Captain Cortland Simpson, she undertook a survey of Rabaul's Harbour in 1872. Blanche Bay is named after *HMS Blanche*. She finished service on the Australia Station in 1875. While sailing to England she was almost lost rounding Cape Horn in bad weather.

After being refitted and rearmed, she was sent to the North

America and West Indies Station, where she remained until 1881. To relate the history of this ship in NZ waters, first we must briefly touch on some of the history of the islands to the south of New Zealand, the Auckland Islands. Many vessels have foundered on the rocks of the Auckland Islands including:

1864 – the *Minerva* shipwreck. Four survivors

1864 – the *Invercauld* shipwreck. 19 survivors of which only 3 survived starvation.

1864 – the *Grafton* shipwreck.

1866 – the *General Grant* shipwreck.

It was the *General Grant* shipwreck that spurred the Admiralty to establish and maintain food stores on the islands. A ship was to visit the islands every six months to ensure the stocks were maintained and to rescue any unfortunates shipwrecked there.

The *General Grant* was a three masted 1,005-ton bark named after Ulysses S Grant the famous American civil war general. The ship sailed from Melbourne en-route for London via Cape Horn. On board were 58 passengers and 25 crew. The cargo consisted of wool, hides and 2,576 ounces of gold. On the 13 May 1866 in light winds, the ship was unable to steer a course that would take them away from the islands. The ship crashed against the Auckland Islands cliffs and subsequently drifted into a large cave. There were fifteen survivors. They were to remain shipwrecked for 16 long months before being rescued by the brig *Amherst* in Nov 1867.

*HMS Blanche* was the first naval vessel to be given the task of inspecting and replenishing the stores in the islands leaving Wellington on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1869 to carry out this arduous duty. It was from this ship that a party landed in the Auckland Islands and took possession of them in the name of Queen Victoria.

The ship was to return to the Auckland Islands a year later to look for the *Matatoka*, a 1092-ton full rigged wooden ship which had left Lyttleton bound for London on the 13 May 1869 but which had

disappeared. On checking a food depot, the crew of the *Blanche* found they had been depleted but there was no response to efforts made to attract the attention of any survivors.

The *Blanche* was to make other trips to check on the food depots established in the Auckland and Campbell islands improving them at every visit. HMS Emerald is also known to have inspected the depots.

*HMS Blanche* was sold for scrap in 1886.

*Postscript: Despite at least 30 attempts to locate and recover the gold from the General Grant, this has never been achieved. The gold would be worth about \$8 million today.*



Regards

**Jerry Payne**

Editor

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