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Social and Environmental Planning

# **Review of Social Impact Assessment Report Proposal to Leave the Remains of the MV Rena on Astrolabe Reef**

**Prepared for the Ministry for the Environment - Manatu Mo Te Taiao**

**By Social & Environmental Limited**

**June 2014**

## Executive Summary

This report peer reviews the final Social Impact Assessment Report: Proposal to Leave the Remains of the MV Rena on Astrolabe Reef (the SIA) prepared by Beca consultants for Daina Shipping Company. The review focuses on methodology, content, structure, comprehensibility and social impact assessment best practice.

Three methods were used to peer review the SIA; a review of documentation, a site visit and definition of how review matters were addressed.

The review findings showed that the structure and content used in the SIA were sound, appropriate and followed Social Impact Assessment best practice.

There are some limitations to the content however, briefness being the main factor particularly in the analysis of social impacts from the Proposal. Explanations, integration of data and filling gaps would make the report more comprehensive. This comprehensiveness could be achieved without detracting from the author's intent of not repeating data from other technical assessments.

I agree in principle with the conclusions made in the SIA that the overall social impacts of the Proposal are considered minor negative to minor positive. However, in my opinion, the overall social impacts of the Proposal to leave the remains of the Rena on the Reef have the potential to be minor negative to minor positive. The response of people and communities as well as how management plans are implemented and carried out will be the key factors to the duration, severity and extent of effects on people and communities. Clarification of data, with the additional information suggested, may confirm my conclusion.

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## 1 Introduction

This report is a peer review of the final Social Impact Assessment Report: Proposal to Leave the Remains of the MV Rena on Astrolabe Reef (SIA) prepared by Beca consultants for Daina Shipping Company. It updates an earlier review (8 April 2014) of the draft SIA with amendments that are necessary.

The review involves the following services:

1. A review of the final Rena SIA in relation to methodology, content, structure, comprehensibility and SIA best practice; and
2. Preparing a draft report in Word document format outlining findings of the review, including:
  - Strengths and weaknesses of the SIA including any information gaps and limitations
  - Suggestions regarding what improvements, if any, could be made to the SIA in terms of methodology, content, structure, comprehensibility and SIA best practice
  - Conclusion as to whether the Supplier agrees with the SIA and its conclusions
  - Reasons for the Supplier's conclusion regarding the SIA.

## 2 Methodology Used for the Peer Review

I used three methods to peer review the SIA for the Proposal to Leave the Remains of the MV Rena on Astrolabe Reef. They are a review of documentation, a site visit and defining the matters to be addressed in the review.

1. The following documentation was reviewed.

Resource Consent application reports:

- A. Social Impact Assessment Report: Proposal to Leave the remains of the MV Rena on Astrolabe Reef prepared by Beca (Final);
- B. Social Impact Assessment Report: Proposal to Leave the remains of the MV Rena on Astrolabe Reef prepared by Beca (Draft);
- C. Application for Resource Consent (MV Rena), Prepared by Beca Carter Hollings and Ferner (Beca), May 2014, Volumes One, Two and Three;
- D. Rena Cultural Impact Assessment for Matakana and Rangiwaia Islands, Tauranga 2013;
- E. Rena Kaitiaki Impact Assessment 2012 (Final);
- F. Rena Cultural Impact Assessment: Whangaparāoa, Waihou Bay, Raukokore Area East Cape Region; and
- G. Ngai Te Hapu Incorporated Cultural Values Assessment of the wreck of the MV Rena on Te Tau O Taiti (Astrolabe Reef).

MfE documents:

- H. Initial MfE Comments on Draft Rena SIA dated 5 March 2014;
- I. Initial consultation with Ngāi Te Rangi on potential consent application for leaving wreck of MV Rena on Otaiti reef dated 11 February 2014; and

- J. Initial consultation with Ngāti Awa on potential Rena consent application for leaving wreck of MV Rena on Otaiti reef dated 4 February 2014.

Other documentation:

- K. [www.renaproject.co.nz](http://www.renaproject.co.nz)

2. I undertook a site visit on 18 May 2014. The purpose of the site visit was to increase my understanding of the Proposal by: identifying the location of the MV Rena; seeing the Astrolabe Reef, recreational fishing, other marine activities and Motītī Island; and re-familiarising myself with the SIA 'area of interest' from Waihi Beach in the north to Pongakawa in the south. I achieved this purpose by hiring a plane from Tauranga airport to fly over the Astrolabe Reef and MV Rena. Weather conditions were ideal and in one vista I could view all the features I was aiming to see, as well as the coast and communities beyond from Whangamata in the north to Matata in the south.
3. The following matters in the SIA report are addressed as follows:
- Structure – that the report has been appropriately configured for an SIA for this particular Proposal;
  - Content – that data contained in the report is sound (valid, justifiable), gaps and limitations are identified, and issues relevant to this SIA are addressed;
  - Comprehensibility – that the SIA is clear, logical and there is no confusion; and
  - SIA best practice – that the report adheres to the SIA process and framework of the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) which is regarded as 'SIA best practice' in New Zealand<sup>1</sup>. I note that the comprehensive framework of social effects developed by the United Nations Environmental Programme is sometimes used also.<sup>2</sup>

### 3 Review Findings

The SIA is reviewed by chapter. The structure of each chapter is assessed followed by an assessment of content in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Throughout the assessment, comments are provided concerning comprehensibility and SIA best practice. The report methodology is assessed under the methodology chapter.

#### 3.1 Introduction

**Structure:** The structure in this chapter is distinctive. I note that the Proposed Conditions<sup>3</sup> and Financial Package<sup>4</sup> are part of the Proposal description for this SIA. Conditions and a financial package are not usually part of the proposal description put forward to manage and/or mitigate the proposal. However, in this case, it is appropriate. The Astrolabe Community Trust (the applicant) has been established and is committed to the conditions and implementation of the funding package on exercising the consent.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iaia.org/about/>

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Sadler B, and M McCabe (Eds), (2002), *United Nations Environment Programme, Environmental Impact Assessment Training Resource Manual, Second edition: Topic 13-Social Impact Assessment*, UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, Economics and Trade Branch, Geneva, pp461-487

<sup>3</sup> SIA 1.1.1, page 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid 1.1.2, page 1.

<sup>5</sup> Application for Resource Consent (MV Rena) May 2014 Volume One, 1.3.

**Content:** Overall, data in the Introduction is sound. The minor modifications suggested below would assist clarity.

### **Strengths**

- The consistency in the Proposal description (by being a summary of the Proposal from Volume 1, Section 2 of the consent application);
- Information provided in 1.3 Purpose & Objectives of SIA Report is stated succinctly and follows SIA best practice; and
- The exclusions and assumptions stated in the SIA are useful for understanding the scope of the SIA report. Recognition that consultation is an on-going process is valuable to the discussion. There is a clear statement that effects that are considered specific to Maori cultural values are addressed separately. This is a sound approach.

### **Weaknesses**

- Under 1.3 Purpose & Objectives of SIA Report, the context of the SIA report in the overall environmental context for the resource consent application is too brief. Reference to the application document (Application for Resource Consent (MV Rena), Beca, May 2014) would assist;
- Under 1.4 Exclusions and Assumptions, it would be helpful if the following was included:
  - First bullet point: referencing here, perhaps by footnote, the technical specialist reports that are relevant to the SIA (I am aware that they are mentioned later); and
  - Third bullet: better integration of other impact assessments in the SIA. Reference to the geographical extent of effects identified in other reports could be included in the SIA. For example, debris from the MV Rena found in Waihou Bay in East Cape Region, as documented in the Rena Cultural Impact Assessment: Whangaparāoa, Waihou Bay, Raukokore Area East Cape Region, could be acknowledged. Reference to a technical report on tide / wave movement may also help explain the extent of debris effects. An SIA should embrace aspects from all the other technical reports that have relevance to social effects.

## **3.2 Methodology**

**Structure:** The SIA methodology structure is appropriate for this Proposal and follows SIA best practice (it incorporates the essential methodological features for this Proposal; Process, Framework, IAIA Scope for an SIA, Stages of SIA and Relationship to this Report, Scale of Impact Assessment and Information Sources used).

**Content:** The scale of impact assessment needs to be clarified to full-proof the methodology being appropriate and meeting SIA best practice.

### **Strengths**

Under the following:

- 2.1 Process, the important principle across all SIA has been included;
- 2.2 Framework, the three themes that have been developed encapsulate the key potential areas to consider from the IAIA framework;

- 2.3 IAIA Scope for an SIA, justification has been provided as to why and where activities or elements that typically form part of an SIA have or have not been addressed;
- 2.4 Stages of SIA and Relationship to this Report, justification is provided for the 'relevant stage' for this Proposal to be considered as 'implementation' and that it is synonymous with 'operation';
- 2.5 Scale of Impact Assessment, the extent and severity of impact as well as the duration of effect have been considered; and
- 2.6 Information Sources, that extensive literature and internet research has been undertaken.

### ***Weaknesses***

Under 2.5 Scale of Impact Assessment used, the bulleted summary of significant effects, moderate effects and minor effect appear to be the 'result' of the assessment undertaken, not the scale used to 'make' the impact assessment. If the former applied, it seems to indicate there were no significant short term effects and no minor long term effect. If the latter applied, no scale is provided for the occurrence of significant short effects or minor long term effect to occur. Clarification of this matter is essential.

Under 2.6.3 Review of Technical Assessments, the relevance of some technical assessments stated ( Acoustics Assessment and The Recreational Diving Safety Assessment) is unknown as their inclusion in the SIA is not apparent. This matter should be addressed.

## **3.3 Description of the Environment**

**Structure:** The structure of this chapter is appropriate. The community focus for the SIA is defined. The 'area of interest' and representative groups in the area of interest are identified and a demographic profile of communities in the 'area of interest' is provided. The relevant communities and / or groups for each assessment theme are then identified and discussed. Overall, the structure in this chapter represents best practice in SIA. However, there are limitations in the content.

**Content:** The content intent is sound but addressing the weaknesses listed below would make the report more comprehensive and justifiable.

### ***Strengths***

- Under 3.1, the SIA correctly recognises that the Census Area Units (CAUs) are not necessarily the same as the community areas of interest;
- Under 3.4, the Experiential Values of the Coastal Environment are clearly documented; and
- Under 3.5 Community Cohesion (Implication for Process and Engagement), the community representative groups are well documented.

### ***Weaknesses***

- Under 3 Description of the Environment, number 3., the description could be expanded to include the people / groups relevant to each;
- How the definition of the 'area of interest' was arrived at needs clarification. Recognition needs to be given to the link with the social effects that occurred from the grounding of the MV Rena;
- Identification of the 'area of interest' opens the opportunity to integrate effects identified in a cultural impact assessment. For example, effects are known to have

- occurred beyond this area, such as MV Rena debris found at Waihou Bay, as mentioned earlier, and could be acknowledged;
- Under 3.1 Defining the 'Area of Interest' for Social Impact Assessment paragraph 2, the CAUs listed should be headed under Tauranga City and Western Bay of Plenty District for clarity;
  - A map of the Bay of Plenty Region indicating the Western Bay of Plenty District and Tauranga City (perhaps as an insert in figure 3.1) would provide a useful perspective on the demographic areas under discussion in 3.3 Profile of the Community;
  - Under 3.3, demographic comparisons with the New Zealand population should be included throughout this sub-section to provide a more balanced understanding of the demographic features of people in the area of interest (some comparisons with the New Zealand population are made but not enough to get a balanced understanding);
  - More detail needs to be provided to understand the consultation undertaken and avoid frustrating reading. Under 3.2.1 first paragraph, a brief summary of the wider public consultation process could be provided. Under the third bullet point, the range of 'community groups' could be specified;
  - Switching terms from the 'area of interest' (in 3.1) to the combined 'coastal area' population (in 3.3.1, 3.3.2 and 3.3.3) is confusing. Using the same term throughout would make the report easier to comprehend. The terms could perhaps be linked by restating that the coastal areas are the 'area of interest' (in 3.3.1, 3.3.2 and 3.3.3);
  - In footnote 7, it is not clear if 2006 Census data were used 'to calculate the 2013 population counts'. This matter needs to be clarified;
  - Under 3.3.3 Key Population Observations second bullet point,
    - It is not clear what the 'rest of NZ' refers to or the demographic data to support this statement(is it the statistic for NZ as a whole?). Clarification is required;
    - Under 3.3.3 third bullet point, it mentions the national average, Māori and Pacific people population but no data is provided. This gap need to be filled;
    - Under 3.3.3 fourth bullet point, it is not clear what the 'remainder of the Bay of Plenty' refers to or the demographic data to support this statement. Clarification is required;
    - The above matters raised under 3.3.3 should be checked in 3.7 Summary Conclusions;
  - Under 3.5 Community Cohesion (Implication for Process and Engagement),
    - In the third paragraph, documentation on population growth in the last 20 years needs to be provided and the meaning of 'a long period of high change' needs to be explained (these points should be checked in 3.7 Summary Conclusions);
    - The second last bullet needs to include an example of a group that has responded to another community issue;
    - The last bullet point should clarify why secondary schools are not typical at getting involved in community issues;
  - Under 3.6 Social Infrastructure and Economic Wellbeing,
    - First paragraph, the statement 'The Bay of Plenty Region is the fifth-most populous region in New Zealand' should have supporting documentation or reference;
    - The three subsequent paragraphs in this sub-section need documentation or reference to support the statements made; and
    - The last paragraph could be extended to provide a more complete picture.



- Under 3.7 Summary Conclusions, it appears that there is no summary for Social Infrastructure and Economic Wellbeing. This potential gap needs to be addressed.

### 3.4 Consultation and Engagement Input

**Structure:** Under the process undertaken, information about consultation and engagement has been appropriately documented and key matters identified relating to the three themes of analysis (experiential values, cohesion, process and engagement, and social infrastructure and economic opportunities). Consultation and engagement undertaken represents SIA best practice.

**Content:** Overall, the content of the consultation and engagement chapter is appropriate for this SIA.

#### **Strengths**

- The opening paragraph clearly distinguishes the consultation undertaken for this Proposal (to leave partial remains of the Rena and of her equipment and cargo on the Astrolabe Reef) from earlier consultation undertaken regarding the grounding of the MV Rena on the reef. The report author acknowledges links regarding effects between the consultations undertaken;
- Overall, the rounds of consultation undertaken, the focus of each and how the SIA has been informed from this consultation is clearly analysed;
- Key matters identified in consultation have been clearly articulated under the three social themes of analysis.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Under 4.1 first bullet point, the meaning of the following is unknown and needs to be explained: 'They [notes] have since been coded and social themes have been identified';
- Under 4.1 second bullet point, it is assumed that the reader knows about the open days and workshops and the results. A brief account of this information would assist comprehending the consultation undertaken. Reference needs to be provided to the Consultation Report. I also note this information is documented in the Rena website (referred to above under Methodology Used for the Peer Review).

### 3.5 Social Impact Assessment

**Structure:** The structure of this chapter is appropriate and follows SIA best practice.

**Content:** The assessment that is provided is appropriate but it has shortfalls and needs clarification and further analysis.

#### **Strengths**

- Recognition of the Proposal conditions being integral to effects not being more than minor adverse;
- The analysis that has been undertaken is appropriate.

#### **Weaknesses**

- It would be helpful to have a brief introductory statement about the impacts that have already occurred from the grounding of the MV Rena (and reference to the

background documented in the application) to provide context to the impacts anticipated from leaving the remains of the Rena on the Reef;

- There seems to be gaps in the analysis. Firstly, the potential social effects are not stated in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. It is essential that the potential social effects are clearly identified and discussed. Brief reference could be provided in 5.1.3. Secondly, if ‘people’s responses’ are considered to be the anticipated social effects, what about all the people who do not respond but are affected? It is also essential that the term ‘people’s responses’ is defined and discussed;
- In 5.1.1, it is not clear what the analysis of effects on experiential values relates to. It could be to the Rena remaining on the Reef, the Rena remains or debris being washed up or something else. Secondly, the anticipated effect is minor negative as stated. According to the assessment scale on page 8 of the SIA, this would mean that the negative effect is ‘of low severity or moderate severity but experienced over a short term or by only very limited or small groups in the community (except vulnerable groups)’<sup>6</sup>. So who might actually be affected? Is the effect of low or moderate severity and what is the effect from? These matters need to be assessed and documented;
- The same kind of explanations need to be provided for the minor positive social effect anticipated under 5.1.2 (on community cohesion, process and engagement) and the minor positive social impacts anticipated under 5.1.3 (on social infrastructure and economic opportunities). Concerning the latter, I note it is ‘impacts’ that are anticipated and not ‘impact’ according to the scale as stated on page 8 of the SIA;
- The short, medium and long term effects do not seem to be addressed for leaving the remains of the Rena on the Reef or for Rena remains or debris being washed up in accordance with the duration scale provided (2.5 Scale of Impact Assessment).
- It seems that the ‘duration’ of effect, and the ‘extent’ and ‘severity’ of impact (as defined in the SIA report page 8) may need to be assessed separately before any combining of effects is made;
- Although on-going monitoring and the removal of any shoreline debris are proposed conditions and part of the Proposal, a brief explanation of what might trigger community involvement and how community involvement might work would assist understanding. The links between potential social effects, people’s and communities responses, the contingency plan coming into effect and monitoring need to be clearer;
- References indicating when and how the social management plans would be implemented and who would manage monitoring<sup>7</sup> would help justify the overall conclusion that social effects are anticipated as minor negative to minor positive; and
- Summary data from the Recreational Assessment could be included to help understand the effects on Social Infrastructure and Economic Opportunities;
- The matters above need to be addressed to assist the comprehensiveness of the report and to follow SIA best practice.

### **3.6 Recommendations to Address Social Impacts**

The report cleverly ties the management elements of the Proposal as recommendations to reach the conclusions made in this SIA.

The suggested changes above will require the author to review this chapter.

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<sup>6</sup> SIA 2.5 under third bullet point, Minor Effect.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to the appropriate section in Volume One of the Application for Resource Consent (MV Rena), Beca, May 2014.

I note here that the author, Ms Amelia Linzey, is an experienced practitioner in social impact assessment and well qualified.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4.0 Summary and Conclusion

Overall, the report structure and content used in this SIA are sound, appropriate and follow SIA best practice. The methodology and consultation used are strong points in this report.

However, there are limitations to the content of the SIA but clarifications could remedy these limitations.

In general, the report is too brief particularly the analysis about social impacts of the Proposal. Explanations and more integration of data from other technical reports would assist. Filling some apparent gaps in information would help also. Information coming from these remedial areas would make the report more comprehensive.

I recognise the author has been vigilant about not repeating what is in other technical reports and this is to be applauded. However, I consider the use of brief summaries from, or references to, other technical reports (particularly the CIAs, Recreation Assessment and the Consultation Report) would meet this need but not defeat the author's goal.

The separation of the SIA from the cultural impact assessments is valid. However, references to the cultural impact assessments (as suggested above) would be useful, particularly as the restoration and mitigation package applies to people and communities in both kinds of technical reports.

I agree in principle with the conclusions made in the SIA that the overall social impacts of the Proposal are considered minor negative to minor positive. However, in my opinion, the overall social impacts of the Proposal to leave the remains of the Rena on the Reef have the potential to be minor negative to minor positive. I consider the response of people and communities as well as how management plans are implemented and carried out will be the key factors in the duration, severity and extent of effect on people and communities. With the addition of information as suggested above, agreement with the author's conclusion may be able to be confirmed.

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<sup>8</sup> The report author, Amelia Linzey, is a planner with a Master of Science in Geography (First Class Honours). She is a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and a member of the International Association of Public Participation and has undertaken the IAP2 Certificate Programme in Public Participation. She has over 15 years' experience in environmental impact assessment and consultation.

Her work has included social impact assessment and consultation for infrastructure and land use development proposed Plan Changes and for district plan development. She has undertaken or been involved in the following recent social impact assessments: Drury South Plan Change; Waterview Connection Proposed Plan Change; MacKays to Pekapeka social impact assessment; Hunua No. 4 Water Pipeline for Watercare; Wairakei Ring 220kV Line; and the Ruakura Inland Port Proposed Plan Change. (From the Statement of Evidence in Chief of Amelia Linzey on behalf of Tainui Group Holdings Ltd and Chedworth Properties Ltd. 26 February 2014).