

# rePort

a community newsletter from **Esperance Ports Sea & Land**

## Training Rewards

**E** sperance Port prides itself on two essential outcomes, but they don't come without a significant effort. First its safety record, for looking after its people is at the top of the charter; and second, its ability to not only facilitate trade but also to meet the needs of its customers.

The source of these achievements can be summed up in one word: training.

As the volume of cargo handled by the Port increased, the number of people employed to handle those tonnages increased proportionately, and a broader base of skills was required to handle a diversified cargo.

The Port has always employed highly skilled people, but in the economic climate that has prevailed in Western Australia over the past decade it has had to compete with mining companies for the available talent.

The local solution has been to undertake an extensive training and assessment program to ensure employees could not only do their job, but also to do it safely.

During the 2010-11 financial year, Port employees completed just less than 2000 hours of training, which rose to more than 3000 hours in 2011-12 and over 5500 hours in 2013-14, an increase of about 160 percent in two years. This year's total included more than 4000 hours provided by external trainers, and more than 1000 hours in-house, significant increases in both areas.

Some of the training is mandatory such as inductions that introduce new employees to the Port's rules, regulations and culture. Others, like manual handling courses teach personnel how to lift and hold equipment safely, fatigue management courses enable employees to determine when they are fit to work or when it is time to go home, and courses on identifying and using the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) for the particular job they may be doing.



*Elements of Shipboard  
Training for Port employees*

As the business has grown, specialists are required in certain areas, for example, to operate the gantry crane that handles the increasing number of containers that arrive and depart the Port and discharge bulk sulphur for the Ravensthorpe Nickel Mine. In late, 2007, the Port did not have a single employee who could operate the crane; today, 15 existing members of the Port's four operational teams have been trained to handle this sophisticated equipment.

Operators of high risk equipment, such as forklifts and loaders, and those responsible for dogging operations, have to revalidate their tickets every five years. Ninety percent of the Port's 150 plus employees have a current first aid certificate that needs updating every three years.

Along with training, assessment of skills is ongoing throughout the year and in 2014 included train supervisor, hatchman, sampling, heavy forklift, risk management, incident investigation, emergency response, and oil spill response assessment.

No EPSL employee is exempt from training that improves their personal safety, the safety of their colleagues, and the learning or upgrading of skills to meet the increasing industry demands on our services.

## FROM MY DESK



**Shayne Flanagan**  
CEO

**T**his will be my last From My Desk report as I have not sought an extension of my contract and will be leaving the Port on 30 June.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who have helped me over the last three years to make the Port more functional, to be able to meet its current and future obligations and to meet the challenges now facing it with the Southern Ports Authority

taking over the operations of the Esperance Port along with the Albany and Bunbury ports from 1 July.

The Port team has given me their unconditional support over the period and I have received great support, counsel and advice from the Esperance Port Authority Board, particularly the Chairman, Bob MacKinnon.

It has given me great satisfaction for the Port to re-establish our relationship with the local community which has been built on trust and goodwill. Our endeavour has been to share information openly and honestly to ensure that we can work together to improve the operations of the Port for the benefit of the town, the region and the State.

During my tenure as CEO, the Port has addressed many of the outstanding legacy issues that had been a burden for some time, and undertaken new Capital Works and maintenance programs that were urgently needed to meet our customer service commitments. This could not have been achieved without the close working relationship and dedication of all employees.

At the same time operations has seen productivity levels rise and record cargo handling figures recorded, and the Port is a safer and better place to work for our 150 employees and the many contractors who provide services.

**Best wishes - Shayne Flanagan**



## Dust Management a Full-time Job

*Dust busters: Dave Fraser and his Mobi Vac team at work*

**M**anaging dust is a full time job at the Esperance Port. While we are proud of our efforts to manage the problem created by our operations, dust generated by natural elements, particularly the strong summer sea breezes, often works against us.

But we're not resting on our laurels in combatting these problems.

Operationally, our nine kilometres of conveyors are totally enclosed with the exception of one transfer point and work has started to remedy this in addition to upgrading dust collection systems.

Sprays are located strategically throughout the iron ore circuit that maintain a constant, dust suppressing moisture level in the iron ore going over the belts, and we are assessing the feasibility of using a foaming system to further manage the issue in the last section of the circuit before the shiploader. Water sprays are also located at the end of the berth three shiploader boom.

The circuit is subjected to regular vacuum cleaning by our contractor, MobiVac, who has been working with us since we started shipping iron ore back in 1995. Road sweepers are used on the berths and sealed roads during and after every shipment.

Inside the negative pressured iron ore storage sheds, loading of product from the stockpile to the belt is carried out in a closed, controlled environment, and dust collectors attached to each of the four sheds feed collected dust back into the stockpile.

Fortunately, nickel dust is no longer a problem at the Port since the producers turned to containers to export their products, both concentrates and hydroxide.

However, dust generated from our unsealed roads by the natural elements, particularly summer sea breezes is another, more difficult problem to manage and as our business grows, so does the length of our internal, unsealed road network and the need

for improved dust control measures.

Truck movements within the Port's boundary have increased significantly over the past three years, particularly those carrying containers and sulphur and magnesium for the Ravensthorpe Nickel mine, which has a major impact on our internal roads.

To deal with this ongoing problem, we have laid a cement-based product on major turning points on the roads, a dust binding agent is sprayed on all the heavily used roads, and a water truck continues to be used to dampen down the worst affected areas.

In the longer term, we plan to seal our road network; however, a decision on when this can be done relies on when other major capital works, such as the proposed Multi User Iron Ore Facility, will be built.

In the meantime, we continue to look for improved dust control measures.

## SHORE TENSION TRIAL

**F**irst impressions of a shore-based hydraulic mooring system developed by the Port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands and installed as part of a six-month trial in Esperance in late March were encouraging, but it has run into some teething problems.

The synthetic mooring line used on the system that has a breaking strain of 200 tonnes was failing at 40 tonnes. This has been replaced by a wire line that seems to be working effectively. Time will tell.

The system significantly dampens the movement of vessels moored alongside a berth, which reduces the risk of conventional mooring lines breaking, the risk of serious injury to stevedores and lost operational time.

Severe weather conditions can stop cargo handling operations. The shore tension system automatically maintains a constant tension on mooring lines in the most severe conditions and prevents lines from breaking and excessive vessel ranging.

As a stand-alone system, it pays out mooring line to cope with the stronger winds and swell to dampen a ship's movement and absorbs its energy without breaking lines, and once the need to dampen peak loads passes, the system then hauls in the excess mooring line paid out during the emergency.

For the trials on berths one and two, two fixed bollards have been installed to secure a vessel fore and aft: the ship's mooring line is connected to the moveable parts of the hydraulic system that



is attached to one of the bollards, with the second a guide for the mooring line.

Technicians from the Port of Rotterdam helped install the system in Esperance and conducted training for Port personnel.

Before a final decision is made about the long-term suitability of the mooring system it will be tested in various weather conditions over the coming months.

## HUGHES ROAD UPGRADE

**N**ow that the Esperance Port Access Corridor project has been completed, the spotlight now turns to Hughes Road, the only heavy vehicle access route into Esperance Port.

Located along the southern boundary of the Port adjacent to a residential area, the road urgently needs upgrading to handle the growing volume of heavy vehicle traffic. EPSL expects vehicle movements in and out of the Port to rise from the current 60,000 a year to more than 90,000 annually over the next few years.

A road capable of handling the anticipated volumes of traffic is critically important for the flow of commodities.

Engineering consultant GHD was appointed last year to identify, assess and review suitable options for the upgrade of the road. GHD proposed four options, with two being selected for further consideration.

Vegetation along the road was recently cut back to improve driver visibility and signage and a speed radar alert installed to improve safety. Work on the upgrade is expected to start later this year.

## PREFERRED PROPONENT ANNOUNCED

**O**n Wednesday, 7 May, 2014, the Yilgarn Esperance Solutions (YES) was named as the preferred proponent to design, build and operate a new Multi User Iron Ore Facility at the Esperance Port.

The YES consortium is led by Asciano Ltd, a company with a proven track record in developing and operating ports in Australia and internationally. It was one of two consortia shortlisted to submit a proposal to develop the facility.

The announcement was based on a recommendation from the EPSL Board which followed an extensive procurement process undertaken by the MUIOF Project Team, independent expert engineering, commercial and legal advisors and an independent evaluation panel.

The consortium will now enter into contract negotiations with the Esperance Port and potential users of the new facility. The new facility is expected to almost double the Port's export capacity – from about 11 million tonnes to more than 20 million tonnes.



*Harbour Master Rob Lovell  
with the AWAC system on  
his computer screen*

## Wave Tracking System Installed

**E**sperance Port is keeping abreast of the latest technology to maintain safe shipping operations with an Acoustic Wave and Current Profiler (AWAC) being installed close to the shipping channel.

Battery operated, the system's duty is three-fold: it measures wave height, wave direction and determines the profile of current. It measures current wave speed and direction in one metre thick layers from the bottom to the surface and measures long or swell waves, storm waves, and short wind waves that may be generated by local ship traffic.

The system works via Acoustic Surface Tracking (AST) software that sends echoes from the bottom to the surface via a transducer. Information collected is transmitted to a computer located in the Harbour Master's office and Port Pilots on duty can access the information on a mobile phone while in the wheelhouse of a ship.

This information is important for pilots bringing vessels into the Esperance Port

through a narrow shipping channel and requiring, in the case of large cape size vessels, to turn the vessel in a small turning basin.

At any one time the water movement in these areas can be affected by the swell that is constant from the south-south west, surface waves of varying heights generated by local weather conditions, often from the north east in the morning and later south east in summer, and by the strong winter cold fronts. Water movement is also affected by high and low tides.

The issue in Esperance is somewhat compounded because of the shape of the bay: the movement of water into the bay is turned and flows out again at depth.

A vessel that is nearly 300 metres long and submerged to about 12 meters with ballast water can be affected by these conflicting natural forces, and leave little room for error.

The AWAC sensors are installed in a frame on the bottom near the shipping channel,

protected from the weather, vandalism and ship traffic. Batteries are replaced every 12 months.

Other weather information is also recorded, for example wind direction and speed, sea temperature and barometric pressure and trends. This information is available on the Esperance Port website. It is also made available to the local weather station to provide more accurate and up-to-date information.

For safety reasons, Esperance Port restricts shipping movements in certain weather conditions, particularly in gale force winds and when a heavy swell is running. The information AWAC provides makes shipping safer.

AWACS and other meteorological information is available at:

- [epsl.com.au/weather-tides.asp](http://epsl.com.au/weather-tides.asp)
- [epsl.com.au/weather-current.asp](http://epsl.com.au/weather-current.asp)
- [epsl.com.au/weather.asp](http://epsl.com.au/weather.asp)
- [epsl.com.au/PilotsWindMonitor.asp](http://epsl.com.au/PilotsWindMonitor.asp)
- [epsl.com.au/metocean/metocean.pdf](http://epsl.com.au/metocean/metocean.pdf)



Brian (left) and Tony serving the community

## Port Personalities Recognised

**St John Ambulance Western Australia recently recognised the exceptional service to the community by 12 Esperance Port's most experienced and dedicated employees: Electrical Supervisor Tony Leeson and OHS Manager Brian Gallop.**

Tony and Brian received a Commandery Commendation from the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency Malcolm McCusker, at Government House in April for their continued support for St John's cause.

Brian joined St John Ambulance in 1998 and at different times has worked as a volunteer at Sandstone, Kalgoorlie, Newman, Bullsbrook, Northam and Esperance sub-centres.

He, like Tony, is a qualified Advanced Ambulance Carer, is Major Incident Management trained, holds numerous other pre-hospital trauma qualifications and has held various training positions. He continues to increase his skills through training and volunteers for as many shifts with the local

sub-centre as time allows.

Of his award Brian said: "The award at Government House was an honour to receive as it is confirmation that coming up to 17 years after starting my St John life, what I have done over this time and the impact I have had on the community by giving up my time and the effort I put in has been recognised."

Tony has been linked to St John Ambulance since High School, but he became increasingly involved five years ago when he realised someone with medical training was regularly required at the local motocross and speedway meetings.

Like Brian, he continues to improve his knowledge as he works towards qualifying as an assistant paramedic.

Congratulations to Tony and Brian and all of the other Esperance St John volunteers who were recognised for their outstanding service, and thank you for your invaluable contribution to our local community.

## YOUTH AT RISK PROGRAM

**Esperance Port is proud of its continued involvement in the community in which it operates. In particular, it is proud of being able to provide sponsorship and funding for special projects, projects that can have lasting benefits to individuals and the community.**

Last year we supported the Re-Cycling Bike Partnership program that engaged at-risk young people through activities that taught them new and lasting skills while at the same time providing positive role models and support.

Twenty people aged between 14 and 25 participated in the program, resulting in many of them returning to education, undertaking further training, gaining work experience and gaining employment.

Although the program was based around restoring and repairing old bicycles, the participants were given the opportunity to engage in alternative learning experiences such as literacy, numeracy, communication, teamwork, OHS, planning, design, and project preparation. They also learnt hands-on skills like cutting, welding, operating machinery, and painting.

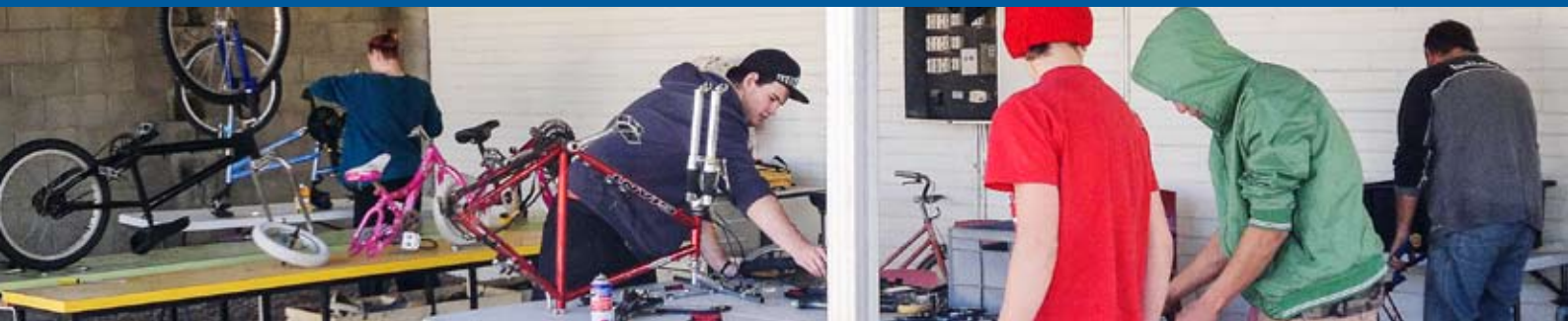
Such was the success of the 2013 program, EPSL is supporting the program again in 2014, providing financial support for equipment hire, facilities and material, and will also look at ways this year's participants can be offered work experience at the Port.

This year the program will be expanded, engaging participants in a series of workshops and work experience that will further develop opportunities in education and employment.

Apart from restoring old bikes, they will learn metal fabrication skills, furniture restoration and horticulture along with the other life skills the program offers. Based on last year's outcomes, this is a most worthwhile project that provides at-risk, disengaged young people with another chance with flow-on benefits to our community.

EPSL is proud to be involved in this program with South Metropolitan Youth Learning Centre, Skillhire's Youth Connections, Community and Youth Justice, Green Frog Studios, Esperance Care Services and the Department of Education.

Participants in the bicycle recycling program



## What do you think?

We are interested in your comments on this RePort, please send feedback through to **Esperance Ports Sea and Land:**

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