

# P A P E R S

RELATIVE TO

THE WORKING OF THE MARINE BOARDS ACT.

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PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND  
OF HIS EXCELLENCY.

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AUCKLAND.

1863.



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## WORKING OF THE MARINE BOARDS ACT.

No. 1.

CAPTAIN ROBERTSON TO THE HONORABLE THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Chief Marine Board Office,  
Auckland, June 9th, 1863.

SIR,—

Applications having been made to the Board from the Provinces of Nelson, Otago, and Southland, requesting Marine Surveys to be made on the Coasts of New Zealand, the Board beg respectfully to submit for the consideration of the Government an estimate of the probable cost of Vessel, Marine Surveyor and Crew for carrying out the Surveys :—

Probable cost of suitable Vessel . . . . .	£1200
Surveyor and Crew and working expenses per month . . . . .	150
Insurance per annum . . . . .	150

The Board also desire to draw the attention of the Government to Clause 12 of the Chief Marine Board Act, requiring the Board to take charge of all Pilot Establishments, and beg to state that they are now prepared to undertake those duties as soon as the Government provide the necessary funds to meet any deficiency that may arise.

The Board recommend that light dues should be levied at the Ports of Wellington and Nelson, and that the Collectors of H.M. Customs should be requested to collect the following rates :—

Vessels from Europe or any possession beyond the Australian Colonies—Sixpence per ton register.

All Steamers and Colonial Traders, not being Coasters—Fourpence per ton.

Coasting Steam and Sailing Vessels—One penny halfpenny per ton, entering only.

I have, &amp;c.,

THOS. ROBERTSON,  
Secretary pro tem.

No. 2.

THE HONORABLE MR. WOOD TO THE SECRETARY, CHIEF MARINE BOARD.

General Post Office,  
Auckland, 11th June, 1863.

SIR,—

In reference to your letter of the 9th instant, in which you make various propositions relative to action on the part of the Chief Marine Board, I have to observe that the whole question of administration under the Marine Board Act is a very difficult one. By that Act the appointment of Pilots and the management of Pilot Establishments vests in the Chief Marine Board. But that Board cannot appoint any person to act as Pilot for any Port until he has first been examined by Examiners to be appointed by the Local Marine Board of the Port to which he is to be attached ; and as by some singular fatality no Local Marine Board is yet known to be in existence in any of the Provinces, the Chief Marine Board cannot appoint a Pilot. The practical difficulty in this case is got over by the Governor, in his capacity as Governor, appointing Pilots when necessary for the respective Ports of the Colony.

The next difficulty arose when the Board attempted to take over the various Pilot Establishments. The Act provides that the Chief Marine Board shall regulate the duties and conduct of all Pilots within the Colony, fix the Pilotage rates within the limits specified in the Schedule, and out of these funds to fix the remuneration to be paid to Pilots, and to settle how Pilot Establishments are to be upheld and maintained. The difficulty here is that the highest dues which the Board can impose as Pilot dues will not nearly pay the expenses of the existing Pilot Establishments, and the Board has at its disposal no funds from which it can make up the difference. At present, although Pilots are appointed by the Governor, they are paid by the Provincial Governments out of funds appropriated by the Provincial Councils for that purpose. The advantage of this system is that there is a local authority on the spot under the control of which the Pilots are brought, inasmuch as they are dependent on that authority for their salaries, for their boats and other appurtenances. The necessity of such a local authority is recognized by the Marine Board Act, which in Section 14 gives authority to any local Board to suspend any Pilot from acting as such for a Port within its jurisdiction, provided a report of every such suspension and the cause thereof be reported to the Chief Marine Board, whose decision shall be final. The Government could get over the difficulty in respect to the matter of funds by agreeing to pay any difference between the amount of pilotage dues received and the expenses of the respective Pilot Establishments, and charging it to the separate account of the Province in respect of which the difference is paid ; but it cannot so easily get over the difficulty (until Local Boards are generally established) of the absence of a local authority having control over the Pilot Establishments ; and the Government is of opinion that it will be better to leave matters as they are, at least until Local Marine Boards have been generally established. It can hardly be doubted that practically the Pilot Establishments would not be kept in such good working order as they are now if the Chief Marine Board took charge of them before the Local Boards were in a position to exercise that supervising power which it was manifestly the intention of the Act that they should have ; and the efficient working of the Pilot Establishments is the main question.

The next difficulty is that with reference to the imposition of Lighthouse dues. The Chief Marine Board is empowered within the limits prescribed by the Schedule to fix Lighthouse dues ; and the Attorney-General has given his opinion that dues cannot be levied until lights are burning. The Board has made provision by special arrangement with the Bank of New Zealand for the erection of lights in Foveaux Straits, at Port Chalmers, at Lyttelton, one in Cook's Straits, and another at Tiritirimatangi. Lights already exist both at Wellington and Nelson. When the lights that have been ordered are burning, light dues may be levied generally on shipping arriving at all the principal Ports in New Zealand, as they will all receive the benefit of a light, and a revenue may be collected of some considerable amount, sufficient to pay interest on the cost of new lights and to furnish a fund for the erection of others. The lights at Wellington and Nelson are maintained efficiently by the Provincial Governments of those places. The levying light dues upon vessels entering those Ports would afford a revenue inconsiderable in itself whilst it might be regarded as operating in other respects to the prejudice of those Ports, such dues being imposed nowhere else in New Zealand.

The Government is of opinion that such dues should be imposed only at the request of the Provincial Governments of Wellington and Nelson.

In reference to the proposal to purchase a vessel and incur expenses to the amount of at least £3,150 per annum for Coast Surveys, the Government is of opinion that such Surveys should be undertaken by the Board only at the request of the Provincial Governments desiring such Surveys, and upon their guarantee to pay all necessary expenses ; but in the absence of any appropriation by the House of Representatives for the purpose, it cannot sanction the expenditure now proposed.

I have, &c.,

READER WOOD.

The Secretary to the Chief Marine Board, Auckland.

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