

25/10/18

# Dredging News # 3

Dear POMA Clients and Stakeholders,

It is now 14 days since I announced the permitting problem which halted our dredging programme so cruelly.

As announced at the time we have been applying ourselves as well as our advisors to resolving the problem.

Sad to say that every effort unearthed new issues and, unfortunately, a very sad state of affairs:

- 1) There are parties that view Port Owen Marina as a “rich man’s playground” and a threat to the Berg River Estuary. They believe that the Marina was developed illegally and maintenance of the Marina is a threat to the Estuary. Some officials in the Department of the Environment and Development Planning (DEADP) seems to share this view.
- 2) There seems to be a discord between the National and Provincial Departments of DEADP regarding legitimacy of the Environmental Authorisations issued to POMA in 2009 and 2018.
- 3) There seems to be a discord between the Directorate of Pollution and Chemical Management and Directorate of Land Management within the DEADP (Provincial). We dealt with the former (D: PCM) whilst clearing the issue of the “toxic waste” and with the latter (D: LM) once the classification of the fines/spoils and the disposal pre-compliance order was sorted out.
- 4) There are now three extra departments to get authorisations from: Directorate of Oceans and Coastal (D: OC), the Department of Water and Sanitation (D: WS) and Department of Public Works (D: PW). These departments are National departments.

We are now required to get the following permits/approvals before we can proceed with dredging:

- 1) A Dumping Permit from D: OC – this refers to the “dumping”, including dredging spoils, of substances into Estuaries and Oceans.
- 2) An Effluent Permit - not sure at this stage which Department deals with this.
- 3) A “Water Permit” from D: WS – we have not been able to connect with anyone from this department so far.
- 4) The Estuary below the Carinus Bridge falls under the jurisdiction of the D: PW, which controls Small Harbours. We need their approval to install discharge pipes into the river, and requested same. So far, no response.

It now seems that all dredging work done by POMA since 2014 has been illegal.

## What is the Plan?

- 1) We have suspended the Santa Isabel Marine dredging contract in terms of an escape clause in the agreement, until further notice. The vessel Santa Isabel will depart from the Marina at high tide this afternoon. There is no further cost for POMA until we resume the work.
- 2) The Berg River Municipality is giving us all their support. We are consulting with all parties at all levels to try and unlock this, seeming, impasse.
- 3) We are arranging a Public Meeting for 10 November where all the available information will be divulged and your specific questions will be answered. Please keep a lookout for e-mails announcing the venue and time. It will be advertised on the notice board at the Port Owen entrance as well.

## How will this affect waterway users?

The immediate result is that there will be no restriction to waterway users.

The longer-term effect of not dredging is not known. We are all aware that dredging is urgent and we will remain relentless in achieving our goal of a "Big Dredge" as well as a sensible maintenance programme thereafter. Sedimentation should be minimised as far as possible to reduce the cost of dredging as well as the impact of releasing spoils into the river. This remains the long term goal.

## POMA MANAGEMENT