



Port Owen Marina Authority (NPC)

Reg # 1999/010199/08

PO Box 506 Velddrif 7365 · Tel 022 783 0943 · Fax 0865462112

E-mail: poma@poma.co.za

It is wonderful to finally be in a position to report concrete progress with respect to dredging of the Port Owen waterways.

The dredging team began re-commissioning the dredging system on the 1st December and, as a result of excellent preparation of the equipment by the dredging crew, this was accomplished without any significant difficulty by the 10th December. Dredging activities were then suspended for the duration of the holiday season to minimise any disruption of water activities. The dredger has been moved back to her berth and the dredging pipes have been moved to the side of the main channel. The main waterway is clear for shipping.

This commissioning phase proved to be a great operational learning experience for the dredging team and for POMA more generally. The dredging equipment is certainly up to the task of moving dredged material to the discharge points – either at the western entrance of the marina or to the dam. However, as the material that is being dredged is not consistent, dredging hours i.e the time spent moving material from point A to the discharge points, is highly variable. Losing the suction is a major headache and is caused by a range of debris lying on and below the surface of the bed material. Items such as natural vegetation, Ulva etc., old fishing nets, old anchor ropes, plastic bottles etc. are a major cause for down time.

Of course, dredging is not simply about the movement of material from one point to another. The Berg River Estuary is a complex and delicate environment and every care must be taken to mitigate environmental risk. During dredging, POMA will monitor water quality in the Berg River and in the dredge slurry, by measuring Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD), dissolved oxygen (DO), turbidity, suspended solids, pH, and temperature. POMA's Environmental Control Officer (ECO, Dr Sue Tonin) is working to obtain an instrument that will measure all these variables simultaneously, quickly and accurately. This will enable POMA to build up a picture of the effect of dredge slurry on the Berg River.

Dredging operations will resume on 9 January and will continue as planned until late August 2023 when operations will be suspended once again due to the fish spawning season.

In the meantime, the dredging team wish all stakeholders a wonderful festive season and a happy healthy and prosperous new year.

Take care out there,

The Dredging Committee

DIRECTORS

A J Uys (Chairman); D Robinson; J Moolman; I MacIntosh; B Van Rensburg; AT Focé
H Lambrechts (Alt); P Viljoen (Alt); J de Meillon (Alt)