

Cook Islands National Maritime Transport Policy

Version 1

10 December 2014

Contents

Cook Islands National Maritime Transport Policy

Background

Purpose

Scope

Definitions

Policy Context

Challenges and Considerations

Policy Principles

Vision

Policy objectives

Specific Policies

Roles and responsibilities

Summary of NMTP policies

Background

Safe and secure ships that pose no threat to the marine environment are vital to the ongoing sustainability of the Cook Islands' economy. Shipping services include international ships bringing cargoes to and from the Cook Islands, inter-island ships providing services for cargo and passengers to the Pa Enea, registration of foreign owned ships under the Cook Islands flag, and small commercial fishing and tourist vessels. Safe and secure ports provide gateways for these ships and ensure the sustainability of transport by sea. The Cook Islands Government also has responsibilities to provide international safety services to shipping. There is a risk to the sustainability of the Cook Islands' economy and reputation if these shipping activities do not meet international standards and are not effectively administered and enforced through national law.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish policies that will guide the planning, actions and strategies necessary to ensure that local port and harbour safety infrastructure and all shipping services operating to, from or within the Cook Islands, or operating internationally under the Cook Islands flag, are compliant, safe and secure, and pose no threat to the marine environment.

Scope

This National Maritime Transport Policy (NMTP) addresses the administration of shipping services from “tinny to tanker” – that is from the point where a tourist boards a sightseeing boat in a lagoon to the point where a tanker embarks a pilot. The policy thus includes all types of ships and the associated infrastructure between these two points, including:

- International ships bringing cargoes and passengers to and from the Cook Islands
- Inter-island ships carrying cargoes and passengers to and from the Pa Enea,
- Ships registered in the Cook Islands trading internationally
- Small commercial fishing vessels
- Small commercial tourist vessel
- Safety and security of Cook Islands ports including pilotage and safe infrastructure; eg beacons, buoys, charts and aids to navigation
- Services to international shipping such as waste disposal, meteorological services, search and rescue, hydrography and distress and safety radio

This policy also focuses upon themes including:

- effective national legislation for safety, security and marine protection

- effective implementation and enforcement of international and national laws
- capacity and capability to provide effective oversight and monitoring of all ships

Definitions

ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
Flag State control	Inspections and audits of ships by the country of registration to determine whether they comply with national maritime legislative requirements
Port State control	Inspections and audits of ships by another country in its ports or anchorages to determine whether the ship complies with international maritime legislative requirements
STCW	The International Convention for Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended

Policy context

The remote and far-flung Cook Islands archipelago, comprising 15 islands spread over 2 million square kilometres of ocean, is almost totally dependent upon ships; for importing and exporting goods and for services to and from the Pa Enua. There have been various studies carried out on inter-island shipping services but there has never been a cohesive and all-inclusive national policy developed for all of the many and varied maritime activities, and international obligations, administered by the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and other Ministries.

Government planning and policy derives from a centralised planning document – the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP). Ministries are required to prepare national policies and strategies that will be guided by and, in turn, inform the various iterations of the NSDP.

Other drivers for MoT policy and strategy are mandatory IMO instruments to which the Cook Islands Government is a contracting Party, and the requirement under these instruments to have effective, up-to-date and enforceable national maritime law.

International level

The requirement for a Government strategy for maritime transport comes from a mandatory IMO Resolution; the Code for the Implementation of Mandatory IMO Instruments¹

There must be an overall strategy by the State to meet its obligations and responsibilities as a maritime administration (flag, port and coastal State) under the various mandatory IMO instruments.... Furthermore, there should be a methodology in place for monitoring the overall organizational performance of the maritime administration in the execution of its duties.

The foregoing should not be confused with individual ministries or entities' strategy, and performance evaluation. Instead, the above referred strategy and performance measurement is an umbrella and collective evaluation of all ministries and agencies performing maritime functions

Regional level

At a regional maritime transport level, and of relevance to the NMTP, Regional Transport Ministers have²;

noted the importance of safety of shipping (international and domestic) in the region, and affirmed the importance of domestic ship safety. They agreed that maritime administrations need to implement safety management systems to improve safety of domestic shipping, and agreed on the need to review and update maritime legislation to comply with evolving maritime instruments, and

acknowledged the critical importance of hydrographic services in enabling maritime surveys that lead to the production of maritime charts to aid shipping and enable development such as determining locations for new ports for tourism and other economic development and new shipping services, and

acknowledged the important role and immense contribution by the private sector in the maritime transport system, and

acknowledged the need to investigate alternative sources of energy to support the shipping industry”.

In particular, Ministers;

¹ IMO Resolution A.1054(27), adopted 30 November 2011

² Second Regional Meeting of Pacific Ministers of Energy and Transport (Aviation and Maritime), Nadi, Fiji, 2 – 4 April 2014

noted the importance of infrastructure to the sustainable development of the Pacific region... and sustainable development goals

noted the need for PICTs to review, update and implement national maritime legislation and planning to reflect recent developments in search and rescue

acknowledged the importance of ratifying and acceding to relevant IMO and ILO instruments including verification of a Member State's status on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III)

recognised the need for Governments, shipowners and seafarers to work effectively to implement and enforce the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 in order to comply with their international obligations

supported the ongoing efforts to have relevant and updated maritime shipping policies in place as a prerequisite for drafting laws in-country to ensure compliance with relevant international instruments

encouraged effective enforcement of national legislation and policies

encouraged regional cooperation in relation to Port State Control

National level

Maritime Transport Act 2008

The Maritime Transport Act 2008 contributes to the policy settings for the Minister of Transport and, by delegation, for the MoT and certain other Ministries.

The Act shall be interpreted and all persons exercising or performing functions, duties, or powers conferred or imposed by or under it shall act in a manner consistent with the Cook Island's international obligations relating to maritime transport and safety and protection of the marine environment.

The purposes of this Act are to provide for the maritime safety of the Cook Islands and Cook Islands vessels, enable the implementation of Cook Island's obligations under international maritime agreements, and ensure that participants in the maritime transport system are responsible for their actions and to protect the marine environment.

The functions of the Minister are to promote safety in maritime transport, protection of the marine environment, to administer Cook Island's participation in the conventions, to ensure Cook Island's preparedness for, and ability to respond to, marine pollution and to make maritime rules and marine protection rules under the Act.

The NMTP takes account of these obligations, purposes and Ministerial responsibilities.

National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP 2011 – 2015)

The major contribution of maritime transport to the sustainability of the Cook Islands is not apparent in the current NSDP (2011 – 2015). Regular, safe, secure and environmentally friendly shipping services are of vital importance to the sustainability of the Cook Islands economy. Without shipping services bringing cargo and fuel there would be empty shelves in supermarkets; no fuel for internal transport, power generation and aviation services and no means of carrying cargo, fuel and passengers to the Pa Enea.

The NSDC is asked to take account of the importance of maritime transport to the sustainability of the Cook Islands economy in the NSDP (2016 – 2020).

Ministry of Transport Business Plan 2014/2015

The Ministry of Transport Business Plans since 2009 have continuously called for the development of a National Transport Plan that would enunciate the path in providing the country with an efficient, affordable and sustainable shipping [and airline] service.

MoT is committed to pursuing completion of this through a NMTP within the 2014-15 period and to maintaining and reviewing the associated strategies, and their linkages to the NSDP into the future.

Challenges and considerations

The following challenges and considerations are taken into account in the development of the NMTP.

International obligations

The Cook Islands Government is Party to a number of mandatory IMO instruments which, collectively, require considerable commitment if the Government is to fully meet its international obligations. There is a reputational risk to the Cook Islands Government if these obligations are not fully and effectively implemented or new Conventions mandatory for ships are not ratified.

International shipping

The Government has contracted Maritime Cook Islands Incorporated (MCI) to operate a Cook Islands Register of Ships. It is also proposed that flag State responsibilities be delegated to MCI. There is a significant reputational risk to the Government if these responsibilities are not effectively discharged.

International scrutiny

The Government, the MoT, other ministries and ports are coming under increased scrutiny through various mandatory IMO audits (flag, port and coastal State, security and STCW).

Capacity and capability

Along with the maritime administrations of many other PICTs, the Cook Islands Ministry of Transport is not adequately resourced to effectively administer its many and varied international and national obligations.

Legal issues

Effective, up-to-date and enforceable national law is required to implement IMO instruments and to ensure that the international and domestic ships meet safety, security and environmental protection standards.

Safe and secure ports

Safe and secure operation of the ports of Avatiu and Aitutaki to recognised and verifiable international standards is critical to the sustainability of the Cook Islands economy.

Safe and sustainable access to the Pa Enua

The provision of safe, reliable and regular shipping services to the Pa Enua is critical to the sustainability, the people and the economies and social cohesion of these remote islands, as is also safe navigation to and from, and into, the ports and anchorages of the Pa Enua

Ownership of maritime safety

Owners of inter-island vessels, small commercial fishing and tourist vessels must take ownership of the safety of their operations through effective safety management systems.

Vision

The following matters are relevant to development of an overall vision for a NMTP;

NSDP national strategies and goals of relevance to the maritime sector

- *Improve our transport infrastructure*
- *Ensure that our legislative and regulatory frameworks reflect our sustainable development goals and objectives*
- *A Cook Islands that thrives on good governance principles development*
- *Ensure our border security both with respect to the movement of goods and persons through the introduction and operation of effective laws and systems*
- *A Cook Islands where the rule of law ensures safe, secure, just, stable and sustainable communities*
- *Establish and strengthen external relations that will benefit the Cook Islands*

Ministry of Transport Business Plan 2014/15

To be a competent, fair and trusted transport regulatory authority that focuses on improving and strengthening the mandate of the Ministry's responsibilities

Key components of a proposed vision

Taking all of the above into account the key components of a vision for maritime transport are;

- to ensure safe and sustainable marine transportation to the Pa Enea
- to meet mandatory international obligations for safety of ships and protection of the marine environment and to be a respected member of national, regional and international maritime communities
- to ensure the sustainability of shipping services to the Cook Islands through safe access to our ports by ships compliant with international standards

These components are distilled into the following vision for Maritime Transport:

Safe, sustainable, secure and environmentally friendly maritime transport by compliant ships. A respected member of national, regional and international maritime communities

Policy principles

The MoT is committed to ensuring the safe operation of all vessels, regardless of their size, nature of operation and location within Cook Islands' ports and waters.

Equity and affordability

All persons in the Cook Islands, no matter where they live; in the Pa Enea or Rarotonga, are entitled to equal access to safe, sustainable and affordable maritime transport for themselves, their anau and their cargoes.

Collaboration and Cooperation

MoT will work in an integrated manner across all relevant Ministries and agencies, and with communities, businesses and stakeholders, to achieve the aims and implement the principles of the NMTP policy.

Precautionary principle

International maritime safety, security and environmental protection Conventions, and the national law that brings them into force in the Cook Islands, are firmly based on the precautionary principle. MoT will take a proactive approach to the monitoring and oversight of all aspects of the maritime sector.

Accountability and Transparency

The MoT is committed to being accountable to the maritime sector and wider public and to acting in a transparent manner in all matters.

Sustainability and Environmental preservation

NMTP policies aim to sustain and protect the Cook Islands marine environment from harmful discharges from ships by policies that ensure compliance by ships with rigorous standards for prevention of pollution of the marine environment.

Compliance with international obligations

Compliance with international obligations for safety, security of ships, security of ports, protection of the marine environment and the welfare of seafarers are central to the NMTP vision, the obligations of the Cook Islands Government and the delegated responsibilities of the MoT.

Policy objectives

In outlining this vision we summarise the following policy objectives;

1. Effective national law to bring international maritime instruments into force;
2. Effective national law and safety management systems for small commercial vessels;
3. Safe operation of small commercial vessels;
4. Safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly maritime transport to the Pa Enuu;
5. A good international reputation for Cook Islands vessels trading internationally;
6. Safe and secure operations of the ports of Avatiu and Aitutaki;
7. Provision of effective port State control;
8. Provision of efficient coastal State services to shipping;
9. Accession to relevant IMO and ILO instruments; and
10. A well-resourced and capable Maritime Division of the Ministry of Transport.

Specific policies

The following specific policies expand on policy objectives and focus more clearly on the specifics of what the MoT plans to do in the areas identified in the policy objectives.

1 Effective national law to bring international maritime instruments into force

It is best practise, and a requirement of international instruments, that countries bring such instruments into force through their national law. The norm is for national law to be developed during the usual two year period between when an instrument is adopted and when it comes into force internationally. Such national law must be effective, up-to-date and capable of enforcement.

The Cook Islands has requested that an STCW audit be carried out during the second half of 2014 and volunteered for an IMO audit to be carried out during the first quarter of 2015.

- 1.1 We will ensure that the Cook Islands national maritime law, required by international instruments, is effective, up-to-date and capable of enforcement;*
- 1.2 We will measure the effectiveness of the Cook Islands national maritime law required by international instruments through results from ongoing mandatory IMO audits;*
- 1.3 We will carry out an independent legal review if national maritime law is found by IMO audits to be deficient.*

2 Effective national law and safety management systems for our small commercial vessels

Cook Islands law for the safety of small commercial vessels is currently either non-existent or deficient and takes no account of operator responsibility through a safety management system.

It is vital to the safety and sustainability of the tourism and fishing industries, and inter-island shipping services, that all small commercial vessels are properly regulated and that owners and operators take ownership of safety management systems.

- 2.1 We will review current and draft national maritime regulations to ensure they are adequate for the regulation of small commercial vessels;*
- 2.2 We will engage with the local maritime community to ensure that a culture of safety management is introduced through new maritime regulations for small commercial vessels.*

3 Safe operation of small commercial vessels

An important function of an effective maritime administration is monitoring and oversight of regulated vessels by qualified and well trained maritime personnel - flag State control.

Monitoring includes audits and inspections and should be risk based from records of operations of vessels and from accident reports.

- 3.1 *We will ensure that qualified and well trained staff are available to carry out flag State control activities on small commercial vessels;*
- 3.2 *We shall develop appropriate risk based systems to determine the level of flag State control and emphasise the requirement for mandatory accident and incident reporting.*

4 Safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly maritime transport to the Pa Enuā

Safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly transportation to the Pa Enuā is a challenge and, if not available, can hinder planned development initiatives and social cohesion. Therefore, efforts will be made to ensure improvements to maritime transportation to, from and between the Pa Enuā and Rarotonga. In doing so we also recognise the value to the economy of developing cruise ship operations in the Pa Enuā.

These efforts will focus on liaison with central and local Government and the private sector to improve transportation efficiency and connectivity to the Pa Enuā.

- 4.1 *We will advise Government and facilitate the provision of expert maritime advice with regard to safe and sustainable maritime transportation to and from the Pa Enuā;*
- 4.2 *We will establish effective regulation and exercise rigorous flag State control to ensure the safe operation of ships trading to and from the Pa Enuā;*
- 4.3 *We will ensure safe routes to, between and into the ports of the Pa Enuā through hydrographic surveys, provision of electronic charts and adequate aids to navigation. Standards and maintenance for the infrastructure of the ports is a responsibility of ICI.*

5 To ensure that Cook Islands has an international reputation as a responsible flag State

The Government has contracted Maritime Cook Islands (MCI) to operate a Registrar of Ships and it is proposed to delegate the Government's flag State responsibilities to MCI. Such ships fly the flag of the Cook Islands worldwide. The Cook Islands is responsible for the administration of technical, social and administrative matters aboard ships flying their flag. It is vital that adequate oversight of MCI is carried out by the MoT to ensure that delegated functions and powers are being adequately administered by MCI on behalf of the Government.

There are currently 160 ships on the Cook Islands' Register trading internationally, inclusive of 40 Superyachts.

Under the recently renewed contract Maritime Cook Islands contributes a percentage of its revenue, based on registered tonnage of ships registered in the Cook Islands, to the Government each year.

- 5.1 *We shall establish monitoring, oversight and reporting functions to ensure that Maritime Cook Islands effectively discharge their delegated responsibilities, and that the operations of ships registered in the Cook Islands do not bring the country into disrepute.*

6 Safe and secure ports of Avatiu and Aitutaki

The ports of Avatiu and Aitutaki are the main gateways to the Cook Islands. Safe and secure operation of these ports is vital to sustainability of the Cook Islands economy.

Although there has been considerable work carried out recently on improvements to the infrastructure of the ports of Avatiu and the Pa Enua there are concerns regarding the safe operation of vessels within these ports; particularly Avatiu.

- 6.1 *We shall work with the Avatiu Port Authority to ensure that ongoing safe management of the port is carried out under an internationally recognised risk assessment and safety management system;*
- 6.2 *We shall work with the port authority to introduce regulations, to international standards, for safe pilotage of ships in the port of Avatiu.*

7 Effective port State control

Equally important to provision of a safe port are the standards of safety, security and environmental protection of international ships entering and leaving the port. The Cook Islands currently rely on port State control inspections carried out in other countries but do not have access to detailed inspection information from worldwide port State control inspections to determine the risk posed by visiting ships.

There are significant benefits to membership of the regional port State control organisation – the Asia-Pacific Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Tokyo MOU) – which has a membership of 19 countries, including Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and the Marshall Islands. The Tokyo MOU provides an extensive framework of training programmes and support for port State control officers.

- 7.1 *We will apply to the Tokyo MOU on behalf of the Cook Islands Government to*

be granted Observer status with a view to obtaining Co-operating Member status after the required 3 years and full Membership in due course;

- 7.2 *We will actively participate in meetings of the Tokyo MOU and seek training opportunities for suitably qualified persons in the Cook Islands.*

8 Efficient coastal State services to shipping

The Government has coastal State responsibilities under various IMO instruments to supply services to the international shipping industry. The domestic shipping industry also benefits from these services. Services include matters, some of which are delegated to Ministries other than the MoT, such as meteorological forecasts and warnings, search and rescue, aids to navigation (buoys, beacons and lighthouses), reception of waste from ships, distress and safety radio and hydrography.

Some of these services are supplied directly by the Cook Islands (meteorological and some distress and safety radio services) while others are supplied by other countries under regional arrangements. The effectiveness of such services is measured through an IMO audit.

- 8.1 *We will liaise with relevant Government departments to ensure there is effective co-ordination in the delivery of essential safety services;*
- 8.2 *We will work with relevant Government departments in preparation for IMO audits;*
- 8.3 *We shall ensure that regional agreements for delivery of services to shipping are in place, up-to-date and undergo periodic reviews;*
- 8.4 *We shall ensure that the periodic exercises required to be carried out of certain services to shipping are undertaken.*

9 Accession to relevant IMO and ILO instruments

From time to time new international instruments for shipping are adopted; principally by the IMO but occasionally by the ILO. Ships must comply with the requirements of these instruments in order to be able to trade internationally. If their flag State has not ratified the Convention its ships are accorded “no more favourable treatment” and are inspected by other countries to the standards of the Convention.

A recent Convention, which came into force in 2013, is the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC). The Cook Islands is not yet Party to MLC 2006.

- 9.1 *We will encourage the Government to ratify MLC 2006;*

- 9.2 *We will work with employer and employee representatives and affected Government departments to ensure smooth ratification of the MLC 2006 and the introduction of effective national law.*

10 Well-resourced and capable Maritime Division

The Maritime Division of the MoT is the key player in the maritime regulatory system and is critical to the success of the majority of the above specific policy objectives. The Division is currently not adequately resourced to have the capability and capacity to implement such policies and monitor their effectiveness.

To establish a capable and well-resourced Maritime Division it will be necessary to undertake a review of the resources required for the Maritime Division to meet their wide responsibilities.

- 10.1 *We will work with Government to ensure that the Maritime Division of the Ministry of Transport is adequately resourced to carry out its regulatory functions and powers.*

Roles, responsibilities and partnerships

It is of the utmost importance to the success of the NMTP that the Ministry work closely with all parties having roles, responsibilities and involvement in the maritime transport sector to ensure a harmonised and well informed approach to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies.

These parties include but are not necessarily limited to the following;

The National Sustainable Development Committee

The National Sustainable Development Committee (NSDC) is the body responsible for oversight of the implementation of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP). With the NMTP as a crucial element of the NSDP, the NSDC is the body responsible for oversight of the implementation of the NMTP and resultant actions and initiatives.

Ministry of Transport (MoT)

The MoT is *inter alia* responsible for regulating the maritime transport system under the mandate of the Maritime Transport Act 2008 and associated maritime Acts. The Maritime Division of the MoT, under the Director of Maritime, is directly responsible to the Secretary of Transport for regulation of the maritime section of the transport system and for marine

pollution response. The coastal State service of meteorological warnings to shipping is carried out by the Director of Meteorology and, through Telecom, some distress and safety radio responsibilities.

Maritime Cook Islands (MCI)

MCI is a corporate entity responsible to the Government for operation of the Cook Islands Register of Ships. It is currently proposed that MCI also deliver most flag State functions and powers under a delegation from the Secretary of Transport, approved by the Minister of Transport.

Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI)

MOI has responsibility for infrastructure in the ports of the Pa Enea, and for Hydrography.

Ministry of Police (MoP)

MoP is responsible for the coastal State service of Search and Rescue within Cook Island waters.

National Environment Services (NES)

MFE have responsibility for the coastal State services of marine pollution and waste disposal.

Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR)

MMR has responsibility for ‘enhancing the skills and knowledge of all those involved in the marine sector’ including a maritime safety element for domestic and artisanal fishermen. MMR also administers the Protection of Natural Resources Act which has provision for the enactment of regulations for all fishing vessels; domestic, artisanal and commercial.

Avatiu Port Authority

The Port Authority for Avatiu and Aitutaki has directly responsibility for Aids to Navigation in those ports and, under delegation from the MoT, for oil pollution response in their harbours.

Shipping companies

The MoT has a very good relationship with Taio Shipping Ltd, the principle outer-island shipping company, and has recently established a series of ongoing meetings with ship-owners in New Zealand who trade to/from to the Cook Islands.

Cook Islands Water Safety Council

The Water Safety Council is active in promoting safety and is planning a water safety education programme for the wider community with a view to a ‘train the trainer’ approach to community education.

Tourism Council

The Tourism Council includes commercial marine operators within the tourism industry which at present produces some voluntary codes and standards it sees as appropriate for water safety in the absence of any effective legislation.

Fishing Associations

Safety of small boat operators is an integral part of responsibilities of the Maritime Division of the Ministry of Transport.

Summary of NMTP Policies

Policy Objectives	Specific Policies
1. Effective national law to bring international maritime instruments into force	<p>1.1 We will ensure that the Cook Islands national maritime law required by international instruments is effective, up-to-date and capable of enforcement.</p> <p>1.2 We will measure the effectiveness of the Cook Islands national maritime law required by international instruments through results from ongoing mandatory IMO audits.</p> <p>1.3 We will carry out an independent legal review if national maritime law is found by IMO audits to be deficient.</p>
2. Effective national law and safety management	<p>2.1 We will review current and draft national maritime regulations to ensure they are adequate for the regulation of small commercial vessels</p>

<p>systems for small commercial vessels</p>	<p>2.2 We will engage with the local maritime community to ensure that a culture of safety management is introduced through national new maritime regulations for small commercial vessels.</p>
<p>3. Safe operation of small commercial vessels</p>	<p>3.1 We will ensure that qualified and well trained staff are available to carry out flag State control activities on small commercial vessels</p> <p>3.2 We shall develop appropriate risk based systems to determine the level of flag State control and introduce a requirement for mandatory accident and incident reporting</p>
<p>4. Safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly maritime transport to the Pa Enea</p>	<p>4.1 We will advise Government and facilitate the provision of expert maritime advice with regard to safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly maritime transportation to and from the Pa Enea</p> <p>4.2 We will exercise rigorous flag State control to ensure the safe operation of ships trading to and from the Pa Enea</p> <p>4.3 We will ensure safe routes to, between and into the ports of the Pa Enea through hydrographic survey, provision of electronic charts and adequate aids to navigation.</p>
<p>5 Ensure that the Cook Islands has an international reputation as a responsible flag State</p>	<p>5.1 We shall establish monitoring, oversight and reporting functions to ensure that Maritime Cook Islands effectively discharge their delegated responsibilities, and that the operations of ships registered in the Cook Islands do not bring the country into disrepute</p>
<p>6 Safe and secure ports of Avatiu and Aitutaki</p>	<p>6.1 We shall work with the port authority to ensure that ongoing safe management of the ports of Avatiu and Aitutaki is carried out under an internationally recognised risk assessment and safety management system</p> <p>6.2 We shall work with the port authority to introduce regulations, to international standards, for the safe pilotage of ships in the port of Avatiu</p>
<p>7 Provision of effective port State control</p>	<p>7.1 We will apply to the Tokyo MOU on behalf of the Cook Islands Government to be granted Observer status with a view to obtaining Co-operating Member status after the required 3 years and full membership in due course</p> <p>7.2 We will actively participate in meetings of the Tokyo</p>

	MOU and seek training opportunities for suitably qualified persons in the Cook Islands
8 Provision of efficient coastal State services to shipping	<p>8.1 We will liaise with relevant Government departments to ensure there is effective co-ordination in the delivery of essential safety services.</p> <p>8.2 We will work with relevant Government departments in preparation for IMO audits</p> <p>8.3 We shall ensure that regional agreements for delivery of services to shipping are in place, up-to-date and undergo periodic reviews</p> <p>8.4 We shall ensure that the periodic exercises required to be carried out of certain services to shipping are undertaken</p>
9 Accession to relevant IMO and ILO instruments	<p>9.1 We will encourage the Government to ratify MLC 2006</p> <p>9.2 We will work with employer and employee representatives and affected Government departments to ensure smooth ratification of the MLC 2006 and the introduction of appropriate national law</p>
10 Well-resourced and capable Maritime Division	10.1 We will work with Government to ensure that the Maritime Division of the Ministry of Transport is well resourced to carry out its regulatory functions and powers