



caring about you & your environment

Report 02.507

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Report to Environment Committee
from Natasha Lewis, Resource Quality Officer

Incident Response Report for the Period 24 June 2002 – 12 August 2002

1. Purpose

To report on incident response work recently undertaken by the Council.

2. Background

The Resource Investigations Department provides a 24-hour incident response service for the Western Wellington Region. This service responds to complaints about pollution incidents, non-compliance with the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and regional plans, as well as after hours consent non-compliance.

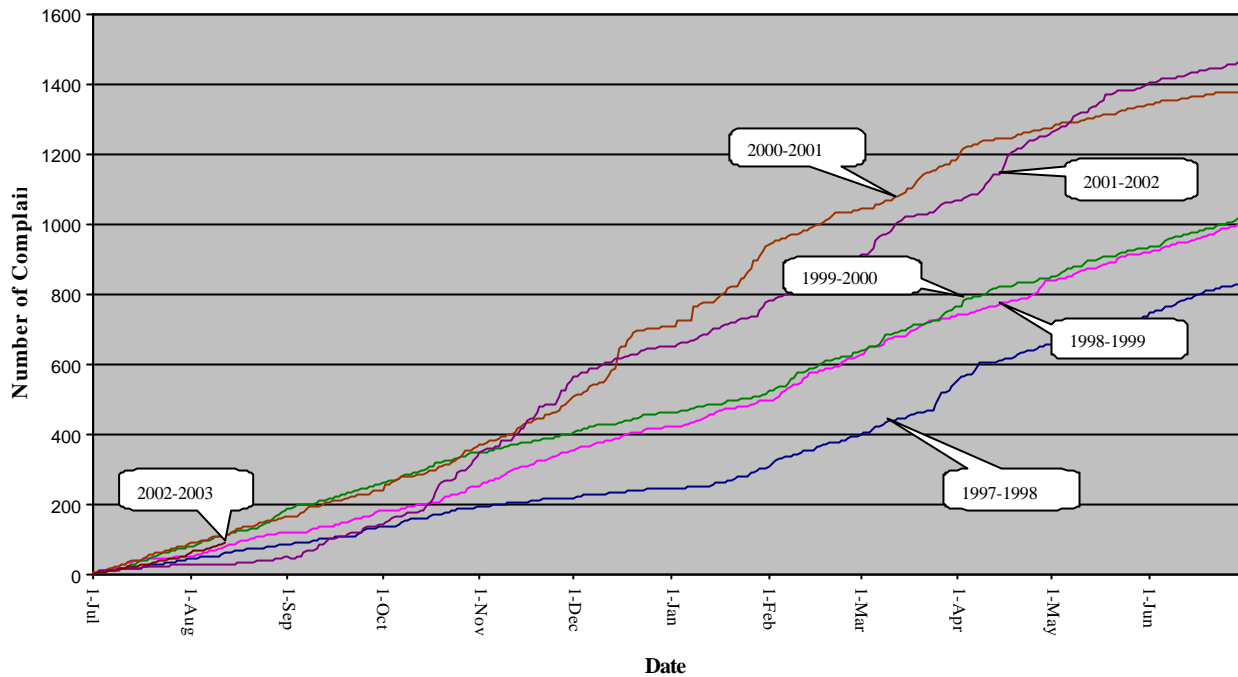
This report summarises complaints that have been received in the period 24 June 2002 to 12 August 2002 and our performance in responding to them including follow up action taken. This report details the complaints received and summarises their resolution.

3. Incident Complaints

One hundred and one complaints were received by the response service during the reporting period; a summary of these complaints is attached.

In comparison, fifty-seven complaints were received during the same seven-week time period last year. A graphical comparison of the number of complaints received by the incident response service over recent years is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Number of Complaints 1997 - Present



The increase in complaints received during this reporting period is attributed to the increase in the number of incidents relating to odour, dead stock and spilled hydrocarbons, as discussed below:

Hydrocarbons

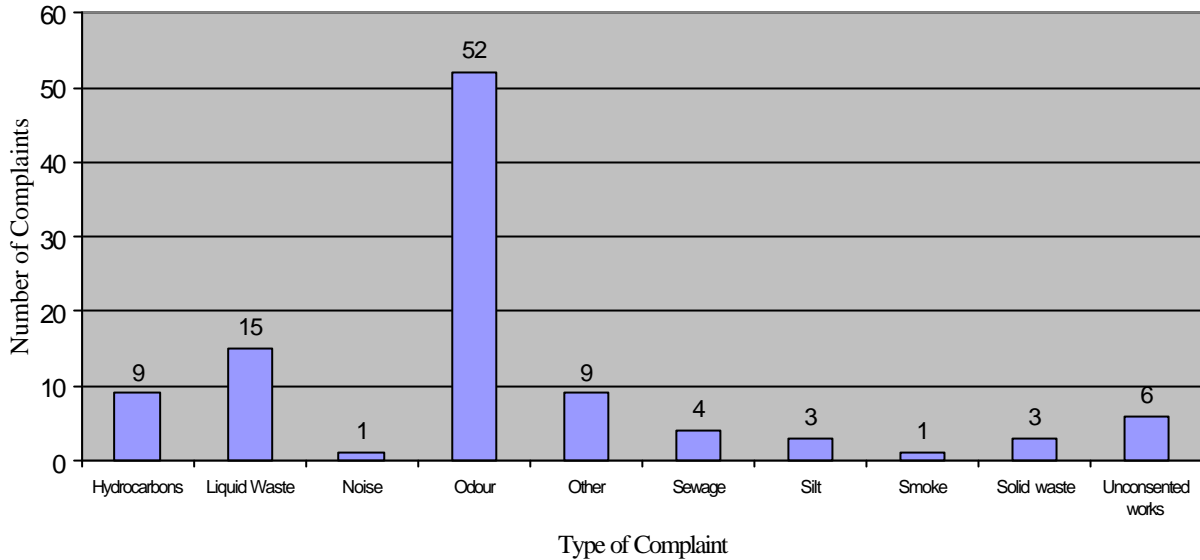
Increase in numbers is attributed to improved reporting by the Fire Service Communications Centre over the past year. The Incident Response duty officer is now automatically notified by pager of incidents which involve dangerous goods or hazardous substances where there is an actual or potential discharge to the environment.

Dead Stock

The wet weather experienced recently is likely to have caused the increased number of incidents involving dead stock during this period as stock are carried down rivers during storm events. Pollution Control are generally only made aware of this type of incident when there is actual or potential contamination of a watercourse.

The types of complaints during this reporting period are summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Types of Incident Complaints 24 June - 12 August 2002



Significant issues/incidents arising in this reporting period are summarised below:

Odour

- A continued high number of complaints regarding odour from an asphalt plant, Tawa, Wellington.

Hydrocarbons

- A forklift pierced the fuel tank of a delivery truck resulting in the discharge of diesel to the stormwater system, Petone, Lower Hutt. Attempts were made to contain and remove the diesel, however some discharge to the harbour was observed.
- The discharge of diesel into the Awamutu Stream from a historically contaminated site at Moera, Lower Hutt. The landowners have now sealed a stormwater pipe so the discharge to the stream has ceased. Site remediation issues will be followed up with landowner by the Contaminated Sites officer.
- The discharge of diesel to land from a pipe broken by a forklift, Plimmerton, Porirua. Most of the diesel was collected and removed from the spill site, the affected area was excavated and contaminated land was disposed of at a licensed facility. Validation samples taken from the spill site show that the remaining soil complies with Oil Industry Guidelines for commercial/industrial landuse.

Silt

- A continued increase in the number of complaints received regarding silt runoff from residential subdivisions across the Wellington Region. Investigation of these incidents is undertaken in conjunction with the relevant territorial authority.

Unauthorised Works

- The unauthorised excavation of a wetland, Orongorongo coast, Lower Hutt. The issue is currently under investigation.

Table 1 shows the total number of odour complaints received during the previous financial year 1 July 2001-1 July 2002 for our most frequent sources of odour complaints and the number of complaints received for each of the sites since the start of this financial year.

Table 1 Number of Complaints received about well known sources

Alleged Source	Complaints (Last Financial Year)	Complaints (01/07/2002-12/08/2002)
MKL Asphalt Ltd	431	9
Taylor Preston Ltd	166	0
AWI Dewatering Plant	64	0
AWI Moa Point	52	0
Southern Landfill	104	2
Nuplex Environmental	31	1
Nuplex Medismart	59	0
HVWS – Seaview Treatment Plant	79	0

4. Response Times

Table 2 summarises our performance in meeting the target response times for complaints received during this reporting period.

Table 2 Response Time Performance

Priority Category	Complaints Received	Average Response Time	Target Response Time	No. of Late Responses
RED ¹	42	34.1 minutes	60 minutes	2
YELLOW ²	17	4.9 hours	24 hours	0
BLUE ³	4	20.4 hours	31 days	0
LOG ONLY ⁴	38	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	101			2

¹ A RED response (target 60 minutes) is set for urgent incidents where either the environmental effects are potentially large or the pollution traceability is brief (i.e., odour).

² A YELLOW response (24 hours) is set for incidents that are not regarded as urgent but still need to be investigated as soon as possible.

³ A BLUE response (within one month) is set for incidents that are not urgent and can be followed up at a later date (i.e., reports of incidents that have happened in the past).

⁴ Incidents that we need to track but require no action are noted as LOG ONLY.

The two late responses were minor delays (less than 15 minutes) and due to traffic delays en route to Waikanae and Paraparaumu.

5. Enforcement Action

We have started proceedings against Allied Concrete Limited for an unauthorised discharge of wastewater into Careys Stream in February 2002, which resulted in sedimentation and elevated pH levels of the stream.

6. Communication

Weekly incident report summaries were sent out to interested parties to keep them informed about incidents.

7. Recommendation

That the report be received and the contents noted.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission:

NATASHA LEWIS
Resource Quality Officer, Resource Quality

JOHN SHERRIFF
Manager, Resource Investigations

JANE BRADBURY
Divisional Manager, Environment

Attachment:

1. Summary of Incident Complaints