



**TO:** FISHING VESSEL OWNERS / OPERATORS  
**SUBJECT:** WESTPORT HARBOUR – HEALTH & SAFETY

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The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 came into force on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2016 and you, as an individual or company, be it a one-man organisation or a larger business, need to be aware of your obligations and responsibilities. It is not sufficient to think that because you are a seafarer on a vessel you have no obligations when shore-side in an area where “work is being carried out” or is “customarily carried out”.

Your obligations are to take reasonable steps to ensure your health and safety and not to affect the health and safety of others. Our role is to take “reasonably practicable steps” to ensure the health and safety of people within the workplace.

Westport Harbour (WH) has identified the basic safety requirements for people using the workplace. This ensures a set minimum PPE for accessing and working within harbour work sites. When a vessel is made fast to a berth it comes under port jurisdiction so you must either have provided to us your own Health & Safety Management System (HSMS) for port operations OR you must comply with WH requirements. Non-compliance leaves everyone open to incident. Signs will indicate the basic minimum requirements we require. If people do not adhere to these requirements then, after an initial reminder, the situation may be reported to WorkSafe NZ who will no doubt take the necessary actions.

It should be highlighted that penalties for breach of the H&S Act are considerable, now include jail time, and everyone needs to be aware of the part they play. There is an also increased focus on enforcement.

The minimum safety requirements are not, in our view, overly restrictive and in a working environment they are necessary. If you see it and it’s wrong, you are condoning it and are therefore a party to it. In other words, we all share in responsibility for keeping each other safe.

**In summary:**

The minimum PPE requirements for the main wharf are a high visibility vest and enclosed footwear. If you are a contractor on site or doing certain jobs on the wharf, then these minimum requirements will clearly increase. You are required to comply with all signage on the wharf.

Talley’s have already put in to place their requirements for fishing vessels working at Fisherman’s Wharf. Other companies will have their own safety requirements. If they exceed those of WH then that’s a bonus. If not, then the minimum requirements as above must be worn.

Please also refer to changes to the Harbour information pack which have been designed to ensure our compliance with the new Act. A reminder that all visitors to vessels and all contractors on site are required to be either visitor or contractor inducted at the Harbour Office.