



REFINING NZ
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Media Release

18 September 2017

Refinery prepares to repair damaged pipeline

Refining NZ has confirmed that it is to start repairs on a section of its multi-product fuel pipeline which was shut down following a jet fuel leak last Thursday.

Chief Executive, Sjoerd Post said that a 30-strong team has been working on a twenty four hour basis over the last four days and that most of the jet fuel has now been recovered from the leak site.

“Much of the jet fuel had leaked into a culvert on the property. Quick action by our team, working alongside environmental staff from the Northland Regional Council, meant we were able to contain the leak and prevent it from moving into waterways.”

“Contaminated soil from around the damaged section of the pipeline is being removed, with heavily contaminated soil being transported to the refinery for remediation, while lightly contaminated soil will be transported to a secure landfill.”

Post confirmed that excavating around the leak had revealed the extent of the damage to the pipeline.

“Inspection has shown clear signs of the pipe being dented and the protective coating removed by heavy equipment. The pipe is located in boggy terrain and it is certain that the acidic nature of the soil will have contributed to the corrosion and subsequent tear in the pipe.”

“What’s not clear is when this section of the pipe may have been damaged. While further analysis of the metal is to be carried out, we are concluding that this incident is a “one-off”.

Post said that the refinery’s engineering team is preparing to insert a new section of pipe and is working to a tight time-frame to return the pipeline to service.

“All going to plan, we expect to deliver jet fuel into Wiri between midday Sunday the 24th and midday Tuesday the 26th. From that point we estimate it will take another 30 hours for the jet fuel to settle, for recertification to be obtained, and to transport to Auckland International airport. We are continuing to work closely with our oil company customers to ensure that the impact on fuel supplies from this outage is minimised as much as we possibly can.”

Post said that the refinery has been keeping residents in the area, up to date about the leak, and has been offering support, including providing alternative accommodation.

“The continued patience of our local community, as we carry out our recovery and repair operation, is very much appreciated.”

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