

Tony Marriott – “I’m still in logistics, still loving it”

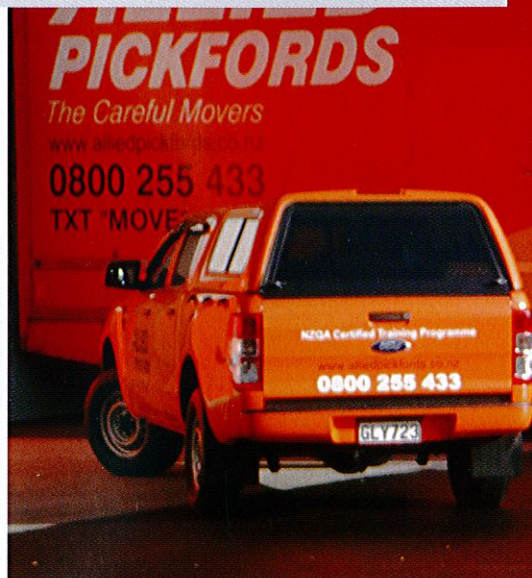
Like many in the logistics industry, Cantabrian Tony Marriott started work as a storeman, working at Meadows Freight at Christchurch Airport in the early 1980s. Today, he’s the general manager of one of New Zealand’s leading providers of moving services within the country and around the world. This is his story.

I left high school at the age of 16 with every intention of going back to uni after I had figured out what I wanted to do. I landed my first job in freight forwarding because, as my first manager put it, I had the best geography scores! Some 30-plus years later, I’m still in logistics and still loving it.

The old days of freight forwarding were the wild frontier of learning. There were no manuals, and most of what we learned was by observation or the old process of ‘drop ‘em in the deep end’, with the possible exception of the IATA/FIATA dangerous goods courses where anything less than 90% was a fail. University graduates were non-existent, and there were no formal qualifications other than airline courses, which I had completed within the first 18 months.

“Sadly, many logistics companies employ people for their revenue-generating capacities and don’t pay enough attention to the single reason they are in business – to make a profit”

In this environment you were air freighting so many different commodities, which ranged from Canterbury rugby jerseys, Bowron



Tony Marriott, general manager of Allied Pickfords New Zealand: “The old days of freight forwarding were the wild frontier of learning”

sheepskins, CWF Hamilton Jet boat engines, fresh flowers, live crayfish and eels, fresh fruit – you quickly became an expert in typing up forms for biosecurity and Customs, then getting them signed and still having three minutes to spare before the cutoff. It was also a very social environment, where all the forwarders were accommodated within 200 m of each other, and Friday nights were the highlight of the week down at the Russley Hotel. Many friendships were forged, and even a couple of marriages!

Unique environment

Having served my time on the service end of the industry, I was itching to work for an exporter, which I perceived as being more interesting and challenging. I was lucky enough to work for Canterbury Timber Products as an export coordinator at their plant in Rangiora, which became part of the Carter Holt Harvey group in 1995.

This manufacturing environment was very unique. At that time, MDF panel boards were in great demand and we would ‘allocate’ what we felt was fair to each

market. Each order had to have a letter of credit established prior to manufacturing, and I can recall orders in excess of 70 containers at a time.

I arrived at a time when the New Zealand shipping market was moving away from break bulk shipping to containers. Very few panel board shippers were using containers, but we recognised the benefits of loading onsite and benefiting from far cheaper shipping.

Our technical department came up with a device for flipping packs of MDF on their edge so they could be loaded, and before long 100% of our markets were ordering in containers. It was not until many shipments later did we understand that most of the Asian clients were unloading containers manually, one sheet at a time!

Applying the science

Around this time (1997) I met Walter Glass, having researched this new term called ‘logistics’ that was just being talked about. I had only found a couple of US and UK courses that were offering training and was excited to learn that New Zealand had just

commenced courses via Massey University.

I was impressed with Walter’s knowledge and passion, and it was refreshing to hear that science could be applied to a trade that I had grown fond of. I was part of the ‘old school, hard core’ diploma graduates as in those early days each module was only passed after submitting a 100-plus-page project. This would usually involve a fictional company (often breweries for some reason) and we would have to completely pull the business apart and redesign its distribution and manufacturing systems.

My light-bulb moment came when I started on the people management module. I learnt how staff should be managed, motivated and trained. This all sounded so sensible, but it

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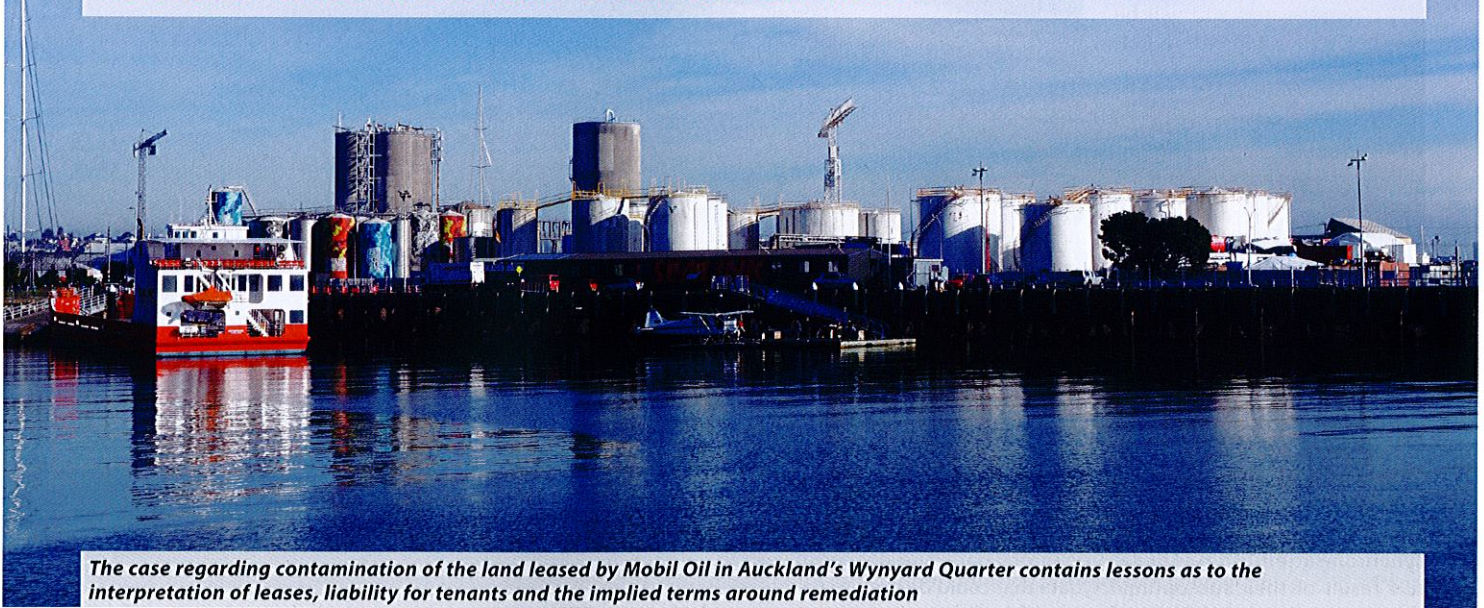
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Contaminated land liability – lessons from the Mobil Oil decision

By Rachel Devine and Patricia Green



The case regarding contamination of the land leased by Mobil Oil in Auckland's Wynyard Quarter contains lessons as to the interpretation of leases, liability for tenants and the implied terms around remediation

The Supreme Court's decision last July in the case of *Mobil Oil New Zealand v Development Auckland* has implications for liability for contaminated land under leases. This article explores some potential implications of the case for those holding a lease over industrial or commercial land and the resulting lessons to be learnt from the decision.

From the 1920s until 2005, properties in Auckland's Wynyard Quarter were used for the bulk storage of oil. The land was first leased to Australian companies that went on to become part of the Mobil Australia group. Then, in the 1950s and 1960s, New Zealand-registered companies took over the leases. These companies were later amalgamated to form Mobil Oil New Zealand (Mobil). In 1985, after the leases had expired, Mobil entered into new tenancy agreements for the

land. These were the tenancy agreements primarily in issue in the case.

The land was part of a reclamation that was completed between 1905 and 1917. The original fill was already contaminated with the likes of demolition debris, gas works waste, refuse from city tips, and material extracted from the harbour in the vicinity of sewage and gas works discharges.

Through leakage and spillage of petroleum products, contamination of the land went on for

years. It was largely caused by Mobil (including its New Zealand predecessors and Australian predecessors). By the 1970s, the contamination had reached a tipping point – the land was so polluted as to require complete remediation. Now, the land is being developed for mixed commercial and residential use.

The ordinary meaning of words

The case was about whether clean and tidy conditions in Mobil's 1985 tenancy agreements meant it had to pay to remediate the land. The High Court had found that Mobil was not required to pay, but the Court of Appeal disagreed. The Supreme Court restored the High Court's decision. In doing so,

the Supreme Court considered the interpretation of the clean and tidy conditions, the overall scheme of the arrangements and the prospect of an implied term requiring Mobil to remediate the land.

The 1985 tenancy agreements contained a 'clean and tidy' condition providing for Mobil to 'keep' the land and (at the end of the tenancies) 'return it' in 'good order and clean and tidy'. In finding Mobil was not required to carry out subsurface remediation, the court focused on the ordinary meaning of these words.

The court found that the word 'keep' can impose obligations beyond maintaining the status quo at the start of the lease, such

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resonated with me that I had never had this laid out in such a logical and planned manner. I started applying it with my staff, and before I knew it, these same people started achieving amazing things in their own roles. I still use these same fundamentals today, and it amazes me to see how many companies working in the logistics industry do not get how important these principles are.

Working in the Red Zone

After qualifying, doors quickly opened for me and in 2007 I found myself managing the South Island operation of Allied Pickfords. As with all Christchurch people in 2010 and 2011, we had to operate through the earthquakes.

From a logistics point of view, my training really kicked in. Early on, we faced and solved issues such as:

- ▶ Growing from a branch of 12 to over 50 in three months
- ▶ Expanding a warehouse of 1200 sq m to one of over 5000 sq m practically overnight
- ▶ Developing a process of quoting that, prior to the earthquakes, covered two to three moves a day to one that could accommodate over 15 moves a day
- ▶ Finding solutions for working in the Red Zone where there was no water or power, and daily restrictions on how many staff could work on any site.

So many moments stand out in my mind. We cleaned out a

20-storey office building which still had sandwiches and cakes sitting on a table from the day of the earthquake, 12 months prior. We moved 300,000 library books offsite for three months and brought them all back and placed them onto the shelves. We coped with 10,000 aftershocks and staff having to deal with their own issues at home, yet still came into work each day smiling.

Managing costs and revenues

Allied Pickfords is a great company and I am indebted to my former managing director, Graham Sutcliffe, who gave me the opportunity to run the South Island like it was my own business. This led to the opportunity to run the overall New Zealand

operation when Graham retired in 2012.

Today, Allied Pickfords New Zealand is a member of the international SIRVA Group, a leading worldwide provider of relocation and moving solutions. In my current role I have quickly learnt the importance of managing costs and revenues together. Sadly, in many logistics companies, we employ people for their revenue-generating capacities and don't pay enough attention to the single reason we are in business – to make a profit.

I can say that without a doubt, my success has been greatly assisted by the knowledge I gained and the contacts I made with the CILT UK Diploma in Logistics (the hard core bunch).