

20 March 2020

Keeping essential maritime infrastructure operational

The Boating Industry Association and the Marina Industries Association stands with the government in efforts to protect public health and support the economy through this difficult time. We recognise and support that businesses are having to adapt in various ways to minimise the spread of the virus while maintaining the provision of essential services to the community.

In context of this need to keep essential services running throughout this emergency, we ask that should government decide to restrict or shut down all non-essential businesses for a period, that marinas and other boat servicing businesses be considered essential businesses due to the essential services they provide to the maritime sector.

The justification for this is that marinas are maritime infrastructure strategically located around the nation's coastline near population centres in metropolitan and regional areas that deliver and support a range of essential services including the response to emergencies such as threat to life and the environment (pollution). Boat service businesses ensure that trailer boats can be serviced and repaired, and boaters have access to acquire essential safety equipment so that boating can continued to be enjoyed by the broader community.

Essential and managed services provided by marinas to protect life, the environment and property include at least the following:

- safe storage and supervision of vessels;
- provision of fuel and the maintenance of waterside fuel delivery systems;
- service and maintenance to vessels (through waterside and specialist technical contractor workshops like mechanics, shipwrights, marine electricians etc);
- emergency boat lift and maintenance;
- Pollution response capability;
- The provision of essential supplies (food and water) to vessels away from their home port;
- sewage pump out; and
- emergency medivac points.

More than half of all marinas and clubs provide fuel for vessels including recreational, commercial and response vessels. Sixty per cent of marinas provide boat lifting services and 54 per cent have boat repair and maintenance facilities.

Marinas also perform support roles in emergency response such as threat to life, fire and pollution threats (eg., oil spills). This includes supervision and management of vessels within

the marina and associated emergency response to pollution and fire events. This was most recently played out during the past summer East Coast fires by providing access and exit points for coastal communities.

There are 320 marinas and clubs across Australia providing 67,000 boat storage spaces. Marinas are vital employment hubs particularly in coastal communities providing employment for 23,000 people. These marinas are essential to be able to maintain not only the fleet of commercial and recreational vessels in marinas but provide support services to a significant percentage of Australia's 910,000 registered vessels and the millions of Australians who enjoy boating. Boat Service businesses that provide essential mechanical, electrical and safety services as well as the sale of safety and other essential boating equipment which are required to maintain the ability of people to boat safely.

It is important to note that boating is an activity which can be conducted safely and consistently with the requirements of community isolation at this time and ongoing access to this activity is essential for the mental and physical wellbeing of boaters and fishers around the country.

We confirm our support for the government for its decisive action to protect and support Australians. We ask that marinas are recognised as essential supporting infrastructure for our maritime communities.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Neil Patchett, General Manager Policy and Advocacy, on e. neil@bia.org.au or m. 0418 279 465 on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



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