

25 April 2022

Mr Anthony Albanese MP
Leader of the ALP
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Dear Leader of the ALP,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Boating Industry Association Ltd (BIA) in Australia to briefly outline our commitment to working with the next Federal Government in support of the social, environmental, cultural and economic benefits of boating.

BIA is the peak industry body in Australia that represents the interests of recreational and light commercial boating which includes: boat manufacturers, importers, brokers, insurers, retailers, charters, yacht and boat clubs, marinas, events, designers, surveyors and trades from boat builders to riggers, and more. BIA is an advocate for boaters and the boating lifestyle and supports safe, responsible, and enjoyable boating.

The boating economy generates significant benefits through employment. In 2021 the industry reported national turnover of \$8.835 billion, directly employed more than 27,630 people with more than 10,000 contractors. Seventy-five per cent are in small, family businesses, employing local workers and supporting local communities.

Across this nation more than 85 per cent of the population live within 50km of the coast. Little wonder almost 1 in 5 households can have a boat or watercraft. People of all ages, gender and ability can participate in boating across paddle, sail and power for leisure and sport.

Australia has more than 2.5 million people with a licence to drive a powerboat and close to 1 million registered vessels and a countless number of non-motorised craft (such as small paddle and sail craft) which do not require registration or licensing.

Boating however is more than numbers, it is a way of life for many Australian families with most vessels being family runabouts and small paddle, and sail craft.

Boating has proven to be a standout choice in leisure activity through the pandemic. The combination of no international travel, the staycation phenomenon, flexible work practices and the need to be COVID Safe have seen interest in getting out the water ramp up significantly.

With this in mind, we offer our ongoing collaboration to work with the next Federal Government on the following:

- safe, responsible and enjoyable boating

- recognition that boating – across paddle, power and sail - is a standout choice of leisure for a considerable number of Australians
- continue to address the need for new and improved access and infrastructure to ensure safe and convenient access for people of all ages and abilities
- industry growth and investment
- boating jobs

Over the weekend the Liberal National Party announced that if elected, they would provide an additional \$20 million towards more than 100 new projects across Australia's coastal and regional communities to extend facilities such as boat ramps, jetties, cleaning stations and disability-accessible toilet blocks and campground facility upgrades.

The announcement recognises activities like boating and fishing had significant economic and regional benefits.

The announcement also included a much-welcomed commitment to maintain our robust Australian Marine Park network in its current form, to provide certainty to the boating and fishing sectors.

The BIA is keen to work with the next Federal Government and would appreciate advice on the Australian Labor Party's position on its support for recreational boating and willingness to collaborate with the boating industry to support family businesses, jobs, skills and training and participation in boating.

BIA seeks advice on the position of the ALP regarding support for boating across Australia and that includes the position on the Australian Marine Park network which should be kept in its current form to provide certainty to the boating and fishing sectors. Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information or to arrange a meeting to discuss any of the above. I can be contacted on 0418 279 465 or neil@bia.org.au

Yours sincerely,



Neil Patchett
Co General Manager
Boating Industry Association Ltd