



Boating Industry Association

ISSUE NOTE: SA Minister for Infrastructure and Transport

Purpose

To outline key issues with the South Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport

Background

The Boating Industry Association Ltd (BIA) is the peak industry body in Australia that represents the interests of 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 the past year (ending 31 Dec) the industry reported national turnover of \$9.55 billion, directly employed more than 26,000 people with more than 8000 contractors. In SA, industry revenue in 2021 was around \$360 million, with 1200 people employed. Seventy-five per cent are in small, family businesses, employing local workers and supporting local communities.

SA reports there are 303,217 boat licence holders (*perpetual licence) and 58,192 registered boats which grew by 2524 last year.

Boat-based fishing has long been a major component of the boating lifestyle. There are more than 277,000 anglers taking to the State's waterways annually, with the combination of recreational and commercial fishing contributing more than \$470 millionⁱ into the economy each year.

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 on the water, ramp up significantly.

Current Position

1. BIA priorities for the next 12-18 months include the following:

- a) High value issues:
 1. Safety
 2. Access



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3. Infrastructure

4. Jobs

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2. Safety and Responsible Boat Ownership

We respectfully ask Government to put education before regulation. There should be a sustained and funded education program aimed at the cohort who are at most risk according to long-term, robust, relevant and objective data analysis. We offer our collaboration and support to work in partnership with the SA Government on the following:

- promote 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
- promote Responsible Boat Ownership.

3. Infrastructure

There is an existing and increasing need for new and improved infrastructure for boating in South Australia to accommodate the demand for such facilities, not just now but into the future.

There is an issue with the availability and lack of slipways both private and government on the Murrumbidgee River for commercial and private users, particularly for access related to survey requirements, insurance and maintenance. The distance and time taken to reach a slipway, particularly for those operators based in the Riverland and the problem of booking into the Berri slipway, which is controlled by SA Water mainly for their own vessels is an ongoing issue. Whilst having completed upgrades, slots are available but operators need to book a long way ahead to have access. With insurance companies now insisting on older private vessels being slipped for out of water inspections, Hire/Drive vessel operators are being charged extension of survey fees, due to not having slipway access.

There is also the importance of boating and tourism to the visitor economy, and the need for infrastructure to continuously cater for development and the opportunities that are arising – this is important as both are so closely intertwined. For example, there is an opportunity to support infrastructure that can attract and accommodate superyachts. These yachts are great for the economy and are a tourist attraction in themselves however there is a need to promote SA as a destination and have the infrastructure in place for such vessels to moor here.

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In addition, the Adelaide to Lincoln yacht race and regatta is now recognised nationally and as such we have racing vessels from interstate and internationally including yachts from the Sydney to Hobart race that want to compete in the event but cannot because there are no deep water moorings to cater for these larger vessels.

4. The DockYard project

The DockYard project, which is forging a partnership between long-established marine industry businesses in the area and further afield, revitalising land that has had an equally long and proud history in the marine industry, has the potential to deliver an excellent outcome for boating and marine manufacturing, service and support into the future.

We seek government support for the DockYard project and the overall revitalisation of the inner Port Adelaide basin's waterfront precinct, to reflect visitor moorings for recreational boats adjacent to Cruikshanks Corner and McLaren's Wharf. Cruikshanks Corner mooring infrastructure would work in unison with the proposed requirements of the commercial fishing industry.

The BIA particularly commends to you the following project features such as:

- a common user facility for the industry which will benefit the broader business community and boating public;
- the opportunity to:
 - bring a commercial shipbuilding industry back to life in SA
 - deliver critical support for training and jobs
 - creation of a training hub
 - a potential venue for industry events, and
 - deliver overall social, environmental and economic benefits to South Australia.

BIA also recognises that such a precinct, as demonstrated by similar models in Australia and overseas, would not only support jobs but enable current businesses to expand, the opportunities for current and new business to bid on work there, interstate and internationally and the ability to attract businesses and people to migrate or expand into South Australia.

5. Jobs

We seek Government support to improve opportunities for marine jobs and that includes support for marine skills and training. After 10 years of having no shipwright training

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available in SA through TAFE SA, we have just recently had approval from the SA Government for the Australian Institute of Engineering in Victoria, to deliver training for Certificate III in Marine Craft Construction into SA. More government assistance is necessary to ensure ongoing and appropriate development of skills and training.

6. Murray River Strategy - “Whole of Murray” Approach

We stand ready to support the SA Government to progress a “Whole of Murray” approach. This should take a safe systems approach and support Safe People, Safe Vessels and Safe Waterways on this iconic waterway. The issue of addressing older unseaworthy private vessels, illegal moorings, and the resultant environmental risks, were highlighted in the SA Boating Facilities Strategic Plan. See **Attachment A**.

7. High level consultation

BIA recommends ongoing high-level engagement with the Department and or Minister’s team on boating in the state. Consideration could be given to establishment of a high-level boating consultative group/ committee which would meet to help inform government decisions in boating across safety, access, infrastructure and jobs. This is a model which has worked well in other States and provides the Minister/ Department with high level and strategic consultation.

ⁱ [Deloitte Access Economics, The economic contribution of South Australia’s marine industries, November 2017](#)

Issue date: 30 June 2022

Murray River Strategy Approach:

Issue

- Increasing number of old unregistered, uninsured, un-surveyed houseboats and riverboats are coming over the border from NSW and Victoria and becoming permanent liveaboards and floating shacks on the Murray River.
- The situation has been further exacerbated by these vessels illegally taking up permanent moorings along the riverbank and backwaters for lengthy periods, with little action being taken by the authorities, to remedy the situation.
- The problem is exacerbating quickly as SA is seen as an easy target, by not having a proper regulatory regime and lack of compliance and enforcement.

Solution

- The revision of river regulations to address illegal moorings and non-compliant unseaworthy vessels, with a “Whole of Murray” approach.
- Compared to NSW and Vic regulations, SA is a long way behind. We need common cross border regulation and have one consistent approach as is the situation in NSW, where Transport for NSW control all vessel regulations and compliance on the Murray River.
- Needs collaboration of relevant agencies to address compliance, safety and water quality. There is obviously a social impact to be managed.
- Current lack of enforcement in SA due to lack of resources and complexity of numerous jurisdictions covering the river.
- All permanently moored vessels in SA waters should be registered and to be registered must have proof of a mooring within a marina or own private land. To be in a marina the vessel must be insured and to be insured, the vessel must be registered and be inspected and or slipped. Must have a designated mooring.
- Currently there are no regulations on private vessels for surveys or inspections except for insurance purposes, where insurance companies are



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now insisting upon a proper out of water (slipped) survey by an AMSA accredited marine surveyor.

- All permanently moored vessels need to be slipped and inspected by accredited marine surveyors/inspectors under a periodic regulatory inspection regime, covering pontoon and structural integrity, black and grey water compliance, electrical, gas and safety compliance. All vessels should be seaworthy and able to undertake a voyage.
- The Murray River is Adelaide's potable water source and black water should be fully contained and not discharged into the river, and grey water properly treated before being discharged or fully contained – zero tolerance should be adopted
- The issue was highlighted as a key requirement in the SA Boating Facilities Strategic Plan where DIT was seen as the lead agency.