

12 January 2024

Mid Murray Council
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Re., Letter of Support

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to acknowledge and support Mid Murray Council's grant application to the Federal Government for disaster recovery assistance as it was hit hard during the South Australian floods.

Mid Murray Council has 440km of riverfront to support and it sustained serious damage to 80 marine facilities during the flood. It is vitally important these facilities requiring work are repaired as quickly as possible, to support the recreational and light commercial marine industry and tourism industry in general.

Recreational marine infrastructure including boat ramps, pontoons and relevant amenities such as car parking, toilets and lighting are vitally important to regional riverine Councils and the local economy in attracting visitation from day trippers and holiday makers who recreate on the River Murray. This encompasses all water sport activities including water skiing, wake boarding, jet skiing, kayaking, paddle boarding and fishing, and of course those cruising the Murray.

Additionally, the River Murray supports the commercial houseboat industry which is a major tourism drawcard to the regions, with operators/ managers employing staff and contractors to support the vessels. This sector was hit hard during the flood with operators having no income for six months when operations had to be suspended.

It is also important to recognise the value of mooring areas adjacent to riverine towns which provide access to businesses for provisioning and utilising hospitality venues, thus driving important revenue into and supporting the local economies. These mooring areas need to be back up and running, and fit for purpose.

The Boating Industry Association Ltd (BIA) is the peak industry body in Australia that represents the interests of boating which includes designers, manufacturers, importers, brokers, insurers, retailers, charters, yacht and boat clubs, marinas,

events, 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. BIA has members in all States and Territories.

The boating economy generates significant benefits. The BIA last year reported industry national turnover of \$9.64 billion, directly employed more than 25,000 people with more than 7000 contractors. Seventy-five per cent are in small family businesses, employing local workers and supporting local communities.

In Australia, more than 85 per cent of the population live within 50km of the coast, so it is little wonder that almost 1 in 5 households can have a boat or watercraft and that approximately 5 million go boating each year. People of all ages, gender and ability participate in boating across paddle, sail and power for leisure and sport.

Boating is a significant contributor to the economy spanning metropolitan, rural and regional Australia.

In conclusion, we strongly support Council in its request for Federal assistance to build back better its infrastructure in support of the social, economic and environmental benefits arising for boating in South Australia.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Scott
Chief Executive Officer
Boating Industry Association Ltd