

Discussion Paper: Management of Port Phillip and Western Port Boating Facilities

December 2019



Boat ramp in Rye, Victoria

Foreword



Message from the Minister for Fishing and Boating

Boating is booming in Victoria as more people discover the health and well-being benefits getting out on the water brings. With hundreds of beautiful bays, inlets and estuaries, and tens of thousands of kilometres of glorious coastline and rivers, it's little wonder that recreational boating licence registrations have been growing at 2.5 per cent over the past eight years. And we're committed to supporting this growth.

We have invested \$47.2 million in the 2019-2020 State budget to boost boating and make it more accessible. We have already removed parking and launching fees at all public boat ramps across the state. We're getting on with the job of upgrading boating facilities at six popular boating and fishing locations in Victoria. We will make sure that every cent of licencing and registration fees is spent on boating safety and facilities. And we will establish the Better Boating Fund.

We've also committed to reviewing and improving the way we manage boating infrastructure in Port Phillip and Western Port. This discussion paper marks the start of the process of getting it right. And this is vitally important because Victoria's population is set to soar, so we need to make sure boating infrastructure in the state's busiest waterways is managed well.

This discussion paper seeks input from recreational boating facility managers, users, and boating industry organisations in order to capture feedback which will be used to determine options to better manage recreational boating infrastructure across Port Phillip and Western Port.

This is your chance to have your say. So, whatever your interest in boating, we want to hear from you and work with you to make managing and using boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port better for all Victorians.

It's an exciting and challenging review and I'm confident that with the goodwill of boating facility managers and the boating community we will make it happen together.

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Fishing and Boating

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Glossary

A list of acronyms and terms used throughout the Discussion Paper are provided below.

Table G.1: List of acronyms and terms used throughout this document.

BBV	Better Boating Victoria
BNP	Boating Now Program (NSW)
BIAV	Boating Industry Association of Victoria
BSO	Boating Safety Officer (NSW)
CoM	Committee of Management
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
RBFS	Recreational Boating Facilities Scheme (WA)
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services (NSW)
TMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads (Queensland)
VRFish	Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body

Why is a Management Review needed?

In response to feedback received from recreational boating users, the Victorian Government made a number of commitments to the recreational boating community. Amongst others, this included undertaking a review of how recreational boating facilities are managed across Port Phillip and Western Port.

In 2019 the Victorian Government established Better Boating Victoria (BBV) to oversee the implementation of its commitments. In keeping with these, BBV recently launched a review of how recreational boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port are managed, and how current management arrangements can be improved.

This paper focuses solely on management arrangements of recreational boating facilities. We understand the Victorian Government currently manages boating safety including boating safety education, marine search and rescue, and safety-related enforcement through various agencies including Maritime Safety Victoria, Emergency Management Victoria, and the Victorian Water Police. While safety is paramount, this discussion paper focuses on infrastructure management.

Why Port Phillip and Western Port?

The majority of Victoria's population is located in the communities surrounding Port Phillip and Western Port. Four out of five Victorians visit these coastal waterways every year. The coastline around these ports is finite and yet the Melbourne metropolitan population will increase by 50% by 2050. This will increase pressure on existing facilities from a range of activities that access these ports.

Why the need for a review?

Twenty-four entities (be they local councils, Committees of Management or Parks Victoria) are currently involved in the management of recreational boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port.

These varied management arrangements can create blurred lines of accountability and responsibility. For many agencies management of recreational boating infrastructure is one of many

responsibilities, and often not an area of specific expertise.

There is no state-wide, strategic approach to recreational boating facility management in place which results in variable standards of infrastructure, functionality and compliance.

The aim of this review

BBV has initiated this review to assess the user experience, understand existing management practices and assess asset condition in order to determine options to better manage recreational boating infrastructure across Port Phillip and Western Port.

This review will better position BBV to determine how to improve how boating infrastructure is managed so that the interests of Victoria's recreational boating community around Port Phillip and Western Port are better served.

The review has commenced with the preparation of this discussion paper.

How we arrived at this discussion paper

A series of stakeholder interviews, document reviews and investigations into practices in other jurisdictions have informed the preparation of this discussion paper.

Objective of this paper

The primary objective of this discussion paper is to gather feedback from recreational boating facility users, industry groups, managers and any other interested party. This feedback will be used to develop options to improve management of public recreational boating facilities. To enable the reader to contribute their feedback, a list of questions is provided at the end of each section of the paper.

We encourage readers to provide feedback. Any information you provide will be crucial as we enter into the next phase of the review and begin considering what the management arrangements for boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port should look like in the future.

Recreational Boating in Port Phillip & Western Port

With 197,000 registered vessels and 417,000 licence holders, recreational boating is a popular activity in Victoria.¹ These figures do not take into account the range of other users including kayakers, canoeists and sailors who utilise recreational boating facilities across Victoria.

Given the concentration of Victoria's population around Port Phillip and Western Port, these waterways are heavily utilised by recreational boaters.

Port Phillip & Western Port Boating Facilities

There are a total of 43 public recreational boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port.

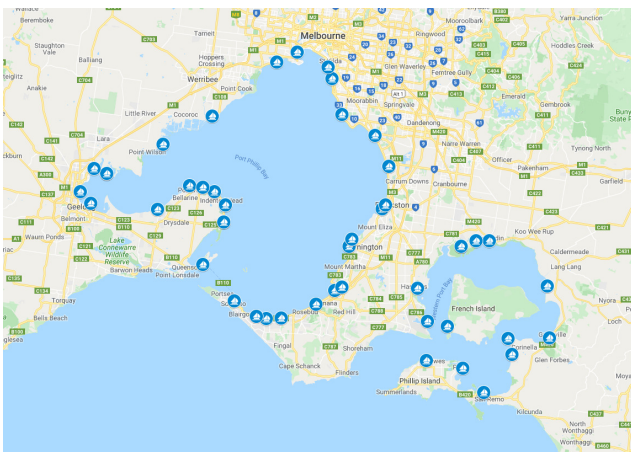


Figure 1: Locations of Current Boating Facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port

These boating facilities range in size. At one end of the spectrum there are smaller facilities that contain single lane boat ramps. At the other end some of the larger facilities contain multiple lane boat ramps, car and trailer parking areas, barbecues and fish cleaning station facilities.

The approximate maintenance spend for these facilities range between \$4,000 with no dredging to \$240,000 with dredging on an annual basis. Common maintenance activities include:

- Cleaning the boat ramps.

- Repairing damages to boat ramps and associated pontoons and jetties from weather, vandalism and boating accidents.
- Looking after the facilities and the environment surrounding the boat ramps such as the toilets, car parks and land.

The major types of renewal works across the boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port include boat ramp extensions to facilitate increased demand and ramp renewal works to enhance the serviceability of the asset.

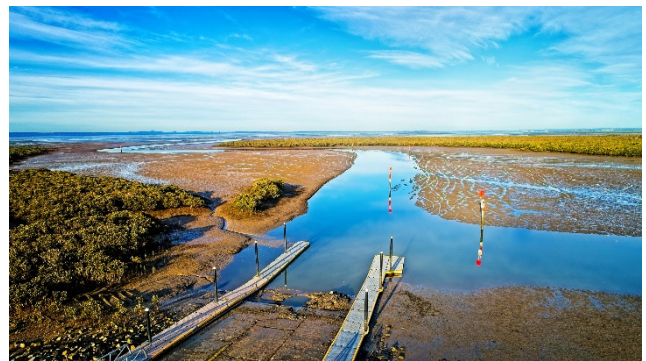


Figure 2: Boat Ramp in Tooradin, Victoria

Public Facilities Management

Boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port are managed by a range of entities. These include:

- Local Councils
- Committees of Management appointed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).
- Parks Victoria.

Recreational Boating Users

Although accurate statistics on who uses recreational boating facilities is difficult to find, there are a variety of groups that represent user interests, including the Boating Industry Association of Victoria (BIAV) and the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body (VRFish). These

¹ <https://transport.vic.gov.au/fishing-and-boating>

groups have at times collected information from users on usage of certain boating facilities.

According to these groups, the majority of recreational boating users in Port Phillip and Western Port are fishers (some say as many as 80%). However, other users include personal water craft, tow craft (e.g. ski boats), yachts, kayaks, canoes and cruisers.

Feedback (About You)

Help us to understand more about you and your association with recreational boating in Port Phillip and Western Port.

1. What is your association with recreational boating in Port Phillip and Western Port?
2. Which recreational boating facility in Port Phillip or Western Port do you most commonly use or are you associated with?
3. What is your postcode?



Figure 3: Boat Ramp in Corinella, Victoria

What is a Recreational Boating facility?

At this stage of the review, information has been collected from the following sources:

- 12 interviews with people representing user groups, State government departments and agencies, local councils and committees of management.
- A detailed review of 22 policy, guideline and strategy documents.
- A high level review of facilities management practices and asset maintenance processes across 21 boating facilities management entities.
- Interviews with agencies in other jurisdictions who are involved in the management of recreational boating facilities.

From this work some preliminary findings and insights have been drawn. One finding is there is lack of clarity or agreement over what constitutes a recreational boating facility.

What do we mean by “recreational boating facilities”?

Our preliminary view is that in addition to the boat ramp, a recreational boating facility includes features such as associated jetties/pontoons, car parks, toilets, fish-cleaning facilities, lighting and navigation aids and access channels (noting that these features are not present at every facility).

Clarity over what constitutes a recreational boating facility will help confirm not only who is responsible for managing and maintaining boating facilities, but also what they are responsible for.

Feedback (Recreational Boating Facility)

Help us understand what you think a recreational boating facility should consist of.

4. What should be included in a boating facility?
5. Which boating facility assets do you think are most essential?

What are the issues associated with current management arrangements?

Operational Issues (day to day management)

As mentioned in the previous section, recreational boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port are managed by a range of entities. This results in facility management practices varying considerably because:

- The different entities responsible for management adopt a variety of approaches to maintaining the facilities.
- There are different levels of funding available to each entity to manage its boating facilities.
- An agreed, standardised approach for the management of recreational boating facilities does not exist.

The result of this arrangement is significant variability in how facilities are managed. Some specific issues are highlighted below.

1. Variable Condition of Facilities

Recreational boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port vary considerably in material of construction, age and usage (demand). This, when coupled with inconsistent maintenance standards, inevitably leads to different levels of condition and capacity.

The absence of a comprehensive and consistent asset management strategy (point 2 below) is a primary reason for the inconsistent maintenance and operations practices for boating facilities. Such a strategy could overcome the challenges created by the variability in construction material, age and demand.

2. Varying standards in maintenance and operations of boating facilities

There are vastly different facility maintenance and operational practices across Port Phillip and Western Port.

In some cases, maintenance is conducted on an ad-hoc basis with no planned inspection regime. Similarly, planning for upgrades is often reactive

and not supported by a robust business case which outlines proactive management.

In other cases, facility managers have a scheduled assessment program which brings to light any required maintenance. Similarly, they have asset management practices which allows them to plan for upgrades to facilities.

The lack of a standardised asset management processes means that, in some cases:

- Asset lists are often incomplete or don't provide the relevant information to enable good asset management practice.
- Assessments of facility condition occur on an ad-hoc basis, and the quality of asset information captured is inconsistent across the various management entities.

Overall, there is no clear, consistent picture of the quality and condition of the facilities across the region and what their longer-term needs are.

Feedback (Operational Management Arrangements)

Help us to understand any existing operational issues associated with current management arrangements.

6. Is there a boating facility in Port Phillip or Western Port that sets high standards for condition and good management?
7. What recreational boating facility features are important to you?
8. Aside from funding, what capabilities or resources would a boat facility manager need to do their job better?

Strategic Issues

Across Victoria, there is no agreed vision or strategy for the management of recreational boating facilities.

There have been previous strategic plans. These include the Boating Action Plan, Regional Boating Framework and the Asset Management Accountability Framework. These have sought to provide a consistent approach toward asset management and facilities development for the boating sector or public sector managers generally.

However, as yet, there isn't a whole-of-state coordinated strategic approach for recreational boating facilities.

A clearer vision and strategy would help identify where priority areas are for asset renewals, asset upgrades and maintenance requirements. It would also allow heritage and culturally significant assets to be identified, thus clarifying responsibilities towards traditional owners.

In some cases, those that manage facilities have developed a vision and strategy with plans for maintenance and upgrades. In other cases, maintenance and upkeep of boating facilities is largely reactive. In Port Phillip and Western Port, the items outlined below could benefit from improved strategic planning.

1. Coordinated Strategy and Vision

For government and local management bodies, the absence of a coordinated, whole-of-state strategy and vision creates uncertainty about the standards expected for recreational boating facilities. This can result in facility management being reactive as managers only respond when issues are brought to their attention by users and maintenance and repairs are conducted on an ad hoc basis.

2. Variable funding arrangements between management entities

For those managing these facilities, it is unclear what their future sources of funding will be. Arrangements for obtaining funding to upgrade or maintain boating facilities vary considerably between management entities. In some cases, commitments have been made by facility managers to fund all maintenance and upgrades from existing revenue sources. In others, funding is largely dependent on grants from the State government.

Limited available funding impacts the repairs and renewal works that can be undertaken at boating facilities. In some instances, only urgent repairs can be carried out, even though a broader upgrade being beneficial to improve the boating experience.

There are some examples where managers of recreational boating facilities have developed a strategy and vision for how their facilities should be maintained, upgraded and operated. As part of this they have developed a plan for both short term (maintenance and repairs) and long term (upgrade and renewal) funding requirements. These plans are validated by a regular inspection regime.

With respect to grant funding, the lack of a standardised approach for seeking and allocating funding means that there is no clear understanding of requirements, application process and timeframes.

In addition, reporting processes vary for facility managers.

3. Lack of a standardised management structure

As has been mentioned, the management arrangements of recreational boating facilities also varies significantly. In some cases, who is responsible for assessing the condition of, maintaining and upgrading facilities is documented with clear accountabilities. Similarly, there are processes surrounding how investment decisions are made with committees overseeing the decision making process. In other cases no such documents exist and decisions are made as and when they are required with no clear processes followed.

Inconsistent operation and maintenance of facilities means quality and safety standards will vary, all of which directly impacts safety and the user experience.

4. Management capability

A clear theme of our review thus far is that recreational boating facility managers are well intentioned and committed to the facilities they manage. However the skills, knowledge and experience that managers possess, or have access to, varies.

In some cases, facility managers have access to the required expertise, be they people who have experience in boating or experience in maintaining recreational boating infrastructure. Similarly, by accessing numerous funding sources, they have access to the equipment needed to maintain facilities (or the ability to engage contractors).

In other cases, facility managers lack the required background to maintain facilities. In addition, they don't have access to (a) personnel who have had experience in managing similar assets in the past, or (b) the resources to procure contractors so that maintenance and repair works can be outsourced. This variability in capability reinforces the varying

standards in maintenance and operations, despite the dedicated efforts of existing facility managers.

Feedback (Strategic Management Arrangements)

Help us to understand any strategic issues associated with current management arrangements:

9. What is your understanding of the role and responsibility of boating facility managers?
10. What additional support would a facility manager need to fulfil their role requirements?
11. If a vision or strategy is developed, where should the State prioritise boating facility investment?



Figure 4: Boat Ramp in Queenscliff, Victoria

User Experience

1. A variety of communication channels

There are a variety of communication channels that enable users to provide feedback to facility managers. These include:

- Social media.
- Government websites (e.g. Better Boating Victoria and Victorian Fisheries Authority websites).
- Local manager channels (e.g. e-mails, websites, social media or surveys administered by local managers).
- Periodic or ad-hoc surveys by industry groups (e.g. RACV Survey), often only for particular facilities where issues have arisen.
- Feedback provided directly to the local manager (this is dependent on the level of connectivity and engagement the local manager has with the community).

However, there is no current mechanism through which feedback can be collected and synthesised to identify common issues or themes across Port Phillip and Western Port.

Similarly, there isn't a consistent mechanism in place for Government to communicate with boating users about the capacity or condition of recreational boating facilities. Information is currently disseminated through a variety of channels and there is scope to streamline this and make accessing information far easier for users of recreational boating facilities.

Some of the issues that may arise from the lack of communication include:

- Lack of understanding of the issues that create problems or risks for users.
- Frustration from user groups or local managers over the length of time it takes to obtain assistance, respond to issues at facilities or access funding to address issues at facilities.
- Poor decision making based on incorrect or incomplete information.

Feedback (Ways to Receive Information and Provide Feedback)

Help us understand what sort of information you need, how you'd like to receive it and how you would prefer to provide feedback:

12. What information do you want to know before you go to the boat facility?
13. How would you prefer to receive information and provide feedback about recreational boating facilities?
14. Who should be responsible for collecting and assessing feedback from users?



Figure 5: Boat Ramp in Newhaven, Victoria

Other states

To better understand the management arrangements surrounding recreational boating facilities in other jurisdictions, the following activities have been undertaken:

- A review of documents relating to the management of recreational boating facilities in other states.
- Interviews of people working in facility management in those states.

Our goal in undertaking this exercise is not to suggest Victoria replicate management arrangements from these jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction has its own unique needs and issues. Rather, by gathering this information, we may identify elements of how other states operate that could be borrowed, learnt from or adapted.

One of the clear themes that has emerged is that other jurisdictions operate a hybrid model between central and local management. Typically a central body governs and manages infrastructure upgrades and capital expenditure while a locally based entity takes responsibility for maintenance and operations.

New South Wales

In NSW a state-wide plan has been developed that “sets out a strategic and coordinated approach to prioritising and delivering maritime infrastructure in NSW.”² The “NSW Maritime Infrastructure Plan” is a five year strategic plan that was launched this year. It outlines trends, opportunities, an investment plan and priority areas for the maritime industry.

One component of the NSW Maritime Infrastructure Plan is the “Boating Now Program” (BNP).³ Administered by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), the BNP aims to deliver new and upgraded boating infrastructure, with a particular focus on recreational boating facilities (further details provided below).

Although the Maritime Infrastructure Plan and the BNP covers the whole of NSW, the summary below focuses on four of the State’s major ports: Sydney Harbour and its tributaries, Botany Bay, Newcastle

Harbour, and Port Kembla Harbour. This will provide an example of how recreational boating facilities are managed in NSW.

Facilities

The Sydney Harbour, Botany Bay, Newcastle Harbour and Port Kembla Harbour waterways are home to 56 recreational boat ramps (Figure 7).

There is no centralised condition assessment of facilities. However, if a local council applies for a grant through the BNP, a comprehensive assessment of their facilities is completed. This provides RMS with an objective assessment of the facility’s condition.



Figure 6: Grenwell Point, NSW

Facility Management

Management of facilities in NSW’s major ports is divided between the RMS and local councils. In short, RMS are responsible for the management of the seabeds in these waterways while local councils are responsible for management of the foreshores (which includes recreational boating facilities).

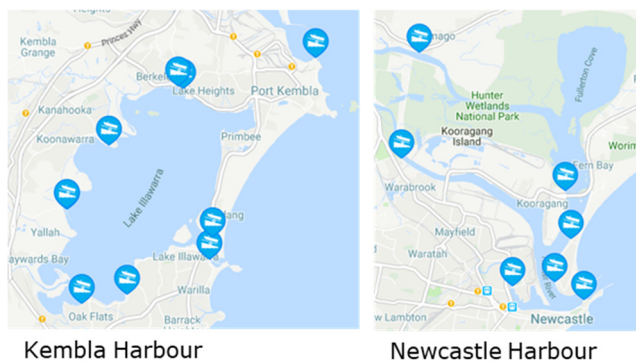
Local councils are expected to pay for all operation and maintenance costs associated with the recreational boating facilities from their consolidated revenue. This includes dredging and

² https://maritimemanagement.transport.nsw.gov.au/documents/Maritime_Infrastructure_Plan.pdf

³ <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/projects/boating-now/index.html>

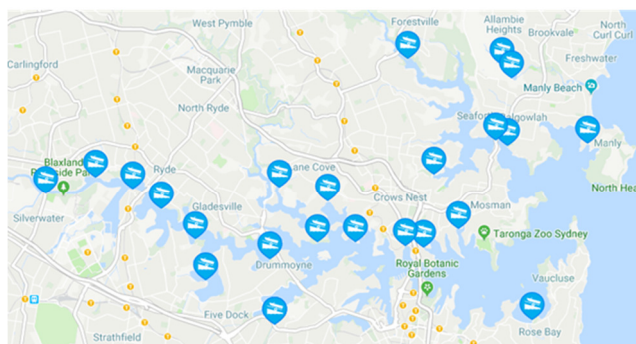
upkeep of associated amenities like car parks, cleaning areas and toilet facilities.

through improvements to local boating facilities.

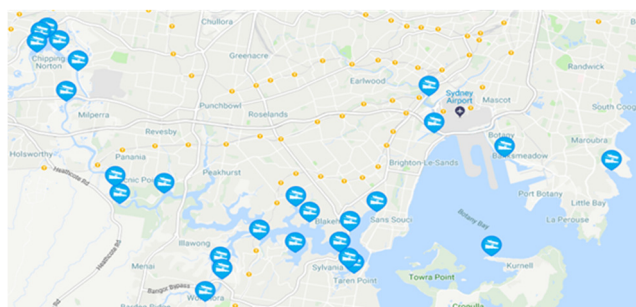


Kembla Harbour

Newcastle Harbour



Sydney Harbour



Botany Bay

Figure 7: Recreational Boating Facilities in NSW's Major Ports⁴

For large capital expenditures, an application can be made to the RMS to access funding from the BNP. Amongst other things, the objectives of the BNP are to:⁵

- Enhance the boating experience in NSW by improving the overall capacity and amenity of boating infrastructure.
- Deliver projects through effective partnership arrangements with Councils and other organisations.
- Ensure local boaters see a greater return from their registration and licence fees

With reference to this final point, the money used to fund projects under the BNP is accessed from the "Waterways Fund", a hypothecated fund that contains revenues collected from boat driver licences, vessel registration and mooring licence fees. Should a local council be successful in receiving funding for capital upgrades, RMS will provide guidance and support to ensure the success of the project. Their level of involvement is largely driven by the sophistication and capability of the council.

User Experience

There are 240,000 registered recreational vessels in NSW and 850,000 licenced recreational fishers.

RMS have developed a series of advisory groups that comprise of individuals representing users and industry bodies. These groups enable them to tap into the experience of users and become aware of any emerging issues.

Of particular importance are the "Regional Boating Advisory Groups" who hold regular (in some cases quarterly) meetings with local users in the various regions. These forums are an invaluable source of information from recreational boaters.

RMS also has a network of Boating Safety Officers (BSOs) that patrol waterways across the state. Direct advice from BSOs on the condition and usage of local facilities in their region is also an important source of information.

⁴ <https://secure.rms.nsw.gov.au/map-files/boat-ramps/index.html>

⁵ <https://maritimemanagement.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/boating-now/index.html>

Queensland

In Queensland, recreational boating facilities (referred to as "Public Marine Facilities" by legislated definition if state-owned) are either owned by local councils or the state government. For the purposes of this summary we will focus on those owned by the state government as they make up the vast majority of recreational boating facilities (approximately 80%).

These facilities are governed by the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*. This legislation is administered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) and underpinned by a broad range of regulations. The regulation relevant to recreational boating facilities is the Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Regulation 2011⁶.



Figure 8: Airlie Beach, Queensland

Facilities

In 2017 TMR commissioned GHD to undertake a study to determine "the current and future demand for recreational boating facilities throughout Queensland."⁷ The study, superseding a similar study completed in 2011, provides a comprehensive overview of boat registrations, demographic forecasts based on the 2016 Census, and existing recreational boating facilities at the local government area level.

According to the study, as at December 2016, there are just under 280,000 boat registrations and 435 recreational boating facilities (containing 736 boat ramp lanes) across Queensland (Figure 9). The study forecasts boat lane demand out to 2036 and based

on the projections envisages a shortfall of 225 boat lanes at that time.

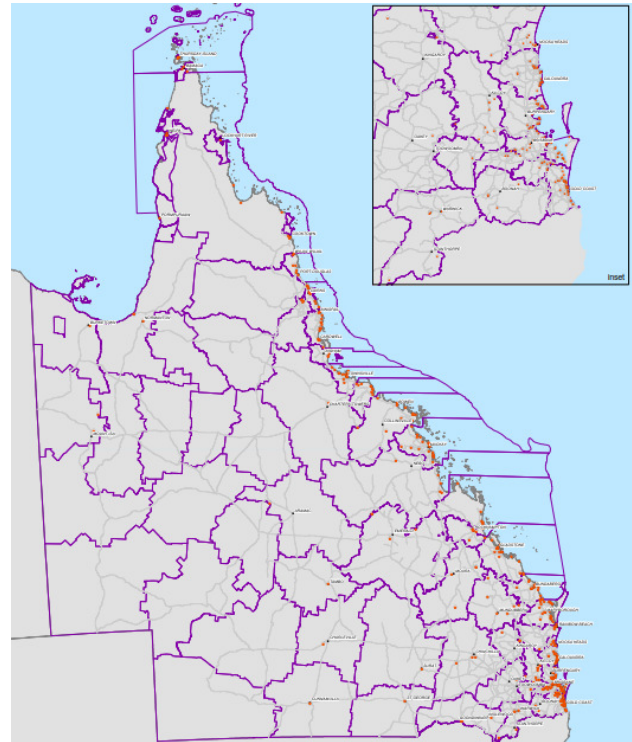


Figure 9: Recreational Boating Facilities in Queensland⁸

Facility Management

Under the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 and the Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Regulation 2011, TMR appoints entities (typically councils or port authorities) to manage recreational boating facilities. The regulation clearly describes the responsibilities of a facility manager. These are:

- a) replacing buoy moorings, pile moorings and dinghy racks in the facility; and
- b) maintaining roads, parking areas, amenities and gardens in the facility; and
- c) maintenance dredging in the facility other than dredging of channels to landings and boat ramps; and
- d) all other aspects of managing the facility, including funding of maintenance unless otherwise agreed to by the Chief Executive.

⁶ <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/2014-05-30/sl-2011-0161>

⁷ GHD (December 2017). Queensland Recreational Boating Facilities Demand Forecasting Study 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/recreational->

[boating-facilities-demand-forecasting-study-2017/resource/71a112e3-a6fd-4fc3-b0b5-3e7aa1058436](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/inforce/2014-05-30/sl-2011-0161)

⁸ GHD (December 2017). Queensland Recreational Boating Facilities Demand Forecasting Study 2017. Page 12.

The facility manager must pay for all maintenance from existing revenue sources (noting that the legislation does not allow fees to be charged for “transient private recreational use of a boat ramp, jetty, landing or pontoon”). However applications can be made to TMR for refund of “structural maintenance” (that is, maintenance that is not routine or ‘day to day’.)

Since 2004 successive Queensland Governments have, at each election, allocated funding for capital upgrades and improvements of recreational boating facilities. This electoral funding averages \$15 million annually and supplements a standing allocation of approximately \$4 million annually. Where these funds are allocated is largely dictated by the demand forecasting study undertaken by GHD.

Where a facility is provided with funding for a capital upgrade or improvement, there are several ways in which the work is undertaken. If the facility manager has the required skills and resources it can complete the project itself. Failing this, TMR can manage the project (they have a team of coastal engineers) or, in periods of heavy demand, private sector project managers can be contracted.

Structural maintenance is funded separately, and, including maintenance dredging, averages \$10 million annually.

User Experience

As mentioned, as at December 2016, there are just under 280,000 boat registrations in Queensland. Although there is no formal mechanism through which information is collected from the users of recreational boating facilities, there are several avenues for feedback.

The primary method through which TMR obtains feedback is through inspections of facilities. These are conducted in two ways. TMR employs 12 district liaison officers who conduct annual, standardised assessments of all facilities on behalf of TMR as the asset owner. Appointed managers (mainly councils) conduct their own inspections on an as required basis throughout each year, and generally join the TMR district officers for a joint annual condition inspection.

In addition to the above, the department has established a public boating infrastructure e-mail address and collects information through social media, letters to the minister, and departmental enquiries (phone and web).

The model in Queensland is one where the facility managers are empowered to maintain high

standards. Therefore, the most likely (and desired) outcome is that information relating to user experience is delivered to the local (TMR district) managers before it reaches TMR’s central boating infrastructure unit in Brisbane.

Western Australia

In Western Australia, under the *Jetties Act 1926*, the Department of Transport issues licences for the development, ownership and operation of boat ramps. At present public boat ramps are typically owned and operated by:

- The Department of Transport (boat ramps that are located in state-owned marinas)
- The Department of Biodiversity, Conservations and Attraction (boat ramps that are located in National Parks)
- Local Councils
- Private owners

Facilities

There are 24 metropolitan and 49 regional locations with boat ramps in Western Australia (some locations have multiple boat ramps).⁹ Entities who have been issued with a licence to own and operate facilities are expected to pay for the maintenance and operation of them. For capital improvements licence holders are able to apply for funding through the Recreational Boating Facilities Scheme (RBFS; described below).

Although the Department of Transport issues guidelines on how to assess and maintain the condition of boating facilities, there is no enforced standardised approach and local managers are provided with autonomy. For the boat ramps located in state owned marinas that are operated by the Department of Transport, a private contractor is engaged to conduct assessments and develop a ten year asset management plan.

Facility Management

As mentioned, entities issued with a licence to own and operate recreational boating facilities are expected to pay for the ongoing maintenance and operation from existing revenue sources. The RBFS, established by the State Government in 1999, provides licence holders with access to funding “for the planning and construction of public boating infrastructure benefiting WA’s recreational boating community.”¹⁰



Figure 10: Hamelin Bay, WA

During the early years of the RBFS, funding was only provided to capital works related to boat ramps. This recognised that at that time the condition of ramps required significant improvement. However, in recent years, funding has been provided for other facilities that surround and support boat ramps, including car parks, toilets, fish cleaning facilities, signage and navigation aids.

The application process to access funding is quite extensive and rigorous.¹¹ All applications are ultimately assessed by a committee consisting of members who represent a range of stakeholders. Recommendations for funding are then sent to the Minister of Transport for approval. The Department of Transport will then support the successful applicants with the execution of their project. Their level of involvement depends on the capabilities of the applicant.

User Experience

To the best of our knowledge, with the exception of ramp usage statistics, there is little data collected from recreational boating users in WA. However, there is a recreational boating study that is currently being completed (the last such study was undertaken in 2008). Amongst other things, this study reviews current facilities, current usage (including the types of boats) and expected future demand. This study is the basis for forward planning on where infrastructure will be required in the future.

⁹ <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/imate/boat-ramps.asp>

¹⁰

https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/marine/MAC_P_RBFS_R24_Guidelines.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/imate/application-process.asp>

Feedback

We would like to hear feedback on the following questions:

15. What are other states doing well that Victoria should consider adopting in relation to managing boating facilities?
16. What are other states doing to manage boating facilities that Victoria should avoid?
17. Finally, what other feedback would you like to share in relation to the management of boating facilities?

Future state – Your view counts

We want to hear from you

This review will ultimately provide BBV with a series of options and recommendations for the management of boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port in the future. However, in commencing this review, we have not come with preconceived ideas or solutions.

For this reason, we would like to hear from you. If you are a recreational boater, an industry group, a facility manager or just an interested party, please provide us with your views and feedback. It will be crucial in helping us and BBV develop a blueprint for what future facility management should look like.

Information on how to provide feedback is contained on the following page. Below are listed all the questions we have used throughout the document. These provide a guide on the type of feedback we are seeking and will allow us to compare differences in opinion on these topics.

If you choose to provide feedback you will notice that for each question there is both:

- a) Multiple choice responses.
- b) The ability to provide free text responses.

The **free text component is entirely optional**. However, for those who would like to elaborate on your views, we encourage you to use the free text option to do so.

Feedback

About you

1. What is your association with recreational boating in Port Phillip and Western Port?
2. Which recreational boating facility in Port Phillip or Western Port do you most commonly use or are you associated with?
3. What is your postcode?

Scope of a "recreational boating facility"

4. What should be included in a boating facility?

5. Which boating facility assets do you think are most essential?

Operational issues

6. Is there a boating facility in Port Phillip or Western Port that sets high standards for condition and good management?
7. What recreational boating facility features are important to you?
8. Aside from funding, what capabilities or resources would a boat facility manager need to do their job better?

Strategic Issues

9. What is your understanding of the role and responsibility of boating facility managers?
10. What additional support would a facility manager need to fulfil their role requirements?
11. If a vision or strategy is developed, where should the State prioritise boating facility investment?

User experience

12. What information do you want to know before you go to the boat facility?
13. How would you prefer to receive information and provide feedback about recreational boating facilities?
14. Who should be responsible for collecting and assessing feedback from users?

Other jurisdictions

15. What are other states doing well that Victoria should consider adopting in relation to managing boating facilities?
16. What are other states doing to manage boating facilities that Victoria should avoid?

17. Finally, what other feedback would you like to share in relation to the management of boating facilities?

How will your feedback be used?

Feedback provided will be collated into a summary report and provided to BBV in early 2020. The information will also be used to help develop a strategy document that will outline a number of options for how recreational boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port should be managed into the future.

The timing of these deliverables is outlined below:

3 Dec 2019	Discussion paper released on survey platform
10 Jan 2020	End of feedback period for discussion paper
Early 2020	Summary report collating user findings released on survey platform
Throughout 2020	Progress options to improve boating facilities management

How to provide feedback

Feedback can be provided on the “Get Involved” survey platform accessed via the following link:

www.getinvolved.transport.vic.gov.au/boatingreview

As mentioned in the previous section, for each question we have provided:

- a) Multiple choice responses.
- b) The ability to provide free text responses.

The **free text component is entirely optional**. However, for those who would like to elaborate on your views, we encourage you to use the free text option to do so.

The deadline for receiving feedback will be **COB 10 January 2020**.

Should you have any queries, please contact BBV.Communications@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Privacy and data collection

The information collected from this survey will be used by the Department of Transport, in consultation with Deloitte, to inform the Port Phillip and Western Port Infrastructure Management Review. For further information on our privacy policy, please visit

<https://getinvolved.transport.vic.gov.au/privacy>

Authorised by the Department of Transport,
1 Spring Street, Melbourne.

