

Seascape

Maritime Safety Queensland

October-December 2006
Volume 3 Issue 4



In this edition:

- New Beacon to Beacon Directory
- Matthew Hayden bats for national lifejacket campaign
- Industry backs Whitsunday marine initiative
- Getting to know you: Bill Wright
- New technology on Queensland waterways
- The law and you
- Learning from marine incidents

Maritime Safety Queensland
GPO Box 2595
Brisbane Queensland 4001

Internet: www.msq.qld.gov.au
Email: seascape@msq.qld.gov.au



Queensland Government
Maritime Safety Queensland

From the helm



Hon Paul Lucas MP
Member for Lytton
Minister for Transport
and Main Roads

The Queensland Government is a strong advocate of maritime safety, and contributes significantly to national initiatives that help to save lives on our waterways and protect the marine environment.

During the past three years, I presided over a comprehensive program of maritime safety initiatives in Queensland and with a new term in office ahead, I am determined that we should maintain this vigour.

The registration of the 200,000th recreational vessel in Queensland earlier this year, and the continuing growth in the number of licences over the half-million mark, highlight the imperative behind our mission: recreational boating is entrenched as a part of this state's coastal lifestyle.

About one in every 20 Queenslanders has a recreational marine driver licence or equivalent; and the on-going increase in boat ownership, at about 5% a year, almost doubles the outstanding rate of Queensland's population growth.

We have a strong responsibility therefore to ensure safety is maximised for all users of our waterways, and I believe we have the correct mix of education, regulation and enforcement to do this.

Recent changes to the laws that Maritime Safety Queensland administers have given the agency better targeted powers, and have toughened up our measures to prevent and combat marine pollution. They include pre-emptive action against vessels that aren't seaworthy, salvage and clean-up insurance requirements, appropriate registration, and more clearly spelled-out liability for owners. One of the great benefits of these amendments is apart from protecting the environment they will also save the community many hundreds of thousands of dollars a year.

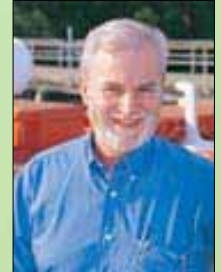
Our jet ski management plan is well embedded, with a specific licence now in place, increased distance-off requirements, acknowledgement of amenity as well as safety, and in the main a positive response to the government's education and enforcement team that patrols recognised hot spots throughout the year.

I'm particularly proud of new laws that make wearing a lifejacket mandatory for children aged up to 12 in small open boats, and for anyone in a small boat that's crossing a designated bar. We're now consulting the community on whether these laws should be extended.

We're building on our extensive legislative program from last year that will further encompass safety standards, marine pollution regulations and other related powers in the available Transport Legislation Amendment Bill.

Above all we'll continue to work in partnership with recreational boaties and operators who share in our vision of providing waterways that are safe and enjoyable for all Queenslanders.

Captain John Watkinson
General Manager
Maritime Safety Queensland



Queensland is a boater's paradise. People flock from all over Australia to experience our beautiful waterways. We estimate that well over half a million people use our waterways for pleasure every year, making it imperative that Maritime Safety Queensland maintain the highest level of safety for everyone.

To keep up-to-date with the thoughts, knowledge and behaviour of recreational boaters, a comprehensive survey is conducted every two years, sent out through registration renewal letters. To track trends and significant changes in boaters' attitudes, results are then collated and compared against previous surveys.

Results are sometimes predictable, but always interesting.

Of the responses, 83% of boats were less than six metres in length with the 21-30 horsepower motor being the most popular size. People are going boating more often and for longer. Only 10% of boats were used in open waters.

Most interesting from a communication perspective is the shift towards impersonal communication – people preferring to get their boating safety information through non-invasive means like the web, television and publications. Our boaters seem to be more sophisticated and feel they understand new legislation and its effects.

People seem to be more responsible when it comes to safety equipment, with a fantastic near perfect compliance rate for carriage of personal floatation devices. This could be attributed to a perceived greater enforcement presence on the water.

An encouraging 92% of people checked the weather forecast before they went out and most told family or friends of their plans. On the flip side, there is an obvious over-reliance on mobile phones for ship to shore communication.

Overall, the interim report is very encouraging. A final report will be prepared and published later this year and results will be used to shape marketing and education programs in the future.

Thank-you to all who participated, your assistance is greatly appreciated.

On another subject, my congratulations to the organisers of the Brisbane International Boat Show, held between August 30 and September 3 at the Brisbane Convention Centre. The show once again showed the boating public's enthusiasm to keep pace with the latest trends and innovations.

The timing of the boat show represents the start of the new boating season in Queensland, and I encourage all recreational boaties to be mindful of their speed and wash while on the water. With more and more craft on the water, particularly over the Christmas break, marine safety becomes even more important.

New, improved Beacon to Beacon Directory available



Matthew Hayden bats for lifejacket campaign

Australian sporting icon and test cricketer Matthew Hayden is lending his name and time to promote a national lifejacket campaign – because not wearing one almost cost him and his mates their lives.

The story of Matthew’s near miss on the North Passage Bar off Stradbroke Island was featured in the July-September 2005 issue of Seascapes. Matthew, Australian cricket team colleague Andrew Symonds, and another friend were left to swim for almost one hour after their boat was swamped and sank with lifejackets stowed away.

“It all happened so bloody quickly,” the opening batsman said of the accident that happened in 1999. The near-death experience is why Matthew volunteered his time to be the spokesperson for the National Marine Safety Committee’s (NSMC) national campaign with the slogan ‘Wear a lifejacket for openers’.

The campaign was launched at the NSMC’s national conference on the Gold Coast in September in time for the summer boating season. It aims to raise awareness among Australia’s recreational boating community of the importance of wearing lifejackets or PFDs (personal flotation devices).

All state maritime authorities across the country will be participating in the campaign which will feature magazine and radio advertisements.

ABOVE: An example of a magazine advertisement featuring Matthew Hayden which will form part of the national lifejacket campaign.

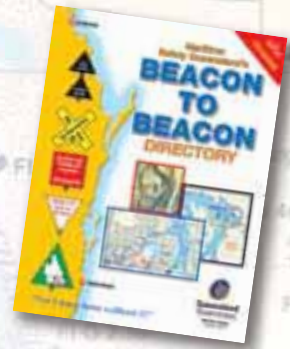
The new, expanded seventh edition of Maritime Safety Queensland’s *Beacon to Beacon Directory* is now available in retail outlets throughout southern Queensland.

Since the first issue 14 years ago, the *Beacon to Beacon Directory* has built a proud reputation as a ‘must have’ item for recreational boaters. This year’s edition introduced several significant changes and additions that make the *Beacon to Beacon Directory* even more user-friendly and informative.

Two changes to the directory will be immediately noticeable: spiral binding allowing complete fold back access to chartlets, and the clear plastic wallet that will assist storage and protect it from the elements.

This year’s edition covers the southern Queensland coastline from Tweed Heads to Gladstone, and the freshwater impoundments which extend west to Charleville, Cunnamulla and Emerald.

The new offshore coastal cruising section is ideal for anyone travelling between Ballina and Gladstone, and additional anchorage



photography now includes the Burnett, Noosa, Brisbane and Tweed River systems.

With coastal chartlets now displaying latitude and longitude, users can continually update their directory by visiting the Maritime Safety Queensland website (msq.qld.gov.au) and subscribing to the Notices to Mariners information site. Information about any changes to navigation aids, navigation depths or any other work which may affect safe navigation, complete with coordinates, is emailed to subscribers and can be plotted directly on to the directory.

Also accompanying to each key map is a listing of gazetted rules and regulations, contact numbers and general information relevant to each section.

And of course, the famous pink line is still featured on every directory chartlet and photograph indicating the correct side of navigation aids a vessel should pass. A dotted pink line indicates a gazetted speed restriction which applies for safety or environmental reasons.

This year sees a price increase from \$29.95 to \$34.95 – the first price increase since the directory’s release in 1992. But boaters will see the value in the improved layout and additional information.

The new look *Beacon to Beacon* will be available from Queensland Transport customer service centres, Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices, Australia Post, boat dealers, chandleries, bait and tackle outlets, newsagents and book sellers.



ABOVE: The Gold Coast Broadwater ... a sample chartlet complete with longitude and latitude.

Getting to know you

Two young boys playing with model boats on the beach isn't unusual. But in the early 1960s other children on the banks of the Noosa River could only look on with envy when Bill Wright and brother Ian played with their father's tank testing models – scaled-down versions of boats to be built at **Norman R. Wright and Sons**, boat builders.

Bill Wright - marine craftsman

Apart from serving an integral part in the building process, the timber model boats, often over a metre long, were also part of the Wright family's holiday essentials. They cut through the water with grace and precision, and today the full-scale boats built at one of Queensland's most renowned and respected boat builders are doing exactly the same. And envious glances are still the norm.

It is almost 25 years since Bill and brother Ian took over the day-to-day running of the iconic Brisbane company, Norman Wright's, as it is known, which was founded by their grandfather Norman Reginald Wright in 1909.

As mentioned in the company's promotional materials, an understanding and respect of the "volatile and sometimes dangerous nature" of the sea, plays a continuing major role in the philosophy of the Wright brothers' boat design and building, and the company's culture.

With a life-time of shipbuilding expertise which began with playing in the workshop sawdust on weekends, Bill still retains a youth-like enthusiasm for the challenge of designing and building boats of excellence.

He is also a keen yachtsman having raced in 20 Brisbane-to-Gladstone yacht races, and when he can find the time, builds and races model radio-controlled yachts, recently returning from the world titles in England.



As part of the fraternity of "traditional boat builders" that esteems timber as the material of choice for hull construction, Bill and his brother have overseen the company's blending of old-world tradition with the latest in industry and computer technology. The result is a boat building company that enjoys a reputation of innovation, quality and professionalism, enhanced by a proud history.

Weekends spent playing in the Norman Wright workshop, then located at Quay Street Bulimba, sailing in Moreton Bay or playing in dinghies, gave Bill a passion for boating from childhood.

Bill and Ian's father, Ronald, was one of the first two naval architects in Queensland, and was widely regarded as one of the best in the country. At 13 years old, Bill began his boat designing career side-by-side with his father at the drafting board, and it was a natural progression when in 1971 Bill began a four-year boat building apprenticeship with Norman Wright's.

Many of Bill's fellow apprentices who at the time worked for the 14 other traditional boat builders around Brisbane, today work at Norman Wright's, now located on the Brisbane River at Bulimba opposite Brett's Wharf.

"There was a very large apprenticeship intake the year I went through, and we became a pretty tight-knit group. Quite a few of these guys work for us now and are the mainstay of our workforce," said Bill. "They teach the young guys, so we are extremely lucky to have them."

During his apprenticeship days Bill "lofted" many boats – drawing boat designs in full-size on the workshop floor in preparation for construction – giving him an intimate, practical knowledge of boat design fundamentals.

The first boat Bill worked on as an apprentice was a traditionally planked 60-foot ferry for the Golden Mile Ferry Service built in the 1970s that serviced a similar route on the Brisbane River as today's CityCats.

