Community Consultation summaries

Cairns Community Forum – 1 August 2020

Topic	Theme of comment or feedback	Taskforce or MSQ responses
Waterways Management	No specific comments on waterways management issues	
Licensing	• One statement that existing licence system is sufficient • Sentiment that PWC operators should have more comprehensive test/licence system • Staged approach should be taken (possible provisional, open and advanced tiers like cars) • Well covered	Licensing is seen as a key touchpoint with licensees and also the framework to ensuring Queensland has the best skilled & experienced skippers operating on waters, which enhances safety to themselves, passengers and other waterway users.
Registration & Hull identification matters	• Registration for all vessels – under 3kw to have a smaller fee • Restrict power to under 10 knots or similar formula • Unregistered on water vessels should be removed after 6 months (or similar) • People intent on abandoning vessel will remove ID from vessel • Seaworthiness of boats on moorings/anchor not actioned and go unchecked • Well covered	MSQ are increasing its on-water presence and are investing in more vessels. MSQ have established and are current trailing the Marine Enforcement Team (MET) in SE Queensland while PWCs may not be possible for use in FNQ (due to safety issues), there is an increasing fleet to assist with on-water compliance and enforcement.
Insurance	• Identification of insurance as an issue needing more discussion/action	Insurance and the ability to ascertain in cyclone prone areas is recognised as a significant issue by the Taskforce who made a separate recommendation. MSQ/TMR will investigate insurance going forward.

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General comments	• More advertising on social media to bring a larger public audience • Two comments of appreciation for the work being undertaken by the government and MSQ to date • General population shouldn't pay for small percentage of people doing the wrong thing	MSQ GM reminded participants that wherever possible, MSQ/TMR take legal action to seek recovery of costs usually from the last registered owner. It was acknowledged that this is not a failsafe, as there are times that the courts issue orders for recovery of costs, but people did not have the funds to pay.

Noosa Community Forum – 22 August 2020

Pressing points and local specific open-ended question around licensing, registration and hull identification and challenges:

Topic	Theme of comment or feedback	Taskforce or MSQ responses
Waterways Management	• Noosa specific comment: high season waterways become like a washing machine due to overcrowding and at times safety is an issue.	In response, it was acknowledged that Noosa is popular destination and MSQ are increasing presence in the region overall, have recently appointed a dedicated marine officer for Noosa River. Feedback received that this is having an impact.
	• Can drop an anchor anywhere in River and in soft seabed which isn't holding and boats crashing into one homeowners' jetty. Those are unregistered and no insurance. Need a better management tool - suggested entity like GCWA could be a model for Noosa.	In response MSQ advised it is in the process of formulating Boating Action Plans for MSQ regions to better assess and understand local issues and nuisances, as a way to manage and address those issues.
	• Discussion around existing anchoring rules and that anchoring provisions provide where and when people can anchor. Taskforce recommendations in Interim Report have recommended those provisions be reviewed.	These are the same provisions that regulate anchorage in Gold Coast prescribed waters. The Taskforce recommendation aims at MSQ taking a more holistic and consistent approach.
	• Some confusion around different entities and authorities and whose responsibilities particular issues fall under.	In response, Taskforce Chair shared that Matt Burnett, Gladstone Mayor will join Taskforce and this will assist in clarifying responsibilities and functions with a view to creating efficiencies.

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	• Comment was made that rules and provisions require compliance and enforcement.	In response, MSQ shared the Marine Enforcement Team (MET) is spending some time at Noosa, it ran campaign over Easter and another scheduled for September school holidays.
	• Discussion noted balance is required between encouraging enjoyment of waterways and ensuring people do the right thing. • Ms Sandy Bolton questioned if anything specific can be adopted while broader policy consultation process underway?	In response, MSQ's Area Manager, Sue Codi-King, advised MSQ General Manager appointed Noosa River Marine Officer and Sue is establishing a local regional working group. Purpose is to investigate local anchoring, mooring and local waterway (speed and use) issues.
	• It was raised that liveaboards are of concern for Noosa River, particularly waste disposal.	MSQ advised it is aware of issues and will be taking over administration of liveaboards for Noosa River. The Taskforce recommendation dealing with waterways management also calls for investigation into better management of liveaboards, mooring and anchoring and the Taskforce are discussing products to assist tracking waste disposal or identification of non-compliances.
Licensing	• Increased business offerings in licencing mean lower prices could be charged. • Suggestion that marine licensing should follow same principles of car graduated licensing scheme – similar levels and types. Hooning laws could also apply. • Similarly, licensing should start at lower level and progress. Recreational level above 10m or 12m, previously had some objections but evidence is in the marine incident reports. • Comments suggested system of renewal or refreshing important, perpetual doesn't make sense, any increase in cost needs to go back into boating. • Comment made that licensing should not be exactly same as roads. Boating is relatively safe activity, supposed to be fun. • General consensus that a person should progress through licensing and operate boats of bigger or more powerful capacity based on experience.	In response MSQ advised it was aware of the number of providers but as a market driven product would not interfere. Rather, MSQ is concerned with consistency or benchmarking of training being provided, particularly where a provider is only conducting sporadic training.

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	• Comment made that no marine regulator currently has licensing right – system should include or be based on merit. People that do the wrong thing, by ignoring laws, or operating vessels unsafely, should be penalised. • General consensus that licensing should consider operational environment, like Noosa River versus offshore; big difference in skills and knowledge – coastal bar crossings dangerous for seasoned masters. • There was some discussion around sailing – there are no specified practise hours/logbook requirements. • Licensing (Registration and Hull Identification) key components so we don't have abandoned vessels replacing those being removed.	
	• A suggestion was made to look to other jurisdictions and what we can adopt and look for consistency.	In response, MSQ advised it is looking for feedback, currently stabilising the BoatSafe course and looking at curriculum to make BoatSafe safer and the components lead to producing safer outcomes and skippers.
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	• One attendee shared that as co-owner of three vessels and licensed sometime ago, while competent to drive one or two of the vessels, wouldn't be able to drive all. This led to discussion around renewal of licence but not refreshing skills and no limitations (essentially being able to drive anything as long as it's recreationally registered). • Discussion progressed to encouraging upskilling for different vessel types, speed and size; environments – onshore and offshore. Comments raised concern around experience and practice or lack thereof, no set number of hours needed operating boat to progress to bigger or more powerful	In response MSQ raised that a significant amount of correspondence is received on a range of matters such as re-validation and renewal of licenses and there were several options. For example, it could be part of an online test that people undertake as part of renewal. MSQ is conscious that renewal doesn't impose a significant cost but noted licensing occurs at a point in time and operating a vessel may happen after a significant period of time has lapsed.

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	vessels, acknowledgement that skills degrade over time. While some people won't need a refresher course, others will.	
	• Plea for MSQ to be mindful of the cost.	Chair explained it is not about creating red tape complexity but a framework for safety, education and facilities for end of life vessels particularly around 70's built fibreglass vessels.
	• Example of a recent incident involving a 51-foot vessel where a 15-year-old unlicensed operator berthed resulting in damage to marina. Teach unlicensed person in a safe environment where risks are low.	
Registration	• Foundation regulatory tool but also a touchpoint for tracking and maintaining data for boats – finding boat owners and contact information needs to be collected. • QRBC suggesting all vessels to be registered. • Unregistered vessels – private companies targeting non-registered craft. Identification tag provides tracking mechanism. Services available to public through VMR and Coast Guard that hold information in case of emergency. • Ensuring owners are responsible for disposal and working with MSQ to not burden taxpayers at the end of life. • Kayaks and unpowered powered shouldn't be registered. • If no registration, don't know who owns it. QRBC recommends everything be in register – not necessarily a cost. Not every watercraft have a unique identifier- that may enable tracking of person using unmanned craft. • Questions around timing and next steps? • There has been a recent boom in boat sales and a big influx of people boating at Christmas time. • A boat sunk and not registered because it didn't have a motor. How can it be considered seaworthy? Consider length as a trigger to registration.	MSQ are conscious of not increasing cost for people going on water. MSQ have spent money on paddle craft stickers to help non-powered/human powered craft details so if found unmanned, knowing who it belongs to will assist rescue organisations. Taskforce will do a report with results of forums. Next stage the Department would probably go out with a broader and more detailed consultation with options we think worthwhile running. MSQ will continue to liaise with community around boating and potential options and seek further feedback. Existing laws only require powered vessels of 3kW or more to be registered but WoW seeing a lot of unpowered things being removed under the program.

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	• Areas with infrastructure it is easier to get out of the water, FNQ is difficult.	
Hull Identification	• Being able to identify vessel, who owns it and track it through its lifecycle is important to ensure responsible ownership.	Disposal of vessels needs to be accessible – and facilities. Potential of vessels built from fibreglass coming to end of life in 10 years. Need to work with boat builders and manufacturers to assist dealing with lifecycle and end of life.
Insurance	• Insurance is an issue identified through the Interim report	
General	• Technology must play a part. • Huge opportunity for MSQ to work closely with VMR and Coast Guard to collaborate. • Consensus that owners be held responsible for vessels. • Thanks to MSQ for appointing dedicated Noosa River resource.	Move to prevention, happy War on Wrecks is looking at responsible boat ownership culture and owners taking responsibility. Education campaign for Responsible Boat Ownership to be released. A responsible ownership Boating Action Plan could be piloted; include infrastructure, access and compliance in a systems approach.
	• Question regarding what is a 'vessel' and tethered structure? Can a structure be removed under War on Wrecks funding.	In response MSQ have taken a strict view except where we pull the vessel away and the structure then falls over.
	• Public perception that people won't be held responsible, what are impediments to compliance and enforcement? Are MSQ well enough funded?	In response, yes, MSQ are funded and able to identify vessels; ensure people are operating safely and that is why Taskforce was formed and why we're looking at licensing, registration and hull identification. The MET have been out at Easter and September – it is a trial program and is highly successful to date. MSQ will create efficiencies by parts of TMR coming back to MSQ to administer waterways and network assets. Feedback is extremely useful to feed back into the program to ensure Queensland has safer waterways and reduce marine incidents; better use and more fun for people which can only happen with safer, cleaner seas.

Wynnum Community Forum – 12 September 2020

Pressing points and local specific open-ended question around licensing, registration and hull identification and challenges:

Topic	Theme of comment or feedback	Taskforce or MSQ responses
Waterways Management	• Contribution that the clean up that happens around wrecks – for example Bulimba Creek, where about 20 tonnes of debris was collected, mostly comes from unregistered and uninsured vessels. • If its not registered, it shouldn't be on the water	
	• Comment that there has been a huge amount of non-compliance in all areas in the past and the War on Wrecks has been a real change in approach. Congratulations to the Taskforce.	
Licensing	• General consensus that licensing and operating bigger boats or of more powerful capacity should be based on skills. • Suggestion it should be based on type of vessel being operated • Discussion about revisiting licencing periodically • Suggestion that grading of licence types should mimic road, and mandatory safety courses – shipboard and sea survival should be enforced. Fishing is a particularly large sector that would benefit – the Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) has a 3-year model	
	• Attendee suggested aspirations of boat ownership wanes after a few years resulting in under-use and vessels turning into derelict.	Taskforce Chair replied that if potential boat owners had a greater understanding of the boat ownership, there would be less abandonment
Registration	• Suggestion that something with capacity for accommodation or a cabin should trigger registration • Further discussion about registering all watercraft – suggestion that some have a cost attached and others don't	

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Hull Identification	• Contribution that everything that floats should have some sort of ID • Attendee suggested ID for all floating craft and registration for 'boats'	
Insurance	• Insurance companies ask for condition reports for cars and there should be a similar approach for boats • Attendee said that surveyor inspection isn't a requirement but is a good investment for boat owners, so there is a base understanding of the vessel	Taskforce Chair advised that the next body of work that will be undertaken will be around insurance
General	• Attendee raised concerns over removals where the vessel could have been salvaged • Attendee raised concerns over the period of time vessels are in the water before action is taken	Regional Harbour Master Glenn Hale discussed the particular examples raised and the issues around them. Taskforce Chair added that the legislative changes proposed will look to expediate the process
	• Contribution from audience that we need to ensure a broad consideration when changing legislation	Taskforce Chair said that this community consultation is part of the process to inform future changes