

Review of Boating Infrastructure Management in Victoria



Contents

Recreational boating in Victoria – overview	3
Review objectives	4
Current facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port	4
Boating facilities and Crown Land management	5
Policy and legislative framework	5
Existing management arrangements	6
Other jurisdictions	6
Findings and key themes – Port Phillip and Western Port	7
Regional Victoria	9
Improving recreational boating facility management	9
Operating models	11
High level capital and maintenance expenditure	12
Implementation	13
Conclusion	13
Next Steps	14
Appendix	
A high level comparison of management arrangements in other Australian states.	15

Recreational boating in Victoria – overview

There are more than 400 publicly accessible boat ramps and launching locations across Victoria's coastal and inland waterways. Recreational boating users are concentrated in the Port Phillip and Western Port regions – serviced by over 50 public boating facilities.

A variety of entities are responsible for managing these facilities. These include Parks Victoria, local councils and volunteer committees of management appointed to manage Crown Land reserves. The management approach adopted by these entities varies greatly. This is partly driven by funding arrangements but also by varying levels of resources and capability at their disposal.

In regional Victoria, the diversity of waterways, dispersed population relative to metropolitan Melbourne, and the unique demands on waterways by different users and craft creates a distinct operating environment for recreational boating facility managers. Facilities based in oceans experience greater impact from volatile weather conditions and swells. In some lakes, water levels can vary significantly. Rivers and estuaries can harbour undergrowth that doesn't exist in other waterways.

The complex and fragmented management arrangements that currently exist for recreational boating facilities in Victoria leads to inconsistent maintenance and renewal practices across facilities. This in turn leads to varying conditions of recreational boating infrastructure, creating frustration for recreational boating users.



Review objectives

As a result of feedback on the condition of boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port, the Victorian Government committed to undertake a review of the management of boating infrastructure across the bays. The review involved consultation with recreational fishing and boating stakeholders, with a view to establishing a dedicated boating infrastructure authority.

The review's objectives were to:

- 1 Assess the current management arrangements of public boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port.
- 2 Identify themes associated with current management arrangements along with their associated causes.
- 3 Develop options to improve existing management arrangements.

While the primary focus of the review was boating facility management across Port Phillip and Western Port, the findings were also tested in regional Victoria to explore whether similar themes emerged.

Current facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port

There are 122 recreational boating facilities located across Port Phillip and Western Port.

These include:

- Publicly accessible boat ramps
- Ramps and facilities located within yacht clubs and sailing clubs
- Jetties and moorings
- Marinas and other private facilities.

Of these, 56 are public boat launching facilities.
The review inspected 46 of these public facilities.



Boating facilities and Crown Land management

Public boating facilities in Victoria are located on Crown Land reserves. A Crown Land reserve is publicly-owned and has been set aside for specific public purposes. Examples include parks and conservation areas, state forests, coastal foreshores and recreation reserves.

Crown Land is managed by a committee of management, appointed by the Minister for Environment, or the Minister's delegate, in accordance with the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. In the Port Phillip and Western Port region of Victoria, Crown Land committees of management include local councils (e.g. Mornington Peninsula Shire Council), smaller committees of management (e.g. Corinella Foreshore committee of management) or larger committees of management with paid employees (e.g. Bellarine Bayside Coastal Management).

In most cases, when a committee of management is appointed to manage a Crown Land reserve, they are responsible for maintaining and operating all the assets on the land.

Policy and legislative framework

Several pieces of State legislation cover responsibilities relating to Victoria's waterways. The former *Coastal Management Act 1995* (replaced by the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*) enabled the following action plans and frameworks relating to delivery and management of boating facilities for the Victorian coast:

- Western Victoria Boating Coastal Action Plan
- Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan
- Central Coastal Board Recreational Boating Facilities Framework (RBFF).

The Boating Coastal Action Plans (BCAPs) include a "hierarchy" to describe the nature and scope of facilities for recreational boaters available at a site and to guide future investment. The Central Coastal Board applied the hierarchy to Port Phillip and Western Port facilities. The hierarchy was not applied to boating facilities on inland waterways.

There are five levels of facilities:

- 1 State facility:** Facilities of international, national, state, regional and local significance.
- 2 Regional facility:** Facilities providing a range of services at one location or with a large catchment.
- 3 District facility:** Facilities that generally provide services for one type of boating activity.
- 4 Local facility:** Facilities providing boating access and are locally significant.
- 5 Decommission:** Facilities earmarked for decommissioning.

The *Marine Safety Act 2010* regulates the safety of recreational boating in Victoria. This legislation places a range of obligations on the owners, users and passengers of recreational vessels. It also requires recreational vessels to be registered, and their owners licenced.

The *Port Management Act 1995* provides for the establishment, management and operation of local ports and appointment of Local Port Managers. Parks Victoria is the local port manager of Port Phillip and Western Port and is responsible for making sure port operations are safe, efficient and effective, and for managing port infrastructure (e.g. piers, jetties, navigational aids, moorings and berths).

There is a variety of legislation that determines who is responsible for the management of recreational boating facilities. The primary legislation is the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* which reserves particular portions of Crown Land for a specific (primarily public) purpose. Under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act*, local councils and committees of management are appointed to manage foreshores and requires them to maintain associated recreational boating facilities.

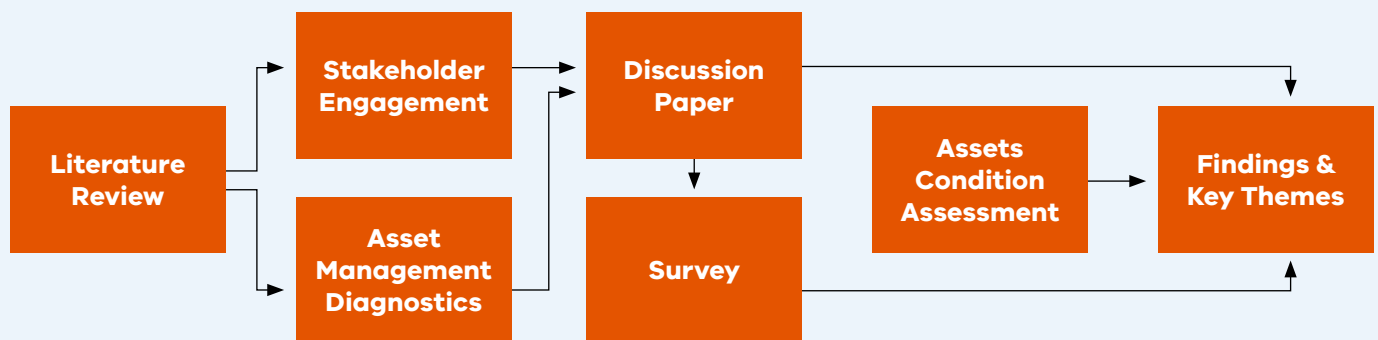
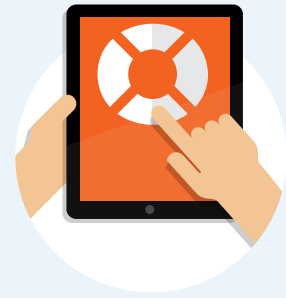
Additional legislation that places limits on what can be done on land managed by local councils or committees of management include:

- *Marine and Coastal Act*
- *Planning and Environment Act*
- *Local Government Act*
- *Road Management Act*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Existing management arrangements

A desktop review examined current management arrangements of recreational boating facilities across Victoria and Australia, and the challenges involved. In addition, targeted stakeholder interviews with industry groups, committees of management, government agencies and local councils were conducted in September and October 2019. As part of this process, a discussion paper was released, identifying some of the current limitations. Feedback was then sought from the boating community about how recreational boating facilities could be managed better between December 2019 – January 2020.

To better understand asset management practices across the various recreational boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port, asset managers were also surveyed.



While assessments of recreational boating facilities in Port Phillip and Western Port were completed as part of the Recreational Boating Facility Framework published in 2014, a more detailed assessment of a select sample of 46 facilities was completed as part of this review. Condition assessments were visual and did not consider the age of facilities or any asset features below the high-water mark. The information collected helped provide a picture of the varying asset conditions and will be used to inform a future renewal program.

To understand if new themes were emerging from regional Victoria, stakeholder interviews were undertaken throughout March and April 2020. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, asset condition assessments of facilities and focus groups were unable to be held. A summary paper outlining issues impacting regional Victoria was released, supported by an online consultation, to ensure all regional boaters had the opportunity to provide feedback and contribute to the review.

Other jurisdictions

As part of the review, a high-level assessment of management arrangements of recreational boating facilities in other jurisdictions (NSW, WA and QLD) found that management of facilities in these states is undertaken by local councils and appointed entities. This summary is provided on page 15.

Findings and key themes – Port Phillip and Western Port



A need for consistent maintenance and operations practices

The condition of recreational boating facilities varies widely across Port Phillip and Western Port, and across Victoria. This can be partially attributed to the lack of an overarching policy and governance to provide guidance. This effectively means that there is not a consistent approach towards: (a) facility inspection (b) asset maintenance (c) record keeping (i.e. asset registers) (d) facility design or (e) managing the disposal and renewal of assets. The existing approach requires facility managers to develop their own policy and governance frameworks and this can result in inconsistency in the design, operations and management of recreational boating assets.



Safe access and usability of boating facilities

There are no consistent safety standards or guidelines in place for the operation and maintenance of recreational boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port. In addition, across the entities responsible for boating facility management the capability of asset managers varies. Only in some cases did facility managers have experience or have access to individuals with experience in maritime engineering and boating asset management. This wide range of capabilities can contribute to inconsistent practices in the maintenance and operation of assets and varying levels of safety and usability.



Developing a holistic view of assets and asset condition

The asset management examination found that recreational boating facility managers employed a range of methods to register their assets and maintain a record of their age and quality. Some facility managers kept comprehensive asset registers that recorded all relevant information including age, condition of key elements and maintenance schedules, while others had little or no recorded information about the assets they managed.



A need for standardised design for boating facilities

The design of recreational boating facilities across Port Phillip and Western Port varies. Typical features of facilities like ramp gradient, ramp width and ramp access are inconsistent. While standards and guidelines for the design and construction of maritime facilities and boat ramps do exist (e.g. the AS 3962 Guidelines for the design of marinas), development of design guidelines tailored for Victorian facilities, conditions and tidal ranges should be developed and consistently applied for future renewals and upgrades.



Establishing clearer lines of accountability for boating facility management and maintenance

Lines of responsibility for maintaining assets such as navigation aids, breakwaters and channel access (dredging) are not always clearly defined or understood.

Various assets and features of a facility that directly impact on user experience – such as boat ramps, pontoons, jetties, on-water infrastructure and access channels – are managed by separate entities. This is confusing for users and creates a situation where several stakeholders need to be engaged to effectively manage recreational boating facilities. This results in significant time and resources being spent on coordinating maintenance or management requirements. In addition, it makes assigning accountability for activities difficult, especially for those activities that sit at the boundaries of responsibility for the various entities.



Creating an overarching vision, strategy and funding plan for recreational boating

The Review identified a need to create an overarching vision and strategy for recreational boating in Port Phillip and Western Port – and Victoria more broadly. While the Recreational Boating Facilities Framework and Boating Coastal Action Plans developed a vision and priorities for the future of facilities, there is no consistent strategic approach to asset management and maintenance, prioritisation of asset renewal and upgrades across Victoria, and plans for funding priorities.

It largely falls to local facility managers to develop a vision and strategy for their assets. Developing an overarching strategy to guide decision making would allow a more strategic and consistent approach to recreational boating facility upgrades and renewal.

In addition, a more reliable source of funding that is transparently administered and linked to the overarching strategy is required.



Clearly defining a recreational boating facility

Feedback from stakeholder engagement found there was no comprehensive or consistent definition of what constitutes a 'recreational boating facility'. There was clear agreement that a boating facility should comprise assets such as a boat ramp and associated jetty or pontoon. However there was no definitive opinion about whether items such as fish cleaning facilities, signage and lighting should be included as part of a boating facility. Feedback obtained during the Review suggests that the following assets represent a minimum baseline for a recreational boating facility:

Boat ramp

Adjoining jetty or pontoon

Access channels

Associated car park (including trailer parking)

Lighting and webcams (where appropriate)

Navigation aids and signage (as they relate to recreational boating ramps)

Toilets (where appropriate)

Fish cleaning station (where appropriate)

Boat washdown facility (where appropriate).

Regional Victoria

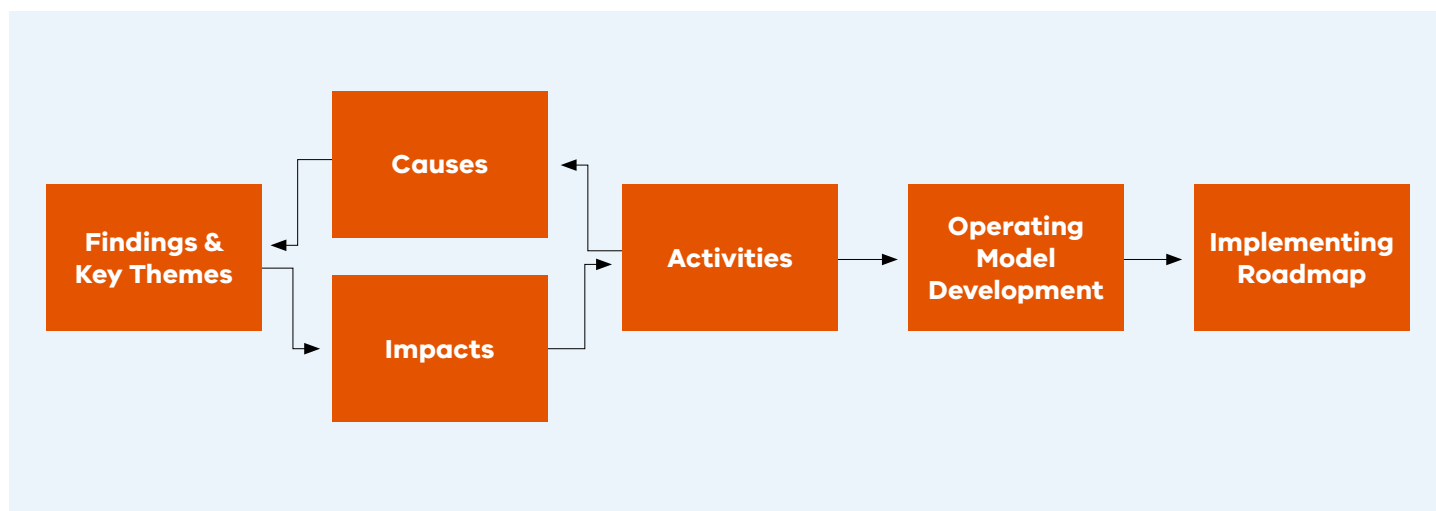
Stakeholder engagement found alignment in the issues facing recreational boating facility managers in regional Victoria and Port Phillip and Western Port. However, there are different operating challenges facing regional facility managers as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Regional stakeholder engagement and public consultation – themes

Themes consistent with Port Phillip and Western Port	Themes partly consistent with Port Phillip and Western Port	Themes unique to Regional Victoria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Absence of overarching vision and strategy – Insufficient and unclear funding arrangements – Varying levels of asset management capacity and capability – Multiple lines of accountability and responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Unclear definition of recreational boating facility – Inadequate communication between stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cross-border issues – Water levels in lakes – Unique design features

Improving recreational boating facility management

Based on the identified key themes, The Review then determined the types of activities that would address issues. This included identifying alternative operating models for assigning responsibility for these activities.



The following table outlines options for management arrangement. These options provide guidance on the functions which could be delivered by a “Boating Infrastructure Authority”.

Table 1: Activities associated with recreational boating facility management.

Activity	Description
Develop a vision and strategy	A strategy will provide recreational boating management with clarity on key issues including prioritisation and funding.
Stakeholder engagement	Engagement will be required to successfully execute a long-term strategic plan and implement consistent maintenance and operating standards.
Design and maintenance standards and guidelines	To minimise deterioration of recreational boating assets so that they remain safe and usable, minimum standards need to be established for the design and maintenance of the assets. Where appropriate, industry standards must be referenced and drawn on to develop standards for Victorian facilities.
Asset management Framework	Asset management is the core activity underpinning the management of recreational boating facilities. Therefore a framework must be developed that specifies how assets will be developed, maintained and renewed, and be captured in a consolidated asset register.
Operational boating policy and governance frameworks	Given the facilities are managed separately and are geographically dispersed, operational boating policy and governance frameworks are needed to provide guidance on inspections and maintenance of assets, management of assets through their lifecycle, record keeping requirements, and occupational health and safety.
CAPEX funding management	Recreational boating facility assets require capital works and renewal that will be detailed through a capital works funding program to be outlined in a strategy.
Operations and maintenance funding management	Funding for operations and maintenance requirements for recreational boating facilities, some of which can be costly (e.g. dredging) will need to be managed and tracked. Opportunities to save costs and create economies of scale by managing some of these expenses holistically should be considered.
Data collection: asset condition, safety and user experience	To ensure recreational boating assets are being managed effectively and in accordance with established standards and guidelines, information needs to be collected on asset condition and any potential safety issues. Surveys on the user experience will also provide information on issues relating to asset usability and safety.
Data analysis: asset condition, safety and user experience	Analysing the information collected will inform management of asset condition and safety (and where maintenance or renewal should be prioritised), as well as any changes to funding requirements should priorities change.
Delivery of upgrades and renewals	Completing upgrades and renewals will require specialist skills from areas such as maritime engineering, project management and construction.
Delivery of asset maintenance	Effectively delivering maintenance and repair work is an important part of recreational boating facility management. Policy and governance frameworks (and associated procedures) will outline how this work should be undertaken while the actual delivery of this work will occur at the local level, regardless of any future management model. However, dredging should be coordinated centrally to ensure economies of scale.
Communications	Throughout The Review, users have identified poor communication as an issue. Processes to improve communication, including providing clarity about who to contact for issues will be required.
Environmental protection	Some activities associated with managing recreational boating facilities will impact the foreshore environment (e.g. dredging or the upgrade or development of facilities). Knowledge and the ability to manage environmental assessments, particularly to support applications for consent under the <i>Marine and Coastal Act 2018</i> , is important.
Support functions	All entities require the necessary support from legal, finance and human resource functions.

Operating models

Three operating models for boating facility management that assign responsibility for these activities to different entities were developed. Each model has its own advantages and disadvantages. However, each of the proposed options (Table 2) represents an improvement on existing recreational boating facility management arrangements.

The models include:



Centralised model

Responsibility for boating facility management activities is assigned to the central entity. This model addresses all the themes but requires substantial change to establish and higher resourcing levels to operate.



Shared model

Boating facilities continue to be managed by existing committees of management but there is far more active support and involvement from a central entity across a range of activities. This model would require a clear delineation of responsibilities and accountabilities or it risks adding greater complexity and ambiguity to the existing arrangements.



Decentralised model

Boating facilities continue to be managed by existing committees of management but supported by a central entity for key strategic activities. This model represents the least significant departure from current arrangements. Despite this, it can still deliver considerable benefit by addressing or partially addressing all the identified themes.

Table 2: Responsibility for each of the activities under alternative operating models

Activity Name	Model (FTE)		
	Centralised	Shared	Decentralised
Develop a vision and strategy	2.5	2.5	2.5
Stakeholder engagement	2.5	2.5	2.5
Design and maintenance standards and guidelines	2.0	2.0	2.0
Asset management framework	1.5	1.5	1.5
Operational boating policy and governance frameworks	1.5	1.5	1.0
CAPEX funding management	0.5	0.5	0.5
Operations and maintenance funding management	0.5	0.0	0.0
Data collection: Asset condition, safety and user experience	1.5	0.5	0.0
Data analysis: Asset condition, safety and user experience	1.0	1.0	0.5
Delivery of upgrades and renewals	PD	PD	PD
Delivery of asset maintenance	Contracted	0.0	0.0
Communications	1.0	1.0	0.0
Environmental protection	0.5	0.5	0.0
Support functions	2.0	1.0	0.0
Total central entity FTE	17.0	14.5	10.5

Central responsibility
 Shared responsibility
 Local responsibility
 PD = Project Dependent

Table 3: Summary of the advantages and disadvantages associated with operating models

	Decentralised	Shared	Centralised
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Least disruption on current arrangements. – A practical first step towards more centralised arrangements (if deemed necessary). – Cost effective. – Provides support to local asset managers and communities. – Leverages on local expertise and knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There is a higher level of support provided by the central entity, thus removing some of the administrative burden on local entities. – Greater data available, allowing for more informed strategy. – Compared with a decentralised model, this model can better support a range of activities as there are more resources available. – The state can be more targeted in its interventions, as funding and resources can be allocated based on data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Consolidates responsibilities to the central entity and creates a clear mandate, providing for the highest level of control over the direction and strategy for boating reform. – Captures economies of scale. – Enhances the profile of the recreational boating sector. – Addresses all the themes associated with existing management arrangements.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fails to address inefficiencies and capture economies of scale. – Most activities remain the responsibility of local entities and is highly dependent on local access to required resources and expertise. – May require central entity to invest in training and auditing or other similar mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Risks the creation of more confusion if the terms of reference for how this arrangement needs to work is not formulated appropriately. – Dependent on collaboration and strong relationships between parties, which is subjective, and can negate the benefits of this model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The most costly model to establish. – Central entity has responsibility for all activities, possibly reducing connection with local users and communities.

High level capital and maintenance expenditure

Using information obtained from the asset management examination and asset condition assessments, approximate capital expenditure was calculated for the 46 recreational boating facilities considered.

An approximate maintenance expenditure was also calculated for the same 46 facilities. The facilities were classified into four categories based on their size and maintenance expenditure information (made available by some facility managers) to determine a representative annual maintenance expenditure.

A high-level assessment indicated that a maintenance and renewal cost of \$87 million in maintenance and renewal is required over a 15-year period, of which approximately \$58 million is capital expenditure and an estimated \$31 million is maintenance.

Once again, this figure is based on broad assumptions, as maintenance cost information was not available for every facility. These estimates exclude dredging costs.

Implementation

Pragmatic first steps to address outcomes of The Review would include implementation of the following:

- ✓ Developing a vision and strategy for the recreational boating sector, possibly building on the work contained in the Recreational Boating Facility Framework.
- ✓ Developing standards, guidelines and policies for design, asset management and operation of boating facilities.
- ✓ Defining the scope of a recreational boating facility.

After completing these initial activities, the Government can consider how effective these actions have been and can determine if any further changes are required.

If a decision is made to apply a new management model, it can be implemented through a continuous improvement process or through direct and focused implementation of a single option. This will provide some improvement to the current highly decentralised management arrangements, while minimising disruption to the status quo.

Gradually improving management arrangements would enable a more evolutionary process. Resourcing, capabilities and systemic structures can be bedded down to ensure lasting change.

Conclusion

A series of key themes that emerged from The Review included:

- 1 A need for consistent maintenance and operations practices.
- 2 Safe access and usability of boating facilities.
- 3 A need for standardised design for boating facilities.
- 4 Developing a holistic view of assets and asset condition.
- 5 Establishing clearer lines of accountability for boating facility management and maintenance.
- 6 Clearly defining what assets are included at a recreational boating facility.
- 7 Creating an overarching vision, strategy and funding plan for recreational boating facilities.

Having identified these themes, The Review considered options for activities that could improve how boating facilities are managed. These activities included:

Defining the scope of a recreational boating facility.

Developing a vision and strategy for the recreational boating sector.

Developing standards, guidelines and policies for design, asset management and operation of boating facilities.

Developing a capital renewals and upgrades funding program that includes operations and maintenance funding management.

Data collection and analysis on asset condition, safety and user experience.

Delivery of maintenance and repair works.

Improved communications.

These improvements can be done by strengthening existing arrangements – i.e. providing better support to facility managers and improved funding options. Alternatively, variations on a fully centralised management model of our public boating facilities – including a central authority – could be considered.

Next Steps

The Review identified the value of local knowledge that asset managers hold, the importance of continuing to work with them and the opportunities around providing more support and improved funding options to them.

Better Boating Victoria will lead improvements by providing additional support to asset managers and undertaking activities such as strategy development, prioritisation of facility renewal, development of an asset management framework, maintenance and design guidelines, and provision of additional funding for maintenance through the Better Boating Fund.

Once this work has been completed, an assessment will be undertaken as to whether progression to a more centralised management approach is required.



Establishing the Better Boating Fund.

The Government has established the Better Boating Fund, which came into effect on 1 July 2021. The establishment of the Fund delivers on the election commitment to 'allocate proceeds of collected boat licence and registration fees to improve facilities and safety' and to 'establish the Better Boating Fund to facilitate urgent upgrades and continual maintenance'.



Develop a Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy.

This Strategy is currently being developed and will outline reforms including those identified in this review, including developing maintenance and design guidelines and an asset management framework. The Strategy will also outline prioritisation of asset renewals and upgrades and identify dredging priorities to improve access.



Bringing Fishing and Boating together

In early February, Better Boating Victoria and the Victorian Fisheries Authority were brought together to maximise the outcomes delivered for boaters and fishers. The two pastimes and many of their facilities are intrinsically linked, and bringing the two organisations together means one authority will be responsible for allocating funding to new boating facilities, upgrades and improvements of existing boating facilities whilst the Victorian Fisheries Authority continues to deliver on fishing outcomes for Victorians.



Appendix

A high level comparison of management arrangements in other Australian states.

New South Wales

Responsibilities

- Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) are responsible for the management of the seabeds.
- Management of the foreshores (which includes recreational boating facilities) is the responsibility of local councils.

Facilities

- The Sydney Harbour, Botany Bay, Newcastle Harbour and Port Kembla Harbour waterways are home to 56 recreational boat ramps.

Facility management

- Local councils pay for all operation and maintenance costs associated with recreational boating facilities (this includes dredging and upkeep of associated amenities).
- For large capital expenditures, an application can be made to the RMS to access funding from the “Boating Now Program” (BNP).
- Administered by RMS, the BNP aims to deliver new and upgraded boating infrastructure.
- The BNP is funded by the “Waterways Fund”, a hypothecated fund that contains revenues collected from boat driver licences, vessel registration and mooring licence fees.

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 who hold regular meetings with local users in the various regions.

Queensland

Responsibilities

- The majority of recreational boating facilities (referred to as “Public Marine Facilities”) are owned by the state government.
- These facilities are governed by the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*.

Facilities

- As at December 2016, there are 435 recreational boating facilities (containing 736 boat ramp lanes) across Queensland.

Facility management

- The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) appoints entities (typically councils or port authorities) to manage recreational boating facilities.
- The regulation clearly describes the responsibilities of a facility manager which include:
 - replacing moorings;
 - maintaining roads, parking areas, amenities and gardens;
 - dredging in the facility; and
 - funding of maintenance (from existing revenue sources).
- Applications can be made to TMR for refund of “structural maintenance”.
- Since 2004 successive Queensland Governments have, allocated funding for capital upgrades and improvements of recreational boating facilities.

User experience

- As at December 2016, there are just under 280,000 boat registrations in Queensland.
- The primary method through which TMR obtains feedback is through inspections of facilities conducted by district liaison officers it employs.



A high level comparison of management arrangements in other Australian states.

Western Australia

Responsibilities

- In WA, under the Jetties Act 1926, the Department of Transport (DoT) issues licences for the development, ownership and operation of boat ramps.

Facilities

- There are 24 metropolitan and 49 regional locations with boat ramps in Western Australia (some locations have multiple boat ramps).

Facility management

- Licence holders are expected to pay for the maintenance and operation of these facilities.
- The DoT issues guidelines on maintenance.
- For capital improvements licence holders are able to apply for funding through the Recreational Boating Facilities Scheme (RBFS).
- The RBFS provides licence holders with access to funding for planning and construction of public boating infrastructure.
- Funding for the RBFS comes from recreational boat registration fees.
- Since the schemes inception, there have been over 23 grant rounds conducted that have funded 434 projects.
- Funding is available for 75 per cent of the total cost of a project with grants capped at a maximum amount of \$750,000.

User experience

- A recreational boating study that is currently being completed in WA (the last such study was undertaken in 2008).
- Amongst other things, this study reviews facilities, usage rates and expected future demand.

Victoria

Responsibilities

- In Victoria, the responsibility for management of boat ramps falls under a number of different entities, including Parks Victoria, local councils, water authorities and foreshore committees of management.

Facilities

- There are over 400 public recreational boating facilities in Victoria.
- Fifty-six of these facilities are located in Port Phillip and Western Port.

Facility management

- The management of recreational boating facilities is the responsibility of individual asset managers.
- This includes funding of the maintenance and operations of facilities (capital works is typically funded through State government grants).
- The Department of Transport (DoT) oversees the Boating Safety and Facilities Program which provides funding for improvements to recreational boating infrastructure with the primary focus being on enhancing safety.
- Boat ramp launching and parking fees have recently been removed, meaning that all public boat ramps are accessible for free.
- The Victorian Local Ports Program, also administered by the DoT, provides local port managers (including Parks Victoria) with funding and support to ensure that local port functions and assets can be maintained (this includes dredging at strategic locations).

User experience

- A public survey undertaken as part of this review found that users desired access to real-time information to enable the use of recreational boating facilities, and also the ability to communicate feedback to management entities through a common channel.

