

1 August 2024
1:30pm-3:30pm
In person

Minutes

Recreational Vessel Advisory Group (RVAG)

Chair	Sian Nivison, SN, Director Insights & Operations Maritime
Attendees	<p>Transport for NSW – NSW Maritime</p> <p>Damian Logue, DL, State Coordinator Maritime Liljana Bridge, LB, Senior Manager Engagement & Education Daniel Cini, DC, Project Manager, Infrastructure Delivery Office Angela Porritt, AP, Manager Intelligence & Insights Sandra Ricklefs, SR, Coordinator Insights & Operations (Governance)</p> <p>Transport for NSW – Safety, Environment and Regulation</p> <p>Rosemary Donley, RD, Director Maritime & Transport Safety Strategy & Policy</p> <p>Members</p> <p>Wahib Gereige, WG, Jet-ski Social Club Craig Ferris, CF, Australian Sailing Mark Tietjen, MT, Rowing NSW Gordon Petersen, GP, Boatsafe Qld Inc Ken Cameron, KC, Boat Owners Association Dan Duemmer, DD, Marine Rescue NSW John Price, JP, Sailability NSW Inc Neil Patchett, NP, Boating Industry Association (BIA) Peter Freeman, PF, Australian Boating College Keith Clark, KC, Seaplane Pilots Association of Australia Peter Tate, PT, Paddle NSW Inc Geoff Duval, GD, Australian Powerboat Association</p>
Apologies	<p>Suzanne Jones SJ, Rowing NSW Brent Manieri, BM, Surf Life Saving NSW</p>
Guests	<p>Cherrie Ashford, CA, Director Greater Sydney, NSW Maritime Anthony Downs, AD, Manager Operational Policy, NSW Maritime Shane Davey, SD, Principal Manager Greater Sydney, NSW Maritime Bahram Abedi, Seafarer Standards and Liaison Officer, NSW Maritime Drew Jones, A/Manager Waterway Operations Sydney Harbour NSW Maritime Sam Ryan, Safe Systems Analyst (Safer Boating) SER Elisa Parry, Snr Safe Systems Analyst (Safer Boating), SER</p>

Welcome, Apologies, Acknowledgment of Country

Conflict of Interest Declarations

- Nil Conflict raised by any member

Approval of minutes from previous meeting

- Approved by members

Items for Discussion	
Item 1: Safety Campaigns: trends and outcomes	DL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total 13561 Vessel Safety Checks conducted: 1805 Formal actions Total 2330 Formal Actions Offences: 740 Lifejacket, 541 Safety Equipment Boating Season 2024/25 Campaigns: 2 Domestic Commercial Vessel, 3 Statewide (Sept, Jan, April), 5 Regional. 	
Item 2: Policy and Legislation update	RD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marine Advisory Council (MAC): Meeting held 10 April. Minutes available on website. Centre for Maritime Safety Partners Transport for NSW 	
Item 3: Education Update	LB
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PWC Youth Waterway Education & Awareness Program: Development of tools and resources that enable and promote positive behaviour changes for a safer and more enjoyable experience on the water. Education Resources: Knots conversion sticker, PWC behaviour label, PWC operators under 16 infographic, PWC/Youth safety brochure for parents/guardians, online mini lesson on PWC rules and safety equipment. Simplified engagement channels for schools and organisations includes a Boating Safety Education Program enquiry form 	
Item 4: Maritime Infrastructure Delivery Office	DC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kamay Ferry Wharves (La Perouse to Kurnell) – Due for completion late 2024. Inner City Sewer Pump Out – Initial Rozelle Bay location not proceeding due to Bays West Precinct planning deliberations. Investigation of an upgrade to King St wharf underway. Balls Head Waverton (Northern Access and Mooring Upgrade) – Design and approvals underway. Target completion Q1 2025. Wharves – Walsh Bay (No. 10 east and west), Bayview Park and Kirribilli wharves currently closed due to safety concerns. No works scheduled pending funding confirmation. Tuncurry Boat Maintenance Facility – Design and approvals underway (complete by Sept 2024). Pending full project funding. Crowdy Head Harbour Upgrade – Design and approvals complete. Construction targeted Q1 2025 - Q1 2026. Coffs Harbour – Unleaded refuelling facility and boat ramp projects complete and open since March 2024. Brunswick Head Harbour – Harbour upgrade on hold, pending funding. Utility upgrade including sewer pump out currently in design and approvals phase. Port Macquarie Breakwater Upgrade – On hold pending resolution with adjacent landowner. Snug Cove Maritime Precinct (Eden) – Maritime pursuing a federal grant to construct a marina, facilities, and public domain. Design and approvals are currently underway. Narooma Wharf Upgrade – Design and approvals complete. Project on hold pending funding. 	
Item 5: Insights Update	AP
Recreational Vessel Driving License summary:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driver licences – 549,704 	

- General Boat Driving Licence + Personal Watercraft (PWC) – overall increase of 2.86%
- General Boat Driving Licences Steady – down 0.23% ≈ -1,000
- Personal Watercraft Licences Increasing – up 21.9% ≈ 16.4k

Recreational Vessel Registration summary:

- Recreational Vessel registrations – 235,581
- General Boat Driving Licence + Personal Watercraft (PWC) – overall decrease of 1.4%
- General Recreational Vessels Registered Decreasing - 3.0% ≈ 6.3k
- Personal Watercraft Registered Increasing - 13.7% ≈ 2.5k

Member Submissions

Item 6: Boating Fee Increase

Submitted by Peter Freeman, Neil Patchett, Gordon Petersen

Presented by Cherrie Ashford

Why did Maritime increase license and registration fees:

- **Increasing Costs:** 28% increase in core business costs over last 3 years; Revenue increase only 6% over same period. Trend of increasing costs expected to continue in the future.
- **Increasing Demand:** 79% increase in PWC Complaints; 42% increase in PWC licences; 44% increase in PWC registrations.
- **Forecasted Services:** Maritime Safety Plan; Boating Now; Dredging; Disability Inclusion Plan; Data and insights.

What is Maritime doing with the money:

- **Maritime Safety Plan:** Safer lifejacket wear and equipment; safer boating through technology, safer waterway access and infrastructure, growing safety culture together.
- **Infrastructure:** High priority dredging statewide, boating infrastructure development, Grants programs, improved boating accessibility.
- **Educational Publications and Merchandise:** Promote inclusivity to engage Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, education strategy to spread key boating messages particularly youths and older boaters.
- **On-water Safety Operations:** Address rising costs to regulate PWC segment to ensure safe and accessible access to waterways, meet rising costs to allow Maritime to continue its on-water operations, ongoing management and enhancement of AtoN network.

What is driving PWC fee increase:

- **Over representation in safety stats:** PWC were involved in 16.8% serious injury incidents and 9.3% of recreational incidents overall - they made up nearly 5.5% of registered recreational vessels over the same period.
- **Increase complaints:** 79% increase to complaints logged to the dedicated PWC hotline since FY20; 94% increase in formal actions recorded against PWC riders since FY20.
- **Increasing calls from sections of the public to restrict PWC usage in 2024:**
 - Call to ban jet skis on Peninsula | Central Coast News
 - Petition launched for jet-ski ban at Bonnie Vale beach | St George & Sutherland Shire Leader;
 - Calls For Jet Ski Ban at Busy Beaches | Following a surge in ownership as there is evidence of more stupidity on the water. | By The Project Facebook.
- The fee increase formed one part of a more holistic long term funding strategy. As per NSW budgeting process, the overall submission was cabinet in confidence.

Item 7: Use and Monitoring of 27MHz

Submitted by Dan Duemmer

- Volume of calls to MRNSW radio bases on 27MHz has significantly reduced as vessels replace 27MHz with a Marine Band VHF radio. The 27MHz radio service is not part of MRNSW broader radio network strategy into the future and is not planned to be integrated into the updated Dispatch Systems.
- MRNSW consulted with TfNSW, AMSA, ACMA and other key stakeholders, towards a plan for a “sunset” clause to be put in place to allow sufficient time for industry to adapt and the community encouraged via campaigns to switch over to a VHF Radio.

Item 8: Cessation of Australian Sailing Qualifications

Submitted by Craig Ferris

Presented by Sian Nivison

- Australian Sailing Powerboat qualifications have been accepted as a necessary qualification by Maritime for over 10 years. Concerns raised around process regarding ongoing recognition of Australian Sailing Powerboat qualification as a necessary qualification.
- Maritime met with Australian Sailing on 29 July 2024. Maritime to consider feedback received and will engage with stakeholders regarding next steps. The Sailing Powerboat qualifications have been recognised until 30 June 2025 whilst this engagement process and review of feedback from stakeholders is completed.

Item 9: PWC Night Use for Fishing

Submitted by Wahib Gereige

Presented by Anthony Downs and Shane Davey

- At the November 2023 RVAG meeting, the Sydney Jet-Ski Club put forward a proposal to allow PWCs to operate between sunset and sunrise for fishing with a trial at Tweed Heads. The feedback from Transport for NSW was the proposal needed some amendments before it could be considered.
- NSW Maritime reviewed the proposal through consultation with Maritime Policy and Operational staff. A number of risks were identified associated with the use of PWC between sunset and sunrise in the proposed waterways. Given NSW Maritime continues to allocate large amounts of resources to respond to high volumes of complaints and incidents related to PWC, NSW Maritime cannot support the proposal. NSW Maritime advised that there are also a number of legislative changes currently under consideration that were proposed under the Marine Safety Regulation discussion paper last year. NSW Maritime would prefer to see if these amendments (if adopted) will assist with reducing PWC compliance issues and incidents before considering changes to restrictions on PWC use.

Item 10: Maritime Strategic Needs Project

Presented by Rosemary Donley

- This project provides key inputs to the review process of the Maritime Infrastructure Plan. Information collated included updated vessel ownership growth and storage needs to 2040; analysis of the non-powered boating sector on Sydney Harbour; and commercial vessel access and storage needs on Sydney Harbour.

Item 11: Agenda Forward Planning

Presented by Sian Nivison

- The Terms of Reference (ToR) will be reviewed in case of any minor updates required after first 12 months. Membership renewal of current and new member applications will also be reviewed in accordance with the ToR. Feedback on agenda structure and agenda topics welcome.

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- Item suggested for November 2024 meeting - update around status of mooring applications in particular marine parks.

Any other business

Chair

5 min

Nil

Actions

- Confirm funding sources for Kamay Ferry Wharf Project and Snug Cove Precinct Project. Date October 2024. Action: DC MIDO.
- Review RVAG Terms of Reference, RVAG meeting structure and current and new membership applications. Date November 2024. Action: Director Maritime Insights & Operations.
- Follow up industry boating and PWC education opportunities as outlined by BIA. Date October 2024. Action: Senior Manager Engagement and Education
- Item agenda for November meeting – Mooring applications/marine parks update. Date November 2024. Action: Director Maritime Insights & Operations

Next meeting

All

12 November 2024

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