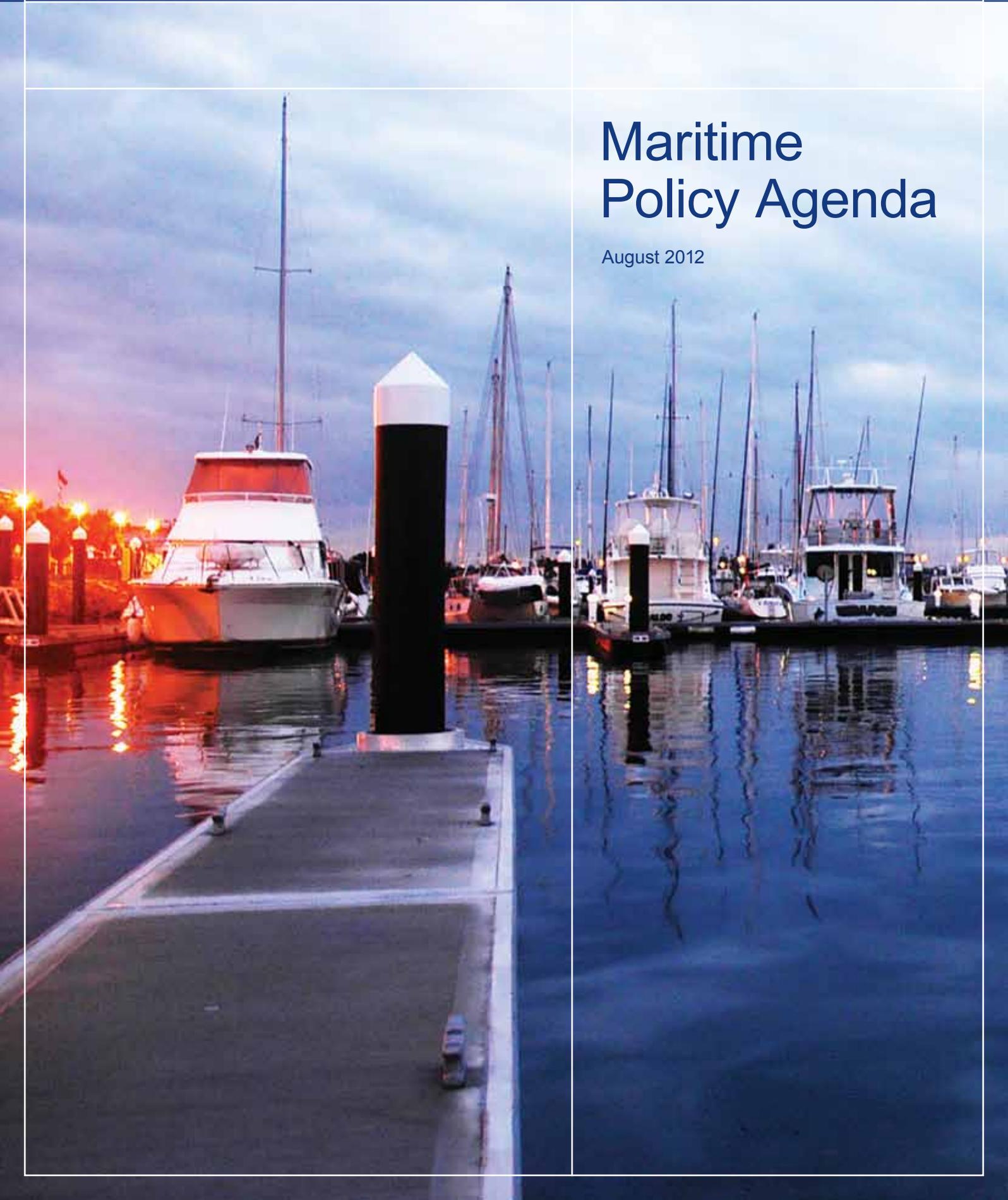




Transport
for NSW

Maritime Policy Agenda

August 2012



Action		Details	Timing
BOATING SAFETY			
1	Lifjacket Awareness Campaign	Develop a major public awareness campaign to support the wearing of lifjackets and reduce loss of life caused by drowning when boating.	2012
2	Lifjacket Wear Initiative	Work with safety partners, including industry, to develop a State Government supported program that provides an incentive to improve lifjacket wear rates.	2013-14
3	Paddle Craft Safety Campaign	Deliver a statewide education campaign to promote safe and responsible use of paddle / oared craft.	2012
4	On-water Compliance Reform	Review existing policies and procedures relating to on-water compliance to ensure appropriate efficiency and effectiveness	2012-13
5	Boating Safety Plans a) Sydney Harbour	Develop and deliver boating safety plans for Sydney Harbour and the Georges River to underpin waterway management and stakeholder safety.	2013
	b) Georges River		2012
6	Safe Boating Education and Communication Strategy 2012-2015	Develop and deliver a 3-year strategy to promote safe and responsible boating with an emphasis to include personal responsibility and to promote lifjacket use.	2012-15
7	National Maritime Safety Law	Implement National Maritime Safety Law for commercial vessels.	2013-16
BOAT STORAGE AND SAFE WATERWAYS ACCESS STRATEGY			
8	Boating Infrastructure Partnership Program	Develop partnership program to replace the Better Boating Program (which expires in 2014).	2013-14
9	Boat Storage Strategy	Develop a waterway-by-waterway plan to match boat storage capacity with forecast demand, commencing with Sydney Harbour.	2012-14
		Encourage development of dry-stack storage facilities on Sydney Harbour.	2012-14
		Conduct a trial of moving boat trailer parking to alternate off-road sites.	2012-13
10	Sydney Harbour Boating Destination Plan	Increase and promote 'destinations' for recreational boaters on Sydney Harbour.	2013
		Review the Commercial Marina Rent Procedure to create incentives for commercial marinas to support the Destinations Plan.	2012
REDUCING RED TAPE			
11	Boating Customer Reforms	Investigate harmonisation of roads and maritime licensing and registration procedures.	2012-13
12	Planning Review	Work with the Department of Planning & Infrastructure to reduce red tape regarding planning controls for maritime property.	2013-14
13	Moorings Review	Review existing policy and regulatory frameworks to improve consistency, minimise administrative burden and assess options for increasing mooring capacity.	2013-14
14	Wharf Access Policy	Establish a consistent policy framework for managing access to Sydney Harbour commuter ferry wharves.	2012
15	Maritime Property Policies and Procedures Review	Review existing RMS policies and procedures to improve consistency and transparency and minimise administrative burden.	2012-13
16	Streamline NSW Maritime Legislative Framework	Review existing legislation to create single instrument for maritime and waterways administration.	2013-14

BOATING SAFETY

Each year an estimated 1.5 million people go boating along the NSW coastline and on inland lakes rivers and estuaries. For many years in NSW, maritime agencies have conducted active communications and education programs with schools, community and industry organisations to highlight on-water risks and responsibilities and promote a culture of boating safety on NSW's waterways.

Boating Safety policy initiatives encompass a range of safety approaches with a particular focus on personal responsibility issues such as skipper responsibility and lifejackets.

Action 1: Lifejacket Awareness Campaign

Between mid 1999 and December 2011, only 15 of the 221 people killed in boating accidents in NSW were wearing lifejackets. Many of those killed could have survived had they been wearing a lifejacket.

Maritime stakeholders overwhelmingly identify the need to educate boaters on lifejacket wear rules, types of lifejackets available and how to maintain and service them.

The 2012-2013 boating season's safety campaign will focus on a major public awareness campaign to support behavioural change toward lifejacket wear.

Action 2: Lifejacket Wear Initiative

Maritime stakeholders have confirmed long-held assumptions on why many people do not wear lifejackets including complexity of regulatory requirements, comfort, costs, and often misguided perceptions of swimming ability.

A range of initiatives to promote lifejacket wear will be explored at a Lifejacket Forum during the 2012 Sydney International Boat Show. One initiative to be tested will be exploration of a life jacket 'Swap n Go' system, similar to the system adopted for LPG cylinders. A Registrations of Interest (ROI) process will be formally launched at the Boat Show to gauge industry interest and help shape the most effective delivery model.

Once the preferred scheme has been identified, an Expressions of Interest process will be held before the end of the year, with a view to commencing a select tender process early in 2013.

Action 3: Paddle Craft Safety Campaign

Paddle craft use does not require any form of licence or registration and are not included in licence or registration databases. As a result paddle craft users receive no compulsory education, training or examination of knowledge and there is no formal channel to communicate safety regulations and requirements.

A Paddle Craft Safety Campaign will be developed in conjunction with peak paddling bodies. A major focus of the campaign will be aimed at paddle craft visibility.

Action 4: On-water Compliance Reform

On-water compliance involves patrols by boating safety officers to monitor whether vessels are operating safely and complying with appropriate water traffic rules such as speed restrictions and vessel wash requirements on NSW coastal, off-shore and in-land waterways.

Existing policies and procedures relating to on-water compliance will be reviewed to ensure appropriate efficiency and effectiveness is achieved.

Action 5: Boating Safety Plan Framework

Boating Safety Plans are a guide to the access and shared use of a particular waterway and are designed to be responsive to changing conditions and boating patterns. A standard framework for developing safe boating plans that includes a statewide priority list to prepare new/ revised safe boating plans will be implemented.

Under the new approach, the draft Georges River Boating Safety Plan has been prepared and released for public consultation. Preparation for the development of a Sydney Harbour Boating Safety Plan is underway.

Action 6: Safe Boating Education and Communication Strategy 2012-2015

The current three year \$3million Boating Safety Education and Communication Plan for 2009-2012 supports the ongoing compliance efforts conducted by the network of boating safety officers across NSW and has delivered positive improvement to maritime safety.

The Safe Boating Education and Communication Strategy 2012-2015 will build on the previous Plan to include the promotion of safe and responsible boating with an emphasis on personal responsibility and lifejacket use. The program under the Strategy will be funded from the Waterways Fund at a budgeted cost of \$5 million.

As an adjunct to the Strategy, in partnership with the Boating Industry Association, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has identified the former pilot station at Watsons Bay as a potential site to establish a boating safety education centre.

Action 7: National Maritime Safety Law

The national system for commercial vessels provides a regulatory framework to support industry development, allowing vessels and crew to move seamlessly around the country to support business needs in a national market for commercial vessels. National Maritime safety laws, under a national system for commercial vessels will commence in 2013.

An industry consultation program is being prepared on the development and implementation of the system and new laws.

BOAT STORAGE AND SAFE WATERWAYS ACCESS STRATEGY

Boat ownership in NSW is forecast to increase at approximately 2.9% per year, creating a significant challenge in accommodating demand for both on-water and off-water boat storage facilities. In some areas excess capacity is available, but in others there are lengthy waiting lists.

Growing boat ownership will also increase demand for boating services and facilities including infrastructure which provides access to waterways. It is also recognised that the demand for boat storage has increased the number of boats being stored on trailers in residential streets.

The Boat Storage and Safe Waterways Access Strategy includes actions designed to increase the capacity of boat storage, waterways access and related facilities.

Action 8: Boating Infrastructure Partnership Program

Since 1998, the Better Boating Program (BBP) has provided more than \$35 million in grants to support more than 600 projects across the state including boat ramps, public wharves, public pontoon facilities, dinghy storage and sewage pump-out facilities. Maritime stakeholders have indicated strong support for continuation of a boating infrastructure grants program to replace the current BBP in 2014.

A Boating Infrastructure Partnership Program will build on the BBP by developing partnership programs with local government and boating organisations to expand the construction of safe and accessible public boat ramps, pontoons, boat trailer parking, sewage pump-out facilities throughout the State.

Action 9: Boat Storage Strategy

Boat ownership forecasts highlight an urgent need for a range of suitable boat storage options. In response, a comprehensive Boat Storage Strategy will be developed that considers boat storage capacity requirements in NSW on a waterway-by-waterways basis.

Starting with Sydney Harbour, the Strategy will explore options to encourage the development of a major dry-stack storage facility on the Harbour.

Under the Strategy, the Government will also provide assistance to help local Councils establish alternate off-road trailer boat parking facilities. Working with selected Sydney metropolitan councils, the Government will look to commence a trial in late 2012 to discourage on-road boat trailer parking in areas where alternate off-road sides are available.

Action 10: Sydney Harbour Boating Destination Plan

Maritime stakeholders recognised there is limited awareness among recreational boaters of suitable places to visit in Sydney Harbour. This is compounded by the limited availability of suitable destinations for recreational boaters to 'tie-up' vessels to use on-shore amenities and services.

Partnering with industry, a Sydney Harbour Boating Destination Plan will be developed to expand the number of boating 'destinations' on Sydney Harbour and inform boat users of boat servicing facilities, public amenities, leisure facilities, and passenger access points.

To support the Plan, a review of the Commercial Marina Rent Procedure will explore incentives for commercial marinas to become involved in the provision of quality facilities and destinations for boaters in Sydney Harbour while achieving sustainable support for the marina industry.

REDUCING RED TAPE

The Maritime Stakeholder Forum 2012 highlighted frustration with the maritime regulatory and policy framework and called on the Government to reduce red tape in order to help facilitate development of boating infrastructure and reduce the administrative burden on industry and the community.

Establishing a modern and responsive regulatory and policy framework will also support the Boat Storage and Safe Waterways Access Strategy by increasing the capacity and efficiency of existing maritime property and infrastructure.

Action 11: Boating Customer Reforms

Building on recent vehicle registration reforms, RMS will reduce the administrative burden on boat owners and licence holders by investigating options to harmonise roads and maritime licensing procedures. Options to be considered include the establishment of a single boating licence and the removal of boat registration labels.

Action 12: Planning Review

Maritime stakeholders have highlighted opportunities to reduce red tape by reviewing the current planning controls for maritime property. Transport for NSW will be working closely with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to progress these issues and reduce the administrative burden for property owners. A set of planning principles will also be developed to promote development of facilities that improve waterways access and boat storage.

Action 13: Moorings Review

RMS is responsible for the management of approximately 15,800 private moorings and 4,900 commercial moorings in NSW. In many areas there is insufficient mooring capacity to accommodate growing boat ownership demand.

Stakeholder feedback suggests that as well as the need to increase the total number of moorings, better use can be made of existing facilities through reforms to administration and compliance arrangements.

The Moorings Review will examine the ability of the existing NSW regulatory and policy framework to respond to future demand. The Review will consider options for increasing capacity through alternate mooring styles, administrative reforms and new technologies. Pricing arrangements will also be reviewed to ensure fairness and identify options for providing commercial incentives to improve market outcomes.

Action 14: Wharf Access Policy

RMS owns the 49 commuter ferry wharves located in Sydney Harbour. As the primary user, Sydney Ferries has priority access to the wharves for the purpose of delivering its timetabled services. RMS owns a further 20 wharves which have historically only been available to charter and tourist operators through an on-line wharf booking system.

The Government has committed to facilitating additional ferry services on Sydney Harbour on a cost-neutral basis. Establishing a consistent and transparent wharf access policy provides certainty to commercial operators in developing new service proposals. The Policy will include measures to support the proposed Sydney Harbour Destination Plan by identifying opportunities for increasing access for recreational boat users.

Action 15: Maritime Property Policies and Procedures Review

RMS has a range of existing policies and procedures governing the administration of agreements relating to the use and occupation of RMS owned land. Stakeholders have raised concerns about a lack of consistency and transparency across the various policies and principles, as well as the need to minimise red tape to help reduce administrative costs and promote investment. There is also a lack of an overall strategic framework setting out clear objectives and principles which are easily understood by stakeholders.

The Review will seek to establish a set of Policy Principles designed to improve transparency and consistency and support other elements of the Maritime Policy Agenda. The Policy Principles will then be used to assess each existing policy/procedure to determine its relevance and update as required. Consultation with key stakeholders, including through the Maritime Advisory Council, will be a key input to the development of the Policy Principles.

Action 16: Streamline NSW Maritime Legislative Framework

There are currently six Acts administered by RMS governing waterways and maritime activities in NSW, including legislation dating as far back as 1901. The complexity of the legislation is a source of regular confusion for stakeholders and presents administrative challenges to RMS.

A comprehensive review of the current maritime legislative framework will be undertaken to identify opportunities to streamline legislation and potentially create a single instrument for maritime and waterways administration.

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COVER: Newcastle Marina at dusk.
Image courtesy of Newcastle Tourism