



PORT PHILLIP CONSERVATION COUNCIL INC.

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PPCC Inc. Policy Statement No. 14

Marinas in or near Port Phillip

SUMMARY:

Examples of the many large marinas, which include large harbours for boats, in or with ready access to Port Phillip are stated below. Those in Port Phillip have, in varying degrees, interfered with the coastal processes of wave action and sand movement on the nearby coast; involved intrusive vehicle, parking and service impacts on the nearby land and sea, and have established a built environment and landscape of far less beauty than the previous natural coastal environment and landscape that has been lost. For those reasons, no further marinas should be built in Port Phillip. Marinas well inland, connected via existing waterways already used for boat traffic, such as the lower Yarra, can provide secure, calm moorings with much less conflict with Port Phillip's values. Existing marinas in Port Phillip should be managed to minimize their impact, and should be phased out where practicable.

DETAIL:

Existing Marinas: Marinas in Port Phillip include Blairgowrie Boat Harbour, Mornington Boat Harbour, Sandringham Yacht Harbour, Brighton Yacht Harbour, St Kilda Marina, St Kilda Yacht Harbour, Geelong Boat Harbour and Queenscliff Boat Harbour. Patterson Lakes Marina is 1 kilometre upstream from Port Phillip. Existing marinas can need extra commercial activities on site to subsidize their heavy costs, despite the large adverse impact their construction and operation have had on public finances.

Failed Marina Proposals: The 1969 Beaumaris Bay; 1973, 1983 and 1987 Sorrento; 1981 Portarlington (see Victoria's defunct *Port Bellarine Act 1981*); 1987 St Kilda; 1987 and 1997 Rosebud; 1988 Williamstown Rifle Range and 1991 Mornington proposals for marinas were all defeated following protests by citizens not wanting to see their public coastal areas degraded or monopolized by commercial constructions, or their taxes spent on subsidising wasteful expenditures for a minority of users unwilling to pay the full costs involved. The sites of those failed proposals are now much more attractive, widely used, and beneficial to their surrounding areas than they would have been if they had been fenced off for corporate monopolistic use. Marina advocates, sensing the disrepute the word "marina" has acquired, have coined the euphemism "safe harbour", but who would want to build an "unsafe" harbour?

Need for More Marinas is Misconceived: Victoria has belatedly required licensing of power boat operators, but many other boating safety reforms are overdue, and their impact on safety is likely to be far greater than a proliferation of marinas could provide. Light aircraft regulation has long required not only licensed, trained pilots and regularly examined aircraft, but has put emphasis on radio communications for weather and operational purposes, and on thorough use of meteorological forecasts. Aerodromes are not built every 100 km along the Australian coast, as pilots are expected to plan, anticipate and return if necessary. Boat operators should be required to use marine radios or mobile telephones, and not put to sea if forecasts are below minima

Boats launched from trailers at ramps, with their long off-season storage occurring well inland, are a less expensive and intrusive means of using large numbers of boats on popular coastlines like that of Port Phillip than are all-year-round marinas. Port Phillip's coast of mainly sandy beaches allows all small "off the beach" yachts and the predominant type of planing hull power boats to be easily and safely beached without having to travel further to a harbour in an emergency. Other vessels should be required to carry adequate anchors, lines, fittings and survival gear and rations for riding out stormy conditions. The cost of providing and policing these safety measures should come from boat owners and licensing revenue, and should be a great deal cheaper for everybody than building and maintaining marinas.

ADOPTION:

This PPCC Inc. Policy Statement No. 15 was adopted by a General Meeting of the Port Phillip Conservation Council Inc. on 21st October 2002.
