

Swansea channel update

The Swansea Channel will be open for business for Christmas/New Year cruising season. The New South Wales Government has let a tender for the dredging of the Channel. Work will commence before the end of November in the most critical area just to the north of the Pelican Airport. Once this area has been restored, an area near the drop-over will be dredged followed by Black Ned's Bay, a mooring area near the Swansea RSL.

The government has also indicated that work will begin shortly on developing a long term strategy for dredging the channel and other small ports. The BOA expects to contribute to this work.

The BOA Hunter Region Committee would like to thank Garry Edwards MP, Member for Swansea, for his support and commitment towards putting the dredging program into place.

We are confident that, by Christmas, the channel will provide buoyed passage of between two and a half and three metres from Pelican Marina to the drop-over.

Nevertheless, account should be taken of the tidal state when entering and leaving the channel, particularly seaward of the bridge. Tidal variation once inside the bridge is considerably less than that notified in tide tables, reducing to approximately 20cm at the drop-over. The lag at the drop-over is approximately two and a half hours after the time for Swansea Heads. For the less experienced, the guidance offered by Alan Lucas and others on crossing barred entrances is well worth reading. A recent hydrographic chart of the channel can be found on the NSW Maritime website:

<http://www.maritime.nsw.gov.au/publications/hydro.html>

Advice on bridge openings can be obtained by VHF from Marine Rescue Swansea. If assistance is required, contact Marine Rescue by VHF or or NSW Maritime Boating Officers on 0427 896 428 or 0418 976 166.

**DO NOT FORGET TO DON
YOUR LIFE JACKET BEFORE
ENTERING THE CHANNEL.**

Swansea Bridge opening times

WEEKDAYS

On the hour from 6am – 7pm. Bridge Operator requires 1 hour notice. Does not open on weekdays in peak.

WEEKENDS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Automatic opening at:

6am
7am
8am
4pm
5pm
6pm
7pm

NOTE: If bridge is required to be open after 7pm or before 6am – Bridge Operator requires 6 hours notice.

Bridge Operator contact details

Telephone 4971-3723

FRANK DOWNING Nov 2011



DATE: 23 December 2011

DREDGING SWANSEA CHANNEL TO CONTINUE IN JANUARY

Dredging the Swansea Channel is progressing, although slower than expected. As a result, dredging of the channel near Swan Bay has not been completed in time for the holiday season, the Hunter Region of the Boat Owners Association and Crown Lands said in a joint statement today. It will now be completed early in the New Year.

“Dredging of the section of the Channel near the southern entrance to Swan Bay started two weeks ago but rain, large high tides and operational circumstances means that work on this section will need to continue in January,” said Crown Lands General Manager, Graham Harding.

“We had hoped to complete this area of dredging by the end of December. However, the work done to date will enable this section of the channel to be cleared early in the New Year” Mr Harding said.

“Following the completion of work near Swan Bay, further dredging will be undertaken at the Dropover into Lake Macquarie and the entrance to Black Neds Bay.

“This relatively small dredging campaign was always aimed at providing some relief while a longer term approach to dredging is developed.

“In the New Year, Crown Lands will be meeting with the Boat Owners Association, Lake Macquarie City Council, NSW Maritime and other local stakeholders to start developing this long-term strategy.”

Boat Owners Association spokesman Frank Downing said, “We are disappointed that we don’t have the results we were expecting for the holiday period. Some members of the boating community with deeper draft vessels will also be disappointed that their plans have been disrupted. We accept, however, that water flow through the channel had been high due to recent heavy rains and seasonal large tides, which has added to the complexity of the dredging operation.”

“Vessels with significant draft should approach the area of shallow water near the southern entrance to Swan Bay at slack high water, approximately three to four hours after the advertised high tide due to the time lag of movement.

“Courtesy moorings are available on both sides of the Swansea Bridge to assist vessels waiting for a bridge opening or the tide.

“The Boat Owners Association will be very actively involved in developing a long-term dredging strategy with the government.”

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Sonia McKay, Regional Manager for NSW Maritime said “people should exercise caution while navigating Swansea Channel during the Christmas period. Navigation advice can be obtained over the holiday period from NSW Maritime’s Boating Safety Officers on 0418 976 166 or 0427 896 428 or VHF radio call sign “Maritime”.”

Please note NSW Maritime is part of Roads and Maritime Services

ENDS

For further information contact:

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