



March 2009

Newsletter

Boat Owners' Association of NSW Inc.
– Representing All Boaters –



EPIRBs AND PLBs - Some Practical Considerations

In February of this year, the 121.5 MHz distress beacon system was finally switched off. The only beacon technology relevant to recreational boat safety now involves those that operate at 406 MHz (albeit that the new beacons also incorporate a very low power 121.5 MHz homing signal). The new technology however is not just limited to a change in operating frequency. It also involves very significant changes to how the system works – changes that have produced a very much more robust and efficient means by which boaters can alert authorities to a distress situation. But because this is a considerably more sophisticated technology, it also provides for a number of choices in regard to the features of the various beacons available on the market – choices that need to take into consideration specific purpose and regulatory (NSW State Government) compliance. In order to assist in putting all this into

some sort of perspective, the following may be of interest.

Some Background on How 406 Beacons Operate:
The 406 MHz distress beacon system involves five components comprising:

- 406 MHz beacons – EPIRBs (emergency position indicating radio beacon) carried by vessels or PLBs (personal locator beacon) carried by persons,
- four polar orbiting low altitude (about 1000 km) satellites (LEOSAR system),
- four geostationary high altitude (about 36,000 km) satellites (GEOSAR system),
- local user terminals (LUTs) that download the distress data from the satellites and
- marine rescue coordination centres (MRCCs) that coordinate resources to effect a rescue.

When a beacon is activated, it immediately transmits a half second burst of data, the main component of which is its unique 15 character HEX identification code. Contained in the code are details concerning the country of registration and details of the vessel and/or owner to which the beacon is referable. Until the beacon dies (battery expires) or it is switched off, the beacon will retransmit this half second burst of data every 50 seconds. Perched 36,000 km above Australia, a GEOSAR satellite, acting as a repeater, will instantaneously download the received data to a LUT which, in turn, will relay it to MRCC in Canberra for validating and actioning. All this, the system can deliver within 5 minutes of beacon activation. But for search and rescue to be effective, it is also necessary to know where to look. If the beacon is GPS equipped, included in the bursts of data will be information that will tell MRCC exactly where the beacon is – within a search radius of about

0.5 nautical miles. And to the extent that the beacon will update the GPS position data every 20 minutes, it will also allow MRCC to calculate set and drift. If, however, the beacon is not GPS equipped then its position will be determined by one of the low altitude polar orbiting LEOSAR satellites. This is achieved by the satellite's ability to measure the Doppler shift of the beacon's signal (as the satellite hurtles by at 7 km per second) and the processing of that information to give two (mirror) possible positions. But that process can take much longer because (a) the time for the satellite to make a pass and (b) the time for the satellite to process the Doppler input and download it to the LUT. The nominal delay for the position to be confirmed by this process is 90 minutes and the position is accurate to within a search radius of about 2.3 nautical miles. And albeit that that this is not as tight as the almost instant positioning information provided by GPS equipped beacons, it is a whole lot better than the 12.5 nautical mile radius accuracy delivered by the now redundant 121.5 technology.



The COSPAS/SARSAT geostationary and polar orbiting constellations. Courtesy of www.cospas-sarsat.org

Choosing a Beacon: Subject to the overriding requirement that they comply with current Australian standards and carry a specific approval to that effect, there are a wide variety of 406 MHz beacons available for purchase. Broadly speaking however, all of them can be divided into two types – EPIRBs and PLBs. From an electronic perspective, both types are exactly the same. They both transmit the same data at exactly the same power output on exactly the same routine. The differences between them concern size, battery life and the ability of the EPIRB to float the right way up when in the water. A 406 EPIRB is not very large but it is relatively bulky - of such a size that it should either be mounted in its cradle to a fixed location on a vessel or stowed in a grab bag. A PLB on the other hand is very much smaller and specifically designed to be attached to a person. The battery life of an EPIRB must be such that it can

operate continuously for at least 48 hours whereas the requirement for a PLB is that it can operate continuously for at least 24 hours. When in the water, both types are required to float but, in the case of an EPIRB, it is required to float upright so that its antenna points directly to the sky. Logic would dictate, that for most sea going vessels, an EPIRB is the best choice. However, for smaller vessels such as tinnies, kayaks and various off the beach boats there are some compelling reasons why a PLB makes more sense.

Regulatory Issues: Since July 2008, NSW boating regulations have required that any vessel, greater than 8 meters in length, proceeding more than 2 nautical miles from shore, carry an EPIRB – an EPIRB being defined as a 406 MHz Australian Standards (AS/NZS 4280.1) approved distress beacon that has a minimum battery operating life of 48 hours and floats in the upright position – not a PLB which conforms to a different standard (AS/NZS 4280.2). Clearly, that makes good sense. But, from the end of March this year, that law will also extend to all vessels less than 8 meters in length. And, to the extent that smaller vessels putting to sea are more likely to get into difficulty, that too makes sense – well, almost. A problem with this extension of the law concerns practical issues dealing with the carrying and the deployment of an EPIRB – a problem that could be addressed by small vessels being allowed the option to carry a PLB attached to a person instead - as is the case in other jurisdictions such as the UK and the USA.

Need for Some Further Consideration: There are two issues that should have been considered in making the use of EPIRBs mandatory for vessels less than 8 meters – stowage and deployment. For many small vessels, the size of an EPIRB is such that appropriate stowage is either difficult or impossible. And to the extent that many incidents involving small vessels at sea concern overturning, swamping or sinking, it should also be recognised that there may be real issues for the crew (now in the water) getting access to the EPIRB which is appropriately stowed inside the boat. A larger vessel usually provides warning of its imminent demise and there will be time to gather up and deploy safety items such as the EPIRB. But in the case of smaller vessels (such as kayaks and tinnies), overturning, swamping or sinking will be a swift event and there will be little time to prepare. It is in this context that a PLB, appropriately attached to the crew, will be of

considerably greater assistance. By definition, it will not present a stowage problem and, in the event of an accident, the PLB will be attached to the boater for immediate activation. And if the PLB is GPS equipped, it will take only a one half second burst of transmission to tell MRCC in Canberra exactly where the person is – all within about 5 minutes of activation.

Misconceptions: One popular misconception is that all EPIRBs somehow deploy themselves and activate automatically – one of the advantages an EPIRB has over a PLB. That is not correct. Most EPIRBs are supplied with a mounting bracket that needs to be affixed to a bulkhead. For those that are water activated, the EPIRB will only activate when two conditions are satisfied – it has been removed from its bracket and it is in the water. If the unit is not equipped with a water activation feature, it must be removed from the bracket and switched on manually. There are EPIRBs available that will float free (when a vessel sinks) and automatically activate but two features of these units make them unsuitable for small vessels – the hydrostatic release housing in which they live until deployed is about half a meter in height (even more of a stowage issue) and release will not occur until the housing is at least a meter below the surface – not necessarily a problem because these units can be released manually but certainly a waste of money if the vessel, because it has reserve buoyancy, won't oblige the owner by sinking.

Another misconception is that, because a PLB will not float upright, it is incapable of functioning in a marine environment. This is also not correct. If attached to that part of a person that is out of the water or held out of the water, a PLB's ability to alert authorities within seconds is no different to that of an EPIRB. Evidence of their suitability for the marine environment, moreover, can be very well illustrated by the many successful ocean rescues that have been carried out in both Europe and North America using these smaller devices. In any event, if PLBs were unsuitable for the marine environment, why would Yachting Australia make such a device mandatory for all on deck crew competing in Category 1 and 2 sailing events?

Conclusion: 406 MHz distress beacons, in whatever form, are expensive devices that are designed to effect rapid assistance in the event of a boating accident. For larger vessels there are a number of

manufacturers supplying EPIRBs – all offering an array of options as to how the devices can be stowed, deployed and activated. For smaller vessels however, EPIRBs may not be appropriate. A more appropriate device would be a PLB. BOA is of the view that this is an issue that state regulators need to reconsider.

BIODIESEL – One BOA Member's Adventure.

Reading the BOA's last newsletter reminded Geoff Raebel of an experience he had about two years ago. "After putting about 30 litres of biodiesel in my yacht, I started the motor, dropped the mooring and proceeded on my way. After travelling about 300 meters down wind the engine stopped. Without hesitation I hoisted sail and clawed my way back to the mooring. The problem with the motor was quickly diagnosed - a fuel filter completely blocked up by a gooey mass." Geoff makes the suggestion that if boat owners choose to go with biodiesel they should drain and clean out their tanks before hand. "It would also be wise, once the change has been made, to stick with the one blend". But having given that advice to would be users of biodiesel, Geoff finishes off his note by indicating that he will be sticking to the non blended variety and giving biodiesel a miss!

PROTECTION AGAINST SHARK ATTACK

A number of recent shark attacks in the Sydney area (including Sydney Harbour) has raised concerns about the risks of entering the water unprotected. Yacht owners, for example, have been advised by yacht clubs to reconsider jumping over the side to clean the bottom of their boats before a yacht race. So is there any protection against these underwater monsters? Apparently there is and it comes in the form of a device that can be strapped to the wearer's ankle or, in the case of a surfer, the back of a surfboard.

Like Australia, South Africa is well known for its great white sharks – along with the menace they pose to swimmers and surfers. Of over 200 recorded attacks, more than 40 have been fatal. More alarmingly for the province of KwaZulu-Natal, it accounted for nearly 50% of these attacks and two thirds of the fatalities. And for the reason that its pristine beaches, lagoons and climate underpin a thriving tourist industry, KwaZulu-Natal made the

determination to do battle with the great white. Through an institution styled the Natal Sharks Board, specifically established to deal with the shark attack problem, South African scientists discovered that a certain electronic waveform repelled sharks. Detected by the shark through its sensory receptors located on its nose (known as Ampullae of Lorezini), the field causes unpleasant muscular spasms that result in the shark moving away – disappointed but not harmed. After many years of research and testing, the technology was incorporated into a product known as the Shark POD. But although it proved to be very successful in deterring sharks, the unit itself was both bulky and expensive.

So recognising a significant opportunity, the founders of a South Australian company styled Sea Change Technology (now Shark Shield Pty Ltd) negotiated a worldwide exclusive licensing agreement with the Natal Shark Board to utilise this unique technology to produce a range of shark deterrent products. The first of these, a device to protect divers, was launched in 2002. But since then the range of products available has expanded to include those for use by swimmers, surfers and snorkelers. The most popular devices are about the size of a couple of mobile phones, can be strapped to an ankle or the back of a surfboard and cost about \$700. Powered by a small rechargeable lithium iron battery, the operating cycle is understood to be about 7 hours. Many more products are understood to be in the pipeline according to the company's website at www.sharkshield.net including large arrays to protect beaches.

From an ecological perspective, BOA notes that this is good science – neither humans nor sharks are harmed.

NSW MARITIME TARGETS BOAT WASH OFFENDERS

Fifty-one skippers are counting the cost following NSW Maritime's state-wide operation targeting boat wash. Boating safety officers checked more than 700 vessels during the state-wide Don't Make Waves safety campaign conducted over the weekend of 21-22 February.

NSW Maritime general manager of Recreational Boating Brett Moore said that boat wash can be extremely dangerous. "Our Don't Make Waves

campaign was conducted to ensure the boating public understood the issue of wash and how to minimise its impact on other boaters and the environment," Mr Moore said. "While the number of fines represents less than 7 per cent of non-compliance, this is too high a figure and we'll be increasing our efforts in both education and enforcement."

In total, 746 vessels were checked, with 51 fines issued and 37 formal warnings given. South Coast boaters were the most considerate and Sydney Harbour and Murray River boaters topped the league table as the most inconsiderate:

- South Coast – 9 formal warnings
- Hawkesbury – 3 fines and 1 formal warning
- North Coast – 5 fines and 9 formal warnings
- Hunter – 9 fines and 1 formal warning
- Sydney Harbour – 14 fines and 5 formal warnings
- Murray River – 20 fines and 12 formal warnings.

"I congratulate South Coast boaters for their care and consideration of others and their knowledge of boating regulations," Mr Moore said. "When you see a no wash sign with a speed limit sign, you can't assume you can travel at the maximum speed indicated, your speed is dictated by the type of boat and the amount of wash you create – it's often necessary to travel at a slower speed to ensure your boat is not creating wash".

"Look behind – if your boat's creating wash and slow down."

MUSSELS IN A BUTTER WHITE WINE SAUCE – As Enjoyed Regularly on Red Herring Cruise Days.

Ingredients for approximately 4 people – vary to suit numbers

Ingredients

2 kilograms of fresh black mussels
1 Onion
1 Bunch of shallots
Half a bottle white wine
Approximately 100 grams of butter
Salt and pepper

Equipment

Apart from a stove,
1 large heavy saucepan
1 ladle or big spoon.

Method

Clean mussels by rubbing with hands or brush in a bucket of salt or fresh water.

Remove beard from each mussel.

Note – if any mussel is slightly open, tap it with a knife and it should close. **If the mussel doesn't close, check it by smell because it might be dead and should be discarded.**

Skin onion and cut off tops of shallots.

Finely chop onion and shallots and place in saucepan.

Add butter – cut into blocks.

Add salt and pepper to taste.

Add white wine. **Note – for quality assurance purposes, it is recommended to taste the remaining half of the bottle before and during cooking!**

Bring the soup to the boil while stirring.

Keep the soup boiling and add mussels and then cover the lid.

Regularly give the mussels and soup a vigorous stir until most or all of the mussels are open – usually within five to eight minutes.

Serving

Either place the saucepan on the table with crusty bread and let the crew dive in or place the mussels in individual serving bowls with a good slurp of soup in each.

Eating

Pick out a delectable mussel – break off the top shell and use it to sever the mussel meat from the bottom half of the shell. Use the same shell to scoop some of the soup into the bottom shell and then **Enjoy!**

The crusty bread dunked in the left over soup doesn't go down too badly either!

Richer Mix

The addition of a good slurp of cream gives the soup a rich and smooth texture if desired.

BIOFUELS – An Update.

In the December addition of this newsletter, BOA spoke about issues concerning the use of biofuels in marine applications. In particular, it highlighted the potential dangers of using ethanol blended petrol and raised a number of issues concerning the use of biodiesel. It also raised the possibility that, sometime down the track, the sale of blended fuels might become mandatory. The following summarises BOA's understanding of what is happening in NSW in this regard.

Changes to NSW Biofuels Legislation: Since the December newsletter was issued, a draft Bill, which will amend existing NSW biofuel legislation referable to the sale of biofuels in this state, has been circulated. BOA was invited to comment on the Bill and did so. And although, as expected, the proposed legislative changes are all about stepping up mandatory levels of biofuel blends over the next few years, the wording of the amending legislation appears to address some of the worst concerns of boat owners.

From BOA's reading of the Bill, the following represent those points relevant to boat owners:

1. The minimum volumetric ethanol content of the aggregate of all petrol sold in NSW is to rise from its present level of 2% to 4% by January 2010 and 6% by January 2011.
2. Subject to the exception set out in (3), the minimum ethanol content of all regular unleaded petrol (ULP) sold in NSW after July 2011 will be 10%.
3. An exception to the ethanol content requirement, in regard to the sale of ULP as described in (2), will apply to the sale of petrol for the fuelling of boats.
4. On a date yet to be announced (soon), the minimum volumetric biodiesel content of the aggregate of all diesel sold in NSW will be 2%. This will increase to 5% by January 2012.

What it means for boat owners appears to be as follows:

The Purchase of Ethanol Free ULP: As it concerns the purchase of ULP not containing ethanol, a

specific ethanol content exemption will allow for such fuel to be sold for the purpose of fuelling boats. But for the obvious reason that petrol stations won't be stocking such fuel, it will be up to boat owners to make sure that it is the only petrol sold by their marina or yacht club. If a petrol station is the only place you are able to purchase petrol for your boat, ethanol free blends will still be available (for the foreseeable future) in the form of petrol with higher octane ratings. It maybe a bit more expensive and do nothing to improve engine performance, but it sure beats damaging your motor and/or fuel system.

And just in case ethanol starts to be added to other grades of petrol sold at petrol stations, it should be noted that Federal law (a) limits the maximum amount of ethanol blend in all petrol to 10% and (b) requires that ethanol blended petrol be labelled to indicate that it contains ethanol.

The Purchase of Biodiesel Free Diesel: The introduction of regulations concerning minimum biodiesel content will be on a volumetric basis. What that means is that, for any given period, the amount of biodiesel sold, as a percentage of all diesel sold, must be no less than that required under the regulation – 2% by (probably) year end 2009 and 5% by 2012. Federal law provides for the sale of diesel containing up to 5% biodiesel without labelling. However, for the reason that with specific Ministerial approval higher blends such as B20 (with labelling) can also be supplied, the sale of these higher blends could offset diesel not containing biodiesel sold to boaters in respect to the meeting of NSW volumetric biodiesel content requirements.

Notwithstanding the vast amount of positive information concerning biodiesel, issues still remain as to its suitability for some marine applications. Of particular concern is the fuel's poor long term storage characteristic – a real issue for those boats with long fuel cycles such as sailing boats. The two main contributors to the breakdown of biodiesel concern its poor oxidation stability and its inherent characteristic of being an excellent medium for microbial growth. Even in concentrations as low as 5%, such breakdowns can lead to accelerated engine wear, break down of the engine lubrication oils and blockages in fuel systems. These are concerns raised not by those that have a vested interest in promoting biofuels but by oil companies required to warrant the blended product, engine manufacturers required to warrant engine performance and insurers who

underwrite associated risks. To that end, BOA strongly recommends that, until the collective concerns associated with biofuels have been fully mitigated, BOA members should make sure that the diesel sold at their marina or yacht club does not contain biodiesel. And to the extent that Federal law allows for biodiesel blends up to 5% to be sold without labelling, these arrangements should be contractual.

Conclusion: Ensure that your marina or yacht club only buys and sells ethanol free petrol and biodiesel free diesel. This is matter concerning the safety of vessels at sea. Ensure that those concerned understand that!

BOA TO OPEN MEMBERSHIP TO BOATING CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The current constitution of the Boat Owners Association of NSW only permits private member individual membership.

As the peak body for recreational boating in NSW, the BOA has recognised the increasing pressure on our waterways. It also recognises that many boating associations and boating club committees are experiencing changes which adversely affect their particular area of boating activity but, in regard to which, no representation is ever requested or is ever likely to be entertained. At the same time, many sailing clubs are having difficulties with government – their voices are simply not being heard. This is not a surprise when we find that state and national yachting administrations are dependent on government funding and sometimes have a government sports department as their landlord. Are they free to speak out?

BOA has listened to community boating representatives who have asked for an umbrella body to represent them as one voice. The BOA Committee believes that it is time to act.

At its March meeting, the BOA Committee met with Murray Clarke, a champion coxswain and coach, a long serving member of the NSW Rowing Association and a passionate advocate of a "fair go for rowers". Murray provided the Committee with an insight into the problems faced by not only rowers every day but also other non-motor water craft such as small yachts, sailing and rowing dinghies, dragon

boats, and paddle skis. These craft, with next to no freeboard, are sharing the congested waterway with large powerful motorboats many of which have drivers that are completely oblivious of the mayhem they create in their wash.

What is required here is mutual understanding and respect by all users of the waterways. In this regard, BOA strongly supports NSW Maritime's "You're the Skipper – You're Responsible" and a policy of education before regulation. BOA also believes that by coming together with a single voice on projects such as "Stop the Wash", all boaters will have considerably more success with the media and boating education.

Statistics reveal that more and more people are enjoying Sydney's waterways including Port Hacking, Pittwater, Sydney Harbour and Lake Macquarie in bigger and bigger boats. And this trend will continue. BOA recognises that all boaters need to coexist, be they sailors, rowers, paddlers or power boat drivers. In its view, BOA believes much more can be done to represent all boaters more effectively if all boaters act with one voice.

To that end, the BOA Committee will, at its next meeting, consider a resolution under Part I -3(A) of the association rules 2002 to include club membership and association membership for an annual fee as set by the Committee under Part II-10(1) with such membership carrying one vote per club or association at Committee meetings.

The benefits of such membership would include:

- ready access to an expert committee prepared to act on the club's or association's behalf,
- a greater awareness of matters concerning all boaters and
- a means through which issues concerning the club or association can be more effectively represented.

Clubs or associations that would like to discuss joining the BOA are invited to contact either:

Michael Chapman, BOA President
Email: chappo@bigpond.net.au or,

David Lyall, BOA Vice President
Email: davidlyall@optusnet.com.au

SAILING OR RACING – the obligation to rescue is the same

In December of last year, on a blustery day at the mouth of Pittwater, an incident took place that should require some yachtsmen to have a long rethink about what yacht racing is all about.

In a scheduled race, conducted by a long established club in Pittwater, its open division of yachts was to round a "mark" off West Head (the mouth of Pittwater and Hawkesbury River) when one of the yachts, a Young 88, had the misfortune to snag its spinnaker around the top of the mast and forestay. This caused the boat to lay over on its side and sail out of control straight for the rocks.

In a crisis such as this, the obvious action is to try and regain control and clear the damage without the luxury of going below to the marine radio.

For about five minutes, with the starboard gunwale under water, the crew called for assistance without any acknowledgement. The yacht was clearly in distress - eventually ending up on the rocks. Apparently others of the racing fleet were passing nearby and even later commented, "What were you doing?" **BUT** – here is the irony of the situation – not one of the skippers or crew on the nearby yachts, in close competitive proximity, offered assistance or even bothered to call the Club or rescue organizations by radio or mobile phone.

Is racing becoming more important than the basic rules of seamanship and consideration for the safety of other boaters? What happened to the long established duty to rescue in a local emergency? Is that to be left to the volunteer services?

BOA has since been advised that the particular Club has now brought to the attention of its yachting members the basic rules of seamanship and instigated penalties for future breaches.

Remember yacht skippers – during a race, if it is prudent to offer assistance to any yacht boat or person in difficulties, or even standby until danger is avoided, you have redress with time allowances whilst undertaking such assistance.

Obviously, in the above incident, to drop sails, try to go alongside or attempt a tow would possibly have been unwarranted but a call on the open channel or Club frequency or a call to the Club on a crewmember's mobile phone may have brought help or at least reassurance to the stressed skipper and crew of the distressed yacht.

Remember boating is a pleasure and rules and obligations still exist on the water.

To offer assistance to others in trouble is a basic accepted rule unless the rendering of assistance places the rescuing vessel and crew in serious and imminent danger.

Keep in mind it may happen to you one day and you may be the one screaming for assistance.

MARINE PESTS – Stopping underwater “rabbits” spreading

Australians understand the impact the rabbit has on our environment but our waterways are equally vulnerable to being over-run by introduced marine plants and animals, with devastating consequences. Just like land pests, such as rabbits and foxes, most marine pests reproduce rapidly, are opportunistic eaters and spread widely. Marine pests prey on native species, steal their food, take over their habitats and destroy their breeding areas.

Marine pests can also have severe impacts on maritime industries, including fisheries and aquaculture, as well as our recreational past-times such as recreational boating and fishing.

Marine pests can affect your boat

- They damage the paint and hull where they attach
- They increase drag and therefore fuel costs
- They increase maintenance costs
- They clog pipes, motors or propellers causing engine overheating

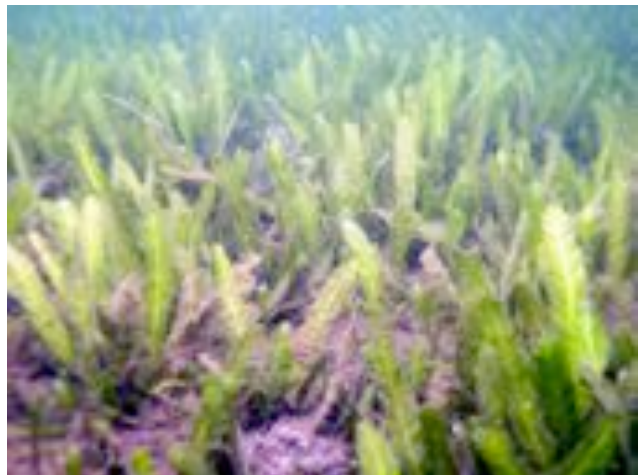
Marine pests can affect your fishing

- They increase pressure on fish populations by competing for food, damaging their habitats, or preying on them
- The Northern Pacific sea star can even steal your bait!

Marine pests are typically non-native species that arrive from overseas, however some pest species are native to other parts of the Australian coast and can go on to become a pest in another location. Marine pests have been introduced into Australian waters in various ways including in ballast waters, attached to the hulls of international ships or recreational boats, or imported as aquarium or aquaculture species.

Boats, yachts, dinghies and cruisers can also easily carry new pests into pristine pest-free areas – stuck to the hull, tangled in nets, rods, propellers or anchors, held in damp burley buckets, bilge, pipes, anchor wells etc. And once a pest arrives, it is almost impossible to get rid of. Any eradication attempts are very costly and can have drastic environmental effects.

There are a number of pests already present in Sydney and along the NSW and Victorian coasts. The pest seaweed *Caulerpa taxifolia* has already become established in Sydney and on the Central and South Coasts and action needs to be taken to avoid other pest species arriving and becoming established in our estuaries. A recent study identified key pests which have a high risk of being transferred to Sydney's waterways by boating traffic from southern NSW and other states such as the Asian bag mussel, Northern Pacific sea star, European/ green shore crab and Japanese kelp.



Pest seaweed *Caulerpa Taxifolia*. Courtesy of NSW Department of Primary Industry

In 2008 the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (SMCMA) with NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), conducted a voluntary online survey of NSW boat owners, to determine the potential of recreational boats to transport marine pests in NSW estuaries. Over 1650

NSW boat owners completed the survey, allowing valuable data to be collected and your opinions to be heard. The survey results were used to inform a comprehensive marine pest risk assessment, looking at all means of transport for marine pests.

How Can Boat Owners Assist:

1. Keep your boat and fishing gear clean to help stop the spread of marine pests and
2. Check and clean your boat regularly to make sure you are not spreading pests.

More Information: A booklet is available with tips to keep your boat and gear free of marine pests and how to identify pests. Pick up a booklet at your local marina, bait and tackle store, NSW Maritime or NSW DPI offices. You can also visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/pest-diseases.

This marine pests educational program is being run as part of a Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority (SMCMA) project, with the assistance of NSW Maritime, NSW Department of Primary Industries, the Boating Industry Association of NSW (BIA), the Boat Owners Association of NSW (BOA), and Coastcare.

NSW recreational boat owner survey – marine pests

In February 2008, the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority conducted a voluntary recreational boat owner survey in NSW. The boat owner survey showed that Lake Macquarie, Pittwater, Hawkesbury, Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) and Botany Bay are well linked by recreational boat traffic. Only 16% of respondents travelled outside of NSW with their vessels. The most popular interstate destinations were, in order, the Gold Coast (Southport), Hamilton Island, Hobart, the Whitsundays, Mooloolaba, Gold Coast and Airlie Beach. Only 2% of respondents travelled overseas and most went to Noumea or Auckland. The majority of boat owners who keep their boats moored, at a berth, or a jetty, antifoul their boats every 12 months (69%), or every 18 months (18%). Only 2% indicated that they never antifoul their boats.

A number of boat owners indicated their lack of awareness about the threat of marine pests highlighting the need for a number of initiatives

including a comprehensive education program, signage at areas for launching, adequate wash down and pump out facilities at boat ramps, and compulsory wash down requirements. Many respondents were not even sure what constituted a marine pest and were unaware that species native to other parts of Australia could also be considered to be introduced. Some boat owners also confused dangerous animals or animals which sting such as sting rays, jellyfish, and razor shells, with pests.

The survey results have been used to inform a comprehensive marine pest risk assessment (including other means of transporting marine pests) and an education program being conducted by the SMCMA for boat owners and recreational fishers in the Sydney Metropolitan region.

For more information on the boat owner survey or the risk assessment please visit the SMCMA website at: www.sydney.cma.nsw.gov.au

NSW MARITIME MOVES TO SOUTH NOWRA

NSW Maritime recreational boating operational customer service centre is moving to South Nowra.

The Bombaderry office will close on Sunday 8 March, with NSW Maritime's new office at Unit 1, 17 Bellevue Street, South Nowra opening for business on Monday 9 March.

The new phone number for NSW Maritime's operational customer service centre is 02 4421 0080.

GOLD MEMBERSHIP

BOA, under both Association Rules (2002) and accepted practice, have accepted membership from not only boat owners but also those who are interested in boating and matters aquatic.

The rule, under Part II- 4(b)(ii), qualifies for membership those who "participate or intend to participate in private boating in New South Wales" provides for a broad coverage of membership participation.

In December, a letter was received from a long standing member who, upon selling his boat, offered

not to renew his membership. This offer caused considerable discussion in Committee where it was considered a pity that such a decision, which apparently was not taken lightly, caused a long time boater to lose contact.

In recent years, as very well illustrated by the BOA's dealings with NSW Maritime on issues regarding our waterfront members, it has been made very clear that to be a member of the BOA you - **Don't Have to Own a Boat**

After further consideration, it was agreed unanimously that, under the powers of the Committee, recognition of long time membership be acknowledged through the creation of a "Gold Membership" with all rights and privileges of normal membership but at a reduced yearly fee of \$10 subject to application and a nominal previous membership of twenty years.

The Committee is pleased to announce that, in accordance with this decision, Mr. Kieth Asboe is now recorded as the first "Gold Member" of BOA of NSW.

NEWS FROM THE HUNTER REGION

Swansea Channel

It is of great concern to all NSW boaters that the NSW government is seemingly relinquishing their direct responsibility to maintain safe navigation of Swansea Channel.

A press release by the Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, on the 17th December 2008 stated quote: "without private sector involvement, dredging of the waterway is unlikely to be achievable". To gauge private sector interest, the DoL called for expressions of interest (EOI) on February 28th. The EOI document procedure's time table indicates that, assuming private involvement is obtained, dredging would not commence until the last quarter of 2009.

See below the Program Time Table, page 7 from LoD's EOI tender document.

3.1 Indicative Program. Following review of the EOI received, Lands intends to seek detailed proposals or

tenders from one or more short-listed Proponents. An indicative program for the project is as follows:

<i>Call for EOI</i>	<i>Late February 2009</i>
<i>Closing date for Submissions of EOI</i>	<i>2pm Tuesday 31 March 2009</i>
<i>Evaluate Expressions of Interest (EOI)</i>	<i>Early May 2009</i>
<i>Invite RDP from short-listed Proponents</i>	<i>Mid June 2009</i>
<i>Submit RDP</i>	<i>Late July 2009</i>
<i>Evaluate Detailed Proposals</i>	<i>Late August 2009</i>
<i>Negotiations and Contract Agreement</i>	<i>September/October 2009</i>

While private sector involvement, aimed at maintaining safe navigation of the channel, would be a positive outcome, the EOI time table, even if successful, doesn't address the urgent need to dredge the shoaled areas now. The current situation is one of continuing loss of depth over shoals ranging 1.6 m to 1.8 m depending on tidal range and atmospheric pressures. This has resulted in a large number of moderate draft ocean going vessels being landlocked. Exit and entry is only possible by heeling vessels over and dragging them across the shoals either by the Coastal Patrol, private vessels or NSW Maritime. For example, on the 25/2/09, seven yachts returning from a cruise to Pittwater had to be heeled and dragged over by a Coastal Patrol vessel on a 1.71m high tide, when transiting the channel.



This is not safe navigation.

In addition, two commercial cruise vessels, currently requiring out of water survey by NSW Maritime, are landlocked and under threat of suspension of their operating approval if such out of water surveys are not carried out in the immediate future.

These vessels bring tourists from outside the region contributing to the local economy. In addition to this

issue, there is an additional loss to the local economy as visiting vessels in the holiday period are bypassing Lake Macquarie due to uncertainty of channel depth.

The photo below of the shoaling in the channel, taken in January 2009, clearly identifies the area where interim dredging is required prior to a successful outcome to LoD EOI



January 2009 Arrows indicate the main shoal locations at 1.6-1.8m

The four monthly hydrographic depth survey is carried out by NSW Maritime and has provided data identifying the deepest water over the shoals in the channel. BSOs have assisted channel navigation by rerouting markers where practical. This rerouting activity has little effect due to the continuing loss of depth.

Even if the DoL is successful in awarding a contract to the private sector to dredge the channel, the evaluation time table of the EOI to “negotiate a contract agreement” (September/October 2009) plus the time factor for the contractor to set up dredging, washing and screening equipment, places doubt that actual dredging would occur in 2009.

Finally whether or not a contract is awarded, the DoL must plan to carry out dredging in the shoaled areas immediately to improve navigation as the current unsafe navigation is unacceptable.

Environmentally Friendly Moorings

At a recent NSW Maritime User Group meeting a manufacturer of EFMs explained the workings of their units. The cost of installation is about 25% greater than chain and block moorings and the annual inspection, including the spring service exchange assembly, is about 40% greater. The service

exchange spring assembly has to be removed on the bottom under water, requiring a diver. The manufacturer stated, “The system has been engineer certified to Australian standards with a SWL equivalent to that achieved by a 2.5 tonne dump weight mooring.”

Sponsor Recognition

The BOA Hunter Region wishes to recognise the following sponsors that offer discounts to all BOA members.

Lifestyle Marine at Toronto, offer a 10% discount to BOA members on slipping fees and on their already competitive chandlery prices, excluding items on special.

Phone: (02) 49591444

Coulin Marine Trim at Marks Point offer 10% discount on repairs to dodgers and covers etc.

Phone: (02) 49453322 Mob: 0414453321.

Alkira Mooring Services offers 10% off material costs for mooring maintenance.

Mob: 0412336692 or 0415318747

Mr.Moorings offers 10% off material cost for mooring maintenance.

Phone (02) 49751779 Mob: 0414351779

To obtain these discounts, membership cards must be shown.

BOA of NSW COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS

A summary of items dealt with at the monthly meetings of your committee for the benefit of members and the boating public

December 2008

From the Chairman's (President's) Report:

- Report on attendance and participation at the second NSW Maritime Stakeholder's meeting - presentation of BOA's four top safety points:
 - (a) keep a proper lookout
 - (b) keep to the right
 - (c) avoid obstacles and other boats
 - (d) if in doubt, wear a life jacketAlso drew attention to need for more hard stand facilities for boat owners to carry out their own

work (economic recession) and concessions for commercial marina lessees providing public access etc.

- The President and Vice President spoke to the Minister about better boating infrastructure.
- The concerns of masthead tri-colour lights in Sydney Harbour again discussed and waiting on NSW Maritime.

Matters Requiring Action or Follow Up:

- Arrangements made to upgrade the BOA website.

Treasurer's Report:

- Our finances are still secure.
- Questions were raised as to why BOA, as a recognised advisory body, could not receive funds from the Government. The President expressed his view that it was better not to become subservient to Government but to improve relationship with industry and seek funding from that source.

Correspondence:

- Input requested from NSW Maritime on the Clyde Estuary Safe Boating Plan 2008-12. Referred to South Coast BOA Representative.

Reports:

- A request from Tweed Heads re boat ramps and private jetties. The President is replying!
- A letter from a long term member relinquishing his membership – see General Business.

Newsletter/AFLOAT:

- Articles for the December issue will include biofuels, disposal of flares, seagrass friendly moorings and other items of interest.

Woodford Bay Slipway:

- Reported that the repairs to the slipway are almost complete.

Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations:

The amalgamation of the VMRs is proceeding well under the chairpersonship of Dianne Beamer.

Membership/Application for Membership:

- Twenty new members accepted. Membership now stands at 801.

Dredging and Boat Launching Facilities:

- Projects under NSW Maritime “better boating” program are proceeding in Sydney Harbour and BOA is pursuing the same 100% funding for the rest of the State.
- The Swansea Channel at Lake Macquarie came under discussion again and concern was expressed on more areas of shoaling in essential navigation channels.

Jervis Bay:

- Despite considerable publicity in Afloat, the drive for facilities for boat owners in Jervis Bay is dormant.

RVAG:

- At the last NSW Maritime Recreational Vessel Advisory Group meeting, an emotional appeal was made by the father of a young girl who was killed in the well publicised boating accident that occurred under the harbour bridge. This accident has had some positive affect on action to be taken when such an incidents occur.

Waterfront Action Group (WAG):

- Membership and funding, both of which are increasing, is facilitating the continued effort to achieve fairness in regard to waterfront rentals.

Topic of The Day:

- The issues of sewerage discharge and relevant legislation was discussed in detail and it was considered that a publicity revival would be appropriate.

General Business:

- The Committee discussed membership for members relinquishing their membership due to age or sale of vessel. It was agreed that any such member, with at least a 20 year membership, would be offered “Gold Membership” at a nominal fee of \$10.

- The proposal for a special general meeting at the February meeting was agreed to.

February 2009.

From the Chairman's (President's) Report:

- Issues concerning the use of EPIRBs and personal locator beacons (PLBs) have raised a number of concerns that will be forwarded to NSW Maritime and publicised in Afloat.
- Spit Bridge openings or not openings have caused severe inconvenience to some members. A letter has been sent to the RTA and NSW Maritime and the matter is being pursued together with suggestions for breakdown procedures.
- Lyne Park Rose Bay Boat Ramp. Following comments from a new member, approaches have been made to NSW Maritime and the local council to address the issues raised.
- BOA/WAG review of rate of return (waterfront) rentals: Agreed that the President would meet with the Minister to try and resolve the deadlock in negotiations.
- Marine Neighbourhood Watch: Concern on the resignation of a Pittwater area coordinator. All help offered by the BOA.
- Boat Storage Strategy: Another study by a consultant for NSW Maritime – BOA will be represented at all “workshop” sessions.
- Administration of BOA: Guidelines and duties agreed to for the more efficient and cost effective methods of handling the administrative workload.

Treasurer's Report:

- Detailed report accepted.

Hunter Region Report:

- Sponsorship by Lifestyle Marine has regrettably ceased.
- Sponsors offering discounts to BOA members continue – Lifestyle Marine offering 10% off slipping and chandlery, Alkira Mooring Services 10% off material costs for mooring repairs and Mr Mooring the same.
- Suggested that a CD of all Hunter Region boat ramps and facilities be offered to BOA members at a nominal price.

- Swansea Channel: Still no acceptable action. The President and Hunter Region Representative to meet with the Minister.

Correspondence:

- Invitations for BOA to participate in the NSW Boat Storage workshops to be held in Sydney, Newcastle, Coffs Harbour and Batemans Bay. Representation arranged.
- Letter from National Parks and Wildlife seeking a nomination from the BOA for the NPWL Advisory Council. Committee member and Councillor Stuart Burley nominated.

Newsletter and Afloat:

- Articles for next issue of the Newsletter to include those on EPIRBs and PLBs, the Spit Bridge, Marine Pests and Biofuels.
- Recommended that BOA members be entitled to a free inclusion of their business card in BOA newsletters.

BOA Website:

- Noted was the vast improvement to the website and thanks to those responsible for the upgrade.

Woodford Bay Slipway:

- Reported that the repairs to the slipway are almost complete.

Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations:

- The amalgamation (integration) is proceeding.

NSW Government Ministers:

- The President has had a meeting with the Minister to discuss the waterfront rental issues.

Local Government:

- Concern on action taken by Pittwater Council on restrictions placed on a Pittwater sailing club in regard to off street parking. Negotiations are ongoing.

Membership/Applications for Membership:

- Fifteen new members were accepted and two were reinstated.

Dredging and Boat Launching Facilities:

- Meeting planned between BOA and NSW Maritime for the Rose Bay ramp and facilities.

Marketing:

- A proposal for a BOA pennant was tabled and will be discussed at the next meeting.

Jervis Bay:

- Despite considerable publicity in Afloat, the drive for facilities for boat owners in Jervis Bay remains dormant.

RVAG:

- NSW Maritime incidents report detailing recreational boating incidents (accidents) for the previous year were tabled and discussed.

Topic of The Day:

- Jaap Rhemrev and Jack Garaty were unanimously appointed to lifelong membership status.



Jaap Rhemrev receives his Life Membership from BOA President Michael Chapman



Jack Garaty receives his Life Membership from BOA President Michael Chapman

Special Recognition and Vote of Appreciation:

- The Committee unanimously agreed that the BOA should record a special vote of appreciation for the advice and leadership provided by David and Lyall and Peter Lubrano.

General Business:

- A discussion paper on the possible formation of a combined recreational maritime advisory council was tabled and discussed with further thoughts to be aired at the next meeting.
- The matter of mooring maintenance and “breakaways” was discussed and it was confirmed that NSW Maritime was taking action against offenders.
- Confirmed that marine radio was still an existing project.

March 2009

From the Chairman’s (President’s) Report:

- BOA will act as an “umbrella” organisation for passive boaters which will increase membership and negotiating power.
- A meeting is scheduled with State MPs to discuss future maritime policy matters.
- Life Jackets: Meetings and discussion still ongoing. BOA’s policy of education rather than legislation still a prime driver. Other matters such as size and types under close investigation and consideration.

- Gosford/Brisbane Waters REP: Draft plan under consideration for a drive to retain the “working harbour”.
- Silverwater Bridge public boat ramp upgrade: Scheduled meeting with Auburn Council on site to discuss and advise on all requirement aspects of the proposal.
- Dredging of Swansea Channel: Approaches to the Minister by both Jack Garaty and the President to be followed up by representation to the NSW Maritime General Council and the Maritime Minister’s Advisory Council.
- EPIRBs and PLBs offshore: Ongoing consideration with input into the recent editorial of Afloat.
- Double dipping on charges for commercial moorings by NSW Maritime: BOA is assisting an industry challenge to restore common sense in regard to NSW Government overcharging.
- Boat Storage Strategy NSW: Workshop planning meetings attended by the President, Vice President and at least five other BOA committee members in Sydney, Newcastle, South Coast and North Coast.

Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

- The decision to create a “Gold Membership” for members with twenty years of membership was unanimously endorsed.
- Clarification of the voting rights of elected members of BOA sub committees was endorsed - such members attending the monthly committee meetings entitled to the normal one vote.

Treasurer’s Report:

- The Committee is desperate to find a volunteer to assist or replace the current Treasurer who, due to health reasons, wishes to hand over the reins at the earliest opportunity.

Hunter Region Report:

- No report as BOA Hunter Region only meets bi-monthly.

Correspondence:

- Stuart Burley nominated for a position to the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council.
- An approach from Dockside Buyers Group offering discount systems to be followed up.

- Other minor correspondence considered and dealt with.

Newsletter and Afloat:

- Articles for next issue of the Newsletter to include those on EPIRBs and PLBs, the Spit Bridge, Marine Pests and Biofuels.

BOA Website:

- The vast improvements to the website were noted and those concerned thanked for their efforts.

Woodford Bay Slipway:

- Repairs to the slipway have now been completed.

Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisations:

- Captain Ken McManus, RVCP’s Public Relations and Marketing Officer addressed the meeting on the progress of the amalgamation and answered questions from around the table.

Local Government:

- NSW Maritime has now announced grants for waterfront infrastructure improvements that BOA has assisted numerous local councils in applying for.

Membership/Applications for Membership:

- Ten new members have been accepted.

Dredging and Boat Launching Facilities:

- Planned meeting between BOA and NSW Maritime in regard to the Rose Bay boat ramp and facilities still to be held.

Marketing:

- Deferred due to shortage of time.

Jervis Bay:

- BOA’s work and studies to be forwarded to the Minister for Lands.

RVAG:

- NSW Maritime Recreational Vessels Advisory Group minutes tabled and discussed.

Waterfront Action Group (WAG):

- WAG has written to the CEO of NSW Maritime requesting a hold on notices. Department of Lands has now acknowledged correspondence.
- A drive for more members and ongoing errors in the calculation of waterfront rentals may lead to a class action.

National Maritime Safety Council (NMSC):

- The Vice President has received an invitation to attend the “Summit Down Under” in May on the Gold Coast. The NMSC were advised that BOA is a volunteer organisation and its member fees could not be used to fund such excursions - attendance by BOA would only be considered if the NMSC paid all travel and accommodation expenses.

Topic of The Day:

- Murray Clarke, representing the NSW Rowing Association, addressed the meeting in regard to a number of issues but in particular on the matter of the association’s “Stop Wash” campaign. He welcomed the idea of amalgamation of the associations for the purpose of adding more clout in regard to the effort required to producing better outcomes for all boaters. Questions from around the table were lively and constructive.

General Business:

- Information was tabled and discussed about an electric wave shark shield device, which is understood to protect swimmers from shark attack. It was agreed that an article on this subject should be included in the next BOA Newsletter.

More details and information are available from the minutes of the meetings and members are reminded they are welcome to attend any Committee meeting, as an observer, if they wish to do so.

RESULTS of SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

On Tuesday February 3, a special general meeting was held to give consideration to three motions concerning the Yearly Audit, the Membership Secretary and Committee Member Numbers. During that meeting each motion was discussed and voted upon. All of the motions were carried unanimously. Details of the meeting and the specific notices of motion were included as an insert with the mailing of the December Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2009/2010

The BOA is a voluntary organization that relies on subscriptions to operate and represent boat owners and other specific groups. As a member of BOA:

- You have ready access to an expert committee prepared to act on boating issues
- You are made aware of matters affecting boaters and action taken by BOA through our regular newsletter
- You have a voice – a means to act to promote the maximum enjoyment for responsible boating.

During the past year, the BOA has been very busy in representing boat owners and other groups in respect to a very large number of issues at both private and Government level. If you are not a member, take the time to join by filling out an application form which can be found on our website at **www.boaters.org.au**. If you are a member, please take the time to check if you have sent off your renewal, which is due by 1 April 2009. BOA thanks those that have already renewed their membership!

BOA NEWSLETTER is the quarterly newsletter of the Boat Owners Association of NSW.

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Printed by: Contact & Clarendon Printing
Email: www.contactprint.com.au

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