

# USE AND MANAGEMENT OF COASTAL CROWN LAND FOR MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE



Land and Property Management Authority  
Land and Property Information



## Coastal assets and responsibilities

Crown land in the coastal zone is of particular importance to the NSW community. Most open coast beaches are Crown Land, together with a multitude of reserves that provide public access to rivers, estuaries and harbour foreshores. The beds of most waterways are Crown Land, together with the sea bed to the three nautical mile state limit.

Over one-third of the state's caravan parks are on Crown Land, many of which are located in the coastal zone, together with the majority of the sixteen NSW state parks and over 30,000 other reserves for public recreation, environmental protection and conservation and other public uses.

The Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA) is directly responsible for much of the state's regional maritime infrastructure and administers a multitude of waterfront and nearby tenures, including jetties and moorings, marinas, slipways and commercial enterprises.

## Scope of maritime infrastructure

Regional maritime infrastructure under the responsibility of LPMA extends from Eden to Tweed Heads and includes 25 minor ports and 21 trained river entrances (including breakwaters), fourteen lighthouses, eight hard rock quarries and the Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Project together with other in-river and estuarine physical structures.

These structures play a fundamental role in public safety, access and use of land and water assets for community and business purposes and the protection and maintenance of coastal amenity and environmental enhancement.

This infrastructure has an estimated replacement value of over \$1.5 billion.

Key issues associated with this infrastructure include:

- due to its age and location, much of it is degrading, requiring regular and ongoing maintenance; it does not always meet the current design standards or the changing needs of waterways users
- river mouths and entrances have historically required significant expenditure on breakwater maintenance and dredging to ensure safe navigation for recreational and commercial vessels, and there is a strong regional expectation that LPMA will continue to undertake necessary maintenance, due to its ownership and statutory responsibilities
- funding requests for maintenance and enhancement of maritime infrastructure continues to increase, placing additional pressure on limited resources. Accordingly, this requires prioritisation of effort and the identification of new and innovative funding sources
- there is not only an increasing register of maintenance requirements of current infrastructure but a need for new and improved engineering and related structures and processes to ensure the balanced community and environmental use and protection goals can be met well into the future.

## Context

The coastal zone is subject to a range of forces that underpin decisions regarding planning and management of infrastructure. These factors include:

- Significant and ongoing population growth in coastal towns and villages
- increased demand for tourism and recreational facilities
- decline in traditional industries, such as commercial fishing and calls for diversification of regional economies
- environmental pressures caused by population growth, legislative requirements and climate change.

As a result there are significant social and economic pressures on LPMA to ensure the continued relevance of, and to obtain optimal public value from the existing maritime infrastructure, whilst maintaining a high degree of environmental protection.

# Objectives

LPMA objectives in maintaining and developing regional maritime infrastructure include:

- provide for safe effective operation and enhanced public access
- respond to the demand for increased recreational/tourism opportunities
- contribute to regional economies through appropriate development
- achieve improved conservation outcomes on Crown and surrounding land
- implement management strategies that are financially and operationally sustainable.

These are consistent with the Statutory Objects and Principles of Crown Land Management contained within the Crown Lands Act 1989.

# Actions

LPMA will continue to deliver the following programs associated with the development and maintenance of the state's maritime infrastructure.

- The Minor Ports Program which is directed at the maintenance of port infrastructure as well as safe, secure access to 25 ports along the coast.
- The River Entrances Program which is directed towards breakwaters and half tide training walls at 21 river entrances and includes dredging of river entrance bars and management of hard rock quarries.
- The Waterways Program emphasises improvements for recreational boating and operates in partnership with local government. It includes particular provision for appropriate dredging for navigation purposes within estuaries, lakes and rivers.
- The Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Project, which is a joint project with the Queensland Government, aims to maintain navigability of the Tweed River Entrance and provide sand to nourish beaches on the southern Gold Coast.
- Targeted reservations of Crown Land for public purposes, such as state parks, surfing reserves, public recreation and environmental protection.
- Improved infrastructure facilities to enhance economic development and public use and enjoyment of our state's coastal and estuarine Crown Lands.

Where appropriate, development of port lands and facilities will be encouraged and facilitated to provide for the needs of regional communities. LPMA will work in partnership with the private sector, local government and other state and national government agencies to achieve a balance that revitalises regional coastal centres.

Actions will include, investing in the upgrading of infrastructure for recreation and tourism, whilst preserving the essential maritime uses, the provision of multi-functional infrastructure to provide for a greater variety of services to the general public and increased opportunities for cost sharing and integrated partnerships.

# Principles

In undertaking initiatives for maritime infrastructure, LPMA will:

- aim to ensure that there is a network of 'safe harbours' at regular intervals along the entire length of the NSW coast
- critically assess the costs and benefits of maintenance and development proposals and prioritise effort to ensure optimal public value
- work with local government in the planning and development of key coastal sites to provide economic, recreational and environmental benefits
- provide appropriate development and investment opportunities for the private sector that will help support regional maritime infrastructure and other Crown assets
- engage in partnerships with local communities, including councils, for ongoing management of coastal Crown reserves
- participate in key initiatives such as planning for climate change and coastal zone management to ensure integration with decision making for assets
- provide key surveying, titling, valuation, mapping and resource inventory, design, land conservation and environmental management services for these critically important Crown Land and water based assets through the integrated service provisions of the Land and Property Information, Crown Lands and Soil Conservation Service Divisions of the Land and Property Management Authority.

# Prioritisation of effort

It is important to recognise that resources are limited. There will always be strong competition for funding, both private and public, to maintain or redevelop assets in the Crown Lands maritime portfolio. It is therefore of paramount importance that a priority be assigned to maintenance and redevelopment of those assets which are of the greatest current and future benefit to the community.

LPMA is implementing a strategic prioritisation process for each of its ongoing programs and the selection of development opportunities. The prioritisation process will be a guide to LPMA's allocation of resources and effort for both maintenance and redevelopment of its maritime assets.

In the broadest terms, and consistent with the goal of achieving a safe anchorage and integrated service provisions for recreational and commercial waterway and coastal users at regular intervals along the coast, priority will be given to trained river entrances that have significant upstream maritime infrastructure as well as sheltered boat harbours located on the open coast.

Priority areas will be critically assessed in terms of their potential for future development, the need to retain existing infrastructure and any possible reduction in the level of infrastructure, due to changing community, environmental and business needs. This will allow the enhancement of core areas and the increased focus of available resources to high public value current sites and support for expanding existing or new areas in need of additional infrastructure.

Priority for investment will then be allocated based on a range of factors including:

- safety and navigability of river entrances and sheltering harbours
- environmental and safety hazards
- potential areas for expansion of facilities
- assessed current and future demand
- proximity to a significant population centre
- availability of public waterfront land
- existing maritime infrastructure, including type and condition
- longevity and practicality of dredging
- environmental sensitivity of dredging.

This will continue to be done within a framework that strives to meet the balanced needs and expectations of a community for economic, environment and social outcomes in the use and management of our precious Crown Land coastal resources.

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