



PUBLIC CONSULTATION – COFFIN BAY BOAT RAMP FEES

Public Consultation is open on Council’s proposed Coffin Bay boat ramp permit fees. The proposed fee structure is as follows (GST Inc):

Use Type	Non-Concession	Concession
<i>Recreational Use</i>		
Yearly	\$ 100.00	\$ 80.00
Monthly	\$ 55.00	\$ 44.00
Weekly	\$ 28.00	\$ 22.00
Daily	\$ 7.00	\$ 5.60
<i>Commercial</i>		
Yearly – 1 Boat	\$ 500.00	n/a
Yearly – Per Additional Boat	\$ 160.00	n/a

BACKGROUND

The Coffin Bay Boat Ramp was upgraded with additional lanes following discussions with oyster industry representatives in 2008.

Fifty per cent of the estimated project cost to provide a boat ramp to the required standard for recreational use was provided by the SA Recreational Boating Facilities Advisory Committee, and a ‘gentlemen’s’ agreement meant oyster lease operators paid an annual fee of \$400 for 10 years to cover Council’s increased capital expenditure to ensure the facility met their commercial needs. Subsequently, at the request of oyster growers, the commercial fee was amended to be \$200 per year with no end date for payment of this fee.

In the absence of a by-law or individual agreements/contracts there was no valid basis to enforce this annual fee and due to disputes arising from the oyster lease operators, and a spat shortage caused by the Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome in 2018, Council ceased charging this fee from the 2017/18 financial year. By-Laws have since been adopted and implemented by Council enabling it to now set and enforce permit fees.

Council has previously considered the implementation of permit fees for the use of the Coffin Bay Boat Ramp to help fund the annual operating and future replacement costs. The Coffin Bay Boat Ramp costs approximately \$92,800 per annum to maintain the ramps, pontoons and fish cleaning facility and to provide for its future replacement.

The facility experiences an estimated 4,000 recreational boat launches and retrievals per annum and is utilised by more than 30 commercial users. Statistics taken by Council Administration indicate about 40 per cent of the boat ramp usage is attributed to commercial operators with the remaining 60 per cent being recreational use.

Whilst the proposed fees are not the lowest of the comparative Councils, the Coffin Bay Boat Ramp does provide a fish cleaning station that the others do not, incurring annual cleaning and maintenance costs of approximately \$29,000 per annum, justifying a slightly higher permit charge.