

# Noosa River Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Wednesday 31 August 2021, 5pm to 7pm

*These minutes were confirmed at the NRSAC meeting on 20 October 2021*

## Minutes

Location: Noosa Leisure Centre, Noosaville

### Attendance:

Joint Chairs: Brett de Chastel: Chief Executive Officer, Noosa Council (NSC) and Jonathon Beatty: Deputy Harbour Master, Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)

Committee Members: Joanne Daley, Bruce Davidson, Michael Gloster, Jane Harris, Nick Hluszko, Noel Playford, Richard Howard, Peter Hunnam, Phillip Moran, Lachlan Stevens, Ben Broadfoot

Observers: Clare Stewart Mayor of Noosa was planning to be in attendance but was held up by traffic on her return from Brisbane.

Apologies: Sandy Bolton, Member of Noosa and Chris Massoud

Committee Support: Gary Crozier, Susan Codi King and Paul Campbell MSQ and Shaun Walsh and Craig Doolan, Noosa Council

### **1. Welcome by Chairs**

The meeting commenced at 5.00pm

Welcome by Brett de Chastel on behalf of the Chairs

Brett de Chastel acknowledged the Noosa River and catchment as home of the Kabi as the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

Brett also introduced Jonathan Beatty who introduced himself and his background in maritime management across Queensland.

### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were tabled from Sandy Bolton, Member of Noosa and Chris Massoud

### **3. Conflict of Interest Declarations**

Brett asked for specific conflict of interests concerning meeting agenda items. No specific conflicts were raised by members concerning Agenda matters for this meeting.

### **4. Confirmation of 23 June Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes from the 23 June were endorsed.

Business arising from minutes has been included in this meeting agenda and recorded in the action table attached to the minutes.

### **5. Correspondence**

The resignation from co-chair Angus Mitchell was formally noted.

The resignation from David Stielow due to business commitments on the river was also formally noted.

The items of correspondence received from the community were noted with key topics of concern being speed restrictions in the Noosa River.

It was noted that there had not been any correspondence received in opposition of proposed anchoring regulation as outlined in recent media.

## **6. MSQ Safety Presentation**

MSQ Officer Gary Crozier provided a presentation on recent safety initiatives and outcomes on the Noosa River including:

- Enforcement framework including relationship with Water Police and Boating and Fisheries Patrol
- The Marine Officer Role stationed permanently on the Noosa River
- Education program, including a focus on juveniles
- Enforcement actions
- Derelict vessels including War on Wrecks
- Buoy Mooring management
- Complaint response
- Waterway audit
- Presentation from MSQ on safety distributed with minutes.

It was noted that the exclusive dedication of a marine officer and patrol boat was unique to the Noosa River. MSQ noted that they are advocating for an additional patrol officer to support Jake in the role, as well as striving for better co-ordination between all government enforcement agencies to ensure effective management.

Discussion focused on:

- Concerns for effective policing on the river on weekends and evenings
- Need for well-resourced solution to these issues to address bad behaviour and speed through simple enforcement
- Community concerns for safety and speeding on the river and nothing seems to have changed in last 20 years leading to community frustration
- More boat traffic, as well as more powerful and speeding boats, as well river pressures from growing SE Queensland population requires a total reconsideration of controls and enforcement
- Ideally there is a holistic management view of the Noosa River to meet contemporary needs and problems
- Interrelationships between increasing passive boats and power boats, and safety conflicts
- Static presence on river bank as important as on river presence

There was an appreciation for the success of the War on Wrecks program implemented by MSQ, with 20 decrepit vessels being removed from the river to date.

There was observation that Department of Agriculture and Fisheries - Boating and Fisheries Patrol had moved away from enforcement activities in recent years, but seemed to be well resourced, and was there potential for transferring of internal government resources? Discussion noted that whilst here is ideally a co-ordinated multiple agency response to river issues – it is at the same time dependent upon agency priorities established by government, and difficult to deliver, compared to focused single agency response with clear accountabilities.

MSQ noted that they will be undertaking vessel speed review in coming months as a priority, and views of NRSAC members are welcome contributions.

Discussion noted the urgency of introducing new controls and enforcement prior to the busy Christmas period.

## **7. Response from MSQ on Response to Proposed Mooring / Anchoring / Live Aboard regulations**

### Anchoring Time Limits

Paul Campbell, MSQ Officer distributed a program that outlined the passage through government process for the amendments to the regulation to achieve anchoring time limits in the Noosa River. He noted the key points:

- Time frames including consent from Minister, Regulatory Impact Process, Community consultation, Consultation with other government agencies and drafting and approval process ran to 12-18 months
- He referenced to Human Right Assessment Process
- Accountability of response to NRSAC on its proposals before submission to Minister
- That more content is needed on the justification as part of the MSQ submissions – what is the outcome that is wanted, and how it will improve the river? There is a gap in the “story” that need to be better populated for submission to regulators
- Unintended consequences of the legislation, as well as possible transfer of the problem elsewhere needs careful consideration
- Consultation will need to be undertaken across the region and state to ensure whole of state perspective by Queensland Government.
- Potential need for transitional period at the introduction of new controls

Paul with Jonathon led a discussion with seeking committee members input on the three key reasons to enact the change. The discussion outcomes are summarised as:

**Environment: to protect the Noosa Biosphere:** avoiding environmental damage to the Noosa Biosphere, particularly damage to benthic communities from uncontrolled anchoring and abandoned vessels

**Safety: A safe Noosa River for all:** unattended vessels not properly secured, and congestion compounds vessel movement safety issues

**Amenity: A good quality experience for all users:** poor quality of experience for all river users caused by congested waterways, abandoned vessels, and unnecessary user conflicts between different at congestion points such as swimming at river foreshores.

**Equity of Access:** for Noosa residents and visitors – having a river that provides capacity for residents and visitors to enjoy the river on a daily and weekly basis that is not unnecessarily congested with unattended vessels that are not being used

Other discussion points, that could be weaved into the headings, above included:

- Improvement of river health in whole system
- Equity of access for Noosa residents and visitors
- Prevention of exploitation of pseudo rental accommodation without any policy program
- Focus on boats being well maintained
- A well-managed and beautiful river being fundamental to the tourism sector and local lifestyle

There was also discussion on the crafting of the messaging, noting that key messages needed to distinguish between local audiences (what's in it for Noosa) and regional audiences (what's in it for south east Queensland) to achieve key understanding by audiences.

#### Moorings, Live Aboards

Paul noted that other recommendations by NRSAC including cap on moorings, transfer to eco-friendly moorings and better management of live aboards can be managed through existing administrative instruments.

#### Next Steps

MSQ undertook to provide an update to the next NRSAC meeting on:

- progress of regulatory reform process for anchoring limits
- management of moorings
- management of live aboards

Action: MSQ to undertake an update to the next NRSAC meeting on:

- progress of regulatory reform process for anchoring limits
- management of moorings
- management of live aboards

Discussion continued on the possible role of Council in managing existing ramps (Doonella Bridge and Moorindil Street) to prevent new large vessels being craned into the river without any type of assessment. It was noted that these areas are used daily by other vessels, and may in advertently restrict legitimate boating enjoyment. There was no consensus to explore this option at this point.

### **8. Presentation – Frying Pan Foreshore Clean Up**

Shaun Walsh noted that Council at its recent Ordinary meeting had supported the recommendations concerning the Frying Pan Foreshore Clean Up.

Shaun provided an outline of the draft Project Plan for clean-up including removal of unlawful structures and stored vessels, as well as rehabilitation program. He noted that nearby residents had already been notified. Enforcement planning meetings already undertaken with Council Local Laws Officers, Maritime Safety Queensland and Boating and Fisheries Patrol for increased surveillance in the locality, and collaboration in implementing rehabilitation and removal of structures.

Feedback on the Project Plan is welcome and in particular Shaun will be seeking input from specific NRSAC members on the rehabilitation plan

### **9. Presentation – Alga Blooms**

Shaun Walsh provided a brief presentation on the algae monitoring program underway in the Noosa River, with specific regard to Hincksia blooms that have caused considerable issues in Main Beach in past decades. It was noted that Hincksia alga has recently been detected in the river system, but due to lack of previous data we are unclear whether at this stage is a normal or abnormal phenomenon at this level. Monitoring will continue to determine any adverse growth patterns, and provides valuable data for future predictive planning. Council contingency planning is also underway in preparation for any possible bloom event impacting on Main Beach.

### **10. General Business**

The following items of General Business were discussed:

- The Change of name for “Noosa Boatman’s Association” to “Noosa Commercial Marine Operators (NCMO)” was noted
- Hydrofoils: not regulated on the Noosa River or across Queensland as don’t require registration. Concerns were raised about the speed of these craft. This is a State wide issue, not a Noosa River issue.
- Speed cameras: MSQ monitoring trails across Australia as a mechanism to manage speeding vessels
- As a point of interest, “squatters” on the Noosa River had recently aired in a television story in South Africa

## **11. Media Statements**

It was considered that that media statement prepared following the meeting should focus on:

- Progress by MSQ on anchoring reform
- Commencement on safety / vessel speed review by NRSAC
- Practical action started on cleaning up the Frying Pan

## **12. Meeting Close**

The meeting was closed by the Chairs at 7pm.

*Post script – the Co-Chairs have confirmed the next meeting date as 5.30pm to 7.30pm Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This also provide timely interval of at least six weeks between meetings.*

## Summary of NRSAC Meeting Actions 23 June 2021

Action	Meeting Date	Status
1. <i>Committee members to provide feedback on MSQ initiatives including the speed signs and brochures and other initiatives. (please email to Susan Codi King)</i>	14 April 2021	Complete
2. <i>Shaun Walsh to prepare Noosa River Issue and Option Analysis template to provide a common framework for members and sub-groups to explore topics</i>	14 April 2021	Complete
3. <i>Nick Hluszko to chair the subgroup focusing on vessel management and Council initiatives and convene discussions in the coming week.</i>	14 April 2021	Complete (see subsequent action below)
4. <i>Committee members to provide feedback on NRSAC terms of reference in preparation for discussion at next meeting. (Please email to Shaun Walsh)</i>	14 April 2021	Complete TOR endorsed 23 June 2021
5. <i>Action: Co-Chair Angus Mitchell to assess proposals concerning anchoring and mooring management and provide advice at next NRSAC meeting.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete (see subsequent action below)
6. <i>Action: MSQ Officers to invite NRSAC members to a river use workshop session to draw up desirable and undesirable river use areas as a first step for further evaluation.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. 2 sessions were scheduled with NRSAC members in June
7. <i>Action: Peter Hunnam with others to distribute information about river strategy and management framework to facilitate ongoing discussions about next steps.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. Discussed by Peter in General Business
8. <i>Action: Shaun Walsh to work with Jake Hennessey and Richard Howard to compile a presentation for next NRSAC meeting on current Noosa River data sets</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. Presentation provided at 23 June meeting
9. <i>Action: Shaun Walsh to coordinate bridge safety discussion with interested committee members, and the facilitate meeting with Council design team for the Garth Prowd Bridge.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. Meeting undertaken in June and members invited  Awaiting response from Council

10. Action: Council / MSQ to liaise with Nick Hluszko to prepare joint media statement for NRSAC meeting.	12 May 2021	Complete. Media Statement distributed
11. Action: Council to prepare a presentation on the circumstance of vessels and structures at the Frying Pan at the next NRSAC meeting	12 May 2021	Complete. Presentation at 23 June meeting
12. Action: Shaun Walsh to draft reply to public correspondents on behalf of NRSAC thanking them for feedback, agreeing that speed and safety require detailed consideration and noting that such review will be prioritised jointly with Maritime Safety Queensland	23 June 2021	Complete. Correspondence sent following 23 June meeting
13. Action: Shaun Walsh to distribute endorsed Terms of Reference to NRSAC members, inclusive of the endorsed option for the subcommittee	23 June 2021	Complete. TOR distributed
23 Action: Gillian Leslie MSQ and Shaun Walsh Noosa Council coordinate an additional session with NRSAC member to better refine and describe the proposed regulation package and its application to Marine Zone / Transport Infrastructure (Waterways Management) Regulations.	23 June 2021	Superseded as Marine Zone proposal not proceeding at this stage
24 Action: MSQ to present the proposed anchoring / mooring / liveaboard regulatory package and proposed implementation program at the next NRSAC meeting	23 June 2021	Complete. Presentation at 31 August meeting
25 Action: NRSAC members to forward any additional known data sources to Shaun Walsh to assist in population of comprehensive data library	23 June 2021	Complete. Material can be forwarded at any time
26 Action: Shaun Walsh to liaise with CEO Noosa Council on timing of report to Council on circumstances of Frying Pan and provide progress report to NRSAC	23 June 2021	Complete. Report presented to Council at its August meeting
27. Action : MSQ to undertake an update to the next NRSAC meeting on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- progress of regulatory reform process for anchoring limits</li> <li>- management of moorings</li> <li>- management of live aboards</li> </ul>	31 August 2021	

