



Submission to the Western Regional Coastal Plan from the Torquay Sailing Club.

Background.

The Torquay Sailing Club is located within the **Western Regional Coastal Plan** jurisdiction and is listed as an **Informal Boating Facility** as defined by the **Boating Coastal Action Plan**. The Club's facility is located some 400 metres to the north of the Torquay **Regional Boat Facility** on Fisherman's Beach (Zeally Bay). The Club has been in operation for over 40 years and presently sails catamarans (mainly Hobie 14 and 16's) and for the junior sailors O'pen Bics (a small monohull). Yachts are manually moved to and from the beach on rollers. The safety/rescue boat (a rubber Zodiac) is towed to and from the beach using an ATV (quad bike).

Proposal

The Club wishes to comment on two issues. While these are specific to the Torquay Sailing Club they have relevance to other sailing facilities covered by the **Western Regional Coastal Plan** and specifically address safety issues as enunciated in Chapter 2- "Coastal Values" (page8) of the Draft Plan.

Improved Signage

A key issue in the **Boating Coastal Action Plan** is the safety of boat users and swimmers. A matter of some concern to the Torquay Sailing Club is the increased use of the immediate launching and boat retrieval area by beach users especially during the Christmas vacation period and the Easter holidays. Though the area in front of the Club's facility is designated as a "Sail Only" area this signage has no relevance to beach goers who swim and sunbake in the area used for yacht launching and retrieval.

As the beach is an excellent and safe swimming location especially for children, the Club does not wish to inhibit its use for beach goers or to compromise public amenity but the Club is concerned

that beach goers are not aware of the inherent dangers when swimming and bathing in the same area used for launching and boat retrieval. There is ample room on the beach for the Sailing Club to have an exclusive launching zone on sailing days without impeding the enjoyment of beach goers.

The Torquay Sailing Club recommends that launching areas at **Informal Boating Facilities** such as at the Torquay Sailing Club have signage to advise beach users not to swim within 50 metre of each side of the launch and retrieval area when yachting is in place. This would be completely consistent with the present rules with respect to swimming close to permanent boat ramps at **Regional Boating Facilities** (such as in the area of the present Torquay Regional Boating Facility boat ramp).

Beach Zoning Arrangements

With respect to any future beach zoning arrangements along Fisherman's Beach the Torquay Sailing Club would like to recommend that the present "Sail Only" area be not reduced in any way and, if at all possible, be extended further to the South.

The present sail launching area at Torquay has some natural constraints in that the beach has a very shallow incline and to the north there is a rocky reef which confines launching to its southern extremity. It is inherent in the physics of sailing that it is frequently impossible to sail perpendicularly from the beach due to prevailing wind conditions and frequently boats must leave at an angle of 45-60 degrees to the beach. This is particularly so when the wind is in an easterly direction. Similarly when beaching boats an oblique trajectory towards the beach, depending on wind conditions and swell, may be necessary. For these reasons an expanded "Sail Only" zone would enhance the amenity of the area for sailors without impacting on the enjoyment of beach goers and swimmers.

Summary of Recommendations

- 1) Signage should be installed at all **Informal Boating Facilities** to warn beach users of the inherent dangers in bathing within 50 metres of the area designated for boat launching and retrieval when sailing is in operation.
- 2) The present **"Sail Only" Zones** should take into account specific local conditions and be expanded where possible to enhance safety and amenity for sailors especially for off-beach sailing.
- 3) In the specific case of the Torquay Sailing Club consideration should be given to expanding the "Sail Only" zone to the south of the present demarcation.

18th March, 2015