



The Honourable Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PP1910-12

Your ref: Petitions

04 JUL 2012

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 1910-12 lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Jason Costigan MP, Member for Whitsunday on 20 June 2012 about a safe harbour for the Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) Cannonvale and improving boat ramp conditions and amenities at Port of Airlie and Shute Harbour.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is working closely with Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) and key stakeholders to search for the best option to provide upgraded recreational boating facilities in the area.

Delivery of recreational boating facilities in the Whitsunday Coast region is severely constrained by a lack of suitable land. Major reclamation of land would be necessary to deliver significant new marine infrastructure facilities. Any new site may also require dredging.

The department is assisting WRC by conducting a \$50,000 feasibility study for a breakwater and associated dredging at the council-owned VMR boat ramp at Cannonvale. The study will look at the design, configuration and cost of options for protecting its boat ramp. A breakwater at the facility would cost approximately \$2-3 million. The study is expected to be completed by mid-July 2012.

In order to justify expenditure on a breakwater, WRC may need to look at increasing capacity of the boat launching facility, including the numbers of car-trailer parking spaces and boat ramp lanes and re-instating the floating walkway destroyed by Cyclone Yasi.

I recognise the importance of facilities like the VMR boat ramp and associated land-side facilities at Cannonvale for the local fishing and tourism community. These facilities are owned and managed by WRC.

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The department owns the nearby Abel Point Marina boat ramp which is available for boaties to use. The department is undertaking works to upgrade this facility. The ramp will be resurfaced and extended, and a floating walkway added to improve access. The works will increase the ability of the facility to handle more traffic and improve its safety and amenity for boat launching. Work is scheduled for completion in late July 2012.

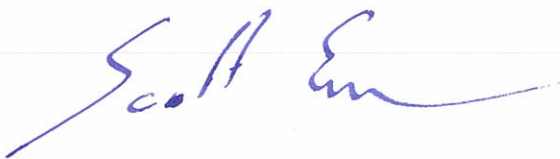
A boat ramp and floating walkway was to have been delivered by the developers of the Port of Airlie project, which is now being managed by receivers. The Port of Airlie boat ramp has been completed, but the floating walkway has not been constructed. WRC, with state assistance, has recently completed the temporary car park and road access works and the facility is now open for public use.

I acknowledge additional public boating infrastructure is required in the Shute Harbour area and can assure the petitioners that the Queensland Government understands the complex issues at hand.

An investigation into potential new sites for boating infrastructure between Abel Point and Shute Harbour is also being undertaken by the department with assistance from WRC. The investigation is expected to be completed by June 2013.

Please be assured that the Queensland Government is committed to better public boating facilities and services throughout the state, with \$50 million committed to small marine infrastructure from the Marine Infrastructure Fund over the next four years.

Yours sincerely



Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads