

29/03/2009

Bob
C/- The Coastal Passage

BY EMAIL

Dear Bob

I have been trying to find out from both QLD Transport and my local minister of parliament, the reasoning behind the scale of fees for registration of boats in QLD.

I sent an email to QLD Transport copy below

Can somebody explain to me how the scale of fees was decided upon. I
> realise that it is based on the length of the vessel, however, there is a
> massive difference between the increase for a 4.5 metre vessel and the
> increase for a 12 metre vessel.
>
> I look forward to a reply

I received the following answer

Dear Don,

>
> Thank you for your recent enquiry regarding the recreational vessel
> registration fee increase.
>
> The increase of annual registration fees has been necessary to ensure
> provision of improved boating infrastructure to the state's recreational
> boating public. Boating registrations growth has been outstripping
> population growth each year for the past five years.
>
> The fee increases were made according to the pre-existing vessel length
> categories, with longer boats attracting higher increases. The increases
> range from \$15 for small vessels (up to 4.5 metres) to over \$300 for very
> large vessels. Larger vessels tend to be more reliant on navigation aids
> and dredged channels, both are costly services to deliver. The large
> increases reflect a priority to improve and maintain public boating
> facilities in the state for the benefit of the boating community.
>
> 100% of the funds received from the recent increase will be put back into
> providing benefits for recreational boaties. The increase will not only
> assist Queensland Transport in meeting the growing costs of maintaining
> existing public boating infrastructure (boat ramps, pontoons and
> channels),
> but also in the provision of new and improved infrastructure across the
> state. The government will continue to outlay more on the recreational

- > boating infrastructure and related services than it will receive from the
- > boat registration fees.
- >
- > Some of the related services include the provision of navigation aids,
- > public education, pollution response and prevention, and enforcement
- > activities provided by Maritime Safety Queensland. Funds from the current
- > increase in registration fees will also assist in the dredging of
- > waterways
- > serving the infrastructure.
- >
- >
- > I hope this has addressed some of the concerns you have about the recent
- > vessel registration fee increase.
- >
- > Further information about the increase and boating infrastructure projects
- > being delivered in your area can be obtained from the Queensland Transport
- > website by following the link www.transport.qld.gov.au/boating.
- >
- >
- >
- > Kind regards,
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- >
- >
- > Boating Infrastructure Unit
- >
- > Queensland Transport
- >
- >

I have also written to my local minister, Steve Wettenhall, member for Barron River. My email below.

Dear Steve,

as a voter in Queensland and in particular Barron River, I would like to ask you to explain and justify the disproportionate registration charge increases that have been levied on boat owners.

I have visited the QLD GOV web site that explains that there are numerous launching ramp maintenance and increases, mainly in SE QLD and in lakes such as Tinaroo.

Boats that use these ramps are small and are on trailers. My boat is 12 metres, cannot be transported by road unless derigged and placed on the back of a proper boat transporting truck. Yet my registration has gone up from \$174.50 according to the website to \$393.50 an increase of about 138%. Car registration according to an article in the Cairns Post only went up 20%.

My boat is moored in the Marina at Yorkeys Knob and I have paid maintenance charges on my berth since 1992, most of this money, up until just recently, went to dredging the access channel, by Yorkeys Knob Boating Club, that I use.

Having checked the registration costs in other states it appears we have the most expensive registration charges in the country. It is actually free in NT

I believe that all users should contribute, users pay, however , the charges to trailer boats , 4.5M are paying less than they did in July 1997 and mine are more than twice as much.

Was any thought given to increasing boat trailer registration, 63%+ of boats in Queensland to help cover launching ramps or was it easier to tax the larger boat owners and suffer less voter backlash against the Labor Party.

I look forward to your response

Don Cortis

His initial reply

Dear Don

Thank you for your email and I apologise I did not get the time to answer before the election.

The increase of annual registration fees has been necessary to ensure the provision of improved boating infrastructure to the states recreational boating public. Boating registrations growth has been outstripping population growth each year for the past five years.

The increases are proportional to boat size, with longer boats attracting higher increases. The increases range from \$15 for small vessels (up to 4.5 metres) to over \$300 for very large vessels. Larger vessels tend to be more reliant on navigation aids and dredged channels, both very costly services to deliver. Please note that 63% of vessel owners (vessels up to 4.5 metres) will still be paying less than they did in July 1997.

The increase will not only assist Queensland Transport in meeting the growing cost of maintaining existing public boating infrastructure (boat ramps, pontoons and channels), but also in the provision of new and improved infrastructure across the state. The government will continue to outlay more on recreational boating infrastructure and related services than it will receive from boat registration fees.

Some of the related services include the provision of navigation aids, public education, pollution response and prevention and enforcement activities provided by Maritime Safety Queensland. Funds from the current increase in registration fees will also assist in the dredging of waterways serving the infrastructure.

In 2008-09, the state government will spend around \$29 million on new and upgraded boating facilities and related services. This compares with \$21 million revenue expected from recreational boating registration fees for the same period after the fee increase.

Further information about vessel registration fee increases can be obtained from the Queensland Transport website by following the link www.transport.qld.gov.au/boating.

Regards

Steve
Steve Wettenhall MP
Member for Barron River

I then replied to him

Dear Steve

Thank you for your response to my email, The main question I asked was to explain and justify the disproportionate differences in the registration charges for boats.

All boats use dredged channels and navigation aids, regardless if size, recreational and commercial as well as major shipping. Only boats on trailers use launching ramps and from the web site the majority of work proposed for Queensland is for launching ramp work, and most of this is for the south east queensland. Why am I paying in excess of double my registration charges when trailer boats are only paying a \$15 increase. I cannot use a launching ramp for my boat and for this very reason I have to pay marina berth charges to store my boat and cover costs for dredging our channel. Has any thought been given to increasing registration charges on boat trailers to cover some of these costs. This variance in charges is blatantly discriminatory and seems to me to be TAXING the presumed wealthy by your government. Can you tell me exactly what work is proposed for dredging and navigation aids in this region. My understanding is that Cairns Council is responsible for the dredging of Half Moon Creek/Half Moon Bay Maring channels and this is paid for by council rates that have been levied on waterfront blocks and the marina at Yorkeys Knob.

Everybody realises that infrastructure needs to be contributed to , but it should be on a fair and equitable basis, all to contribute equally not by your email that 63% of vessel owners(less than 4.5M) actually pay less than in July 1997. What was my registration in July 1997 i'll be it wasnt less than \$393.70. Your Government should not just screw people , like myself who have worked hard all of our lives, paid taxes and employed people so that we can have a few simple joys in our retirement.

Thanks to the Global economic meltdown, our government forced, but not guaranteed, superannuation is almost worthless and now now your government has found a new way to tax people.

I look forward to your response with a justifiable reason or a reduction in my fees.

Don Cortis

His Reply

Don,

I've done my best to explain the rationale..

If you want a more detailed official response from the Minister, let me know, otherwise I'm not expecting you to agree with the government's decision so we could just leave it at that.

Regards

Steve Wettenhall MP

My Reply to him

Steve

As my elected representative, what I would like is an answer to my question as to the way the charges were levied on the different sizes of boats. It seems to me that 37% of the boat owners in Queensland are paying for the majority of boating infrastructure, according to figures supplied by yourself.

I have asked this question of yourself, I have emailed Qld Transport and all I get is runaround. Does anybody have the authority and the ability to actually answer my question or should I discuss the situation with the Ombudsman as I am getting sick of people avoiding the question and fobbing me off.

Can you answer the question or not and if not can you give me the email address of somebody who can because I intend to get an answer from somebody.

Your response it awaited

Don Cortis

After reading your article on spreadsheets I thought I could do a spreadsheet to try to explain to them that the rego charges are wrong, so here goes

Boat Length Metres	Old Rego	New Rego	New Rego per Metre
4.5	68.90	81.50	18.11
5	108.50	161.30	32.26
6	108.50	161.30	26.88
7	148.15	268.05	38.29
8	148.15	268.05	33.50
9	148.15	268.05	29.78
10	148.15	268.05	26.80
11	174.50	393.85	35.80
12	174.50	393.85	32.82
13	174.50	393.85	30.29
14	174.50	393.85	28.13
15	174.50	393.85	26.25
16	214.05	488.30	30.51
17	214.05	488.30	28.72
18	214.05	488.30	26.83
19	214.05	488.30	25.70
20	214.05	488.30	24.41
Greater than 20	267.00	614.50	

As you can see from the spreadsheet, a 4.5 metres boat pays \$18.11 per metre, a 7 metre boat pays \$38.29 per metre, a 12 metre boat (median sized boat) pays \$32.82 per metre and a 20 metre boat only pays \$24.41 per metre.

From this information I think that every fair minded boat owner should write or email the Department of Transport and their local representative and lobby to have this unjust scale of fees changes to a fairer system for all.

I have attached the full spreadsheet that I did for further information.

I hope that this will stir up the boat owners as the only way we will get a fair result is for everybody to act as a unified group.

Regards

Don Cortis

SV Loose Goose IV

87 Wattle Street
Yorkeys Knob QLD 4878