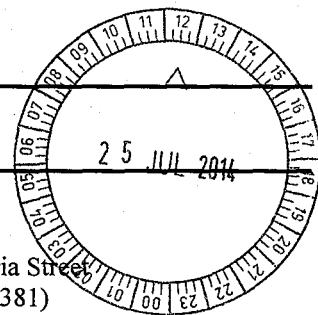

Hon. Adele Farina MLC

Member for South West Region

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Hon. Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
18-32 Parliament Place
WEST PERTH WA 6000

Dear Chairman,

Petition No. 41 - Casuarina Boat Harbour (Bunbury) Recreational Pens

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the matter of Petition No. 41 - Casuarina Boat Harbour (Bunbury) recreational pens.

There are approximately 6,000 registered boat owners in the Greater Bunbury area.

The Casuarina Boat Harbour in Bunbury, a public facility comprising 48 recreational pens only, is inadequate to meet the needs of the recreational boating community in the Greater Bunbury area, and has been inadequate for many years now.

More than seven years ago and in response to pressure from the local boating community, the Department of Transport prepared plans to increase the number of pens at Casuarina Boat Harbour from 48 to 200 recreational pens. However, much to the frustration of the local boating community, the project has not progressed due to a lack of funding by Government.

Prior to the last State election, the Marine Facilities Alliance formed to develop a plan to address local boating needs, including the Koombana Bay Sailing Club plans to expand its facilities to ensure the Club's future sustainability.

The Marine Facilities Alliance plan, released before the 2013 State election, comprised three stages - stage one, secure \$1million in funding to carry out environmental studies and design works for a 250 boat marina at Koombana Bay Sailing Club (a private club). It has been stated the Marina would facilitate collocation of the Koombana Bay Sailing Club, Bunbury Powerboat Club and South West Cruising Association at the one site; stage two, the development of the Koombana Bay Marina; stage three, redevelopment of the Casuarina Boat Harbour.

The plan failed to secure endorsement of all stakeholders, including the Bunbury Sailing Club and some members of the local boating community who were concerned that the plan preferences private marine facilities ahead of public facilities and would delay provision of additional public recreational boat pens to the never-never stage three, when they were desperately needed. Concern was also expressed over the plan to place much needed public boat ramps within the proposed private marina development, raising concerns these would not be easily accessible by the public. The Marine Facilities Alliance Plan failed to secure government funding.

Subsequent to the 2013 election, the Bunbury Marine Facilities Committee, chaired by Mr John Castrilli MLA, was established to progress what is essentially the Marine Facilities Alliance Plan with minor modifications. Funding for stage one, the environmental studies and design work has been secured. Concerns previously expressed continue unabated. A number in the community remain of the view that the public recreational pens should be the staging and funding priority to meet existing demand for the pens, giving rise to the petition before the Committee.

Some in the community have also expressed concern that Mr Castrilli MLA is both Committee Chair and patron of the Koombana Bay Sailing Club, giving rise to a conflict of interest.

As explained there exists a demand for additional public recreational pens and public boat ramps in the Greater Bunbury area. The petitioners raise valid concerns about the potential of the Marine Facilities proposal to delay, possibly more than 10 years, much needed and cheaper public recreational pens and are calling on Government to immediately fund the public recreational pens and boat ramps and to do so before funding a private facility.

I respectfully ask the Standing Committee to inquire into the concerns expressed and the urgent need for additional public recreational pens and boat ramps in Bunbury.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. Adele Farina MLC
MEMBER FOR SOUTH WEST REGION

25 July 2014