



SANDGATE YACHT CLUB Incorporated

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4-11-

14 October 2008

The Secretary / Manager

04 NOV 2008

Yachting Queensland

PO Box 5462

Manly Q 4179

Re: Proposal for the Future Collection of Yachting Queensland Membership Fees

We believe Yachting Queensland needs to provide a report card of what they have done to promote the sport of sailing at grass-roots level in Queensland.

We are not interested in elite development programs. We need programs in clubs to introduce new juniors / youth and adults to the sport of sailing.

If Yachting Queensland was actively contributing to the membership base in this way, then we believe clubs would gladly pay a reasonable affiliation membership fee.

Yachting Queensland should seek funding on behalf of clubs from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund and other sources to enable clubs to offer such programmes. We believe Yachting Queensland could do well to investigate how other sports recruit participants, such as the AFL Auskick Program.

We think a lot of what Yachting Queensland offers could be offered by Yachting Australia, especially in these days of electronic communication

Also we believe all positions in Yachting Queensland should be honorary, as it is in most cases at sailing / yachting clubs in Queensland. A more austere approach to grass-roots sailing is required.

If the fees promulgated in your proposal aren't significantly reduced to current levels of approximately \$40.00 annually for adult membership, there is a possibility that our club could be wound up. For your interest, the suggested Yachting Queensland membership fee exceeds by almost double the amount that is charged to be a member of Sandgate Yacht Club. You would appreciate that it is extremely difficult to demonstrate to members the justification in having to apply the majority of their membership fee to a third party. This is particularly difficult in the face of the tenuous benefits Yachting Queensland can directly offer to sailing clubs where our objectives of building numbers of grass-roots sailors seems to be in stark contrast to Yachting Queensland's apparent focus on elite sailors.

It is highlighted that the financial background presented in Yachting Queensland's proposal document indicates a fundamentally flawed business model, in that expenses are projected to continue upwards whilst the ability to raise income is diminishing. Continuing to push this unsustainable business model by increasing membership charges to a decreasing membership base seems very difficult to reconcile, and it is indeed puzzling why the proposal document hasn't explored alternative models. Indeed Yachting Queensland should have noted over the past two decades that many member clubs have had to diversify their membership base to survive. It would seem very clear to most that Yachting Queensland must make some radical changes to its business model or face serious liquidity issues in the very near future.

By way of suggestion, a way forward may be for Yachting Queensland to consider the following:

Amalgamating with other peak boating bodies to reduce overheads and enlarge the support base

Refocus on building a supporter base through grass-roots sailors rather than focussing on elite performance which generally also brings high support costs

Identify the absolute core needs of member clubs and reduce services to meet a realistic and affordable membership fee.

In respect to Proposal No. 34, under no circumstances will Sandgate Yacht Club agree to sign a contract or an agreement (MoU) with Yachting Queensland regarding the implementation of the membership of Yachting Queensland.

Currently in-depth discussions are being held with other clubs to possibly set up a Queensland or maybe Australia-wide body with fair and reasonable fees that all financial members of sailing / yachting clubs can afford, and which is recognized by Yachting Australia and ISAF.

Our Commodore William Wheatley and Vice Commodore Laurie Williamson, who are our Y.Q. delegates, will be present at the meeting on Saturday 29th November 2008 at 7 p.m. to discuss the future collection of Yachting Queensland membership fees.

Yours sincerely

Ron Walker

