

# Tour Operator Surf School Licences Workshop

23 July 2018



## Summary Report

### 1. Introduction

The Barwon Coast Committee of Management (BCCM) is responsible for the management of the coastal Crown land reserves from beach access 7W at Collendina on the eastern boundary of Ocean Grove, through to 42W at the western end of 13th Beach, Connewarre. The BCCM is also responsible for the management of the Riverview Family Caravan Park, Riverside Camp Ground, Barwon Heads Caravan Park and the Local Port of Barwon Heads.

In 2012, BCCM issued a total of 8 licenses to operate surf schools and similar activities across the Barwon Coast foreshore and Barwon River at designated sites.

In June 2018, BCCM initiated the development of an Expression of Interest (EOI) process intended to deliver new 5-year licences to run water-based activities (human powered) within designated zones on the Barwon Coast from late 2018.

On Monday 23 July 2018, BCCM hosted a Key Stakeholder Workshop to inform the Expression of Interest process. Attendees are shown in Attachment 1.

### 2. Method

The workshop was independently facilitated and focussed on stakeholder feedback. The agenda is shown at Attachment 2.

The workshop consisted of three main processes:

- A brainstorm session to list ideas under the headings of EOI process, Operations, Linkages and Other issues.
- Priority-setting by participants according to votes
- Detailed discussion based on a series of themes which emerged from the brainstorming and priority-setting.

As this was the first opportunity provided to operators to contribute to the development of tour operator licences, the format of the workshop adapted to the interest of participants.

This Summary Report has been developed through the workshop products and notes made by Barwon Coast staff present and the facilitator. Participants have been given an additional opportunity to review this report as an accurate summary prior to publishing on the Barwon Coast website.

### 3. Brainstorm session

The brainstorm session sought to gather ideas to inform the more detailed discussion on key issues later in the workshop. The areas of EOI process, Operations, Linkages and Other were suggested as ways to focus thinking, rather than being rigid categories for discussion. Valuable discussion occurred throughout the brainstorm session, and as a result the format was adapted to maximise participation in the time available.

At the conclusion of the brainstorm session participants were given five red dots and asked to stick them on what they considered to be the most important issues for detailed discussion. There was no limit to the number of dots each participant could place on any item.

#### EOI process

Issue	Priority
Why not issue 10-year licences?	10
Evaluation of what is local	5
Transparent assessment of applicants and decision making	5
Evaluation acknowledges exemplary practice	4
Timing and lead time	3
Licences issued outside EOI processes	2
Entertain new entrants into market when provider numbers are maxed-out	
Timing for delivery of EOI – finalise and appeals process clear	
Process on-line	
Environmental performance high value in evaluation	

#### Surf School Operations

Issue	Priority
School/education groups and not-for-profits able to operate without a licence, need them to register use	7
Designated parking for surf schools, benefits for accountability and marketing.	4
Learn to surf industry has local economic benefit to coastal management	4
Early alerts, and extensive alerts of shark events (and other events)	4
Review time of day use constraints eg Sat / Sun /Public Holiday 1pm curfew through peak period	2
Surf Life Saving Clubs and relationships with local operators	2
Daily booking process development (alert use)	2
Seek education institutions to register use	2
Licence numbers - who are the client groups? (Need clarity where corporate activities require extra and separate permit)	1
Local club priorities for specific beach areas	1
Potential for off-peak licences to operate on peak period afternoons	
Unclear accountability after licence awarded. Who? How? When?	
Good operations destabilised by EOI process – “new” may bring “new” offerings	
New clubs threaten established relationships	

#### 4. Key issues

Following prioritisation, participants enjoyed a break while the facilitator grouped the issues into themes which aligned with points raised and priorities. Participants were asked to sit at a table to discuss the issue of their choice, and after 20 minutes were asked to move to another issue (table) to contribute to it.

##### Licence Conditions

- 10-year licences should be available for experienced operators.
- Having too many operators threatens the viability of individual operators.
- Having more licences reduces the ability of any one licence to generate a sustainable revenue stream.
- “Not-for-profit” organisations are able to attract business through charging less, are not licenced and undermine licenced operators.
- The time of peak period operations is OK.
- Try operations after 5pm?
- Option of a probationary licence to demonstrate performance.
- “Use it or lose it” – annual review process check (not cancel).
- Need to watch unlicenced operators “rogue watch”.
- What is the focus/purpose of Barwon Coast in calling an EOI at this time?
- There should be greater control of the licence allocation process and assessment should be weighted for experience.
- Recognition of “capital” investment for 5-year turnover.
- SUP activities are generally on flat water and have limited relevance to surf-based licences.
- Potential for smaller group sizes in peak periods.
- Opportunity for minimum environmental standards
- Licence timing could utilise afternoons which are often free to manage pressures.

##### Evaluation

- Ensure EOI criteria provide real (current, thorough picture) about the applicant.
- How much weight is placed on local business?
- Does size of surf school matter? Permits for smaller group sizes (than currently) may work in peak season.
- How much weight is placed on sustainable practices?
- Is there a more relevant certification (eco)/qualification for surf schools?
- Good to encourage new businesses, but how to do this while supporting current businesses?
- The economic benefits of surf schools should result in some form of credit to operators.
- Unlicenced operators should be part of booking and reporting processes.
- What is the definition of “local”? The last EOI process extended from Anglesea to Queenscliffe and is too large an area.
- Should preference be given to existing/established businesses and proven performers?

##### Sharing the coast

- Beneficial to know SLSC training times
- Educational institutions should provide their numbers, have effective risk management and designate sites.

- Managing the projected growth of surfing eg increase expected from 2020 Olympic Games inclusion of surfing
- Importance of safety and awareness of safety issues eg lightning
- Communication – who, where, how and when.
- Basic signage
- Etiquette, rules and best practice
- A publicised calendar of events
- Unlicensed operators – eg schools
- Better consultation with all stakeholders eg Boardriders Clubs, SLSC
- New blood does bring new ideas
- Kayaking
- Barwon River
- Team challenges
- Parks Victoria areas
- Parking areas for surf schools
- Lifesaving – danger from lost boards during training
- Number of events and users at locations
- Surf school instructors “are” lifeguards to assist with rescues.
- On-line booking may work, lots of examples to draw upon.
- Need to manage risks from other events, school groups, LSV aquatic sport, LSV close the beach for sharks.
- Designation of “home clubs” for specific locales to manage pressure from other, (new) clubs and protect those places

### **Other**

- New businesses are driver for licences between EOI process. If 10-year licences were available new entrants could purchase existing businesses. Retiring businesses would have a choice to either sell or wait until the next EOI.
- CoMs to manage EOI process to ensure enough time. Perhaps current licence holders could have more time.
- There is some uncertainty around timelines for EOI. Needs defined timelines and clear expectations.
- Having EOI process on-line could lead to more efficiencies.
- Results of last EOI took too long, needs to be shorter and appeals process clear.

## **Attachment 1**

### **ATTENDANCE LIST**

#### **Apologies**

Sandy Gatehouse, Member BCCM  
Paul Fletcher, Southern Ocean Union of Longboarders (SOUL)  
Michael Noelker, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)  
Ian Carlton, State Emergency Service  
Dean Parrello, Victoria Police - Bellarine  
Christian Pritchett, 13th Beach Boardriders Club

#### **Present**

Nathan Taylor, Go Ride A Wave  
Daniella, Go Ride A Wave  
Dane Hubbard, Sea Earth Adventures  
Michael Sheehan, Southern Exposure  
Bindy Sheehan, Southern Exposure  
Cameron Lamperd, Surf Sessions  
Bec Lamperd, Surf Sessions  
Shaun Ward, Wards Stand Up Paddle Boarding  
Heather Peck, Switchfoot Surf Coaching  
James Murphy, Great Ocean Road Surf Tours  
Adam Robertson, Surfing Victoria  
Briana Newson, Life Saving Victoria  
Amenah McDonald, Ocean Grove SLSC  
Danny Aitken, Great Ocean Road Coast Committee  
Ralph Wright, Bellarine Paddlers  
Gary McPike, BCCM  
Warren Chapman, BCCM  
Steve Blackley, Steve Blackley Consulting (Facilitator)

## Attachment 2

### Surf Schools and Water-based Activity Licence EOI 2018-23

#### Stakeholder Workshop



#### Agenda

**Date:** Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018

**Time:** 130-4pm

**Venue:** Barwon Heads Multi-Purpose Facility, accessed via Bluff Road

Please note that light refreshments will be available from 1:10pm.

Time	Item	Responsible
1:10pm	Light snack and coffee/tea available	
1:30pm	Welcome	Steve Blackley (Facilitator)
	Introduction and format of meeting/expectations	Gary McPike (CEO Barwon Coast)
1:35 pm	Introductions: Role and experience in/with the industry	All
1:40 pm	Outline of new Guidelines and policy update	Gary McPike
1:45 pm	Workshop outline	Steve Blackley
	<b>Key issues – brainstorm session</b>	All
1:50 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EOI process</li> </ul>	
2:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Licence operations</li> </ul>	
2:10 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linkages and other issues</li> </ul>	
2:20 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priorities for discussion</li> </ul>	
2:30 pm	<i>Coffee break and informal discussion</i>	
2:45 pm	<b>Key issues discussion - groups</b>	All
3:30 pm	<b>Groups report back and discuss</b>	All
3:55 pm	Next steps	Gary McPike
4:00 pm	Finish	Steve Blackley