

**Submission  
No 237**

## **INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME**

**Organisation:** Boating Industry Association NSW  
**Date received:** 18/06/2012

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Submission to  
The Joint Select Committee on the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme  
by the  
Boating Industry Association of NSW

**The Boating Industry Association** of NSW (the BIA) is an association of employers formed in 1960 and incorporated in 1970.

The BIA's membership represents over 90% of commercial activity in the sector, which employs around 9000 people. Amounting to around 750 in total, membership comprises boat manufacturers and importers, supply-chain goods manufacturers and importers, brokers and retailers (of vessels and equipment), boat storage and service facility operators (marinas, boat yards and slipways, dry-storage etc), providers of industrial services to the recreational and light commercial boating industry (shipwrights, surveyors, mechanics, engineers, technicians, detailers, riggers, sail-makers and upholsterers, painters etc), and providers of travel/ tourism, advisory, and incidental goods and services.

The BIA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NSW Worker Compensation Scheme.

The Australian boating industry is currently facing the most challenging business conditions in decades, and somewhat central to this situation is our exposure to world markets. Easy and advantageous access to goods in foreign markets by Australian consumers is a primary factor, examination of which draws into question the competitiveness of goods and services offered in Australia – by no means a situation confined to the boating industry.

Whilst currency arbitrage has drastically impacted the competitiveness of Australian business, the high cost of doing business in Australia must be considered. The cost of doing business in NSW is the highest nationally in a number of categories – workers compensation being one of many.

In order to improve competitiveness of NSW, it is critical that all possible avenues be explored to reduce the burden of the scheme on enterprise, thereby assisting enterprise to boost productivity. **The deficit in the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme financials must be managed in a manner that does not increase the cost of doing business in this state.**

The Boating Industry Association is a strong advocate for the health & safety of workers. Our proactive pursuit of improved WHS outcomes through development of programs and education for employers & workers in the boating industry was recently recognized with the award for Leadership in Safety by WorkCover NSW.

Yet, there is limited future for employers and workers alike in an industry which is unsustainable.

In reviewing key cost centres of the NSW scheme, options for improvement, and efficiencies realized in other states, government should seek to affect reforms which **deliver a significant reduction to costs** currently imposed on business, and to simplify and streamline related administrative process.

The boating industry is certainly not alone in its current predicament, and it is only through a confluence of improved trading conditions, increased productivity, and relief of red-tape that industry, and the economy at large, can regain altitude.

Should further comment be required, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Roy Privett  
GENERAL MANAGER  
May 16, 2012