



Gippsland Ports
23 June 2016

Unauthorised Swing Moorings

Gippsland Ports is concerned about the growing number of unauthorised swing moorings which have been installed in various locations around South Gippsland and the Gippsland Lakes, noting there has been a particular proliferation along foreshores at Yanakie and Shallow Inlet in South Gippsland.

To ensure, as far as practicable, minimising damage to sea grass beds, the safety of vessels on swing moorings, the safety of other vessels in designated swing mooring grounds and also to minimise navigational hazards, such as abandoned or failed mooring tackle, Gippsland Ports in its capacity as the waterway manager, requires that swing moorings can only be established in designated mooring grounds and then, subject to meeting environmental and structural integrity standards.

Many of the illicitly installed swing moorings do not comply with required environmental and structural integrity and maintenance standards, and consequently, pose a safety risk not only to the vessel on the mooring but also other vessels as well as a potential seabed hazard to boaters and swimmers, in the event of mooring tackle failure.

In addition, the non-compliant floatation buoys used on the moorings are many different shapes and sizes, are very difficult to see at night, creating a navigation risk for vessels using the area.

Gippsland Ports advises that under **Regulation 29(1) of the Port Management (Local Ports) Regulations 2015** it is an offence to install or use an unauthorised mooring. The offence carries a fine of 10 Penalty Units (approximately \$1550).

Given the significant penalties associated with unauthorised mooring installation, together with the other attendant risks, Gippsland Ports encourages those responsible for having installed or making use of unauthorised moorings to remove the mooring, including ground tackle by 15th July 2016. Following this date, Gippsland Ports will commence a program of removal of unauthorised moorings and by implication, taking temporary possession of any vessels found to be placed on these moorings.

Vessel operators requiring information on swing moorings and existing designated Set Aside areas in South Gippsland or who wish to make application for a swing mooring permit are encouraged to contact Gippsland Ports or to apply online by completing a Berthing and Mooring Application form available at gippslandports.vic.gov.au.

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