



**GIPPSLAND PORTS – 21 March 2016**

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### **Paynesville Charter Boats - Loading Zones**

The summer months in Paynesville see a huge increase in the number of boaters out enjoying the best of the Gippsland Lakes. Whether out sailing, fishing, water skiing or just enjoying the scenery, one of the unique aspects of boating on the Gippsland Lakes is the availability of free public berthing in a variety of locations, provided and maintained by Gippsland Ports.

Over the years there has been a steady increase in the number of boats on the lakes and managing access to the more popular public jetties is ever more challenging for Gippsland Ports' Marine Operations team. After conducting a review of the past summer season it is clear that there is a lack of suitable berthing space for charter boat operators to load and unload passengers in the Paynesville precinct. Charter vessels provide an important drawcard for tourists to the area and are a vital boost to the local economy. Gippsland Ports is keen to support these local businesses and to provide them with fair access to public infrastructure, particularly given that charter operators provide those who do not own or have access to a vessel the opportunity to enjoy a boating experience on the Gippsland Lakes.

After consulting with Paynesville charter boat operators, the current commercial vessel zone situated at the southern end of Paynesville Fisherman's Wharf will be relocated to the northern end and extended by ten metres. This area will be clearly marked with red capping and berthing in this area will be by Permit only. The former commercial vessel zone will become a loading/unloading zone for the public and clearly marked with yellow capping. This arrangement will be trialled for three months and be subject to a review at the end of this period. The new zones will be in place prior to the Easter long weekend.

Gippsland Ports CEO Mr Nick Murray said "These refinements to the current arrangements are all about attempting to achieve a balance in the provision of services and infrastructure for the increasing number of people choosing to participate in boating activities on the Gippsland Lakes. It's about providing a fair go for everyone and we look forward to all boaters observing the zoning of particular areas of wharves and jetties and also observing time limits. We look forward to receiving public comment during this three month trial"

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For further information, please contact:

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