NSW Regional Ports Strategy

Background

Harbours are the economic hearts of many coastal communities and play an important role in providing opportunities for economic growth, job opportunities, tourism and recreation.

The Department of Industry – Lands is responsible for the management and maintenance of 25 coastal harbours along the coast which are important contributors to the NSW economy through the commercial fishing industry, tourism and recreational boating.

The 25 coastal harbours lie outside the commercial Ports of Newcastle, Sydney, Port Botany and Port Kembla.
The NSW Regional Port Strategy is being developed in order to guide the investment and operations of regional ports and infrastructure managed by the Department.

The strategy will be informed by existing corporate and government strategic plans with the aim of promoting regional economic growth over the next 10 years.

Work on the strategy to date has included developing the framework of the strategy and understanding the core components of existing conditions and service standards, environment and heritage, economics and issues for each of the regional ports. This work forms the basis for the first phase of the work – an outline of strategic options for the ports.
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Next Phase

The next phase of the work will involve consultation with stakeholders to explore the options and find paths that best fit the needs of local ports to sustain and grow regional economic activity.

This work will provide an opportunity to validate data used in the strategic economic assessment and to inform master planning at each port.

From this information, the strategy will be able to identify areas of future growth and development and determine future management arrangements.
Coastal growth industries of the future – Part I

Economic analysis of the regional ports determined that the Present Value contribution to the NSW economy over a projected 10 year period will be in the order of $6.7 billion.

The highest contributing business sectors are:

- Commercial fishing and aquaculture - $844 million
- Commercial boating - $50 million
- Recreational boating - $3.1 billion (including fishing)
- Tourism - $2.9 billion

These important coastal industries have been identified as areas of future economic growth.
Coastal growth industries of the future – Part II

**Commercial fishing**

The wild capture of fish generally remains stable although decline has been seen in some regions. Aquaculture is seen to be the source of food for the future with the current value of the oyster industry being $36 million and other aquaculture such as prawns, cod, perch and trout being valued at $17 million. To develop the aquaculture opportunities further will take significant investment in shore facilities such as laboratories, tanks, store rooms, workshops, garages etc.

**Recreational boating**

There has been a modest increase of vessel ownership across NSW (3% pa) and the issue of boat licences remains steady. The ports that successfully cater to recreational boating all share a few common features for success.

They are all popular tourist destinations on natural waterways. They have a sustainable local population and have the capacity to meet demand and provide access to adequate services and facilities.

**Tourism**

Coastal tourism provides a greater than average opportunity for local employment in regional areas.

Regional ports play an important part in adding value to coastal tourism by providing charter and recreational boating, dining out as well as fishing and walking along breakwaters and training walls.
Port development for future opportunities

Metrics were established to determine the existing conditions of each port with overall findings showing ports with high utilisation as well as moderate and low utilisation.

Our next steps are to engage stakeholders at all levels to ensure that local issues are understood and strategic partnerships can be developed for local and regional economic growth.
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Expected outcomes

1. Refinement of the initial planning level information on current activity and trends for each regional port

2. Identification of economic and employment opportunities for local and regional growth over the next 25 years

3. Enhanced information for use in economic appraisal and Benefit Cost Analysis to support identified economic and employment opportunities

4. Development of a prioritised action plan to drive identified opportunities with particular focus on the next 5 years

5. Identify opportunities for integrated development

6. Identify key stakeholder groups and industry champions for each economic opportunity