

Charting course

MARINE SNAPSHOT

Victoria's marine industry:

- Is worth \$4.5 billion
- Has 172,000 registered boards and 270,000 marine licence holders
- Provides 17,700 fulltime jobs



Federal Small Business Minister Bruce Billson talks with Bar Crusher director Peter Cleland, Boating Industry Association president Paul Benjamin and Boating Industry Association chief executive Steven Potts.

Picture: DERRICK DEN HOLLANDER

Geordie Cowan

INDUSTRY FUTURE DISCUSSED

FIFTEEN years ago, brothers Peter and Warren Cleland thought they saw a gap in the market for a premium quality boat.

Bar Crusher Boats was born, and the Dandenong South business is still going strong.

Last Thursday, they welcomed federal Small Business Minister and Dunkley MP Bruce Billson to discuss

the future of the industry.

"The southeast is such a strong manufacturing area and with automotives under pressure, he is looking at industries that can continue to grow and prosper," director Peter Cleland said.

"I think there's a tremendous opportunity to grow recreational boating and manufacturing in Victoria."

Boating Industry Association of Victoria chief executive Steven Potts said the projected population increase in Victoria's central coast from 4.6 million to nearly eight million by 2050 would see boat activities double.

"This needs long-term planning and increased production," Mr Potts said.

But the industry needed to be properly guided if it was to achieve that aim, Mr Cleland said.

"One of the key issues is the development of infrastructure to provide access to our waterways," he said.

"Being such a fantastic resource for the state, it needs an appropriate level of policy consideration.

"There is tremendous potential if the infrastructure is there."

BAR CRUSHER BOATS.

10th Oct 2016

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LEADER

DANDENONG SOUTH

Boat firm sees a way forward

A DANDENONG South-based boat manufacturer has scored a \$320,000 government grant to invest in new equipment, create 12 new jobs and increase exports by more than \$1 million.

Bar Crusher Boats – the largest manufacturer of “plate” aluminium trailer boats in Australia – will use the money as part of a \$1.44 million project to install a robotic processing line, increasing capacity at the plant.

Dandenong state Labor MP Gabrielle Williams said the manufacturing sector was one of the largest employers in the southeast.

Bar Crusher Boats manufactures boats up to 7.8m in length for recreational fishing.

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New jobs on deck

By Casey Neill