



South Australian

# Recreational Boating Safety Strategy

What we heard




Government of South Australia  
Department for Infrastructure  
and Transport

Build. Move. Connect.


We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Country throughout South Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land and waters. We pay our respects to the diversity of cultures, significance of contributions and to Elders past, present and emerging.




# What we heard




**1635 respondents**



**93% have a South Australian Boating Licence**

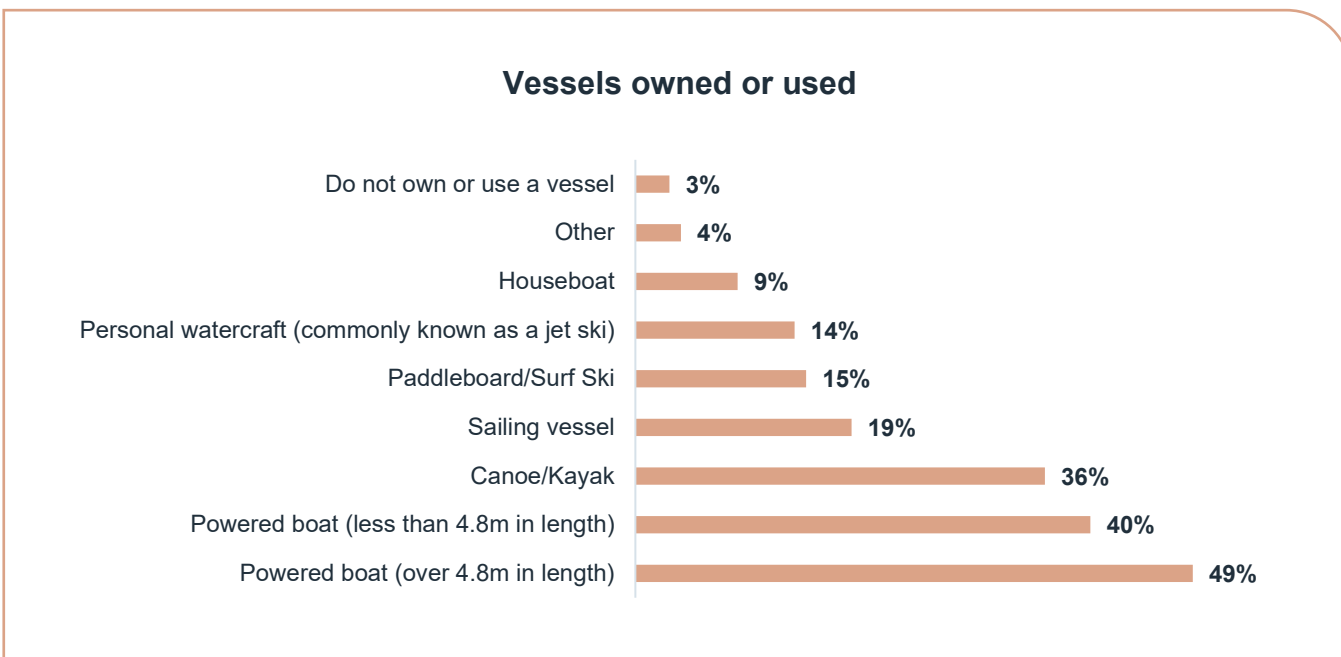
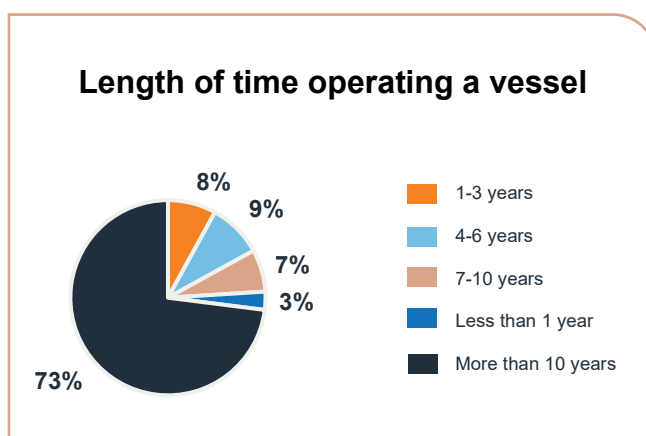
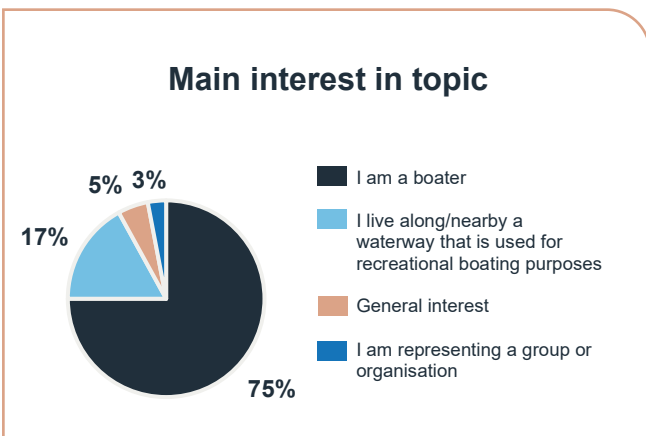


**29% engage in boating on a weekly basis**



**Most popular locations for boating:**

- Riverland (44%)
- Metro Adelaide / local waterways (24%)
- Yorke Peninsula (17%)



# Recreational boating in SA

## Boating safety

**65%** felt it was safe while **14%** felt it was unsafe.

**38%** of those who boat daily exhibit a lower perception of safety compared to **72%** of those who boat less frequently, such as once a month.

This suggests boating more often may lead to seeing more unsafe behaviours by others out on the water.



### When prompted about recreational boating safety

- 49%** are concerned that public awareness of boat safety is lacking.
- 44%** are concerned about the lack of boating safety knowledge for boaters.
- 42%** are concerned with speeding.
- 36%** are concerned with limited training for boaters.



# Licensing and training changes



**90%**  
supported at least one improvement to boating safety knowledge.

The provision of jet ski education courses was most supported in improving boating safety knowledge:



**78%**

in support of theory courses.

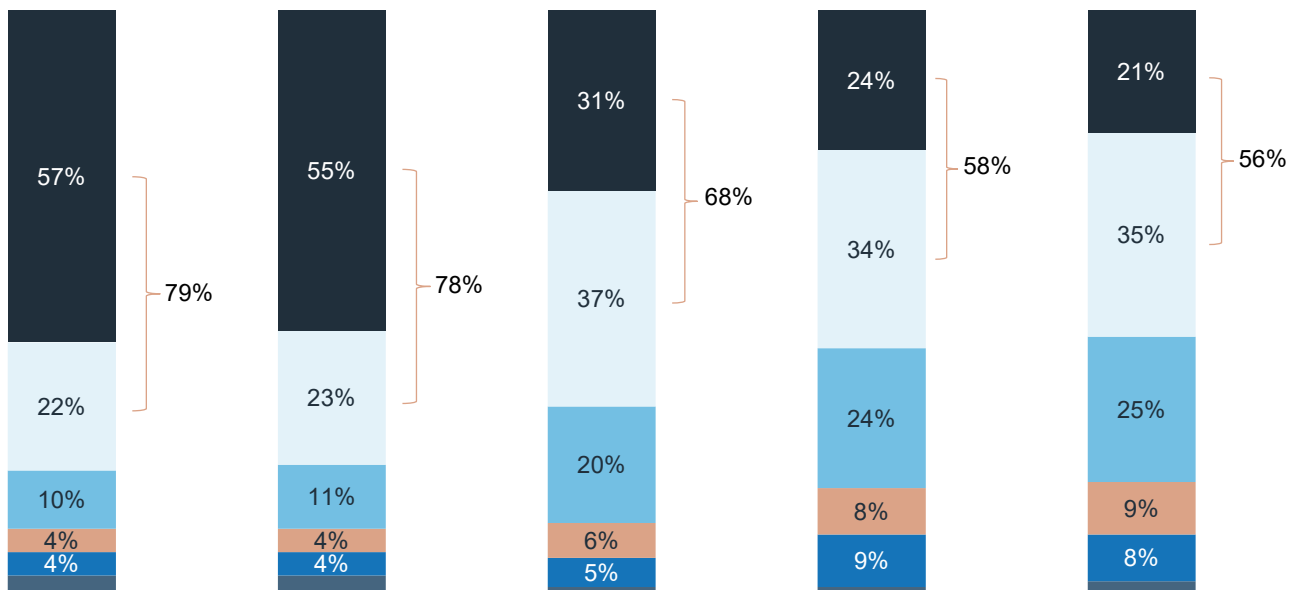


**79%**

in support of practical training.

## Support in improving boating safety knowledge

■ Strongly support  
 ■ Support  
 ■ Neutral  
 ■ Oppose  
 ■ Strongly oppose  
 ■ Don't know



Provision of specific personal watercraft (commonly known as jetski) practical courses for safely operating a personal watercraft

Provision of specific personal watercraft (commonly known as jetski) theory courses for safely operating a personal watercraft

Provision of practical courses for operating a motorised boat

Online refresher courses around safe vessel operation

Development of digital boat licence testing with associated training modules to help increase knowledge of safe vessel operation

## Boat licensing for young people (12 – 15 years)

**51%** were in support of the current option which allows 12- to-15-year-olds the opportunity to gain a Special Permit to operate under the supervision of a full boat licence holder with restrictions until they turn 16 years old (requiring a theory test).

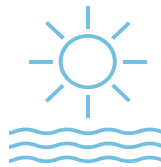


Support was strongest for these operational restrictions for young boat licence holders (12 – 15 years) when operating solo:



**53%**

restricting boat operations to daylight hours.



**45%**

restricting young boaters to operating closer to shore on coastal waters (i.e. only operating up to 2 nautical miles from the shore and inland).



# Boating safety education

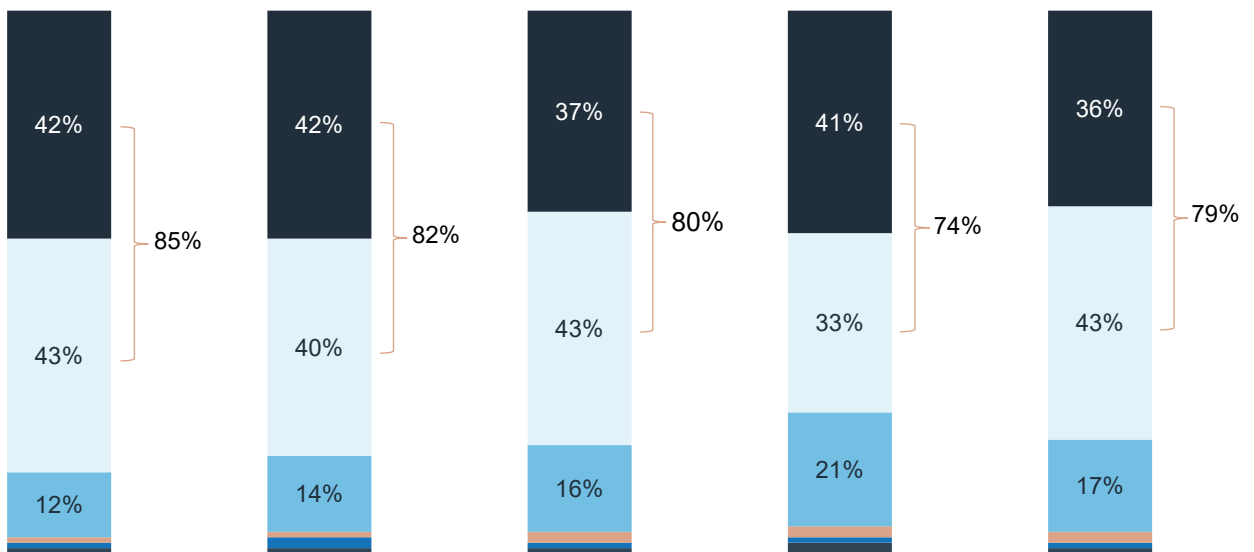
 **97%**

support at least one increase in boating safety education.



## Support for increasing education boating safety

■ Strongly support  
 ■ Support  
 ■ Neutral  
 ■ Oppose  
 ■ Strongly oppose  
 ■ Don't know



Increased education for school-aged children around boating safety

Increased education about lifejackets to boat owners

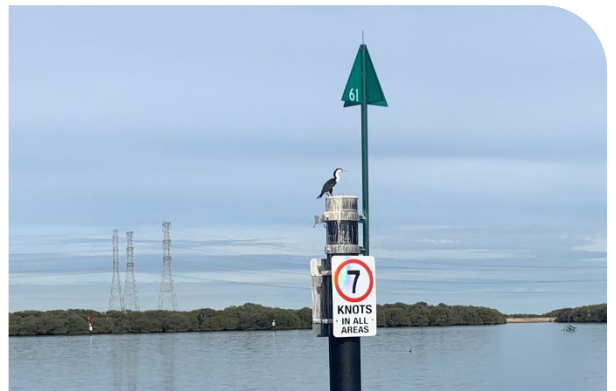
Increased education about boat maintenance requirements to boat owners

Increased education to retailers who sell boating safety equipment

Increased education for the general public around boating safety (including boating safety equipment requirements)

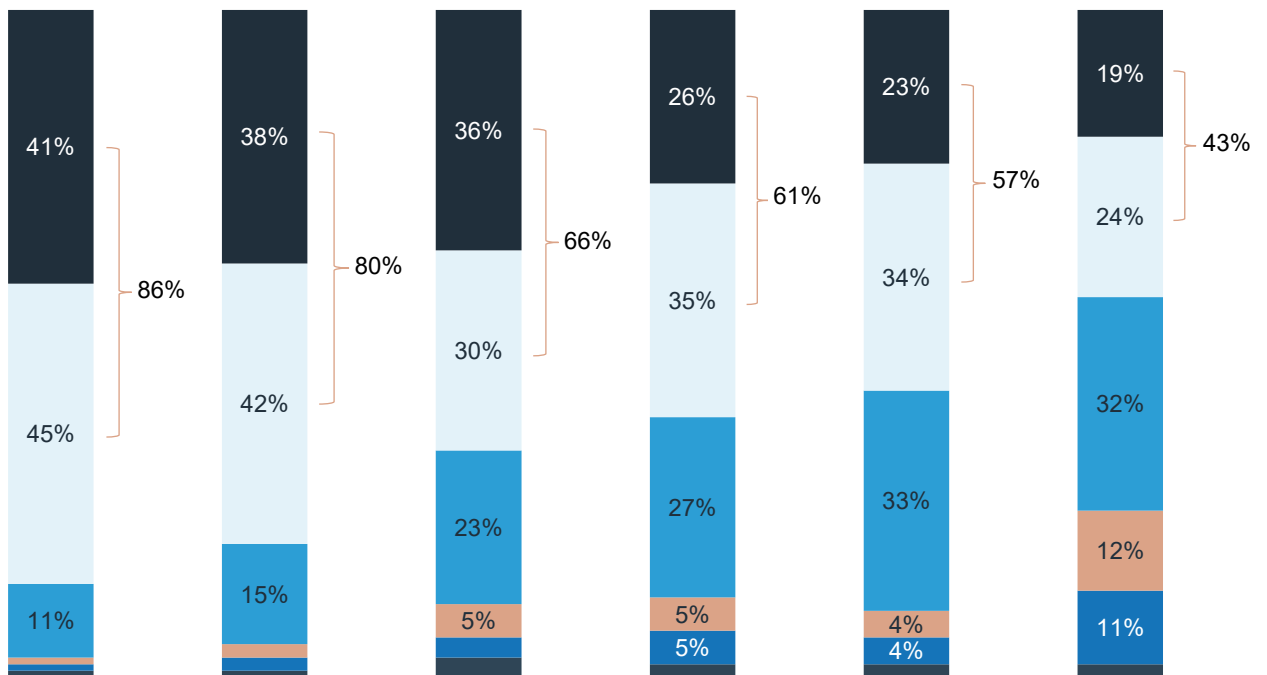
# Boating safety measures

96% supported at least one boating safety measure.



## Support for increasing boating safety measures

■ Strongly support  
 ■ Support  
 ■ Neutral  
 ■ Oppose  
 ■ Strongly oppose  
 ■ Don't know



Consistent signage for coastal and protected waters at boat ramps, reminding users about safe speed and safety equipment requirements

The Department partnering with a boating safety app to provide simple, easy, relevant safety information to recreational boaters

More web cameras across the state at boat ramps to help boaters assess boating conditions

Prioritising compliance activities to reduce risk and promote safer waterways

A review of safety equipment requirements for different vessels

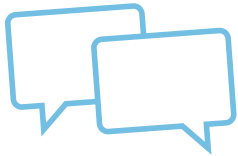
Conducting a speed limit review for coastal and river waters in SA



# Consultation

## Council consultation

27 South Australian Councils have restricted areas and controls under the *Harbors and Navigation Regulations 2023*.



27

Councils were **contacted** to gain feedback on these restricted areas and controls.

85%

Councils responded with general support for an increase in **compliance and education** activities, greater **signage**, and **safer shared areas** on the water such as keeping or extending 4-knot speed zone.



## Key Government and Non-Government forums

Key online survey findings and draft priority areas were presented to different government and non-government organisations and recreational boating associations.



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Different organisations attended the **forums** held on 23 to 24 May 2024 and 5 June 2024.

Feedback was incorporated into refining priority areas and proposed actions.



