



Media release

The Hon Peter Walsh MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security
Minister for Water

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Boost to Lake Eildon houseboat licences

North East Victoria's houseboat industry is set to receive a boost with five commercial houseboat licence upgrades to be released by Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) this week.

Water Minister Peter Walsh said the five commercial licences, which cater for larger hire houseboats, would be offered through a ballot to existing commercial operators.

"I gave a commitment late last year to see bigger houseboats on Lake Eildon to boost regional tourism and employment," Mr Walsh said.

"Five of these licences for larger boats are now being released specifically to expand existing tourism operations to further invest in Lake Eildon."

Mr Walsh said it would enable existing commercial operators to upgrade their licences to accommodate larger modern houseboats, up to 20 metres long and eight metres wide, to be constructed for use on the lake. This compliments a plan to progressively renew the houseboat fleet to ensure contemporary environmental standards are met.

Lake Eildon is the only inland waterway in Victoria that allows houseboats.

"The lake and its water holdings are a massive asset for the state and we want to encourage the local tourism industry to have the best possible facilities to attract visitors," Mr Walsh said.

"There are around 700 private houseboats licensed at Lake Eildon and only 15 commercial houseboats currently in operation, so there is certainly scope for more tourist services."

GMW chair Llew Vale said over the past five years GMW had invested \$3.4 million into new infrastructure at Lake Eildon to better deal with houseboat effluent and rubbish disposal.

"To investigate further options for increases in both commercial and private houseboat numbers, we need to investigate infrastructure type and placement – and of course the funding and fees required to support such infrastructure," Mr Vale said.

GMW will consult with existing commercial operators to work through a ballot process to issue the new houseboat licences in the coming weeks.

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