

This submission is made on behalf of Dragon Flyers Inc, a Dragon Boating sporting club which comprises membership of women and men mostly aged 40 and over, in response to the request by the Australian Government published on 21 February 2022 for comments on the Exposure Draft of Australian Capital Territory National Land (Lakes) Ordinance 2022 (**the Draft Ordinance**).

Comment and Submission

Clause 6(a)(i) of the Draft Ordinance introduces a new requirement (not in the existing Ordinance) which effectively prohibits the operation of a Dragon Boat on Lake Burley Griffin unless the dragon boat is within 200 metres of the shore of the Lake .

We submit that this sub-clause should be deleted from the Ordinance for the following reasons:

If introduced, such a restriction (which does not apply to any other users of the Lake) would:

1. Significantly impede and restrict the ability of our Club and the many hundreds of members of the ACT's dragon boating community (which comprises people aged from school age to those in their 70s including the internationally recognized Dragons Abreast movement for breast cancer survivors) from conducting their sport in an effective and efficient manner.
2. Limit the ability to conduct regatta competitions on the regatta course which are currently regularly attended by many interstate clubs as well as the 11 ACT Clubs. These events and the Australian National Dragon Boating Championship, which has been regularly held on the Lake, bring economic and other important benefits to the ACT which will be significantly impacted by such a restriction.
3. Impede the development of a sport which provides important community health and well-being benefits and outcomes to Canberra and the Capital region - a sport which has seen significant success by ACT club and Territory Dragon Boat representatives in national and international competitions over many years.
4. Have significant implications for the viability of the development of the Dragon Boat centre which is currently underway, following the significant financial investment and commitments of the ACT Government and the Dragon Boating community.

There is no safety rationale for requiring a Dragon Boat to be operated close to shore. A Dragon Boat contains 11-20 people all of whom have regular safety and emergency drill training. No such restriction applies to any other users of the Lake much more likely to be at risk, such as sailboards, surf boats, rowing boats, paddleboats, kayaks, canoes and recreational boats.

The requirement for a Dragon Boat to stay within 200 metres of the Lake shore is impractical and inconsistent with the other provisions of the Ordinance relating to the direction of traffic on the Lake. If Dragon Boats are unable to proceed more than 200m from shore, they will not be able to cross the Lake to be on the required side of the Lake to return to base and will therefore need to travel back the same side of the Lake as they came. This would require them to travel against all other traffic on the Lake, be in breach of the traffic flow regulations and would create unnecessary hazard and undermine the purpose of the traffic regulations.

We request that this sub-clause 6(a)(i) (be removed from the Ordinance.

We confirm that this submission may be made public.

Hugh Chalmers
President
on behalf of Dragon Flyers Inc