

Dear Sir / Madam,

On behalf of my wife and myself I wish to comment on **some of the proposals set** out in the Review.

Before doing so, I wish to make several general comments.

There appear to be views, borne out by the **spokesman** for Crown Lands **who appeared** on television some **weeks** ago, that all waterfront dwellers are wealthy and that non-waterfront people subsidise this group. **Of course, this is false** on both counts. My wife and I receive the **age** pension and pay higher rates than non-waterfront dwellers even though we do not **receive any** additional services from our local council. Our property represents not **only** our life's **savings but my superannuation received on** retirement.

However, I accept that it is one of **life's** realities that people such as **my wife and myself will** not be **able** to reside on waterfront properties in the longer term. **What I cannot** accept is a proposed massive increase in rentals that **will** either force **us** to sell **our** standard **pontoon to** a neighbour **or** suddenly force us **from** a property that **we carved** out and built with our **own** bare hands. **Your proposed rental is** approximately **our** weekly **income**.

The proposal to link waterfront rentals to the unimproved capital value of **land** is not a viable proposition. The UCV of land **has lost its "magical" connection** With **general market** forces, including **rentals** of property. Because of the unique **nature** of the supply of land its price has **accelerated beyond** other **market** commodities **and**, as such, local councils **are** no longer able to use the UCV **as** its basis for land rate increases. Instead, rate increases are capped at a **fair annual** percentage increase which is monitored by the **State Government**.

The proposal also assumes that the space occupied by a pontoon or other such structure may be equated in some way with freehold property. This is an incorrect assumption. **We own our land** and, within sensible regulations, **are** able to build on it, landscape it and use it exclusively for our **own** pleasure. The Crown space over **which** our pontoon is constructed is neither **our property nor do we have exclusive use of our pontoon**. The latter **situation** persists even though we paid for the pontoon and ramp and **modified** our property insurance to cover **damage to** them. However, third **party** claims in relation to injuries to strangers who may use **our** pontoon is **still** a very contentious issue.

There is a much simpler and **fairer way** to base **rental** values.

Revenue from waterfront structures should not only cover **general** current and capital expenditure but should be **derived** in **such a** manner to provide a surplus to **cover** research and development and other activities **designed** to enhance our waterways. This margin **could be** determined **each year** according to cost **structures** and inflation and **capped in the same way as** land **rates** on **freehold property**. I **am** sure that the **financial** planners of **Crown Lands** have the expertise to prepare accurate budgets.

I would also hope that the Crown Lands Dept. adopts a more considerate attitude towards pensioners and those in similar circumstances. Waterways already applies concessional discounts of 50% on boat licences, boat registration and moorings.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the rental proposals and I do hope that my concerns are considered.

Yours faithfully,

Bill Barton, on behalf of my wife
and myself.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Barton', with a stylized flourish at the end.