

Safer Ocean Access From Torquay's New Beach Access Boat Ramp

Torquay's Fisherman's Beach boat ramp was completed in December 2010. The two-lane ramp cost \$1.7 million, with Transport Safety Victoria providing \$1.2 m. The works were managed by a Steering Committee including stakeholders such as the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC).

The new ramp replaces a degraded old ramp with a new concrete structure of gradient of 1 in 16.5, with a final gradient of 1:8 – however most of the steeper section is sand-covered and most boats are launched from the beach sand. The ramp is on a recreational beach which directly fronts an ocean surf beach.



The ramp was designed in accordance with Australian Standards including AS 3962-Guidelines for the design of marinas and AS 4997 Guidelines for the design of maritime structures.

The design was developed following a feasibility study by engineering firm Connell Wagner (now Aurecon), with the vision being to provide *'a safe and accessible boat launching facility for the region that preserves the social, landscape and environmental values of the area'*.

The feasibility study assessed three lead options:

1. Enhanced beach access
2. Small reef or breakwater
3. Large breakwater.

After feedback from stakeholders, the Steering Committee identified Option 1; 'Enhanced beach access' as their preferred option, as it would potentially provide some improvement to existing launch and retrieval conditions, had a relatively low impact on the environment, and was the cheapest option.

Whilst Option 3 – 'Large breakwater' was recognised as providing greater safety for launching and retrieving, there would be considerable impact on the environment and coastal processes, it would considerably alter the beach for other users, and would be highly expensive.

The Option 2 - 'Small reef or breakwater' did not provide a good value for money solution in terms of safety achieved versus the capital cost of the infrastructure.

The successful completion of this ramp, that the GORCC estimates will cater for 22,000 annual launches, shows it can be done!