

COVID-19 Marine Tourism Assistance Round 2: Frequently Asked Questions

August 2021

General

Why has the Queensland Government launched the COVID-19 Marine Tourism Assistance Scheme Round 2?

Queensland's tourism and events industry has been considerably impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 Marine Tourism Assistance Scheme Round 2 (the Program) is part of the Queensland Government's \$47.75 million Tourism and Hospitality Sector COVID-19 Lockdown Support package. This package will deliver immediate benefits and provide cash flow relief to help tourism and events businesses to survive and revive.

The Program supports marine tourism businesses that have suffered losses of income as a result of the impacts of COVID-19 travel restrictions. The Program is designed to assist eligible applicants by offsetting the cost of berthing fees at privately-owned or privately-operated marinas in eligible local government areas of Bundaberg, Burdekin, Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Cook, Douglas, Fraser Coast, Gladstone, Hinchinbrook, Isaac, Livingstone, Mackay, Townsville and Whitsunday.

Applying

How do I apply?

Applicants are required to complete an online application form available at the [Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport](#) (DTIS).

The guidelines and frequently asked questions are available at [Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport](#).

In preparation of completing their application form, applicants should familiarise themselves with the Program guidelines.

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) is administering the Program on behalf DTIS.

Who can apply?

The Program is open to eligible marine tourism businesses towards the cost of offsetting berthing fees at privately-owned or privately-operated marinas in eligible local government areas from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Marine tourism businesses must demonstrate they have suffered a loss of income due to the impacts of COVID-19.

The marine tourism business must be headquartered in Queensland.

What is the closing date for applying?

The Program will close once all funding has been fully allocated. Applications will be processed on a first come, first serve basis, and therefore not all applications may be successful.

How much will be paid?

The Program will be up to a maximum of \$20,000 (excluding GST) per applicant.

Can I amend my application after submission?

No, but you must advise QRIDA of any changes that are likely to affect your eligibility.

Can I submit more than one application?

No. Multiple applications will not be accepted from one applicant.

Can my business advisor apply under the Program on my behalf with my permission?

Yes. Your business advisor or another party may submit an application with your consent.

When will I find out if my application is successful?

All applicants will receive formal notification of the outcome of the application at the earliest possible time. However, please note that this stage involves a detailed assessment and due diligence process. Successful applicants will receive an approval letter confirming the terms and conditions of funding.

After approval, applicants or privately-owned or privately-operated marinas will receive 100 per cent of the eligible funding amount.

Can I submit my application before I have gathered all my evidence to hold my place in line?

No. You must submit a completed application, which includes all supporting evidence as requested in the application form, in order to be considered under the Program.

What happens to the information I supplied in my application?

The application form for the Program contains specific information on how personal information will be collected, used, and disclosed. Applicants should note that broad details of successful proposals, agreed outcomes, progress and the level of funding awarded may be published by the Queensland Government.

Some information may be used to promote funded activities. Personal information will not be disclosed to any other third party without consent, unless required by law or for the purposes of *Information Privacy Act 2009*. The provisions of the *Right to Information Act 2009* apply to documents in the possession of the Queensland Government.

Eligibility

What is an eligible marine tourism business?

For a business to be considered an eligible marine tourism business to receive funding under the Program, it must meet all of the following criteria:

- have an established marine tourism business that includes the use of at least one commercial vessel utilising a berth at a privately-owned or privately-operated marina in eligible local government areas, as at 1 April 2021
- have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN) as at 1 April 2021
- be registered for GST
- have an annual turnover of more than \$75,000 during the 2018-19, 2019-20 or 2020-21 financial years (businesses that have recently started can provide financial records to show they will reasonably meet this turnover requirement in the 2021-22 financial year)
- have experienced a loss of income since 1 April 2021 as a result of the impact of COVID-19 travel restrictions
- employ at least 1 full time equivalent employees as at 1 April 2021
- not be insolvent or have owners or directors that are an undischarged bankrupt

- possess a Vessel Certificate of Operation from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

If I have more than one business with a different ABN for each, can I receive support for each business?

Yes, in these circumstances each business under a separate ABN may be eligible for support under the Program provided each business meets all other eligibility criteria.

Can I apply if I have received other Queensland Government grants?

Yes, you can. If you received the COVID-19 Marine Tourism Rebate in Round 1, you are still eligible to apply under the Program in Round 2.

Do I have to be operating an existing business to be eligible to apply?

Yes. Your application must be for an existing operating marine tourism business with a valid Australian Business Number as at 1 April 2021.

Can I apply if I am a Sole Trader?

Yes, provided you meet all of the eligibility criteria.

Can I apply for a grant for more than one marine tourism vessel or more than one berth?

Yes, the payment is a maximum of \$20 000 (excluding GST) per applicant, regardless of the number of vessels or berths leased at privately-owned or privately-operated marinas. For example, if you operate two marine tourism vessels berthed in a privately-owned or privately-operated marina in eligible local government areas for a total cost of \$30 000, the maximum payment you could receive is \$20 000 (excluding GST).

Can I apply under the Program for marina licence / rental fees?

Yes, if the evidence through an invoice for the eligible fees or of payment of such eligible fees shows the costs for a berth at a privately-owned or privately-operated marina. For example, if you pay marina licence fees to the Hamilton Island Marina, your evidence needs to show the marina berthing costs as part of your licensing fees charged or that have been paid.

Can I apply under the Program if my current marina fees are paid at a discount rate?

Yes. Some marinas may be offering discounted berthing fees to their customers due to the impacts of COVID-19. Berthing fees at privately-owned or privately-operated marinas in eligible local government areas for all or part of the financial year period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 are eligible if the berthing fees have been invoiced at a discounted rate.

For example, if berthing fees at a privately-owned or privately-operated marina in eligible local government areas have been reduced by 20 per cent during the 2021-22 financial year you still need to supply the:

- official marina invoice to be paid; or
- invoice and receipt which details the actual payments you have made.

Can I apply for the grant for future unpaid marine berthing fees?

The Program is available as a payment/reimbursement for 2021-22 berthing fees at privately-owned or privately-operated marinas in eligible local government areas by the marine tourism business. Payment of berthing fees at privately-owned or privately-operated marinas are eligible from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

Marine tourism businesses are not required to be invoiced or have paid the entire 12 months berthing fees at a privately-owned or privately-operated marina upfront to 30 June 2022, though if you have paid any berthing fees in advance, those berthing fees are eligible for the support. For example, if you currently pay berthing fees on a monthly basis and you decide to pay for the full year to 30 June 2022, the marine tourism business would be eligible to apply for these berthing fees.

Documentation required

The applicant will need to complete the online application form and attach evidence of berthing fees at a privately-owned or privately-operated marina in eligible local government areas in 2021/22 including:

For seeking reimbursement for berthing fees already paid by the applicant

The invoice/s and receipt/s from the privately-owned or privately-operated marina, with reimbursement up to a maximum of \$20,000 (excluding GST), will need to be evidenced. The payment will be made directly to the applicant's nominated bank account.

For seeking payment of marina invoice up to maximum eligible berthing fees

The invoice/s from the privately-owned or privately-operated marina for the eligible fees, with payment up to a maximum of \$20,000 (excluding GST) will need to be provided. The payment will be made directly from QRIDA to the marina on behalf of the applicant to the nominated bank account of the marina.

The payment of the portion of the invoice/s from the privately-owned or privately-operated marina that exceed the eligible fees will be the sole responsibility of the approved applicant.

Marine Tourism Operator certification

The application form will require the applicant to attach a copy of their Vessel Certificate of Operation from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and a copy of either their Permit to Operate on the Great Barrier Reef from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority or their Permit to Operate on a Queensland Marine National Park from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Does my business have to be located in Queensland?

Yes. The business must be headquartered in Queensland and have paid berthing fees at a privately-owned or privately-operated marina in eligible local government areas during the financial year period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

To demonstrate your business is located in Queensland, the 'Main Business Location' of the applicant's ABN must be listed as being in Queensland on the Australian Business Register (ABR) at the time of application, at www.abr.gov.au.

If the ABR listing for the applying business does not list a Queensland address as the main business location, you must provide evidence of a Queensland operation as part of your application.

Evidence of a Queensland operation may include:

- a copy of the applicant's Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) Company Statement listing a Queensland address as 'principal place of business'; or
- a letter from the applicant's accountant confirming the business operates from a regional Queensland location.

Do I need to be registered for GST?

Yes. The business must be registered for GST as at 1 April 2021 to be eligible for funding under the Program. All businesses that have an annual turnover of \$75,000 or greater are required to register for GST. If your business is not registered for GST visit www.ato.gov.au/Business/GST/Registering-for-GST to find out more.

The Queensland Government recommends you seek independent professional advice before registering for GST.

Will I be reimbursed for GST spent?

No. Support is not subject to the GST. Therefore, GST is not payable and grant funding will not compensate for any GST spent by the business. The support amount is GST exempt.

How is the marine tourism assistance paid?

After approval, applicants or privately-owned or privately-operated marinas will receive 100 per cent of the eligible funding amount approved as payment to the nominated bank account.

Where the eligible fees are:

- being paid directly to the marina, this will be directly to the marina's nominated bank account; or
- if seeking reimbursement of eligible berthing fees paid, then this will be to the nominated bank account in the name of applicant.

What are my tax obligations?

Payments are treated as assessable income for tax purposes, unless exempted by law. The Queensland Government recommends you seek independent professional advice on your tax obligations.

How will my application be assessed?

All applications will be reviewed against the eligibility criteria to determine compliant applications.

Compliant applications will be assessed and approved by the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority to determine the amount of funding allocated to the applicant against the available funding.

Audit requirements

Do I need to retain documentation?

Yes, approved applicants will need to retain documentation for the Program audit purposes.

Marine tourism businesses may be surveyed six months after the completion of the Program.

The administration of the Program allows the Queensland Government to validate and check the authenticity of applications and the applicant's details at any time.

Applicants who are awarded the support must refund the support to the Queensland Government if the support is subsequently found to be based on an invalid application.

Further information

Who do I contact for information about my application?

For further information about the Program or general advice on applications, please contact QRIDA on Freecall 1800 623 946 or email contact_us@qrda.qld.gov.au

Definitions

Domestic tourism market - intrastate and interstate visitor segments that a marine tourism business may wish to target.

Full-Time Equivalent Employees - number of equivalent full-time employees of a marine tourism business is calculated using the below formula -

$$E = F + \frac{P}{35}$$

Where:

- **E** means the number of equivalent full-time employees of the marine tourism business.
- **F** means the number of full-time employees of the marine tourism business.
- **P** means the total number of hours worked each week by employees other than full-time employees.

Loss of Income - ability to demonstrate that a marine tourism business has experienced a loss of income since 1 April 2021 as a result of the impact of COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Marine Tourism Business - business primarily providing goods and services to or for which the primary/majority target market is domestic or international visitors to Queensland. This includes bare boats, sail boats, rigid inflatable boats and motor vessels used to deliver tourism experiences.

Privately-owned Marina - privately-owned commercial marinas that are not owned by government.

Privately-operated Marina - privately-operated commercial marinas that are not operated by government.

Reviews

Am I able to review a decision?

- Applicants may request a review of a decision made by QRIDA in relation to the provision of funding or a declined application under the Program.
- Requests for review must be received by QRIDA within 20 business days after receipt of a decision advice.
- Applicants will be notified in writing of review outcomes within 30 business days from receipt of the appeal.