

The Hon Eric Abetz MP  
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources  
Minister for Transport  
Leader of the House

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Mr Michael Ferguson MP  
Member for Bass

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Dear Mr Ferguson

Thank you for your constituent question, asked in Parliament on 12 March 2025, regarding the removal of abandoned boats in the Tamar River.

Derelict vessels can present risks to navigation, the safe use of waters by the public, and risks to the environment. Vessel owners have the ultimate responsibility for their vessels, including any salvage and removal costs.

It's therefore important that vessel owners are held to account for the cost of managing and disposing of derelict vessels.

As you're aware, the Government committed at the last State election to introduce much tougher new laws to address the growing problem of abandoned and derelict vessels as part of our 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's future.

The Department of State Growth is preparing a policy position paper for consultation, which will inform the legislation that the Government brings to Parliament.

Matters under consideration include powers of access to vessels, responsibilities to maintain vessels and enhanced powers to take control of vessels that are at risk.

In the meantime, Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST) has identified seven high-risk vessels that require removal from the Tamar River, primarily where the owner of the vessel is unknown.

Most of the vessels are situated within the Tamar River Conservation Area, and MAST is currently seeking the necessary approvals from the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) to proceed with their removal. MAST has prepared the tender documentation, and once approvals are received from PWS, the procurement process will commence in accordance with the Treasurer's Instructions.

Thank you for raising this matter in Parliament on behalf of your constituent and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Eric Abetz MP  
Minister for Transport