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relating to the cruise liner studies is disturbing – more big brother stuff from a government with an appalling record of withholding unfavourable findings to their hair-brained schemes. Their record of withholding findings on so-called scientific studies in support of the ludicrous Marine Sewage Legislation introduced in 2004 was an earlier example of how to ignore public opinion and proceed blindly with stupid legislation.

One other proposal for a terminal and commercial development on the west side of the Spit has been put forward by a Gold Coast Marina consortium, but there does not appear to be any backing for this proposal. Although this proposal appears to be less environmentally damaging, the recreational boating public will lose their much loved and used Marine Stadium, colloquially known as “Bum’s Bay” and Doug Jennings Park will be largely contained to the northern end of the Spit. Public access will be gone for everyone from the average family who drive to The Spit for a weekend picnic to the hundreds of rowers, surfers and recreational users who enjoy the Spit foreshore and Seaway.

The stupidity behind the proposal is that there are few cruise ships that frequent Australian waters. They won’t use a terminal in Brisbane as well as the Gold Coast – it will be one or the other so why not develop the Brisbane River terminal where there will be minimal environmental impact and sufficient deep water to accommodate these floating hotels.

There is no doubt that Queensland needs a super yacht facility but the existing Gold Coast City Marina and the proposed Rivergate, on the Brisbane River, can provide those much needed facilities. Why create another one and jeopardise the economic viability of the existing two facilities. Many in support of the cruise terminal and super yacht facility argue that the Gold Coast could become like Fort Lauderdale in Florida and Miami. But here’s what the Mayor of Fort Lauderdale, Jim Naugle, has to say on the effect cruise ship terminals have had on his city. Fort Lauderdale is home to one of the largest US cruise ship terminals.

*“If I could, I’d get rid of the cruise ships tomorrow. Their*



The Gold Coast Seaway will require constant dredging

*passengers clog up our airport and leave empty hotel rooms that tourists wishing to stay in the city can't access. They don't spend any money, other than cab fares getting between the airport and the cruise terminal. And they're a huge drain on our city's resources”*

So, are we set to follow the US example and bugger-up another of our recreational boating resources. Let us not forget the substantial environmental impact this development will have on the Gold Coast Seaway and immediate environs around Wave Break Island.

To succeed in terms of operations alone, not counting the environmental cost, the proposed Gold Coast cruise ship terminal and super yacht facility will require a channel to be dredged at least one kilometre offshore from the Gold Coast Seaway and to be continually dredged because of the large volumes of shifting sand along the Gold Coast beaches.

Despite pre-election promises almost two years ago to dredge the Gold Coast waterways including the South arm of the Coomera River, the Government has still not done so. This River provides access to the Gold Coast City Marina – a facility capable of handling super yachts. Similarly, the North arm of the Coomera River at anything lower than half tide is hardly navigable by anything other than trailer boats.

The interruption to recreational boating on the Gold Coast will be enormous. Small ships will be required to stand-off the entrance to the Sea Way when cruise ships are approaching. In the summer storm season or when a south-easterly change hits, what will that do to boating safety?

There are so many factors which the State Government have not considered or if they have, they are proceeding blindly. This is one proposal which should NEVER get up. Public outcry hopefully will see to that and the political cost to the Government could see many sitting Government members decimated at the next election if they are fool hardy enough to support this development proposal. To proceed, the cruise ship terminal and super yacht facility will require specific legislation and it would be a brave person to back such a scenario.

Rather than waste more public money on hair-brained schemes, the Queensland Government and indeed most governments would be better served to concentrate on infrastructure upgrades – better ramps, better marinas, more dredging of existing channels, better navigation marks, fish cleaning facilities and some government support for sewage pump-out facilities.

Premier Beattie proudly struts his stuff pronouncing that Queensland is the *Smart State*, yet there is absolutely nothing smart about this one.