

19 December 2017

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Dear Kevin,

Thank you for providing me with a copy of your group's latest newsletter. I do have some observations that I would like to bring to your attention.

I have looked at some sample rate notices for properties that pay the Port Geographe SAR including your own rates notice but cannot see how you have calculated that the percentage of the SAR equates to 23% of the total rates, approximately or otherwise.

To take your own rates notice as an example, your notice for the 17/18 financial year, which includes all levies and waste charges, amounts to \$2631 per annum. The total dollar amount of the SAR component as shown on your rate notice is \$303. The SAR component is not therefore 23% of the total rate notice but 11.51%.

Looking at it another way, if waste charges and state government levies are excluded and the total rates are calculated at \$2229, the SAR still only equates to 13.6% of that amount.

To be sure of the percentage calculations, I took another sample property in the Port Geographe area and reviewed the calculations. The result was the same at 11.51% and 13.6% respectively.

Port Geographe is not unlike other artificially created canal developments in Australia that require property owners within its catchment to contribute to the cost of maintaining a healthy waterway and therefore an acceptable environment in which to reside. The City of Mandurah are one example of a local government that raises a specified area rate for management and maintenance of their canals.

The specified area rate applied to properties within the Port Geographe catchment is not a "tax to pay for dredging the entrance channel etc.." The SAR is used for the overall purpose of managing the waterways and the impact on the wider environment of having created a canal development. The Port Geographe SAR *contributes* to the cost of the works required to maintain the Port Geographe waterways. The actual cost of waterway maintenance is far in excess of the amount collected annually via the SAR and involves a great deal more than simply dredging the canal.

As you know, the SAR can only be used for the purpose for which it has been collected and whilst this *includes* dredging it can also be applied to the cost of maintaining water quality within the canals. Whilst I am aware of the degree of scepticism that exists in relation to this requirement, it is nevertheless vitally important to be able to access the SAR and the reserve into which it is deposited for this purpose should it be required.

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Please also bear in mind the fact that, for the purpose of maintaining appropriate water quality, it is impossible to distinguish between the portion of waterway that canal fronted properties 'own' for the purpose of constructing private jetties and the remainder of the canal system. It could be argued that a proportion of the SAR would be utilised to maintain water quality for sections of the waterway within private ownership.

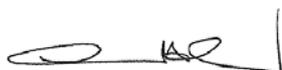
It is misleading to say that the City makes no contribution. This implies that infrastructure such as the public boat ramps, the pedestrian bridge and the landscaping within the area are not met from general rate revenue of the City, which is incorrect.

Also, as you know, there are many public facilities such as parks and gardens in the communities of Provenge and Vasse that the ratepayers pay a current SAR for and have done so for many years. These areas are also freely accessible and capable of being enjoyed by the entire community.

I understand there may be some misconceptions caused by the name "*Port Geographe*". So far as any comment about the purpose of the navigable waterway is concerned, whatever the use of the word 'port' may imply, there is no sea freight or commercial loading and unloading facilities. The harbour and waterways cannot therefore be classified as a port in that sense of the word.

My aim in responding to your publication has been to provide you with sufficient information to enable you to correct what has been publically distributed. It is your call entirely but I am sure you would prefer that your association were credited with using accurate data and information in "your campaign" as discussed in the recent newsletter.

Yours Sincerely,



Mike Archer
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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