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Yorkeys Knob Boat Club Expands Facilities to Provide Improved Access for Cruise Ship Tenders

The Yorkeys Knob Boat Club recently completed a \$2.2m upgrade to provide improved accommodations and infrastructure for visiting cruise ships.

Yorkeys Knob, Queensland, Australia – 2 March 2015 – Sixteen miles of pristine beaches, tropical rainforests, sunny skies and proximity to the Great Barrier Reef as well as Australia's hottest vacation destination, Cairns, make Yorkeys Knob a popular port of call for the cruise industry.

However, until recently cruise infrastructure in Yorkeys Knob, a tender port for ships too big to berth at Cairns, was inadequate for the high volume traffic associated with the visiting ships. According to Stuart Vella, Club Manager at Yorkeys Knob Boat Club, in the past it had been a major operation to disembark and embark passengers from cruise ship moorings off Yorkeys. A great deal of time was spent waiting at the old small jetty to board the tenders ferrying them back to their ships. Vella added, "Lack of adequate infrastructure took away from the passengers' overall experience and time ashore."

After two years of planning and petitioning political support, Yorkeys Knob Boat Club received approval to move forward with plans to construct a properly designed tender wharf for Yorkeys Knob. The new tender wharf at the Boat Club allows several ships' tenders to embark/disembark passengers at the same time. In addition, a number of shoreside improvements were made to streamline the transfer of passengers.

Bellingham Marine was hired to design and build the pontoon system for the Club's tender wharf. "Considering cruise ship tenders carry up to 300 passengers at a time, it was important the floating terminal be able to handle high volume foot traffic comfortably and safely – Bellingham's heavy duty concrete pontoon system was perfect for the application," said Tom Meehan, Business Development Manager for Bellingham Marine Australia. "The pontoon system has an extremely high load capacity and is as stable as walking on dry land."

The new wharf includes a 4m wide concrete pontoon with 600mm freeboard. Access is provided via two gangways to allow for one direction foot traffic during loading and off-loading of tender vessels. New security gates were also installed to close off the terminal when not in use.

Because of the massive size of the concrete modules, Bellingham Marine assembled the new pontoon on site.

The Club's improvement plan also called for the construction of a new boat ramp, improvements to the fuel dock and a number of shoreside upgrades. Landside improvements included construction of a sheltered passenger holding area, multiple bus bays, and a newly paved pedestrian path between the tender wharf, boat ramp and club facilities.

As the world's leading marina design-build construction company, Bellingham Marine specializes in floating dock, floating platform and floating wave attenuation systems for marinas worldwide. The company also produces dry storage systems for the upland storage of boats.

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