

Boatbuilding

Business start-up guide

Boatbuilding industry overview

Boatbuilding business operators manufacture small to medium size boats.

Demand for boats has gone down after the heavy floods in Queensland, but the industry is expected to recover.

Starting or buying a boatbuilding business involves many essential steps. Legally, you must ensure that you apply for and receive the correct licences.

This guide explains how to start a boatbuilding business in Queensland. It will help you understand the challenges and opportunities of entering the boatbuilding industry so you can make good business decisions.

Getting into the boatbuilding industry

Before you start a boatbuilding business in Queensland, you need to understand how the industry works, what things you need to consider in your planning, and the legal requirements you must meet.

Finding a competitive edge in Queensland's boatbuilding industry

In Queensland, there is strong competition from international boat manufacturers who compete on price because they have lower labour and raw material costs. However, there are ways you can give your business a competitive edge.

If you build small, simple craft, you can compete on price because there are few differences between basic boats and international boatbuilding companies have freight costs.

If you build larger, complex crafts, you can compete on special boat features.

Your competitive edge can also be in technological innovations or being energy efficient and using sustainable design principles. These factors can help build your reputation and bring you loyal customers.

Key success factors for a boatbuilding business

To start a successful boatbuilding business, you need to:

- use the latest technology and most efficient techniques
- place your business near your target customers
- make popular types of boats
- be able to export your boats
- do technical research and development.

Boatbuilding industry entry barriers

The major barrier to entry in the boatbuilding industry is the high start-up costs involved, such as factory rental and material costs. It also takes extra effort to win over long-term boating customers because they are loyal to their brands and reluctant to change.

(Source IBISWorld, March 2012)

Boatbuilding industry requirements

A number of licensing and registration regulations govern the boating industry. When starting a boatbuilding business you need to consider the following requirements.

Inventing a useful device, substance, method or new process

If you invent something new in the boatbuilding industry, you may need a Grant of a Patent.

[IP Australia](#) manages patent grants and



costs vary depending on the type of patent you need. Patent ownership can be transferred if you sell your invention.

Unique design registrations

If you design an item with a unique appearance to make your boats stand out from the competition, you may need a Registration of Design. [IP Australia](#) manages design registrations and costs vary depending on your type of design. Registration can be transferred if you sell your design.

Building a commercial vessel longer than 24 metres

You may need a Certificate of Loadline (Queensland) from [Maritime Safety Queensland](#) to build a commercial vessel longer than 24m. Certificate costs vary depending on the type of vessel you build and it can take up to 28 days to process your application. Certificates remain effective for up to 5 years and can be transferred.

Using a gas fuel system for vessel propulsion

To use a gas fuel system to propel your vessel, you may need an Approval of Gas Fuel Systems on Vessels from the [Department of Natural Resources and Mines](#).

Operating your own vessel

To operate the vessel you are building, you may need a:

- **Restricted Use Flag (if the vessel is not registered).** [Maritime Safety Queensland](#) approves the flag, which authorises you to use the vehicle when it's not registered.
- **ERIRB (Distress beacon registration)** from the [Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#). Your registration stays in effect until ownership changes.
- **Certificate of Registration** from [Maritime Safety Queensland](#). Registration costs vary depending on your type of vessel. This registration is valid for 12 months and can be transferred.
- **Certificate of Competency/Recognition of Service (Marine Engine Driver)** from [Maritime Safety Queensland](#). Certification costs vary and it can take up to 2 months to process your application. You need this certificate to operate as a master of a commercial vessel in Queensland.

- **Recognition Certificate of Survey (Outside Queensland)** from [Maritime Safety Queensland](#). Certification costs vary and it can take up to 28 days to process your application. You need this certificate to recognise vessels and loadlines certified outside of Queensland. You can transfer interstate certificates if you have a current Certificate of Survey for your vessel.
- **Certificate of Survey** from [Maritime Safety Queensland](#). Certification costs vary and it can take up to 28 days to process your application. This certificate permits you to take a commercial vessel outside Queensland waters. You don't need this certificate for fishing vessels shorter than 10m in length or for private pleasure vessels.
- **Commercial Use of Jetties approval** from [your local council](#). Application costs vary so check with your council. All commercial vessels must be approved to use jetties and pay mooring fees.

Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) Licence

You may need an Environmentally Relevant Activity Licence (which is part of the Development Permit) to conduct environmentally relevant activities from [your local council](#). Licence costs vary so check with your council when you request an application form. The council can take up to 4 weeks to process your application. You need this licence to undertake any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm to an area where your council is responsible.

Using equipment or machinery to lift or hoist in your business

If you use equipment or machinery to lift or hoist in your boatbuilding business, you may need a:

Certificate of Registration of a Registrable Plant from [Workplace Health and Safety](#). Certification costs vary and the certificate stays in effect for 12 months but cannot be transferred.

Certificate to Work in a Prescribed Occupation - Crane or Hoist Operator's Certificate from [Workplace Health and Safety](#). Certificates cost \$77 and you are legally required to have this certificate to operate a crane or a hoist. All applicants must be competent in operating the crane or hoist covered by the certificate.

Certificate to Work in a Prescribed Occupation - Rigger from [Workplace Health and Safety](#). Certificates cost \$77 and you are legally required to have this certificate to do rigging work.

Legislation that may apply to your business

Queensland

- *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*
- *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994*
- *Fisheries Act 1994*
- *Land Act 1994*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Marine Parks Act 2004*
- *National Measurement Act 1960*
- *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*
- *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995*
- *Water Act 2000*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

Commonwealth

- *Customs Act 1901*
- *Endangered Species Protection Act 1992*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Export Control Act 1982*
- *Fisheries Management Act 1991*
- *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*

To access copies of legislation, visit www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

Useful industry contacts

Business Support Unit

For more information on licences, regulations, market research, business planning and other support services phone 13 25 23 or visit business.qld.gov.au

Marine Queensland

Phone (07) 3390 4657

Visit www.marineqld.com.au