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Page 1 of 1

## Duo push for legislation change to get our tourism 'sailing'

MEMBER for Flynn Ken O'Dowd and GAPDL CEO Darryl Branthwaite are united to change legislation to allow foreign flagged super-yachts to run charters in Australian waters.

Mr Branthwaite said the current law was a hindrance.

"There is some lobbying to have the rules freed up to attract high-end super-yacht tourism in Australia," he said.

"Gladstone is the ideal location to base a super-yacht.

"If you have one operating from here for a couple of months it'll soon be joined by more.

"It's my aim to see it happen."

Mr O'Dowd said the Australian Government recognised the economic importance of tourism and super-yacht visitors to Australia, particularly to Queensland.

"The government introduced the Coastal Trading Revitalising Australian Shipping Amendment Bill 2017 into Parliament on September 13, 2017," he said.

"The Bill will support foreign-flagged super-yachts offering commercial charters in Australia by making it easier for operators to obtain coastal trading licences.

"They will be exempt from importation under the Customs Act 1901 and will not have to pay GST and import duty and also ensures they will be able to dry-dock in Australia."

The Bill passed the House of Representatives on August 15 and is awaiting debate in the Senate.

Mr Branthwaite said he was keen to lure more luxury yachts to the region.

"It would be nice to get the

super-yachts sailing from Brisbane to Abel Point Marina in the Whitsundays to linger here longer," he said.

"We have three great marinas in Bundaberg, Gladstone and Rosslyn Bay they can use to explore the great Southern Barrier from.

"The reef off here is amazing."

**Greg Bray**



**IDEA SETS SAIL: Member for Flynn Ken O'Dowd and GAPDL CEO Darryl Branthwaite.**

Photo: Campbell Gellie