Background: Motor-boat related burns have not previously been reported. Summer 2013 saw an unusually high number of admissions to the Victoria Adult Burns Service secondary to this mechanism. The majority of these required surgical intervention. Trends related to this group are presented, looking at potential causes for the incidence increase. A campaign to the boating community of Victoria was initiated. The Herald Sun also warned boat-lovers of this increase in boat-blasts, featuring two of our patients (Right).

Results: In 3 years, our unit identified - via the VABS Burns Registry - 18 cases of motor-boat related burns, 8 of which occurred between January and March 2013. Mean age was 43 years and the majority were male (78%). Most burns were less than 15% TBSA (mean 11%), although 80% required surgical intervention (debridement + SSG / Biobrane application). One patient died following a large explosion (> 40% TBSA). 44% grew water-borne organisms from wounds, including Aeromonas Hydrophilia and Stenotrophomonas Maltophilia. Mean length of stay was 10 days.

72% occurred at sea or on the river; the rest on land. Only 44% were the owner of the boat; the rest were passengers. 94% of incidents involved an explosion, due to petrol or vapour leak and only 1 reported wearing a safety suit, but without boots!

Conclusions: We can partially attribute the increase to: an expanding number of high-powered recreational boat owners in Victoria and reduction in drought-affected waterways, but mainly to lack of knowledge of safety standards and equipment.

Future Prevention: The role of the VBPP is to improve community awareness in Victoria of fire and burns prevention through the development of targeted burns prevention campaigns. VBPP are targeting seasonal prevention messages via the media as the boat season approaches this year.