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ANNUAL REPORT

2008-09

The contents of the Annual Report are intended to inform all stakeholders of The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Inc (trading as Recfish Australia) regarding its performance in 2008-2009.

These achievements have been accomplished through the strong support and guidance of the Recfish Australia Board, member organisation delegates and Recfish Australia staff.

The achievements of Recfish Australia in 2008-2009 was made possible through the financial support from **MEMBERS** organisations, the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Recfishing Research and the New South Wales Recreational Fishing Trusts.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

RECFISH AUSTRALIA	4
Our Mission	4
Our Vision	4
Our Values	4
Our Objects	5
RECFISH AUSTRALIA BOARD 2008 - 2009	6
RECFISH AUSTRALIA PERSONNEL	9
Chief Executive Officer	9
Office & Projects Manager	9
Public Officer	9
Auditor	9
Contractors	9
MEMBERS	9
BOARD REPORTS	10
CHAIR OF THE BOARD REPORT - Bruce Schumacher	10
BOARD SUB-COMMITTEES	11
Finance and Audit Sub-Committee	11
Communication Sub-Committee	11
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT - Len Olyott	12
PROJECTS	14
Recfishing Research (RR2)	14
Implementation of the NEATFish environmental standard for recreational fishing tournaments	18
A revised and reinvigorated National Code of Practice	20
Strategic Revenue Options Scoping Paper	22
MEMBER ORGANISATION REPORTS	25
AMATEUR FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF THE NT (AFANT)	25
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION LTD (ANSA)	28
AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER FEDERATION – SPEARFISHING (AUF)	31
NSW ADVISORY COUNCIL OF RECREATIONAL FISHING (ACoRF)	33
PROFESSIONAL FISHING INSTRUCTORS AND GUIDES ASSOCIATION (PFIGA)	35
WA RECREATIONAL AND SPORTFISHING COUNCIL INC - RECFISHWEST	36
TASMANIAN ASSOCIATION FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING INC (TARFISH)	39
VICTORIA'S RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY (VRFISH)	41
FINANCIAL REPORTS	43

RECFISH AUSTRALIA**The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Inc****OUR MISSION**

Recfish Australia's mission – One voice promoting sustainable fishing and representing recreational fishers at a national level

OUR VISION**Key Result Area 1: One voice**

Recfish Australia is recognised and respected as one voice representing recreational fishers at a national level through partnerships with stakeholders and the community

Key Result Area 2: Sustainability

The Australian community recognise recreational fishing as legitimate, sustainable and valuable

Key Result Area 3: Communication & Promotion

Key stakeholders are aware and supportive of the role and function of Recfish Australia and of the benefits delivered.

Key Result Area 4: Policy Development

Influential & consistent messages delivered through clear policies that guide and influence decisions and actions

Key Result Area 5: Recreational fishing development

Participation rates and sustainability levels are achieved through alliances and partnerships that are supported by a stream of motivated and capable people.

Key Result Area 6: Resources & Administration

An appropriately resourced team operating professionally, working strategically, respected and valued by its stakeholders for its contribution

OUR VALUES

Recfish Australia's values are based on our commitment to:

provide leadership, planning and advice and respond with representations and submissions on policies and programs relating to recreational fishing;

foster, facilitate and promote recreational and sport fishing related communication, education and co-operation between and with our members, stakeholders and the wider Australian community;

grow the knowledge base by supporting, encouraging and facilitating research, development and extension for recreational fishing.

collect and disseminate relevant information on recreational fishing, fish and their supporting natural resources and systems;

encourage, promote and assist in the collection, preparation and analysis of new information;

represent our constituents at meetings, advisory groups, conferences seminars and other fora;

report to our members and stakeholders on the results of our efforts and the subsequent outcomes; and

listen, accept and incorporate feedback from members and stakeholders on our performance.

This strategic plan will help us to represent the interests of recreational fishing with **one voice** on the future challenges we will undoubtedly face.

OUR OBJECTS

The main **Objects** of the Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Inc. is to encourage and promote the sport of recreational fishing, and to:

- a) Represent Australia's recreational fishers at a national level to ensure high quality fishing experience;
- b) Actively and effectively represent and advocate the interests of members and recreational fishers to the Australian Government, Federal departments and agencies, non-government organisations, and scientific institutions and allied organisations;
- c) Advise governments, government departments and agencies, and non-government organisations on policies and programs relating to recreational fishing and management of natural resources and systems supporting recreational fishing;
- d) Assist the members to make submissions and representations on matters of national and international importance to recreational fishing;
- e) Make representations and submissions on behalf of members on issues of national consequence in the furtherance of these objects and for the benefit of recreational fishing;
- f) Foster and promote legal, and ecologically sustainable recreational fishing in all its forms;
- g) Facilitate, encourage and promote recreational and sport fishing-related communication, education and co-operation among all members and the Australian recreational fishing community and the wider Australian community;
- h) Encourage and promote the study of recreational fishing, the scientific study for the conservation and management of fish, their environment and ecology;
- i) Collect and disseminate information and knowledge of scientific work on recreational fishing, fish and their supporting natural resources and systems to members, governments and scientific bodies;
- j) Promote and assist in the collection, preparation and analysis of any information relevant to recreational and sport fishing at a national level;
- k) Represent, in Australia and overseas, its members at meetings, conferences or seminars relating to fishing as a sport or recreation or relating to the utilisation and management of fish species and their supporting natural resources and systems;
- l) Encourage members to participate, where appropriate, in programs or scientific projects related to recreational fishing and fisheries;
- m) Commission, contract and make grants to organisations or individuals for the purpose of research and education in matters relevant to recreational fishing and to fish, their conservation, environment and management;
- n) Receive gifts, grants and subscriptions for the functioning or furtherance of these objects;
- o) To assist members, as far as possible, for the furtherance of these objects, and
- p) Do all such things and acts which may be deemed necessary to achieve the foregoing objects

RECFISH AUSTRALIA BOARD 2008 - 2009

Changes to the constitution in 2008 saw a return to a representative board structure. All full members can nominate a board member. Board members are appointed for a period of 1 year commencing on the date of the AGM. Membership during the reporting period (post 2008 AGM) is shown below.

Board Member	Member Body	Position Held	Period of Board membership	Subcommittee
Bruce Schumacher	NSW ACoRF	Chair	2005-2009	Audit & Finance
Adam Smith	AUF	Deputy Chair	2006-2009	Communication
Chris Makepeace	AFANT	Board Member	2005-2009	Communication
John Burgess	ANSA	Board Member	2008-2009	Audit & Finance
Franz Grasser/Russell Conway	VRFISH	Board Member	2008-2009	Audit & Finance, Communication
Mark Nikolai	TARFish	Observer	2008-2009	
Des Wood	Recfishwest	Board Member	2006-2009	Communication

Board meetings attended by Board Members

At 30 June 2009 there were 7 board members of Recfish Australia.

The following is a record of attendance by board members at board meetings. A total of 6 meetings were held during the 2008-09 financial year including one being conducted by teleconference and 1 held at the time of the AGM in October 2008.

Board Member	Maximum Attendance	Actual Attendance
Bruce Schumacher (Chair)	6	6
Adam Smith (Deputy Chair)	6	3
Chris Makepeace	6	6
John Burgess	6	6
Franz Grasser (until May 2009)	4	4
Russell Conway (from May 2009)	2	2
Mark Nikolai	6	6
Des Wood	6	6



Adam Smith (Deputy Chair)



John Burgess



Franz Grasser



Chris Makepeace



Des Wood



Bruce Schumacher (Chair)



Mark Nikolai



Russell Conway

Past Board Members

Board Member	Position Held	Period
John Cleary	Deputy Chair	2006-2008
Malcolm Poole	Board Member	2005-2008
Bill Sawynok	Board Member	2005-2007
Brett Cleary	Deputy Chair	2005-2006
David Hall	Board Member	2005-2006
Frank Prokop	Board Member	2005-2006
Bruce Alvey	Board Member	2005-2006

Honour Board

Past Executive of Recfish Australia

President	Vice-President	Secretary	Treasurer	Year
Graham Pike	Barrie de Flon	Did Gadsby	Did Gadsby	1983
Graham Pike	Mal Ramsay	Did Gadsby	Mal Ramsay	1984
Graham Pike	Mal Ramsay	Did Gadsby	Baden Hopgood	1985
Graham Pike	Mal Ramsay	Did Gadsby	Baden Hopgood	1986
Graham Pike	Mal Ramsay	Did Gadsby	Baden Hopgood	1987
Graham Pike	Mal Ramsay	Did Gadsby	Baden Hopgood	1988
Mal Ramsay	John O'Sullivan	Did Gadsby	David Bateman	1989
Mal Ramsay	John O'Sullivan	Did Gadsby	David Bateman	1990
Mal Ramsay	John O'Sullivan	Les Hawkins	David Bateman	1991
Mal Ramsay	David Bateman	Les Hawkins	Graham Pike	1992
Mal Ramsay	David Bateman	Les Hawkins	Graham Pike	1993
Mal Ramsay	David Bateman	Les Hawkins	Graham Pike	1994
Mal Ramsay	David Bateman	Les Hawkins	Grahame Williams	1995
Mal Ramsay	David Bateman	Les Hawkins	Patrick Hunter	1996
Angus Horwood	David Bateman	Les Hawkins	Patrick Hunter	1997
Angus Horwood	Graham Pike	Les Hawkins	Patrick Hunter	1998
Angus Horwood	Graham Pike	Les Hawkins	Patrick Hunter	1999
Angus Horwood	Graham Pike	Les Hawkins	Patrick Hunter	2000
John Harrison	Graham Pike	David Bateman	Graeme Creed/Geoff Hawkins	2001
John Harrison	Frank Prokop	David Bateman	Geoff Hawkins/David Bateman	2002
Frank Prokop	Bruce Schumacher	Gavin Bedford	David Bateman	2003
Frank Prokop	Bruce Schumacher	David Bateman	Malcolm Poole	2004
Frank Prokop	Bruce Schumacher	Malcolm Poole	Malcolm Poole	2005

RECFISH AUSTRALIA PERSONNEL**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Len Olyott

OFFICE & PROJECTS MANAGER

Rhonda Farlow

PUBLIC OFFICER

Geoff Mazengarb

AUDITOR

Bevin Schafferius

CONTRACTORS

Contractor	Company	Project
Julian Pepperell	Pepperell Research & Consulting	Review of the National Code of Practice
Bill Sawynok	Infofish Services	Recfishing Research
Ben Diggles	Digsfish Services	Tournament Accreditation
Ben Diggles	Digsfish Services	Fishing in Commonwealth Waters
Ian Cartwright	Thalassa Consulting	2008 National Conference
Ian Cartwright	Thalassa Consulting	Strategic Revenue Options
Dean Logan	Patrick Russell Consulting	Strengthening Partnerships
Ian Plowman	Ian Plowman Consulting	Strengthening Partnerships
Marsden Jacob Associates	Marsden Jacob Associates	Strategic Revenue Options

MEMBERS

2008 - 2009 MEMBER ORGANISATIONS & DELEGATES

Full Members

Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT (AFANT)

Chris Makepeace

Dennis Smart

Australian National Sportfishing Association Ltd (ANSA)

Bill Sawynok

John Burgess

Australian Underwater Federation (Spearfishing)

Adam Smith

John Featherstone

NSW Advisory Council On Recreational Fishing

Malcolm Poole/Max Castle

John Drew

Recfishwest

Frank Prokop

Des Wood

TARFish

Mark Nikolai

Brett Cleary

VRFish

Christopher Collins

Franz Grasser/Russell Conway

Affiliate Members

Recreational Fishing Alliance of New South Wales (RFA)

Malcolm Poole

Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association (PFIGA)

Steve Williamson

BOARD REPORTS

CHAIR OF THE BOARD REPORT - Bruce Schumacher



To my mind, as chair of the board, 2008-09 was a very disappointing year.

Funding:

Following much consultation, discussion and the expenditure of a considerable amount of money to find a means to equitably fund Recfish, the best we were prepared to endorse from the Revenue Options Paper was funding by sponsorship and donation. Other options were canvassed including funding from the federal government with the rationale that to ensure optimum resource management then management agencies should seek expert advice from the users of the resource, namely the commercial and recreational fishing sectors, and they should be prepared to pay for that advice.

A user pay option was also proposed whereby anglers, through their state agencies, could contribute to recreational fisheries management at a national level through a per capita levy. How the state agencies achieved that, through fishing licences or state taxes would be up to them. Whilst neither of those options would be easy to achieve, either would be a more a practical course than to expect sufficient funding to maintain Recfish resourcing by donation.

Industry Alliance:

Repeatedly we have tried to encourage past members of Recfish, who have discontinued membership for one reason or another, to reaffiliate. Unfortunately with no success. Early this year the board agreed to seek funding from the FRDC to hold a meeting with all parties, including prospective members, to see if we could iron out our differences and encourage affiliation. The FRDC application was successful and the first meeting was held in March 2009. Instead of consolidating the Recfish membership, the board agreed in principle to become a member, with various industry organisations, of a national alliance, namely the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia. We are probably too far along this path now to retreat and only time will tell whether the alliance benefits Recfish Australia and its members.

Constitution Rewrite:

It has been recognised by the board that the Recfish constitution needs a rewrite, for a number of reasons, but the most significant of which is the allowance to expand our membership. To be more encompassing and truly representative we need to allow any significant recreational fishing organisation to become a member. This has caused some concern for some current members in that recognising other representative groups from within a State may prejudice the understanding of who is the peak representative group to a state government. Hopefully this issue may move towards resolution in the best interests of Recfish Australia and our members and I thank Chris Makepeace for preparing the working paper to facilitate this.

After 22 years of service to Recfish I have not put my name forward this year for nomination as a delegate or for a position on the board. There are a number of reasons for this, including plans for more overseas travel, however I do believe I can work more positively for Recfish as a non participating member.

Bruce Schumacher, Chair

BOARD SUB-COMMITTEES

The Board has two standing sub-committees elected by board members to advise the board on their respective areas of expertise:

FINANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

Membership of this Committee for 2008-09 was three Board members: Bruce Schumacher, John Burgess and Franz Grasser/Russell Conway.

The Finance and Audit Committee reports that the annual audit has been completed for the year and in the opinion of the Board the financial statements are a true and fair view of the results of the Confederation for the year ended 30 June 2009. These statements can be found at the end of this booklet.

The new accounting software introduced at 1 July 2006 has been updated and continues to provide more comprehensive reports for the board.

COMMUNICATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Membership of this Committee for 2008-09 was three board members & the CEO: Chris Makepeace, Des Wood, Franz Grasser/Russell Conway and Len Olyott.

The Communications Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of the Communications plan. It is the responsibility of this Committee to review its objectives and activities each year and recommend to the board for approval any changes it believes will enhance the value or effectiveness of its activities.

Communication as always was a priority topic for the committee and board generally. The Communication Plan was reviewed in 2007 and an interim plan agreed for 2009. The main purpose of this plan is to continue the implementation and development of a framework for internal and external communications for Recfish Australia.

The Objectives of the plan are to:

- have in place suitable protocols and communications tools to ensure effective internal communications within Recfish Australia.

- have in place suitable protocols and communications tools to ensure effective communications with external bodies of importance to Recfish Australia.

- maintain protocols for media releases by Recfish Australia.

- have in place a suitable communications program to communicate with recreational fishers and the broader community.

The Communiqué was introduced in 2006 as the organisations major communication tool along with the website. The Communiqué covers many topics from sourcing funding opportunities, training opportunities, media releases, project updates and important events. Requests to be added to the distribution list for the Communiqué continue to arrive.

The website continues to be updated to include the latest Recfish Australia information. During the year, the website was migrated from the current platform to a Content Management System. The new system should make it easier for Recfish staff to maintain the website without the need for a specialized maintenance contract. The website can be accessed at www.recfish.com.au.

Support from the fishing and other media in 2008-09 has been greatly appreciated.

The challenge we face for next year is to maintain the level of communication and continue to raise the profile of Recfish Australia while facing decreasing funds. This is seen as a key challenge for the Sub- Committee and the Board.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT - Len Olyott

12 months in recreational fishing is either an eternity or never enough time. For Recfish Australia, it has been an exhausting, bitter sweet time. On the negative side of the ledger, we saw the departure of one of our greatest assets – Rhonda Farlow, Office and Project Manager since 2005. To be blunt, Rhonda was forced to go when the money for her position ran out and with no ongoing commitment to a Community Grants program from the Australian Government, it was impossible to continue resourcing an office and project manager. That is not to say that the work of Recfish Australia has become any less – instead the workload has shifted to the CEO position and increasingly to the volunteer board.

On the positive side, Recfish Australia has continued to build a strong relationship with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. Together with the National Aquaculture Council and the Commonwealth Fisheries Association, we provide advice to the FRDC on research, development and extension priorities for fisheries and aquaculture in Australia. Part of that role involves direct engagement of industry in a nationwide review of the R,D&E framework for fisheries and aquaculture and many of our members have been directly consulted to hear their views on what the future R,D&E landscape should look like. 2008-09 also saw Recfish Australia host the second in our series of national conferences and Recfishing Research workshops. Held in October 2008, the conference attracted a wide range of representatives from across the recreational fishing community and included government stakeholders and expert scientists. The second Recfishing Awards ceremony was also held and saw the inaugural Mal Ramsay Lifetime Service Award presented to Frank Prokop, Executive Director of Recfishwest.

The Awards are a simple gesture to acknowledge the role played by volunteer recreational fishers in our community but they are greatly appreciated by those that are honoured to receive them.

The role of the Not-for-Profit sector in the Australian economy was the subject of a recent Productivity Commission review. If the draft report is anything to go by, the size and importance of the sector is staggering given the heavy reliance on volunteers. The Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW made a detailed submission highlighting the value of organisations such as RFA and Recfish Australia and it is essential that we continue to remind government and the community of the vital role that we fill.

2008-09 also saw the formation of the national Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee to advise federal fisheries minister Tony Burke on the development of a Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy to replace the 1994 National Policy on Recreational Fishing. As a member of the committee, I am confident that we have consulted widely and have incorporated a range of views on how best to develop our industry. Recfish Australia members will be pleased to know that the outcomes from the 2008 national conference that reviewed the 1994 policy have been considered. Hopefully with the announcement of the strategy expected early in 2010, there will be a clear role for Recfish Australia to assist in the delivery of the strategy.

The Marine Bioregional Planning program in Commonwealth Waters gathered significant steam in 2008-09 with not just one region progressing but four: Southwest, Northwest, North and East. With these processes running concurrently, it is almost impossible for Recfish Australia to devote enough time and effort to work with our regional members to ensure positive outcomes for recreational fishers. Combine this with one of the slickest and most well resourced anti-fishing campaigns Australia has ever seen and our work is clearly cut out for us. Recfish Australia is committed to the sustainable management of our aquatic resources but we are not prepared to accept blanket bans on recreational fishing.

Proposals for large (greater than 1 million km²) no take marine reserves in the Coral Sea and off Perth are nothing less than an attempt to ban fishing and we should not stand for it.

2008-09 was also a time of new opportunities and we saw the Recreational Fishing Alliance of New South Wales and the Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association join Recfish Australia as affiliate members. This is a positive step for the organisation and should serve as encouragement for other organisations to consider joining or rejoining. Earlier this year we embarked on a project aimed at strengthening partnerships within the industry. In this light, we have had positive discussions with SARFAC from South Australia and Sunfish from Queensland. We have also forged new relationships with the fishing trade industry and the boating and outboard industries. The culmination of these discussions has been the formation of an industry alliance, the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia. The purpose of the Council is to present to the Australian government, a united voice on matters of national significance and to work with government on better engagement and co-management models. Membership of the council means that Recfish Australia is able to engage government on a range of issues and in a variety of forums.

Looking forward, our immediate challenge must be to secure the future of Recfish Australia. The Strategic Revenues Option report has delivered a range of options, none of which are easy to achieve in the short term and some of which are unrealistic in the medium term. What is evident is that there will be no free rides – the only model with a hope of success is one where government and our recreational fishing community work in partnership. Going forward, we will continue to identify options where we can work with government in the areas of extension, education and consultation. We will continue to explore with state jurisdictions that collect fees from recreational fishers, options to channel some of those fees to address issues of national significance and we will continue to work with industry partners to identify mutually beneficial opportunities.

At the same time, we will continue to deliver a high standard of service to our members and Australian fishing families. Our vision as always is for a sustainable fishing future and with your help, we can achieve it.

Len Olyott,
Chief Executive Officer

PROJECTS

Project 2007/227	RECFISHING RESEARCH (RR2)	Oct 07 – June 2010	FRDC
<p>Aim:</p> <p>Through extensive and ongoing consultation with the recreational sector, develop and maintain a list of current national-level recreational fishing RDE priorities.</p> <p>Work with recreational fishing stakeholders and researchers at all levels to facilitate the development of RDE projects to meet identified priorities.</p> <p>Develop an extension network that will promote the adoption of new knowledge generated by recreational fishing related R&D by decision makers, recreational fishers, and the wider community.</p> <p>Assess the adoption of new knowledge by decision makers, recreational fishers, and the wider community, and identify constraints and barriers to the adoption of new knowledge by these groups.</p> <p>An irregular briefing is provided on Recfishing Research to keep all those interested in Recfishing Research up to date with what is happening. Len Olyott is on the Steering Committee and the Recfish Board is included in correspondence/ communications that are relevant to Board. The last report provided to the Board was January 2009.</p>			
<p>STEERING COMMITTEE</p> <p>The following changes have occurred to the membership of the Steering Committee. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Phil Sahlqvist has replaced Graham Anderson as the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry nominee <input type="checkbox"/> Bryan van der Walt shares his position with Cameron Westaway with an expertise in freshwater and Government management/research and link to the NSW Fishing Trust <input type="checkbox"/> As the Australasian Fisheries Communicators Network is no longer a functioning group and this position has been vacant for some time it was resolved at meeting 10 that no nomination from this group be sought. <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Williamson has joined the group with expertise in freshwater and guiding. <p>Due to the number of changes these have been referred to FRDC and Recfish Australia for confirmation.</p> <p>There are two Steering Committee meetings planned for 2009 with one in Mar-Apr in Brisbane and one in Sept-Oct in Perth. Board members are welcome to attend Steering Committee meetings.</p>			
<p>STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS</p> <p>There have been 2 steering committee meetings since the last briefing. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting 9 was held in Brisbane on 31 March 2009 <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting 10 was held in Perth on 1-2 September 2009 			

There is one further Steering Committee meeting to be held as part of the current project. This meeting will be held in Sydney in March-April 2010.

BUSINESS PLAN 2009-10

The Business Plan for 2009-10 was completed in April 2009. The plan identified the national priorities for research, development and extension for the recreational sector. Since then Recfishing Research has been working with various researchers/agencies on the development of projects to address those priorities.

The target was to get 2 projects that address those priorities into the FRDC 2009 round. The Bureau of Rural Science was approached on the development of a project on the health and well-being benefits of recreational fishing however due to a lack of priority for this within BRS no project was developed.

A project on the economic value of recreational fishing to regional and rural communities is currently being developed by Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries. This project will not require FRDC funding however will address the priority.

At Steering Committee meeting 10 in Perth it was resolved that Recfishing Research look to take a more active approach and examine the possibility of commissioning projects to address the key priorities.

A Status Report for 2008-09 is currently being finalised which summarises what research has been recently completed or is underway to address those priorities. The Status Report is expected to be completed by the end of September.

RECFISHING RESEARCH WEBSITE

The website at www.recfishingresearch.org has been up and running since September 2008. The website needs updating to reflect the current business plan. This has not been done yet due to other priorities.

There has been an upgrade in the management of the website and publication distribution through the introduction of a "Control Panel" that allows all changes be made and reports distributed from the one place. This has considerably simplified the process.

DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS AND SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

The distribution of reports and scientific publications is now a routine activity with more and more researchers forwarding papers to be distributed through the network. There were 13 publications distributed since the previous briefing.

While many reports cannot be made available from the website due to copyright restrictions a summary of papers distributed will be added when time permits.

MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES

Recfishing Research needs to keep up to date with what is happening in the industry in order to make sure that its national priorities remain relevant and are addressing the key issues of the industry.

January 2009

- Recfish Australia - Strategic Revenue Options Focus Group meeting in Brisbane (Bill Sawynok, Len Olyott)

February 2009

- Meeting with GBRMPA, AIMS, JCU and RRRC re tropical research priorities in Townsville (Bill Sawynok, Len Olyott, Steve Sutton)
- Meeting with BRS on community monitoring in fisheries review in Canberra (Bill Sawynok)

April 2009

- Meeting with BRS re social science research in Canberra (Bill Sawynok)

May 2009

- 8th Indo Pacific Fish Conference and 2008 ASFB Workshop and Conference in Fremantle (Kane Moyle)

June 2009

- Coral Sea DEWHA Workshop in Cairns (Bill Sawynok, Len Olyott, Julian Pepperell) and Brisbane (Len Olyott)

July 2009

- Meeting of Technical Committee on Research Anglers Diary project in Queenscliff (Ross Winstanley, Bill Sawynok)
- National RD&E Framework for Fisheries and Aquaculture Planning Workshop (Ross Winstanley, Len Olyott)
- Qld Primary Industries and Fisheries Strategic Review Workshop in Brisbane (Bill Sawynok)

August 2009

- Gold Coast Tackle Trade Show in Gold Coast (Bill Sawynok and others)

REVIEW OF FRDC 2010 APPLICATIONS

At meeting 10 in Perth Recfishing Research reviewed 6 applications being developed for the FRDC 2010 round. Advice has been provided to all applicants on these projects.

RECREATIONAL FISHING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RFAC)

Over the past few months the RFAC has been working on 2 tasks being:

- Update of the 1994 National Recreational Fishing policy
- Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy

A sub-committee of the RFAC has been travelling around Australia getting the views of recreational fishing and government agencies on the policy and strategy.

A meeting of the RFAC will be held at the end of September which will produce a draft policy and draft strategy. The policy will then be circulated to interest groups for further input.

A number of research priorities of the RFAC are likely to coincide with those of Recfishing Research and there will need to be some interaction between the 2 groups to work on those priorities.

RECFISHING RESEARCH NEXT MILESTONE

Milestone 3 was due on 31 October 2009 however due to cash flow requirements, was being brought forward to 1 October 2009. Targets for that milestone have been met and a report will be provided by the revised date.

RECFISHING RESEARCH NEXT PHASE

The current project is due to be completed by June 2010. A PRP was developed and submitted to

FRDC for the next round of Recfishing Research. This was developed in conjunction with Recfish Australia.

At meeting 10 the future direction and focus for Recfishing Research was outlined as:

- Development and/or commissioning of projects to address the priorities identified in the Business Plan
- Development of an extension service that can be provided to assist projects extend their research information to recfishers
- Work with the RFAC on priority research areas identified for the Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy
- Implementation of an appropriate legal entity to be progressed slowly and be a review of governance arrangements

The full application will need to be submitted to FRDC by 1 November 2009. A draft of the new application will be provided to the Recfish Board for their consideration once it has been prepared. As I will be in the Northern Territory for most of October this will need to be finalised by 30 September 2009.

Bill Sawynok
Infofish Services

Email: bill@info-fish.net or phone 07-4928-6133

Development of a national environmental management and accreditation system for business/public recreational fishing competitions



Project 2008/215	IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEATFISH ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARD FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENTS	March 08 – June 09	FRDC
<p>Aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop an interactive website with dynamic content to manage and promote the NEATFish standard and facilitate its uptake by industry 2. To publicise the standard and website in the fishing media. 3. To publicise the standard and website at trade tackle shows and conferences. 4. To liaise with industry bodies, tournament organisers, government authorities and environmental groups. <p>Outcome: Awareness of the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament fishing (NEATFish) was raised through development of a website, promotional materials, advertising and articles in the fishing media and contact with tournament organisers at various industry events.</p> <p>The NEATFish standard was adapted to an online questionnaire that is accessible via www.neatfish.com. This made the process of obtaining accreditation easier and faster than the previous paper based system.</p> <p>Several tournaments have undertaken accreditation online since the website went live and as expected this has become the preferred way of undertaking the NEATFish accreditation process.</p> <p>Awareness of the NEATFish standard and website was raised via extension activities at several tackle and boat shows, and through conference presentations, articles, editorial and advertising in a wide cross section of the recreational fishing media. Targeted consultation was undertaken with several interest groups to determine how the standard can be applied to meet the evolving needs of the industry and the environment.</p> <p>Recfish Australia with assistance from the FRDC and DigsFish Services originally developed the conceptual outline of a national environmental standard for fishing tournaments through FRDC projects 2005/235 and 2006/057. Feedback from the recreational fishing industry during the development of the Standard for National Environmental Assessment of Tournament fishing (NEATFish) suggested that the major challenge for the concept was to create a better awareness of NEATFish and what it has to offer. The current project was designed to facilitate this process of raising awareness through development of a website, promotional materials, and a profile for NEATFish in the fishing media and at various industry events, including tackle shows and conferences.</p> <p>Development of the www.neatfish.com website encompassed adaptation of the NEATFish standard into a web based questionnaire that was freely accessible online for tournament organisers and the general public. Making the process of obtaining accreditation as easy and painless as possible was the major focus of this undertaking, with the website achieving this upon</p>			

its completion in May 2009. Several tournaments have undertaken accreditation online since the website went live and feedback from these organisers and the industry as a whole suggests this has already become the preferred way of undertaking the NEATFish accreditation process.

The NEATFish standard and website were promoted via extension activities at several boating and tackle shows, including the Brisbane Tinnie and Tackle Show, the Sydney International Boat Show, the Australian Fishing Trade Association Trade Tackle show on the Gold Coast, and the National Off-road, Fishing and Outdoors Expo, Melbourne. Articles, editorial and advertising featuring NEATFish have been published in a wide cross section of the media in recreational fishing publications such as Fishing World Magazine, Modern Fishing, Queensland Fishing Monthly, Bluewater Magazine, FISH Magazine as well as newspapers, talkback radio and other media produced for the tackle and boat shows attended. A presentation on NEATFish was also given to an international audience at the 5th World Recreational Fishing Conference in Florida in November 2008.

Targeted consultation has been undertaken with several interest groups including the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, several member organisations within the Australian Fishing Trade Association, the Australian Conservation Foundation, and organisers of several high profile fishing tournaments. Successful commercialization of the NEATFish Standard in the future focuses around continuing consultation with the recreational fishing industry, conservation groups and government authorities with respect to how the standard can be applied to best meet the evolving needs of the industry and the environment.

Ben Diggles

Principal Investigator

Project	A REVISED AND REINVIGORATED NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE	June 06 to June 2009	RFCGP
<p>Aim: This project aimed to revise the national code of practice (NCOP) for recreational and sport fishing and update the content to reflect the knowledge gains and changes since it was first written in 1995. The revised code incorporated the new best practices that have been developed in recent years including the use of circle hooks, knotless landing nets, fish handling techniques, best methods for releasing various species, animal welfare advice as per the Australian Aquatic Animal Welfare Strategy, safety issues like boating, rock fishing, dangerous/poisonous fish, etc.</p>			
<p>Outcomes:</p>			
<p>In revising and updating the NCOP this project engaged stakeholders from Australia and overseas in updating the world first national code of practice which covered all forms of recreational fishing. A list of key personnel was compiled, consisting primarily of recreational fishing peak bodies, government officers including fisheries communicators and managers, and importantly, the recreational fishing media and industry. These were canvassed for ideas and possible input into a revised NCOP.</p>			
<p>The revision confirmed the view that while the work completed for the development of the original code was still relevant there were opportunities to incorporate new learnings, techniques and methods.</p>			
<p>The new code went through several rounds of feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders and represents a balance between being informative without being overwhelming. Each stakeholder that provided advice received a letter indicating how their comments were utilised.</p>			
<p>A novel approach was also tried, through canvassing feedback via some of the larger recreational fishing chat forums.</p>			
<p>Input and feedback was also sought from international sources including Hal Schram (Mississippi Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit), Robert Arlinghaus (Leibniz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology and Inland Fisheries and Humboldt-University of Berlin, Germany), Ian Cowx (International Fisheries Institute, Hull, UK), Jan Kappel (Secretary General EAA, the European Anglers Alliance, Belgium) as they were also involved in the development of the Global Code of Practice.</p>			
<p>Involvement by the former CEO and OPM in the workshop held in Bilthoven Netherlands in November 2007 to develop a global code of practice resulted in much useful information and ideas being built into the draft NCOP.</p>			
<p>The revised code altered the order of priority of the key areas to elevate humane treatment of fish to the top rank. This was based on extensive stakeholder feedback including discussion with animal welfare groups such as the RSPCA and Animals Australia.</p>			
<p>Reference to the overarching principles of aquatic animal welfare was made and as far as possible, these principles are included in the code. Reference was also made to the National Strategy for Released Fish Survival (Gently Does It) and the techniques developed to maximise the release of line caught fish. Rather than repeat the advice of the Gently Does It campaign, fishers are directed to the appropriate material.</p>			
<p>We distributed 10,000 copies of the code as an A4 brochure with a further 50,000 DL-sized brochures printed through extension funding through Recfishing Research. We have conducted over a dozen radio and TV interviews around the country and attended several boating and fishing shows. We have also advertised the Code in most major recreational fishing magazines resulting in requests for copies of the NCOP to be sent to individuals, clubs, associations and government agencies, with further reprints being necessary.</p>			

Copies have been distributed by Fishcare Volunteers in NSW and Victoria and we are currently looking at including a copy with NSW fishing license renewals.

Given the level of interest by recreational fishers to provide positive feedback on the drafts and the requests for copies of the code it is anticipated that the NCOP will achieve the desired outcomes.

A preliminary survey conducted in June 2009 found that both avid and less frequent fishers were aware of the Code and the key messages were recalled. Most of those surveyed believed that more could be done to promote the code through advertising campaigns and endorsement through fishing shows on TV.

Len Olyott

Project	STRATEGIC REVENUE OPTIONS SCOPING PAPER	June 2007 to December 2008	RFCGP & FRDC
<p>Aim: The planned outcome of this project was identification of a model to provide a secure, reliable and independent income stream to the sector for a range of activities including: to promote development and increased participation in recreational fishing, research, development and extension, infrastructure, habitat restoration, succession planning, capacity building, and communication.</p>			
<p>The project also explored appropriate pathways to implementation of the strategic revenue options identified. The consultant's report provided a comprehensive analysis of the benefits/detriments of options and the processes that need to be addressed if introduction was to be further considered. The project hoped to identify additional or alternative options not previously considered.</p>			
<p>Outcomes:</p>			
<p>Consultation with the recreational fishing sector and fisheries management agencies occurred through a series of workshops held throughout 2007 and 2008. Inputs into the funding needs of the sector were identified at both the state/federal and national level.</p>			
<p>The consultants investigated current revenue options used in Australia and overseas, particularly the USA, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Options of hypothecation of existing taxes or a new tax on fishing related expenses were investigated through discussion with the Australian Government.</p>			
<p>The results of the consultants' research were provided in an extensive report and the attributes, both negative and positive of each option were assessed. Potential flaws with specific options were identified and the consultants made recommendations on which options they felt were most likely to succeed. Recfish Australia invited attendees of the stakeholder workshops to a focus group to discuss the report and recommendations. The discussions arising from that focus group helped form the recommendations of the Recfish Australia board which were distributed together with the final report.</p>			
<p>Several options for strategic funding mechanisms were considered including hypothecation of existing taxes and the raising of new levies on fishing related purchases. Most of these were rejected based on government policy or difficulties with implementing new "taxes". A broader roll out of general fishing licences or boating levies was considered as one possible source of funding at state/territory level while the establishment of a permanent recreational fishing trust was considered as an option at a national level to fund activities of national importance. Both of these streams, however, rely on some form of government involvement.</p>			
<p>The only options for a truly independent stream for the recreational fishing sector involves the development of partnerships with corporate sponsors and reliance on money collected directly from recreational fishers through donations or membership. Provision of professional services may establish a revenue stream for peak representative organisations but this is dependent of a willingness (and ability) of customers to pay for these services.</p>			
<p>The major findings of the project can be summarised:</p>			
<p>In most jurisdictions there is extremely high reliance on consolidated revenue. Nationally, around 80% of funding for the recreational fishing sector (excluding regional peak</p>			

bodies) is from consolidated revenue.

The Australian Government has no permanent funding arrangement for the recreational fishing sector, and is yet to scope out the types of activities it should be funding or the cost of those activities. This is an extremely high priority area that needs to be addressed. There is a suite of national issues that the Australian Government should focus on and take responsibility for. For example, the sector will require responses to climate change issues, bio-security, the need to promote growth in participation (which will deliver significant health & social cohesion benefits), training, coordination of State/Territory policies, international recreational fisheries policy liaison, and other issues with national and cross-border significance.

For national peak bodies such as Recfish Australia, funding is almost entirely 'at risk' with no revenue security. This clearly makes it impossible to conduct medium to long term planning, or to provide continuity in the programs the peak bodies undertake. The Australian Government's Recreational Fishing Community Grants Programme is now discontinued and there is no firm commitment from the Australian Government for funding of a national peak body – which represents the principal rationale for commissioning this study."

Further, the consultants made the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Roll out of licences at State/Territory level subject to public benefit test findings

State/Territory Governments should roll out recreational fishing licences (RFLs) where they are deemed to pass a public benefit test – potential benefits include: (i) enhanced 'beneficiary pays'/equity; (ii) greater management control; and (iii) greater transparency in funding decisions. This will be offset by implementation and annual administration/compliance costs. A licence – quite apart from raising revenue – is considered an important first step in being able to understand the potential impact of these fishers. As an example, there are up to 750,000 recreational fishers in Queensland, and establishing a firm database of all fishers greatly facilitates surveys which, in turn, support improved understanding of the social and economic value of the sector as well as impacts on fish resources.

As a second, less ideal option to licences, States/Territories could introduce boat levies (along the lines of the private pleasure vessel (PPV) levy which has been successfully introduced in Queensland) or recreational fishing boat licences (as currently proposed for Tasmania).

The general licences of NSW and Victoria suggests that licences are **administratively feasible and can provide a secure and reliable funding base** for recreational fishing management.

Assuming a similar licence regime is introduced in other States/Territories, an additional \$23-31.5 million per annum could be raised, assuming a \$20 - \$30 fee per licence (see Table 4 and Section 4.3 of the Report for more detail.)

Recommendation 2: Australian Government to introduce permanent funding arrangements for the recreational fishing sector

The Australian Government should introduce a formal permanent funding structure requiring formation of a Board and a small secretariat to administer and allocate funds. A critical first step is to identify through a review or business case, the core activities and appropriate level of Australian Government funding for the recreational fishing sector.

1. establish the criteria for determining how funds are to be allocated;
2. establish a small secretariat for administration;

3. establish a metric for annual increments in the fund; and
4. periodically conduct major reviews of the level of funding (a reasonable timeframe would be once every 5 years).

Recommendation 3: Australian Government to promote State/Territory reviews of potential for implementing licences or other dedicated funding instruments

The Australian Government should promote evaluation and potential implementation of licences at the jurisdictional level by providing financial incentives to State/Territory Governments to:

- conduct public benefit tests to review the pros and cons of implementing RFLs or other forms of licence, or PPVs; and
- introduce RFLs (where they are deemed to pass a public benefit test).

The Australian Government could also assist by developing guidelines for conducting public benefit tests of new licences at the State/Territory level.

Recommendation 4: A review of Australian Government funding

A review of national peak body roles and responsibilities and associated funding requirements needs to be undertaken. This should be a high priority and should focus on activities most efficiently and effectively undertaken, or funded, by the Australian Government.

Part of this review would be an assessment of the roles and responsibilities of the national peak body – i.e., Recfish Australia – and the associated funding requirements.

Recommendation 5: Peak bodies to actively seek private sector funding

National peak bodies should be allocated funding from the Australian Government and/or State/Territory Governments. Increasing the security of national funding, and promoting independent revenue streams at the State/Territory level directly increases the security of funding of the national peak body.

However, peak bodies should also seek to attain a proportion of funds from private sector sources e.g. corporate sponsorships of events such as conferences and training programs, and from the sale of products and services (such as the National Environmental Accreditation program for conducting recreational fishing tournaments).

Given the current financial sector crisis, it will be difficult in the short term to raise funds from the private sector. However, a long-term goal of 20% of funding from the corporate sector should be set in place by Recfish Australia.

Len Olyott

MEMBER ORGANISATION REPORTS

AMATEUR FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF THE NT (AFANT)

Executive Officer's Report — Chris Makepeace



**Amateur Fishermen's Association
of the Northern Territory Inc.**

A Territory election in July 2008 with the Labor Government retaining power. With the reshuffle of ministers we have a new Fisheries Minister — or more accurately, back to the future with Minister Kon Vatskalis becoming Fisheries Minister once again. This has made the transition much easier than it has been in the past when starting out with a new minister and Kon Vatskalis has been able to hit the ground running.

At last year's AFANT Annual General Meeting there was a presentation given by John Christophenson (at the time, acting CEO of the Northern Land Council) concerning the then pending Blue Mud Bay High Court decision. As we know now, the Court

found in favour of traditional owners. There was and still is a lot of uncertainty amongst recreational anglers as to what the future holds. It was reassuring to have Chief Minister Paul Henderson give a guarantee that recreational fishing on waters affected by the High Court's Blue Mud Bay decision will continue and that we will not be required to obtain individual fishing permits or to pay to fish. This guarantee provides some certainty for us as we work through the details of how to implement the decision with all the stakeholders including the three land councils.

Our priorities in this process will be to ensure the environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability of fisheries in all NT waters; to work towards a single, seamless and simple regulatory, compliance and enforcement framework across the NT; to ensure governments put in place mechanisms to provide benefits to indigenous owners in recognition of their allowing recreational fishing to continue in waters over their land; to work towards a structure that will allow all major stakeholders to be genuinely engaged in the management of the Territories fisheries; and to have mechanisms in place (including making available any regional development assistance measures) to support indigenous land owners wishing to develop recreational fishing access and facilities on their land. If we can achieve these outcomes it will provide real benefits both for indigenous landowners and recreational fishers – a true win-win result.

The NT Government has increased funding in 2008/09 to meet its commitment to buy back the three commercial barramundi fishing licenses promised in 2005. In addition, \$1.8 million will be provided over the next three years to buy a further three licences. This means there will be a total of six commercial licenses to be bought out in this term of Government. On 10 December the Fisheries Minister announced that the Territory Government would close Bynoe Harbour and the Finnis River to commercial barra netting when it bought back the first three of these licences.

AFANT has indicated to the Minister that the closure line for commercial barramundi fishing in this area should extend from Charles Point to Point Blaze and run seaward of the islands south of the mouth of Bynoe. Government must put the closure lines in to get the full benefits of shifting the resource to the recreational sector. Otherwise there will be continuing problems with the two sectors competing for the same stocks and no real gains for the large investment of taxpayer money made by the NT Government.

AFANT has been in discussion with the NT Government for several years now about the review of recreational possession limits and equipment changes that have broad support among amateur fishers. In the case of black jewfish and cherabin, particularly in the Daly River, there are real concerns that maintaining the current arrangements may actually be having an adverse impact on fish stocks. The NT Government must take notice of the concerns of the majority of recreational fishers and get these new provisions in place before we see any further impact on the fish stocks.

Opening up new areas for recreational fishing access is another area where we have not been able to make much progress. We continue to work through the Recreational Fishing Access Working Group (RFAWG) but, while it is starting to get some traction on infrastructure issues, to date it has not been

able to achieve new access opportunities. Public liability insurance is one of the things that make it difficult even for landowners who are willing to allow access and the RFAWG has established a sub-committee to look at the issue but there are no outcomes so far.

We are hoping that, as an outcome of working through Blue Mud Bay issues, there will be new access opportunities for recreational fishers and we have indicated that there should be support to get such initiatives started. We see this as a real development opportunity for indigenous groups and so do many of them. The Tiwi Land Council have rationalized the camp sites available through the permit system we run on their behalf and they have installed shelters and tanks at each of the four campsites. Just recently, traditional owners at Ranku on Bathurst Island have opened facilities through the Ranku Store for recreational fishers including air-conditioned caravan accommodation and supply of fuel, ice and food. This allows people to stay and fish in Port Hurd, which is the location of the famous old Barra Base Lodge. Other owners at Sandy Creek in Arnhem Land now operate a camping area with permits from the Northern Land Council.

On the other hand, we seem to be losing access opportunities on pastoral land as stock management practices in the Territory change to more fenced paddocks. For reasons we can understand there is reluctance on the part of many station operators to provide access for recreational fishers but there are great fishing opportunities on many of these stations and there should be some way that they can be accessed by the public. Pastoral landowners don't own the water or the fish in them and there is a provision in the Pastoral Land Act which requires that public access to permanent water be provided. The NT Government has never been prepared to enforce this provision and so many great fishing opportunities are locked up. We must work to find a mutually acceptable system to open up access to these waters and the NT Government should be making it a priority. It would be ironic if we were able to open up access opportunities on Aboriginal land where the owners have exclusive rights but not on pastoral leases where there is a legislated public right of access.

Another potential challenge is emerging which could threaten our access and that is the development of marine protected areas by both the Commonwealth and NT Governments. Our fishing colleagues in other states have been locked out of large areas of some of their best fishing locations. Often there is no better reason than political pandering to green voters and the so-called conservation movement. The more radical of these groups will not be satisfied until they have virtually wiped out recreational fishing. Their latest push is to have recreational fishing banned from the whole of the Coral Sea and to also have it banned or severely restricted in a new marine park that they want in NSW to run from Wollongong to Newcastle.

The current catch cry from these groups and the governments who are implementing their agendas is that we have to remove all human impacts in some areas in order to ensure biodiversity conservation. They will simply not ever accept that biodiversity conservation and properly regulated recreational fishing can happily coexist. There are also spurious claims that these closures are necessary to provide "scientific reference sites" for the conduct of research. Well, we have a big one of those in the Territory already. It's the West Alligator River system in Kakadu National Park and, since the park was established, it has never been used for that purpose which was so important that they had to ban recreational fishing from it. There doesn't appear to be any scientific consideration (or any consideration at all for that matter) of the actual impacts of recreational fishing or, if there are real concerns about the environment, biodiversity or any threats to particular species, how recreational fishing might be modified so it can continue without adverse impacts.

There is no reason why recreational fishing should be subject to this same type of action in the Northern Territory. Our fisheries are well managed, our fish stocks are healthy, our water quality is excellent, our marine biodiversity is not under threat and the vast majority of our recreational fishers are responsible in terms of their concerns for our fish and the environments that sustain them. We have told the NT Government that we will not support recreational fishing no go/ no take zones in water that are actually accessed by recreational fishers unless it can be clearly demonstrated that our impact in that area is or will be damaging and that lesser limitations on recreational fishing are unlikely to provide the required level of protection.

This could well emerge as a major issue in 2009/10 and will all need to make our position very clear to Government. We do not want to put ourselves in a position where unjustified access limitations will be

our own government—particularly as they gave us a further commitment to “boosting fishing infrastructure and access” in July 2008.

I really think that, if we want to get real action on some of these issues, the silent majority of recreational fishers in the Territory may have to start making a bit more noise. They need to be applauding Government when it does the right thing and letting them know when there are things we think they should be doing. In the meantime, AFANT will keep working hard to ensure that recreational fishing in the Territory continues to be the envy of our counterparts elsewhere in Australia.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION LTD (ANSA)

Executive Officer Report – John Burgess



2008/09 was another extremely busy and challenging year for ANSA at both a Branch and National level. The harsh reality of politics and consequential impacts upon recreational fishing have remained at the forefront of National and State Branch activity. We have had to counter a plethora of new marine parks and reserves thrust upon us by Commonwealth and State Governments alike. Likewise we have had to defend our position against vocal and well resourced anti fishing lobby groups such as the Pew Foundation with its quest for a Coral Sea no fishing reserve and the National Parks Association and its "Torn Blue Fringe" campaign to have 20% of NSW ocean waters declared sanctuary zones. These are just 2 examples of the sorts of pressure ANSA members and recfishers generally across the nation are under and the threat to our historical rights of access are very real and we need to make our voice heard. It needs to be emphasised that ANSA is not opposed to the concept of marine parks but rather the seeming lack of good science when it comes to the location of marine parks and reserves and the activities allowed or restricted within the zoning process.

ANSA does maintain a cordial and effective relationship with governments at all levels and this is evidenced by the many board and committees established at a Commonwealth or State level upon which ANSA has a member representative. ANSA has also directly participated in a wide variety of government inquiries and reviews including - review of the performance and structure of AFMA and the composition of its management advisory committees, review of the optimal outcomes possible from managing Australian Fisheries, consultation on Commonwealth Marine Bioregional planning, review of the Tasmanian Scalefish fishery review – to name but a few.

From a financial and membership perspective, ANSA is travelling well. Our membership numbers have fallen slightly over the year and this can be attributed to a variety of factors including tight economic times, a decline in recreational fishing participation and the challenge of keeping our branch and club network vibrant and attractive to the younger generation of sportfishers. Sadly some of our longstanding clubs have called it a day but other new clubs have affiliated to fill the void and the future of ANSA as a peak sportfishing body is secure. Financially our position remains sound due very much to the time and effort voluntarily contributed by our Board executive and astute financial management. Membership fees remain at their 2004 level and all services to members such as National record and Masters awards are now provided free of charge.

2008/09 has also seen a successful cultural shift for ANSA in that we are now demonstrably leading the way in terms of caring for our marine and terrestrial environment and the fish and other creatures that inhabit those environs. Our move towards length only Records and Masters with emphasis on capture and release and the use of braided line and breakaway traces have received wide and positive recognition by the fishing print media and many conservation groups. Similar accolades have been received for our groundbreaking promotion of the use of biodegradable line and also the contribution by many ANSA clubs and members who have chosen to do something positive about cleaning up our fishing habitat by removing rubbish and the like. ANSA also adopted the revised Recfish Australia National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sportfishing as its own.

Our successful Angel Ring and Fishing Safety Awareness education projects are now well on the track towards having a National focus. Strategic partnerships have been formed with Surf Lifesaving Australia to work with ANSA and other like-minded organisations to get these very successful projects

up and running throughout Australia and overseas. Funding continues to be a major constraint but we are continuing to lobby Governments of all persuasion to contribute financially to these proven "life saving" projects which are well established in NSW and are now up and running in SA, Vic, Tas and NZ. ANSA contributed \$2000 of its own funds and considerable in kind effort towards these projects over the past year. These contributions were more than matched by contributions from Commonwealth grants and other moneys sourced by ANSA NSW and the NSW Recreational Fishing Alliance via the NSW licence trust fund.

From a community perspective, ANSA also put its weight behind the Great Australian Bike Ride and the quest by Rotary to raise funds for research into mental illness. Our own very sprightly 80 year old Chairman, Geoff Hawkins set himself the enduring 9 month task of cycling the 17834 km to circumnavigate the nation only to suffer a nasty fall from his bike in Tasmania which took him out of the event as the oldest competitor. Regrettably, Geoff has not been well since the accident and we wish him a speedy recovery. Some \$4000 was donated by ANSA and its members towards this worthwhile cause.

In terms of research activity the National Austag programme continues successfully, particularly in Qld via Suntag where some 570000 fish have been tagged and 47000 recaptured. It is unfortunate that other States have not been able to emulate the Suntag success but we will keep working on it. An amount of \$2200 was collectively contributed by ANSA National together with ANSA Qld and NSW Branches towards a research project involving longtail tuna. Recfishing Research is coordinating this project with the scientific community including CSIRO. ANSA has also been actively involved with a number of community based research programmes and the Capreef project involving ANSA Qld is a glowing example of how the local recreational fishing community can play an effective role in the gathering and interpretation of wild fisheries data.

As a promotional initiative ANSA developed and distributed free to all its members a range of eye-catching bumper and tackle box stickers bearing the slogan "Stress Less- Go Fishing" and "Take a Break – Go Fishing". We are planning to follow this up with another sticker featuring the IGFA slogan "Take Marlin off the Menu". This message will subtly reinforce our longstanding campaign to procure a reduction in longlining effort within the coastal regions of the east and west coast tuna and billfish zones and encourage research funding for the striped marlin fishery. A new range of ANSA branded brag mats (measuring devices) will also be available shortly which will feature the minimum trophy length for all eligible ANSA species and a clear "capture and release" and "take your rubbish home" message.

ANSA is also very conscious of the need to encourage and develop the next generation of future leaders in the recreational fishing sector. Building upon the "Next Generation of Leaders" programmes initiated by Recfish Australia in 2007 and Recfishwest in 2008, ANSA joined forces with the NSW Recreational Fishing Alliance and the NSW Dept of Primary Industries to deliver a "NSW Future Leaders" programme earlier this year. A number of younger ANSA members were selected to participate in the programme and it was an excellent opportunity to develop and mentor a new generation of leaders for ANSA and other likeminded recfisher organisations. It was also pleasing to see that the theme of the ANSA Qld 2009 Branch conference was "Youth is the ANSA"

ANSA has maintained its long established membership ties with IGFA and Recfish Australia. We have actively supported IGFA in its campaign to increase membership and likewise have campaigned hard to secure a long term and committed funding base for Recfish Australia. It is difficult to understand why the Australian Government has chosen not to support Recfish Australia with ongoing funding given its vital role in the representation of recfishers as the recognised national peak body and the pressing need for advocacy on so many national issues confronting the recfishing industry. Hopefully the yet to be released report from the newly formed Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee will

address this vital issue and enlighten the Government to appreciate the socio economic value and role of recreational fishing and reinstate financial support for Recfish Australia and those that it represents. It is also pleasing to see that Recfish Australia has recently agreed to enter into an alliance with the members of the Boating and Fishing Council of Australia. This alliance is a positive step and will via the process of collaboration with other industry stakeholders, strengthen the role of Recfish on vital national issues such as marine parks and the erosion of access rights. Recfish Australia is to be congratulated for its recent decision to move forward with a plan to open up and broaden its membership base.

To conclude I would like to thank all of those on the ANSA National Executive and State Branch Committees for the tremendous amount of energy and commitment contributed over the past year. For a small organisation with very limited resources we punch well above our weight on most every issue and it is a matter of considerable pride that we carry forward the best of ANSA tradition.

AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER FEDERATION – SPEARFISHING (AUF)

National Chair Report (Spearfishing) - Dr Adam Smith



1. MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL CHAIR

The AUF has developed a strong working relationship with Recfish Australia and sees great value in working together in the future.

The key items of interest are discussed below:

2. Strategic Planning

The National AUF Strategic Plan was updated and several new initiatives were completed or are close to completion. In particular the AUF has recently moved to an online membership system and national insurance. We receive no core government funding but rely on our members and some sponsors for funding.

3. Projects

The most significant project has been the Great Australian Shark Count (now called Great Australian Shark Watch). This was funded by the RFCG for \$73,000 and facilitated the employment of a PT Executive Officer. The GASW had two primary objectives- education about sharks and community monitoring. It has won several or been finalist in awards and generated enormous interest and media. Over 100 articles and numerous TV stories (the most recent being filming for Escape with ET in September 2009).

A huge disappointment is that despite numerous applications and letters and widespread support we have not been able to secure ongoing funding for this highly successful project.

4. People

Dr Adam Smith was accepted as Vice Chair for the Recfish Board for 1 year and has taken an active role. Dr Smith was acting Chair while Bruce Schuemaker was on leave during Feb\March 2009. In particular Adam has worked with the Board, CEO, staff and stakeholders on priority items including policy, strategic planning, national fish names, communication, sharks, marine protected areas (particularly Coral Sea), sponsorship and staffing.

Dr Smith was awarded a FRDC Australian Rural Leadership Program scholarship for 2008/9. This has resulted in some great experiences and leadership lessons, but has also resulted in competing demands and less time for meetings.

5. Communication

The communication between Recfish Australian and spearfishers has been greater than ever before. The AUF has several websites, specialist publications (*International Freediving and Spearfishing News*

and *Spearfishing Downunder*), DVD and video and trade displays and I believe that this has led to a significant increase in knowledge transfer and our membership in the past year.

In 2008 we commenced our own electronic newsletter **Seachange** which is generated every 3 months

The AUF spearfishing website -<http://www.auf-spearfishing.com.au> is fantastic and contains campaigns, media, contacts, competitions, records and much, much more.

In 2008/9, AUF committee members wrote hundreds of letters and emails and made and received hundreds of telephone calls with the state Chairs, Federal Fisheries Minister, State Fisheries Ministers, fishing and conservation groups and AUF members.

Highlights of particular importance to Recfish Australia

- AUF presentation on spearfishing to 2008 Recfish Australia Workshop
- *Fantastic Fish Calendar (2008)* included Recfish, Sunfish, AUF logos
- 5 joint media releases on Great Australian Shark Count
- AUF presentation to RFAC (Townsville)
- Spearfishing the Menu (a Community TV/DVD by previous NGL Dr Matt Koopman)

6. Competitions

The Australian Championships were held in February 2009 in Dunsborough, WA waters with 50 competitors. The event was focussed on spearfishing but also held film fishing and fin swimming events. The next national championships are in Victoria in February 2010.

The Australian team won the 2008 and 2009 Interpacific Championships (in Hawaii and Perth).

The AUF now has 3 NEATfish accredited competitions:

Blue Water Classic, Australian Championships, Pacific Coast Spearfishing Championships

7. Politics and management of fisheries

Spearfishers continue to be under pressures for changes to our activity from Federal and State government and the conservation groups, and there has been major issues associated with marine protected areas, protected species and fisheries management. We need to be more proactive with meetings with politicians, mail outs, media releases.

In early 2009, one of our state organisations USFA split from the AUF. We respect their decision and will continue to work with the NSW divers to ensure the best outcomes for the sport.

8. Finance and support

AUF is member of Recfish (\$550) and has been a member and Vice-Chair of the Board. In 2008 we donated a \$500 Award for the Recfish Australia "Excellence in Recreational Fishing Communication". A significant amount of in-kind support such as expertise, contacts, letters and time was also provided (estimated at 5 hours week or 250 hours for the year)

NSW ADVISORY COUNCIL OF RECREATIONAL FISHING (ACORF)

NSW ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RECREATIONAL FISHING


NSW ACoRF Annual Report to Recfish Australia

The NSW Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing has again had another busy and productive year.

In June 2009 the NSW Government restructured the departments and created 13 "super departments". Prior to the restructure NSW Fisheries came under the Dept of Primary Industries (DPI). The new department is called the Department of Industry and Investment (DII) and has seen the addition of other existing agencies which include Dept of State and Regional Development; NSW Tourism; Dept of Water and Energy; Screen NSW; Mine Subsidence Board; Rural Assistant Authority; Coal Compensation Board; Game Council and NSW Food Authority. Recreational fishers have expressed some concern that again NSW Fisheries will become less significant in this new structure.

The income generated from the NSW All Waters Recreational Fishing Licence amounted to \$13.7 million for financial year 08/09. That money has been committed to projects that will enhance recreational fishing in both freshwater and saltwater and is underpinned by a number of platforms such as: Fishing fee and payment; Aquatic habitat protection and rehabilitation; Recreational fishing education; Fishing enhancement; Fishing access and facilities; Research on fish and recreational fishing; and Enforcement of fishing rules. Specific details can be found on web site www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/recreational

SOME SIGNIFICANT FUNDED PROJECTS:

As mentioned in the 2007/08 report one of the major issues confronted last year was "access".

With the introduction of Marine Parks, Sanctuary Zones have been an issue of concern. ACoRF commissioned a report in response to 'The Torn Blue Fringe' (prepared by the National Parks Assoc.) which confirmed there were little or no science to Sanctuary Zones and the real threats to biodiversity are not being addressed by Marine Parks.

During the last twelve months an Investment Plan (2008/09 - 2012/13) was developed to provide a more structured framework for longer term planning and some certainty of funding allocation. The Plan will still be reviewed on an annual basis. The intention of this Plan is to provide quality fishing opportunities and to support the NSW State Plan.

Access to two Recreational Fishing Havens (RFH) continues to be a concern with ongoing negotiations following Draft Plan of Managements by National Parks and Wildlife.

Numerous locations have been identified especially in the freshwater inland areas of NSW where access points at rivers, streams, dams and impoundments are ongoing issues regarding access. To support the existing DII position of Freshwater Access Officer a new appointment was made to provide for a Saltwater Access Officer in early 2009.

The Botany Bay (RFH) Port Botany expansion and adjacent Desal plant infrastructure projects continue to be constructed which will result in some loss of amenity. One major ramp has been replaced in Botany Bay as part of the Sydney Ports Development expansion. Other compensation requests such as more boat ramps and artificial reefs remain on the wish list.

In the inland there is the possible privatization of some paper roads and traveling stock routes which could reduce access to some rivers and streams.

In late 2008 the Government proposed the sale of a number of assets following a mini budget and associated reforms to the public sector. One of these assets was the Gaden Trout Hatchery (Jindabyne) which was not seen as Government core business. After serious negotiations (which involved a number of conditions) the hatchery has been saved by a significant funding allocation of \$1.7m over four years funded by the fishing licence (freshwater).

The Solitary Islands and Jervis Bay Marine Parks have been reviewed and it is understood more Sanctuary Zones are proposed which target the intermittent reefs between 20m and 60m however there has been no decision by Government in regard to these two Marine Parks at this stage.

Further Government financial cutbacks to DII temporary positions saw a proposal to reduce Conservations Managers however again recreational fishing funds have saved this important activity at least in the short term.

The artificial reef program continues with the provision of a reef at Lake Conjola in late 2008 and additional reef infrastructure at Lake Macquarie and Botany Bay in the first half of 2009. Planning is continuing for further reefs at Bryon Bay.

During the last twelve months there has been some discussion regarding a joint NSW and Victoria recreational fishing license however at this stage the proposal has not been supported by ACoRF.

The Department of Environment and Climate Change released a new Biodiversity Strategy for NSW. ACoRF responded to the discussion paper in early 2009.

Max Castle

For

Bruce Schumacher

Chair, ACoRF



PROFESSIONAL FISHING INSTRUCTORS AND GUIDES ASSOCIATION (PFIGA)

State Representative (Vic) – Rod Barford

2008/09 has been a year of significant change for PFIGA, with a late but steady increase in membership numbers, and the gaining of a badly needed Secretary, which has eased the workload on President Steve Williamson considerably.

As in previous years, and partly due to our widespread membership, our AGM in Albury in June was again poorly attended, with only 12 members arriving to hear our two guest speakers talk. Despite low turnout, it was nevertheless a very successful meeting, and the consensus was to again favour Albury as the venue for the next AGM. Previous years have seen us at Pambula, and before that, Nimmitabel for many years.

In the latter half of the past year, we have been able to identify and address a number of matters of major importance to the Association, and as such are currently working hard to bring these matters to a conclusion that benefits our members.

The matter of why the majority of fishing guides around Australia don't join a peak body has again caught our attention, and we will be working a lot more on this one into 2010.

2009 also saw us widening our affiliation base, which now includes CFA NSW, Recfish, and the NSW Recreational Fishing Alliance. Already these new affiliations and the wider contact base they bring have brought new benefits, and will continue to do so.

Membership numbers have also increased during this period, gaining us 6 new members. Given the current economic resurgence, we expect this trend to continue as more and more people choose fishing as their personal pastime and pressure relief valve.

Our committee delegates have been working very hard all year, and have been involved in many high-level discussions and other processes with both State & Federal government, as well as the upper echelons of recreational fishing representation.

One of the most important changes to the Association has been the adoption of the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program as part of the membership criteria. Sometime in 2010 we will be hosting a delegation from ATAP to hear them extol the virtues and mechanisms of accreditation, which a couple of members have already attained independently of PFIGA. ATAP (formerly the Better Business TAP) was rolled out nation-wide earlier this year, and is now widely regarded by all levels of government and tourism management as THE accreditation to have. ATAP accreditation opens a lot of doors for all tourism operators, and we expect that our members will likewise benefit significantly from this addition to our already highly respected accreditation process, and will make PFIGA membership even more sought-after.

Given the noises being made around the different agencies, there is still hope that in the foreseeable future, there might be some kind of guide licensing system introduced, most likely it will be in NSW if it happens. PFIGA has done a lot of work with government in that state on this issue in the past.

The addition of a new Secretary (Melanie Young) to our ranks has been a real boon to the committee – she has proved already that she is a skilled and hard worker who is keen to improve life for members. Already she has made significant changes to our marketing strategy, adding a major FaceBook presence, which has shown to be very popular with net surfing anglers, as well as drawing a good

response from non-member guides. Melanie has also shown herself to be an excellent ambassador for PFIGA at functions and meetings.

The coming year is looking positive, and we are hoping to increase our membership more substantially as economic conditions continue to improve.

WA RECREATIONAL AND SPORTFISHING COUNCIL INC - RECFISHWEST

Executive Director's Report - Frank Prokop



The 2008-2009 year has, like all other before it presented a number of hurdles to be overcome, challenges to be met and successes to be had. Some of the most important decisions in the last twenty years affecting recreational fishing have been made.

The role and accountability of Recfishwest has also been put under close scrutiny as we move towards significant changes to the Board structure and a much greater Recfishwest involvement in regional consultation for recreational fisheries. Special mention must also go to the completely indefatigable Terry Fuller. The *Casting around the Internet* newsletter that Terry puts together is highly prized throughout Australia and contains exceptional information.

Recfishwest faced a number of challenges on the funding and staffing front. The loss of Mark Pagano's experience and an additional policy position has had an impact on the issues which Recfishwest has been able to engage. Following from Recfishwest meeting its membership target, we were also able to secure some additional funding for 2008/2009. Many fantastic things happened for the organisation. Recfishwest was able to once again run fishing clinics for more than 3,000 people throughout the state. These included clinics for remote aboriginal communities, grandparent and child clinics and Pink Fly Fishers clinic for women suffering from breast cancer. Our dedicated group of clinics presenters should feel extremely proud of these accomplishments.

I was able to attend the World Recreational Fishing Conference in Florida and to lead a national study tour on behalf of the FRDC. Participants from around Australia made nine presentations at the World Conference, including two by me. One of the highlights of the trip is to learn of the amazingly high regard in which Bill Sawynok of Queensland is held in engaging the recreational sector in data collection. Following the Conference Bill was awarded an international conservation award by the International Gamefishing Association, helped in no small part by WA's own Neil Patrick who made the nomination.

The release weight developed here in WA was one of the most keenly discussed innovations at the conference. Subsequently, *Sportfishing* magazine, arguably America's most prestigious saltwater fishing magazine, published an editorial extolling its virtues in reducing barotrauma related post capture mortality.

Following the publication, many thousands of hits were recorded on the Recfishwest website from American anglers keen to see what the fuss was about. A truly remarkable result!

The study tour also visited The Florida Keys National Park to see how anchor management is done so much better there and met with marine park proponents. It was amusing that the government people professed to be strongly opposed to the use of habitat enhancement as a trade-off for their much smaller sanctuary zones. Our group said we loved their massive habitat enhancement project already in place. To their frowns we said – "Yeah but you call them road bridges!!"

The change of government at the federal level has had implications for Recfishwest. The good news is that Young Future Leaders graduates Lisa Sharp and Michael Sawyer have been appointed to the national Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee. This is yet another accolade for this incredibly successful program. Matt Gillett was elected to the Recfishwest Board and the 12 month reunion was full of encouraging success stories.

The bad news is that RFAC is not looking to fund programs like the Young Future Leaders and although Recfishwest is ready to move forward with another intake, the funding is proving elusive. The role of this RFAC and Recfish Australia is still unclear as is the way forward with a national recreational fishing presence.

The whole year was taken up with negotiations on the West Coast demersal wetfish management arrangements. There were many debates over the validity of the science which led to 'independent' reviews. After much debate, Recfishwest concluded that while the science was open to interpretation, the conclusions that definitive management was required on dhufish especially was valid.

What remains extraordinarily frustrating for Recfishwest is that it was us, through the Dhufish Workshop in 2004 that strongly urged the need for management reforms for dhufish. The researchers refused to accept the need and indeed were reluctant to undertake research. The research was a mixed bag of some exceptional work by Mike Mackie and some extremely poor work by Jill St John, but the conclusion was patronising in suggesting that the resource was indeed over-exploited and that massive reductions were necessary. One wonders what could have happened if we had a cooperative approach back in 2004?

The government announced a package of reforms that included a \$150 per annum license fee for demersal species. Recfishwest, with assistance from many industry leaders was able to propose an alternative management package that ultimately saw a number of compromises.

The ability to work with government and achieve a workable outcome is a major benefit to Recfishwest, yet there are still many critics who believe that because we did not do exactly what they wanted, when they wanted it – for them, that we have failed. Unless recreational fishing recognises that management is difficult and that we all need to make sacrifices for a fishing future, we will lose credibility in achieving meaningful results.

During the year the change in state government brought many changes. We have developed an excellent working relationship with Minister for Fisheries Norman Moore, a seasoned and senior politician with a good understanding of the need to take conservative action on fisheries management. Minister Moore was also the first Fisheries Minister to attend a Recfishwest AGM.

The Minister's Chief of Staff, Trevor Whittington and Fisheries Policy Advisor, Mark Pagano have had regular briefings. While we may not always agree on everything, there is mutual recognition and respect, which is a solid base on which to base decision making. We thank the Minister and his advisers for making themselves available.

I continued as a Director to the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, which is a real honour. My term comes to an end soon and politics are changing rapidly in Canberra, not always to the betterment of recreational fishing.

Kane Moyle continues to excel in many areas and continues on the Fisheries Research Advisory Body (FRAB) that advises FRDC on Western Australian research priorities. Kane has continued with the Recfishing Research team administered by Bill Sawynok.

Recfishwest has continued to have a high profile with Recfish Australia. Des Wood is a member of the Board during the year and worked hard to ensure that the politics of fishing at the national level didn't become too difficult. Recfish Australia is under enormous pressure to continue. There will be significant challenges for new CEO Len Olyott during the coming year.

The list of the vast range of committees and working groups in which Recfishwest participates demonstrates the regard with which our views are held. We add value not only to all of the program initiatives of the Department of Fisheries, but across a huge spectrum of government and non-government issues. We have given and earned respect from the commercial fishing industry, mainstream conservation groups, local government, state government departments and their Ministers and the Australian government. We should all feel proud that we ensure that the views of recreational fishing are considered. We may not win

everything and there are times when it feels that the mountain to climb is extremely high, but it is better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all.

During the year, Recfishwest welcomed a new Fisheries CEO in Stuart Smith. Not having a background in fisheries management was a blessing, as we had struggled under the previous CEO who had little sympathy with recreational fishing issues. Stuart has been a breath of fresh air and we hope that he will be able to institute the cultural reforms that will see more transparent and equitable management processes in the future.

Our relationship with the Department of Fisheries the Research Division suffered a number of testing times. Recfishwest continued to raise significant concerns about Cockburn Sound crabs modelling, recreational catch calculations and addressing the management of the Roe's abalone fishery. There was considerable controversy about the negative portrayal of recreational assistance in the dhufish tagging report.

This has culminated in FRDC setting aside funds to manage the changing dynamic of recreational fishing efforts and expectations in nearshore waters as a result of changes to demersal fisheries management. To date, Murdoch University have been very accommodating about projects, but the Department of Fisheries have been nowhere to be seen. This lack of cooperation and engagement is unacceptable and could result in the loss of valuable research funds to WA.

We have spent the entire year working on changes to consultative structures which would cause Recfishwest to examine its Board composition and servicing of regional issues. Recfishwest has now changed its constitution to include bioregional representation. We are looking to appoint a regional policy officer to have greater engagement on regional fisheries management priorities. Recfishwest has worked very hard to meet the challenge that good ideas for recreational fisheries management can be adopted, but bad ideas have to be able to be objectively assessed. The operational aspects of this initiative are expected to be resolved early in the next financial year.

It is also extremely important to point out the enormous contribution of our volunteer based Board. The Executive Committee including Craig Leatt-Hayter, Des Wood, Andrew Matthews, Norman Halse and Terry Fuller work many hours a week on Recfishwest issues. I would like to offer special thanks to our Chairman, Craig Leatt-Hayter, whose enthusiasm and dedication has been greatly appreciated. Craig has had to take the lead on some extremely difficult issues and has done so with confidence and poise.

The staff of Recfishwest continues to show enormous leadership and teamwork. Kane Moyle faces the challenges of fatherhood and will no doubt be as accomplished at this task as he is at all others. Con Costa remains the rock upon which the foundation of Recfishwest is built and Yvette Guy has continued to develop new skills and ensure that Recfishwest maintains a professional presence with fishing clinics and management processes. My sincere thanks to you all.

We have been continuing to ensure that the needs of recreational fishermen are given full consideration in the development of management strategies by local, state and federal government and by other interest groups such as commercial fishing, conservation and many others.

WAFIC and the rock lobster industry are also facing many challenges and it is essential that all recreational fishers understand how important it is to have a strong, professional and viable peak body for both commercial and recreational fishing in Western Australia.

The efforts of all Board members and other volunteers who give so freely of their time on behalf of recreational fishing are often under recognised. It has been a challenge to work on the variety of issues during the past year with such enthusiastic and dedicated people.

TARFish

TASMANIAN ASSOCIATION FOR RECREATIONAL FISHING INC (TARFISH)

Executive Officer Report – Mark Nikolai

Representation on Committees and Groups:

- Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee (RecFAC) - Rep. Lynden Chipman
- Tasmanian Fisheries Research Advisory Board (TasFRAB) - John Cleary
- Abalone Working Group – Mark Nikolai
- Recfish Australia: Board member – Mark Nikolai
- Small Pelagic Fishery MAC - Brett Cleary and Jon Bryan
- TAFI Research Advisory Groups – Mark Nikolai
- Recreational Fishery Research Advisory Group (RecRAG) - Mark Nikolai & Brett Cleary. This is a very useful group as it provides TARFish with the ability to prioritise its research requirements for future years. Priorities set for 2009/10 included: 1) Social & Economic Assessment of recreational fishing 2) Evaluation of Gillnetting Practices and 3) Ecological Impacts of Fishing.
- Tasmania Police compliance committee - Brett Cleary
- Centrostephanus (Long Spined Sea Urchin) Steering Committee – Mark Nikolai – Centrostephanus are an introduced pest species and our involvement in this committee provides us with access and input into how the process to control this marine pest is being developed.
- Abalone Biosecurity Reference Group – Mark Nikolai. This group was established to specifically have input into the bio-security process being established to deal with the Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG).

Gunn's Pulp Mill

We continue to keep a watching brief on developments on this project. TARFish has particular concerns regarding the environmental impacts of the ocean outfall and the impact the mills operations will have on the Tamar river marine environment.

Lauderdale Quay project by Walker Corporation

We have a continued watching brief following previous year submissions. This is a proposed canal estate development in Southern Tasmania which has impacts on the marine environment in the Ralphs Bay area.

Consultation and policy responses:

We have provided consultation and policy responses in the following areas;

- Permit Applications submitted to the state government.
- Remake Fisheries (Mackerel) Rules 1999
- Fisheries Rules Review 2009
- Mackerel Fishery in Tasmania Total Allowable Catch 2009/10
- The Fisheries Mackerel Rules 2009
- Striped Trumpeter – Seasonal Closure 2009
- Review of the Fisheries (Scalefish) Rules 2004 - Attended all 13 public meetings held by the state government around Tasmania

- Rock Lobster Rules Review
- Abalone Rules Review
- Marine Farming Development Plans
- Seal Interactions and Management Strategy working group with Tassal
- Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2020 Consultation Draft

Recreational Fishing Policy Void

Currently Tasmania has no specific government policy in relation to recreational marine fishing. There is a suite of regulations, legislation, and management plans that control fisheries and the marine environment but none clearly sets out the rights of recreational marine fishers and the obligations of government to the recreational fishing community in Tasmania. TARFish have decided to challenge all political parties to develop a recreational fishing policy that looks after the long term interests of the recreational marine fishing community. TARFish met with the Labour Party, Tasmanian Liberals and the Tasmanian Greens to push our Recreational Fisheries Policy Framework. The framework is based around; implementing long term core funding commitment from state government for a government recognised peak body to look after the interests of recreational marine fishers; base Marine Fisheries Policy on Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management methodology; structure Marine Fisheries Policy on internationally recognised Co-Management Structural Alignment; redirect the \$250,000 pa that is directed to consolidated revenue from recreational marine fishing licence fees into direct benefits for recreational marine fishers; increase funding available for marine fisheries research at a state level and provide transparent allocation of recreational marine fishing licence fees

Pursuit of Funding:

TARFish were successful in negotiating a new funding agreement with the state government for the next three years until June 2012. Core funding has been agreed at \$80,000 pa. The government require, and are therefore only funding, a base level of services. TARFish provides a broad range of services to Tasmania's recreational fishing community and will have to source additional funding if it is to continue to provide the broad ranging state wide level of services in future years.

Membership

Following the TARFish Rule changes that came into effect in February 2009 we have successfully increased Associate Members to in excess of 890 individuals. We have also addressed the North Western Fisheries Association (NWFA) and formally extended an invitation for them to join TARFish as the North Western regional representatives for TARFish. NWFA represents 6 clubs on the North West coast and have been in existence for over 30 years. Sea Charter Boat Operators of Tasmania have also reactivated as a financial member of TARFish during 2009.

As can be seen TARFish continue to be involved in anything that has the potential to have an impact on recreational marine fishers and their activities. Our activities and involvements are broad and by necessity are across all fisheries thereby making our association's key objective of looking after the interests of recreational marine fishers more than a full time occupation. With the assistance of a stable and supportive committee who keep the association's focus on clearly defined objectives TARFish is able to effectively meet the challenges of balance and complexity in marine fisheries management, research, advocacy and representativeness.

VICTORIA'S RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY (VRFISH)

Executive Officer's Report – Christopher Collins



Looking back over the last financial year a great deal of effort from the VRFish office has gone into responding to the Victorian Fisheries Consultative Arrangements and the new Fisheries Regulations. One of the unlooked for benefits from this process has been discussions with Seafood Industry Victoria and the Victorian National Parks Association on a collective response from the peak bodies to the Fisheries Consultative Review. This has been an extremely rewarding experience and it has resulted in some significant breakthroughs towards

cementing stronger relationships with all stakeholders within the fishing sector.

The October edition of VRFish's flagship publication, "Fishing Lines", including our 2007/08 Annual report, was published in time for the 4WD & Fishing Show. The importance of this publication in promoting what VRFish does to the broader recreational fishing community cannot be underestimated.

As reported in the April edition of Fishing Lines another significant achievement for last year was the very successful VRFish Boat Ramp Forum. The importance of this forum was recognised in the June 2009 progress report from the Central Coastal Board Boating Coastal Action Plan (CAP). The report praised the boat ramp forum initiative and stated that "...VRFish has developed five key outcomes to help progress solutions to Victoria's boat launching issues and future needs."

VRFish looks forward to working with our key stakeholders and partners, including Marine Safety Victoria and Parks Victoria, to develop measurable and tangible outcomes to benefit all Victorian recreational boat users into the future.

In February VRFish hosted a workshop to look at future recreational fishing access to the new Devilbend Natural Features Reserve on the Mornington Peninsula. Over 50 participants from a broad range of Victorian fishing clubs and associations, including potential commercial interests, attended the workshop to have their say about the Reserve. The clear message from the workshop was that the majority of recreational fishers are very environmentally aware and recognise the need to be sensitive to the cultural heritage and flora and fauna values within the Devilbend Reserve and that this is potentially an asset for all of the community. The recreational fishers of Victoria owe a great deal of thanks to Tom Camp of the Mornington Peninsula Fly Fishing Club for his more than 10 years of tireless and relentless energy in championing recreational fisher access to this potentially great new fishery.

In March this year VRFish conducted a native fish policy workshop in Bendigo. The workshop reviewed the native fish section of our inland fisheries policy. The Native Fish Policy workshop was well received and thanks to efforts of all participants VRFish has developed a robust policy. For further details of the workshop and the policy development process refer to the article in this issue.

Thanks to the untiring efforts of Ben Scullin the State Member for Seymour, Mr Ben Hardmann, officially opened a recreational fishing pontoon on the Eildon Pondage in May. Jointly funded by both the Commonwealth and Victoria through the Recreational Fishing Community Grants Scheme (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) and the Recreational Fishing Grants Program (Department Primary Industries), this project has been the result of a collaborative effort between VRFish, DPI Fisheries Victoria, Murrindindi Shire, Goulburn-Murray Water and the Eildon community. Murrindindi Shire is also coordinating the development of a picnic area and car park adjacent to the floating pontoon, with a financial contribution from DPI Fisheries Victoria, as part of the Premier Lakes designation through the State Governments 'Go Fishing in Victoria Initiative'.

VRFish Board members attended the launch of the Artificial Reef Project at Patterson River in May. This project was a joint initiative of VRFish and Futurefish to improve reef structure. The Victorian

Government initiated this great project under the Enhanced Recreational Fishing Program. For further details of this exciting project refer to Anthony Hurst's article in this edition.

VRFish are eagerly awaiting the results of this exciting project and are already in discussions with recreational fishing groups and Fisheries Victoria to seek to expand this program to other marine and estuarine habitats throughout Victoria.

As in any team all successes are the result of a team effort and VRFish is no exception. I'd like to gratefully acknowledge the outstanding efforts of Alison, Ben, Samantha and Jodie throughout the year. Their valued contributions ensure that VRFish always has the capacity and capability to meet any and all challenges whatever the future may bring.

Finally the Board, State Council and staff of VRFish send our best wishes to Alison and her husband Antony as they embark on an exciting new chapter in their lives as parents. We all look forward to welcoming another new recreational fisher.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

**THE AUSTRALIAN RECREATIONAL AND
SPORT FISHING INDUSTRY CONFEDERATION INCORPORATED**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

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The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated**Contents**

Board's Report	3
Income and Expenditure Statement	4
Balance Sheet	6
Statement of Cash Flows	7
Notes to the Financial Statements	9
Auditor's Independence Declaration	13
Statement by Members of the Board	14
Independent Audit Report to the Members	15

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Board's Report

Your board members submit the financial accounts of the Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2009.

Board Members

The names of the board members at the date of this report are:

Bruce Schumacher
Adam Smith
Chris Makepeace
John Burgess
Des Wood
Russell Conway
Mark Nikolai (observer)

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were representing the interests of recreational and sport fishing at a national level.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The profit/(loss) from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to:

30 June 2009	30 June 2008
\$	\$
(49,302)	64,175

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Board on 18th day of September 2009:

Chairman

Board Member

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Income			
Grants - Projects	2	374,898	406,876
Memberships and contributions	2	40,708	124,088
Interest received		13,498	17,532
Grant - administration		6,986	108,631
Fees		<u>102,896</u>	<u>83,852</u>
Total Income		<u>538,986</u>	<u>740,979</u>
Expenses			
Expenditure - Projects			
Board Review		-	27,559
DEW MPA Liaison		-	104
Recfishing Research		104,379	74,728
Tournament Accreditation		1,551	33,855
Sponsorship		22,727	4,395
Next Generation Leaders		-	67,700
Pink Fly Fishers		-	10,330
Qualification Pathways		9,376	46,452
Revised COP		56,822	26,551
Levy Scoping Paper		73,199	104,699
Safety Scoping Paper		1,840	16,524
Bioregional Planning		163	-
2008/336 Conference (FRDC)		67,603	-
2009/314 Partnerships (FRDC)		6,051	-
5WRFC (FRDC)		7,005	-

SRO (FRDC)	25,605	-
Total expenditure - Projects	376,322	412,897
Association Expenses		
Administration	19,211	14,492
Conference & Meetings	3,042	2,669
Employment and contractors	166,982	130,800
Professional fees	1,936	3,636
Travel expenses	20,795	26,846
Total Association expenses	211,966	178,443
AAT Grey Nurse Shark Case	-	85,464
Total expenses	<u>588,288</u>	<u>676,804</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached auditors report.

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax	<u>(49,302)</u>	<u>64,175</u>
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	-	-
Net profit (loss) attributable to the association	<u>(49,302)</u>	<u>64,175</u>
Total changes in equity of the association		
Opening retained profits	156,129	91,954
Net profit attributable to the association	<u>(49,302)</u>	<u>64,175</u>
Closing retained profits	<u>106,827</u>	<u>156,129</u>

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Current Assets			
Cash Assets	3	164,454	383,165
Receivables	4	22,621	5,420
Current tax asset	7	-	3,904
Total Current Assets		187,075	392,489
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	5	-	332
Total Non-Current Assets		-	332
Total Assets		187,075	392,821
Current Liabilities			
Payables	6	69,029	227,883
Current tax liabilities	7	7,694	3,780
Provision for annual leave		3,525	5,029
Total Current Liabilities		80,248	236,692
Total Liabilities		80,248	236,692
Net Assets (Liabilities)		106,827	156,129
Members' Funds			
Retained profits		106,827	156,129
Total Members' Funds		106,827	156,129

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached auditors report.

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Cash Flow From Operating Activities		
Receipts from members and grants	512,524	805,723
Payments to suppliers and employees	(744,733)	(921,977)
Interest received	13,498	17,532
	(218,711)	(98,722)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities (Note 2)		
	(218,711)	(98,722)
Cash at the beginning of the year	383,165	481,887
Cash at the end of the year (Note 1)	164,454	383,165

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached auditors report.

Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	2009	2008
	\$	\$

Note 1. Reconciliation Of Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money market instruments, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Cash at the end of the year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:

CBA Cheque Account	17,835	130,576
CBA Term Deposit	90,173	-
CBA Grant Account	16,934	38,785
CBA Project Account	8,692	6,465
CBA Investment Account	<u>30,820</u>	<u>207,339</u>
	<u>164,454</u>	<u>383,165</u>

Note 2. Reconciliation Of Net Cash Provided By/Used In Operating Activities To Net Profit

Operating profit after income tax	(49,302)	64,175
Depreciation expense	332	-
Change in assets and liabilities net of the effects of purchases and disposals of controlled entities:		
(Increase) decrease in trade and term debtors	(13,297)	86,180
Increase (decrease) in trade creditors and accruals	(158,854)	25,231
Increase (decrease) in other creditors	3,914	(222,587)
Increase (decrease) in employee entitlements	(1,504)	(7,258)
Increase (decrease) in sundry provisions	<u>-</u>	<u>(44,463)</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>(218,711)</u>	<u>(98,722)</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached auditors report.

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2009

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act. The board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 112:	Income Taxes
AASB 1031:	Materiality
AASB 110:	Events after the Balance Sheet Date

No other Australian Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report:

(a) Income Tax

The association is a tax exempt entity and is therefore not liable for income tax.

(b) Fixed Assets

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

(c) Segment Reporting

The association operates solely in the recreational and sports fishing industry within Australia.

(d) Auditors remuneration

The auditors remuneration relates solely to the audit of the financial statements

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	2009	2008
Note 2: Revenue		
Grant - Projects		
Grants - Projects	228,828	207,642
Add Unexpended 1 July 2008	200,107	372,693
Add Member Contributions	-	26,648
Less Unexpended 30 June 2009	(54,037)	(200,107)
Net Grants	374,898	406,876
Memberships and contributions:		
Memberships and contributions:	40,708	124,088
Less memberships in advance	-	-
Less Unexpended Grey Nurse Case	-	-
Net Membership and contributions	40,708	124,088
 Note 3: Cash Assets		
Bank Accounts:		
CBA Cheque Account	17,835	130,576
CBA Term Deposit	90,173	-
CBA Grant Account	16,934	38,785
CBA Project Account	8,692	6,465
CBA Investment Account	30,820	207,339
	<u>164,454</u>	<u>383,165</u>

Note 4: Receivables**Current**

Trade Debtors	19,530	5,420
Prepaid Expenses	<u>3,091</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>22,621</u>	<u>5,420</u>

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	2009	2008
 Note 5: Property, Plant and Equipment		
Plant and equipment:		
- At cost	1,599	1,599
- Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(1,599)</u>	<u>(1,267)</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>332</u>
 Note 6: Payables		
Unsecured:		
Trade creditors	612	27,776
Creditors and accruals	14,381	-
Superannuation payable	-	-
 Unexpended Grants		
DEW MPA Liaison	47,692	47,692
Long Tuna (NSW)	3,500	3,500
Tournament Accreditation	-	40,068
Revised COP	-	36,629
Safety Scoping Paper	-	1,767
2009 Conference (RFCGP)	-	22,727
SRO (FRDC)	-	20,605
SRO Scoping Paper (RFCGP)	2,720	27,119
2008/336 Conference (FRDC)	99	-
2009/314 Partnerships (FRDC)	26	-
Total unexpended grants	<u>54,037</u>	<u>200,107</u>
	<u>69,029</u>	<u>227,883</u>

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2009

	2009	2008
Note 7: Tax Liabilities		
Current		
GST payable control account	1,308	(3,904)
Amounts withheld from salary and wages	6,386	3,780
	7,694	(124)

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Auditor's Independence Declaration

To the board members of the Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2008 there have been:

- (i) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the Audit; and
- (ii) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Signed at Brisbane on this day of 2009.

Bevin R Schafferius
Registered Company Auditor

Bevin R Schafferius
Suite 37, 18 Masthead Drive, Cleveland, QLD, 4163

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Statement by Members of the Board
For the year ended 30 June 2009

The Board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board the Income and Expenditure Statement, Statement of Financial Position, and Notes to the Financial Statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated as at 30 June 2008 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable
3. grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

Chair

Board Member

Date: _____

The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated
Independent Audit Report to the members

Scope

We have audited the attached financial report, being a special purpose financial report comprising the Statement by Members of the Board, Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Financial Position, and Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2007 of The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated. The Board is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (ACT) and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial statements have been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT). We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the association's financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows. These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, the financial position of The Australian Recreational and Sport Fishing Industry Confederation Incorporated as at 30 June 2008 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

Signed on

Bevin R Schafferius, Registered Company Auditor
Suite 37, 18 Masthead Drive, Cleveland, QLD, 4163
