



PO Box 187  
Grange Qld 4051  
Phone/fax 07 3356 1111  
Email [ceo@recfish.com.au](mailto:ceo@recfish.com.au)  
ABN 87 547 561 663  
[www.recfish.com.au](http://www.recfish.com.au)

For immediate publication 23 August 2007

## Media release

### Setting the record straight.

John Harrison CEO of Recfish Australia today wanted to clear some confusion in media reports on a process whereby the recreational fishing sector is seeking to identify an independent revenue stream to support recreational fishing needs around Australia.

“For many years it has been impossible to find a means whereby the recreational and sport fishing sector of the fishing industry can secure a reliable and equitable source of revenue to provide the capability for the sector to develop and grow”.

“Historically the sector has always relied on the governments of the day to provide resources to develop and promote the sector. This puts you at the whim of the Minister of the day”

Whilst some argue that it is the responsibility of the governments to support peak bodies in reality this does not always happen. There are examples of government withdrawing funding or threatening to withdraw funding to peak bodies, e.g. Recfish Australia 1996, Sunfish ~ 2000 & Recfishwest 2007.

“With funding from the Australian Government’s Recreational Fishing Community Grant Program Recfish Australia will commission a scoping study to identify funding options that **if** implemented will see any funds paid by the anglers go back into the industry with direct benefits returned to the fisheries, fishers and the sector. The study will commence shortly with a target completion of mid 2008.”

“A reliable revenue source will allow the sector’s representative groups to develop long term plans for capacity building, succession planning, growing the participation, Research & Development & Extension (RDE), restoration projects, capacity building, communications, habitat restoration etc., which in turn will deliver direct benefits to the fishing public. A number of potential uses of strategic revenue options or alternative funding options have already been identified and the scoping paper will develop these, and any additional initiatives identified by consultant/s, further”.

“One area within the study will be looking at the fuel excise paid by recreational fishers in their boats and how this may be used to support the recreational fishing sector. Currently fuel rebates are available for the commercial fishing fleet, primary producers and others. This study will look at how the fuel excise that is currently paid by anglers for their boat fuel could be diverted into a trust fund to provide the revenue necessary to deliver the long term objectives”.

“The study will also look at the option of a lottery or lotto system and it will study the spending habits of recreational fishers on the goods and services they use and identify any possible options for either

capturing some of the taxes currently paid or the potential arrangements where an equitable and fair amount can be included in the cost of these goods and services.”

“These are not the only options that will be considered in the study as we are seeking innovative and new ideas from the study.”

“The whole concept behind this is to ask the questions and explore the options for independent funding mechanisms and if so what the next steps might be. If the question is not asked we will never know the answer.”

“I must reiterate, this is a scoping paper only, looking at potential options and seeking recommendations.”

“This is not about lining Recfish Australia’s pocket or a money grab. It is about the future of recreational fishing being able to stand on its own feet and shape its future.” Mr Harrison concluded.

Media enquiries

John Harrison  
07 33561111