

## **Paper Addressing Need For Amendment To ANSA Rulebook re SCALES**

There are 2 references to scales in the ANSA Rulebook, namely;

### **Page 28. Procedure for Submitting National Record Claims**

- All captures must be weighed on land by an independent witness over the age of 16 on scales that have been checked and certified for accuracy by Government agencies or other qualified and accredited organisations.
- All scales must be checked for accuracy and certified in accordance with Government regulations at least every 12 months. Scales should be accurate to the Standard for Commerce class 3 ( All retail shop scales are tested to Commerce class 3 standard.
- If at the time of weighing the fish, the scale has not been properly certified within 12 months, it should be checked and certified for accuracy as quickly as possible, and an official report stating the findings of the inspection prior to any adjustment of the scale must be included with the record application.

### **Page 31. Master Angler Awards – Weighing**

- All capture must be weighed by an independent witness over the age of 16 years using scales that have been checked and certified for accuracy by Government agencies or other qualified and accredited organisations or on scales that are certified in writing as accurate by the branch or club committee.
- Branch and club committee will only certify scales as accurate after testing them through their range against certified scales or by use of certified standard weights.
- A fish may be weighed on water if it is to be released alive and conditions are such that an accurate measurement of weight can be made. The principle shall be that the vessel shall remain steady for 3 seconds or longer and that the lowest reading in that time shall be the one recorded.
- Note. This procedure is not applicable to National records.
- Captures may be weighed whole, gilled and gutted or cleaned plus gills and gut as one item

It is apparent from reading these 2 extracts from the Rule book that the rules for weighing a Masters capture are much more liberal than those applicable for a National record claim. This is deliberately the case and reflects the ANSA ethos for Masters captures which invariably involves the angler in a self challenge where personal integrity is fundamental and the fact that an angler is more likely to capture a Masters class fish than a National Record and the capture will be made in an environment where access to scales, which meet the National Record criteria, is not readily available. The rules for weighing Masters captures are considered adequate for the needs of ANSA members and contain no technical deficiencies. Accordingly no modification is considered necessary.

The rules for weighing of National Record claims do however require modification due to the following factors.

- The reference to “Standard for Commerce class 3” is no longer relevant.

- The requirement for checking and certification for accuracy of scales at least every 12 months is questionable.
- There is need for a more flexible approach to acceptable scales to facilitate the weighing of potential record captures in remote locations.

Government regulations.

The regulations for use of scales in most Australian States falls under the jurisdiction of the Office of Fair Trading or like named body in each State. While regrettably there is no uniform regulation across all States governing the use and testing of scales there is however a National Standard which the Commonwealth Government has introduced for the certification of scales under the National Measurement Act. This process is administered by the National Standards Commission (NSC)

There are 4 grades of NSC classification for scales, all determined by the number of divisions on the scale itself – eg;

NSC 1 – to a max of 1million divisions ( eg delicate scientific scales )

NSC 2 – to a max of 100 thousand divisions ( eg general trade use)

NSC 3 – to a max of 10 thousand divisions (eg general trade use)

NSC 4 – to max of 1 thousand divisions (eg large factory scales)

Generally speaking you cannot purchase dial or digital scales over 100kg capacity that have been given NSC certification. The reason for this being that to obtain ASC certification status, scale manufactures must submit their product to the ASC for rigorous accuracy and durability testing. Given the limited sales market for scales in Australia most scale manufactures are not prepared to meet the high cost of putting all their products before the NSC for certification. Hence the only scales that have certification are those in the most popular size (upto100 kg) which invariably are those scales used in most retail trades. NSC certified scales are much more robust than non NSC certified scales and the higher purchase price asked for NSC certified scales reflects this premium quality

If scales bear a NSC certification and they are used for recognised trade purposes they need only be tested every 2 years. Non NSC certified scales if they are used for trade must be tested at least every 12 months. The NSC testing criteria uniformly accepted by all State Offices of Fair Trading is as follows –

- Where number of divisions > 500. Acceptable error factor is 1 division.
- Where number of divisions < 500. Acceptable error factor is half a division.

Most club scales will be 100kg or less and as such if they are NSC certified, they need to be officially tested every 2 years. If the scales are non NSC certified then irrespective of weight capacity, they will need to be officially tested and certified for accuracy at least every 2 years.

### **IGFA Position**

The following is an extract from the IGFA requirements for World Records –

All record fish should be weighed on scales that have been checked and certified for accuracy by government agencies or other qualified and accredited organisations. All scales must be regularly checked for accuracy and certified in accordance with applicable government regulations at least once every 12 months. If at the time of weighing the fish the scale has not been properly certified within 12 months, it should be checked and certified for accuracy as quickly as possible. An official report stating the findings of the inspection prior to any adjustment of the scale must be included with the record application.

#### Scale Certification

1. If there is no official Government inspector or accredited scales representative available in the area where the fish is weighed, the scales must be checked by weighing objects of recognised and proven weight. Objects weighed must be at least equal to the weight of the fish. Substantiation of the correct weight of these objects must be submitted to IGFA along with the names and complete addresses of accredited witnesses to the entire procedure.
2. In extremely remote areas where no weighing scales are available, it will be permissible for the angler to use his own scales providing that they are of a quality type and have been properly certified both before and after returning from the fishing trip.
3. IGFA reserves the right to require any scale to be recertified for accuracy if there are any indications that the scale might not have been weighed correctly.

Clearly IGFA affords anglers a greater degree of flexibility for anglers to weigh for World records than is the case for ANSA members to weigh and claim National records. This is particularly relevant for fishing in remote locations. It is perhaps appropriate that ANSA supplement its National record weighing rules by incorporating some of the wording of the IGFA rules, in particular clauses 1, 2 and 3.

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the following amendments and inclusions be made to the ANSA Rulebook governing the procedure for submitting National record claims.

- **1(a)** All captures must be weighed on land by an independent witness over the age of sixteen (16) years on scales that have been checked and certified for accuracy by government agencies or other qualified and accredited organisations.
- **1(b)** All scales must be checked for accuracy and certified in accordance with applicable government regulations at least every 24 months for NSC certified scales and at least every 12 months for non NSC certified scales.
- **1(c)** If at the time of weighing the scale has not been properly certified within the before mentioned time frames, it should be checked and certified for accuracy as quickly as possible and an official report stating the findings of the inspection prior to any adjustment of the scale must be included with the record application.
- **1(d)** If there is no official government agency or other qualified and accredited organisation available in the area where the fish is weighed, the scale must be checked by weighing objects of recognised and proven weight. Objects weighed

must be at least equal to the weight of the fish. Substantiation of the correct weight of these objects must be submitted to ANSA with the record application together with the names and addresses of accredited witnesses to the entire procedure.

- **1(e)** In extremely remote areas where no Government certified weighing scales are available, it will be permissible for the angler to use his own scales providing that they are of a quality type and have been properly checked for accuracy ( to NSC criteria detailed below) against Government certified scales both before and after returning from the fishing trip. Substantiation of accurate checking of such scales against Government certified scales must be submitted to ANSA with the record application together with names and addresses of accredited witnesses to the entire procedure.
- **1(f)** ANSA reserves the right to require any scale to be re certified for accuracy if there are any indications that the scale might not have weighed properly.

**Nb (1)** The acceptable error factor for scale certification under these rules will be as per NSC criteria namely-

- Where number of divisions > 500. Acceptable error factor is 1 division.
- Where number of divisions < 500. Acceptable error factor is one half a division.

**(2)** These rules apply only for ANSA National record claims. Any claim for an IGFA world record must comply with IGFA weighing rules.

John Burgess  
August 2004