



ANSA NEWS BULLETIN

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**ANSA Board
PO Box 328
Matraville
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NATIONAL RECREATIONAL FISHING CONFERENCE

The conference, jointly hosted by Recfish Australia and The Australian Fishing Trade Association (AFTA), was held over the weekend of 17 -19 at the Gold Coast Convention Centre. Some 160 delegates representing the recreational fishing sector attended - these included several Commonwealth and State fishery management agencies, all major state and national peak recreational fishing bodies and a wide variety of other organisations and individuals with a connection to recreational fishing. The Conference was officially opened by Senator the Hon Joe Ludwig, Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry.

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The Conference is one of the most significant events on the Australian recreational fishing calendar and provides an excellent forum for wide ranging discussions that will chart the future of recreational fishing. The key note theme for this year's conference was "Casting Towards tomorrow – Keeping Australia Fishing"

ANSA was well represented at the conference with several of the National executive in attendance together with Branch representatives from NSW, ACT and Qld. There were 4 key note speakers including Martin Salter – the UK based author of the Keep Australia Fishing report and 36 individual speaker presentations on a wide and diverse range of topics relative to recreational fishing. A speaker schedule and brief profile of individual speakers is attached.

Enquiries to:

* John Burgess
Phone: (02) 9311 3200
Mobile: 0408 609 586
Email:
abtrap@yahoo.com.au

ANSA speakers included -

- Nathan Johnston (ANSA Qld). "Challenges from a young fishers perspective".
- Stan Konstantaras (ANSA Nat/ NSW). "Angel Rings reduce the number of Angels".
- Bill Sawynok (ANSA Nat/ Qld). "Catch and Release – identifying and promoting responsible fishing practices".
- Tony Steiner (ANSA NSW). "Understanding the importance of recreational fishing to Australian society".
- Kim Martin (ANSA Qld). "Why effective leadership will be required to advance recreational fishing in Australia".

National Recreational Fishing Conference Continued

ANSA also did very well in the annual Recreational Fishing awards with Stan Konstantaras picking up the 2012 Volunteer of the Year award and Jason Stanfield (ANSA Qld) picking up the Most Successful Future Leader Graduate award. Well deserved congratulations are extended to Stan and Jason for their awards.

Other award winners included -

Steve Starling
Excellence in Recreational Fishing Communication.

John Kirk
Excellence In Support of Research Outcomes - Victorian Angler Diary programme.

Ryan Paik
Project of the Year – Moreton Bay Artificial Reef.

Recfishwest
Best Project or Initiative Encouraging women and/or Young Peoples Participation In Fishing –
Recfishwest Fishing Clinic programme.

Bob Loats from Victoria was also awarded the prestigious Mal Ramsay Achievement Award for his lifetime of devoted volunteer service to recreational fishing.

The expected outcome of the Conference is to take on three defined themes that will set the ground work for the ongoing development of the future of recreational fishing and the role that the next generation will play in ensuring a healthy and sustainable fishery. A number of suitable theme topics were suggested by the delegates and these will be refined into a working document to be released shortly.

A special mention of thanks is extended to Bill and Shirley Sawynok, Matt Barwick, Russell Conway, Alan Hansard and the extended team of people who pulled this conference together and made it such a success. Thanks is also extended to the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) and the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) for jointly funding the conference as part of the Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy.

Photos of the ANSA team attending the conference will be on the ANSA website www.ansa.com.au shortly.

NATIONAL FISHING EDUCATION WORKSHOP

To take advantage of delegates attending the Recreational Fishing Conference an important workshop was convened on the Friday to set the direction for a new FRDC funded project titled “National Recreational Fishing Education programme”.

Education was identified as a priority by the Federal Ministers Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee as part of the national strategy to develop a project to improve education of fishers nationally. It was recognised that there was considerable scope for recreational fishing to enhance the lives of more Australians but we face many challenges such as finite fish resources, family and work pressures, access issues and a declining interest in recreational fishing by the younger generation.

A number of state fisheries agencies and peak bodies already provide a variety of education programmes to potential and existing recreational fishers but there is no uniform national curriculum and delivery of the education message is limited by lack of funds and manpower resources.

The aim the workshop was to explore all possible options on how to inform the non fishing public about recreational fishing and to establish a pathway for the recruitment of the next generation of recreational fishers and to promote the health and social values of recreational fishing.

There were some fantastic exchanges of views and details of education initiatives currently in train across the nation and stories of success and challenge. It was unanimously agreed that there were numerous untapped opportunities to reach out to the next generation of fishers and get the health and social value message of fishing across to this audience. One such opportunity that featured predominantly was the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Forums, etc.

There is still much to be done to bring this project to a conclusion but the workshop did provide an excellent opportunity for all those who have a passionate interest in recreational fishing and the educators to have a frank and constructive exchange of views of how best to reach out and win over the next generation of fishers and to reinforce the positive values of fishing to those who have already taken the bait.

RECREATIONAL FISHING ROUNDTABLE MEETING

This meeting was held on the Friday afternoon at the Convention Centre and chaired by Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig, Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry. In attendance were senior staff from Commonwealth fishing industry agencies and representatives of most major recreational fishing peak bodies. Main topics for discussion were –

The Margiris. It was made very clear to the Minister that all peak recreational fishing bodies and recreational fishers generally were strongly and uniformly opposed to the licensing of the Margiris to operate in Australian waters. Concerns with the scope and veracity of the science being relied upon for the recent doubling of the total allowable catch of jack mackerel in the Small Pelagic Fishery were expressed as were concerns over the ability of AFMA to adequately safeguard against the risk of local area depletion of bait fish such as jack mackerel and redbait and the implications this could have on predatory pelagic species such as Southern Bluefin Tuna.

It was put to Minister Ludwig that our recreational fishing representatives on the working group, established to negotiate operational protocols and safeguards for the Margiris, had come to an end as the science behind the quotas raised more questions than answers – see attached media releases from ARFF and Tarfish. An appeal was put to the Minister to find a solution to this impasse which has no visible support from the general public. Labor's historic precedent with the Franklin River damming was cited as an example of positive political leadership in similar challenging circumstances where public opinion prevailed over science and economic benefit. Just where matters will progress from here remains to be seen but hopefully a sensible political outcome will be forthcoming.

It is comforting that Minister Tony Burke has voiced concerns about local stock depletion risks associated with this proposed fishing operation while yet a number of scientists have banded together to give public assurances that the science justifies the fishery and that there are no local area depletion risks.

A possible challenge to the legality of the process used to increase the quota is being contemplated and there will be more public campaigns against the licensing of the Margiris. If you are a Victorian member then there is a rally/ protest convoy scheduled for Saturday 1 September leaving from Altona boat ramp at 9.30 am and Patterson Lake at 9am. Be there if you can.

Bio Regional Planning. It was put to the Minister that as a consequence of a recent meeting with his colleague, Environment Minister Tony Burke, the peak recreational fishing bodies had no choice but to oppose the Government's bio regional planning process. It was explained to Minister Ludwig that while the marine reserve proposals now on the table were generally favourable to recreational fishing there was a need for some minor tweaking of the proposed zones and recreational fishing restrictions in the Coral Sea and South West marine reserves. Unfortunately, Minister Burke was unable to accommodate these minor changes. Our main concerns in the Coral Sea were the no fish zones around Charlotte, Osprey, Shark and Vema Reefs and non allowance of pelagic trolling on the outer marine park zones. The Lock up of the Rottneest Trench, Geographic Bay and Dampier were issues of deep resentment in WA given their safe, shallow and readily accessible features. Over arching all of these concerns was the absence of science to substantiate that recreational fishing would have any negative impact on bio diversity at any of these locations.

Recreational Fishing Roundtable Meeting Continued

The deadline for submissions in respect of the draft bio regional plan is 10 September 2012 and ANSA will be lodging submissions. All other peak recreational fishing bodies will be encouraged to also lodge submissions in keeping with the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation (ARFF) "Keep Australia Fishing – Don't Lock Us Out" theme. These and the ANSA submission will ideally follow a uniform statement of rejection of the government plan and our reasons for doing so.

What can you do. Go to the Keep Australia Fishing (KAF) website www.keepaustraliafishing.com.au and show your support for the "Don't Lock Us Out" campaign. Use the example submission letter as a starting point for your own submission or just follow the prompts to send off an email version to Minister Tony Burke. If you are a WA member, there is a public rally to be held on Wednesday August 29 at Langley park commencing at 4pm. Protest convoys will also be departing from Leeuwin and Hillarys boat ramps at 2.30 pm with a 2pm assembly.

Resource Sharing for Southern Blue fin Tuna. A number of commonwealth and state research programmes are about to commence on SBT movements, stock numbers, recreational take impacts and mortality post capture and release. These research findings should come together later next year and will be part of the process of developing a resource sharing process for SBT by the commercial and recreational sectors. Just how this will be achieved and managed is a major challenge but it is evident that the government is committed to the idea of resource sharing for SBT. If achievable this could herald the introduction of resource sharing for other species where the recreational take and impact is significant. Watch this space for more details.

ANSA NATIONAL AGM AND DELEGATES MEETING

Members are reminded that the AGM and delegates meeting will be held on Sunday 28 October at South Sydney Amateur Fishing Association, Sydney. A dinner will also be held on the Saturday evening. Details of the meeting and an agenda will issue in due course but delegates are encouraged to make early travel arrangements to take advantage of any discount travel packages. Attendance by all ANSA members – not just delegates - is encouraged.



John Burgess

Executive Officer / Director
