

**Tenth Meeting of the  
Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee  
Final Minutes  
12/08/03  
9:30am to 3.30pm  
Cronulla Fisheries Centre  
202 Nicholson Parade, Cronulla**

**Attendance**

**Chair**

Bruce Schumacher

**Committee Members**

Bruce Mahony	Region 1 – Qld border to Evans Head
Lisa Terry	Region 2 – Evans Head to Woolgoolga
John Drew	Region 3 – Woolgoolga to Port Macquarie
Graham Harrison	Region 4 – Port Macquarie to Seal Rocks
Lionel Jones	Region 5 – Seal Rocks to The Entrance
David Turner	Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong
William Heaton	Region 6 – The Entrance to Wollongong
Warren Buchan	Region 7 & 8 – Wollongong to Vic border

Geoffrey Woolley	NSW Game Fishing Association
Malcolm Poole	Recreational Fishing Alliance
John Millyard	Australian Fishing Tackle Association
Anthony Moore	Nature Conservation Council

**NSW Fisheries (observers)**

John Diplock, Principal Manager, Recreational Fisheries  
Bryan van der Walt, A/Senior Manager, Recreational Fisheries

**Apologies**

Bill Heaton  
John Millyard

## **Agenda Items**

- 1) Recreational Fishing Trusts financial report
- 2) NSW Fisheries ongoing program reports
  1. Recreational harvest of baitfish
  2. Recreational fishing haven survey
  3. Licence Administration
  4. Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program
  5. Licence Research database
- 3) External program reports
  1. Striped marlin economic survey
  2. Angel rings
  3. Expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers
- 4) Presentation by Mick Palmer, Chair, Black Marketing Forum
- 5) Review of Fishcare Volunteer Program
- 6) Recreational Fishing Trusts Sub Committee Meeting 1
- 7) Incentive scheme for Recreational Fishing Trusts and gold agents
- 8) Deferred program applications
  1. Capacity development for recreational fishing committee representatives
  2. Bringing sustainable recreational fishing to Sydney schools and communities through the Marine Discovery Centre Bondi Beach
  3. An assessment of recreational fishing havens in NSW: Do havens improve recreational fishing in estuarine waters of NSW?

Small grants

  4. Hawkesbury Esplanade Reserve, Sylvania Waters-Fish cleaning facilities
  5. Swallow Rock Reserve, Grays Point-Fishing cleaning facilities
- 9) New program applications
  1. Safe, permanent launching facility at Currarong

Small grants

  2. Review of Environmental Factors for Marine Waste Reception Facilities
  3. Seagrass savers
  4. Impacts of a mooring anchor device (MAD) on aquatic habitats
  5. Solar powered navigation lights at Shelley Beach
  6. Shoalhaven legal limit education on fishing jetties
  7. Deepwater FAD trial
  8. Population structure of the euryhaline sportfish, the estuary perch
  9. Fish 4 Youth
  10. Restoration of riparian fish habitats-Shoalhaven River Estuary
  11. Boat Ramp Signage Upgrade Program
  12. Fish cleaning table-Taree

10) Action Items from meeting 9

11) General Business

12) Next meeting

### **Business**

#### **Welcome by Chair**

The Chair opened the meeting by greeting members and noting a full agenda for the meeting, including a number of presentations from external speakers.

#### **Minutes of RFSTEC meeting 9. Held 22.05.03**

The Committee requested that it be noted in the minutes that Doug Joyner attended the meeting in place of John Millyard.

The draft minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> RFSTEC meeting including the amendment recorded above were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried.**

#### **Business arising from the minutes**

None

**Issue**

Recreational Fishing Trusts financial report

**Background**

At previous meetings the Committee has requested additional budget information to assist in the review of applications for funding from the Saltwater Trust. In particular, more details on the breakdown of Trust allocations are required to ensure transparent reporting to the general public. Following the 2002/03 year end, new Trust Fund cashflow tables have been prepared for the Committee which will include the salary, operating costs and cost recovery components of each program once the budgets have been loaded (see Attachment 1). Separate tables have been prepared for each financial year and Trust Fund since the implementation of general licence. The tables also show details of shared programs. In addition, a Trust Fund summary including details of fishing fee income, other income, bank charges, approved allocations and Trust Fund balance, has also been prepared.

The Committee, the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing and the Minister for Fisheries have also approved budgets for ongoing programs in 2004/05 and 2005/06. A forward planning financial table has also been prepared for forecasting purposes.

Total funds allocated to saltwater programs approved by RFSTEC and the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing in 2002/03 was over \$6.5 million (after the transfer of \$2.5 million to Freshwater Trust). Likewise, over \$2.6 million was allocated to inland programs.

A table of Trust funded program employees has also been prepared for the Committee's information. This table will be updated on an ongoing basis.

**Outcomes**

New cashflow financial tables were presented to the Committee. The tables included information on the Freshwater and Saltwater Trusts and shared programs between the two Trust Funds. The tables will show the salary, operating costs and cost recovery components of each program, once the budgets have been loaded by the Finance Department. It was noted that the tables were complex and the Committee was encouraged to take the time to familiarise themselves with the details of each table. Details of the NSW Fisheries programs were also provided including the functions of each program. For example, the Communications program funded part salaries of staff responsible for:

- Development and ongoing maintenance of the NSW Fisheries recreational fishing website, which currently receives the highest number of hits.
- Formal reply to emails received through the website from anglers (an average of 180 are received per month related to recreational fishing)
- Over 1,000 calls related to recreational fishing are received on the information and advisory phonenumber (1300 550 474) each month.
- The NSW Fisheries Media Unit responds to numerous media enquires.

- Major events attended by NSW Fisheries displaying a recreational fishing theme have included the Four wheel drive and Fishing Show, Fishing Expo, Sydney Boat Show etc.

The Committee recommended that the nine Fisheries Officers funded by the Trust should wear badges to identify and acknowledge the Recreational Fishing Trusts. NSW Fisheries advised that the 3 Officers in the recreational mobile squad will wear Trust badges and hats so that anglers can recognise them. This is appropriate as the Officers concentrate their compliance and advisory activities in recreational fishing havens. However, the activities of the other nine Fisheries Officers are aimed at commercial and recreational fishers. This is an operational strategy as commercial fishing activities may also impact on recreational fishing. It is therefore not appropriate for these Fisheries Officers to wear Trust labelling.

A Trust Fund summary, including the current status of the Saltwater Trust, was presented to the Committee. It was noted that income of \$8,393,699 was received from the sale of fishing licences throughout the state in 2002/03. Other income to the Saltwater Trust received from interest and net registrations totalled \$86,376. Following the transfer of \$2.5 million to the Freshwater Trust and less bank charges and allocations for programs approved by this Committee and the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing in 2002/03, a balance of just over \$1.8 million remained in the Trust as of 30 June 2003.

A forward planning financial table for the next five years was also prepared for forecasting. Ongoing programs that are likely to be funded on an ongoing basis, such as the recreational mobile squad, have been included in the table. It was noted that a positive balance is maintained in the Trust Fund over the five year period.

The Committee requested clarification on the allocations for the preparation of the fisheries management strategy and associated environmental assessment for on recreational fishing. NSW Fisheries advised that the Committee had approved allocations of \$300,000 in 2002/03 and 2003/04 for this program.

A Trust funded asset register and staff list was presented to the Committee for their information. The Committee requested that asset costs, depreciation and current value of the asset be added to the asset list. NSW Fisheries also presented a plaque which had been developed for labelling infrastructural projects, such as fish cleaning tables, fishing platforms etc, which had been funded by the Trust. A new logo for Trust funded research programs had also been designed. The logos and plaques will ensure recognition and acknowledgment of the Trust fund.

**Action item:** NSW Fisheries to include purchase prices, depreciation and current value of items on the asset register.

At the previous meeting, the Committee discussed the development of a memorandum of understanding/mission statement for the Trust Expenditure Committees. NSW Fisheries advised that this issue will be placed on the agenda for the next ACoRF meeting scheduled for 25 September 2003. A draft memorandum/statement will be prepared by Council which will include the clarification of roles and responsibilities of expenditure committees and the setting out of specific funding priorities. It will provide

a framework to enable consistency in the management of the freshwater and saltwater trust expenditure committees, budget programs and application and assessment process for new projects. It will also ensure a consistent and transparent approach to the management of committee operations, budget processes and projects.

For information.

## Agenda item 2a

NSW Fisheries

### Issue

NSW Fisheries ongoing program reports-Recreational harvest of baitfish

### Background

Assessment of bait use by the primary recreational sectors associated with the fishery continues.

**Gamefish:** As an addition to the existing work being carried out to monitor competition gamefish catch additional information has been collected recording bait use from 17 competitions. Data collected from these competitions is currently being collated and will provide the basis for developing estimates of baitfish use from the club based gamefish sector.

**Charter:** Estimates of catch for all species including bait use have been determined for 2001. Future work will concentrate on collating and developing estimates from subsequent years. All charter boat operators will also be surveyed to gather information regarding local patterns of distribution and abundance of bait stocks and to indicate to operators the importance of providing accurate information through the logbook program.

**Trailer boat:** Existing information of bait catch from the trailer boat survey conducted in 1994 has been estimated for the two years of the study. These preliminary estimates are limited to the amount of bait retained at the end of each trip. The next phase of the study will concentrate on extracting the information that relates to the portion of the baitfish catch that is used on each trip.

Both the gamefish and charter sectors have been an excellent source of information and samples. The ongoing sampling program supported by the recreational sector will provide the basis for detecting patterns in size and sex and provide the sample needed to scale up the numbers estimated from each sector into landed catch, which can be used to compare to current patterns of commercial use.

### Outcomes

The Committee was informed that sampling had progressed well over the last 3 months although there have been some difficulties obtaining samples over winter. Early trends indicate a much greater proportion of female fish with males "dotted" along the coast in isolated areas. The samples have also indicated an increase in the size of fish with an increase in latitude. The Australian Maritime College research vessel "Bluefin" is due to commence the second cruise in late September and will be

focusing on the collection of blue mackerel larvae and eggs to gain further information about movement and reproductive patterns which should help explain the observed trends in the adult population.

## **Agenda item 2b**

## **NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

NSW Fisheries ongoing program reports- Recreational fishing haven survey

### **Background**

The current proposal for the survey of the effectiveness of recreational fishing havens is based on the use of telephone/diary techniques as used in the 2000/01 National Angling survey, combined with a sampling frame of fishing licence holders. National Angling Survey data has been analysed to assess the status of recreational fishing in NSW before the establishment of the havens. Following the analysis, several problems have been identified with this methodology. The most notable is that the number of respondents from the National survey is too small to provide a basis for detection of a relatively large change (such as of the order of 40%) in statistics such as catch rates. This is the case even for Lake Macquarie which provided the largest sample. This "before" analysis of this project was completed with funding from the National Angling Survey. Therefore, no Trust funds have been expended from the project budget at this stage. It is proposed to vary the methodologies of the program by replicating the on-site creel surveys carried out in Lake Macquarie and Tuross Lakes in 1999 before the declaration of the recreational fishing havens. Full details of the new methods will be provided at the meeting. Summaries of the creel surveys carried out in Lake Macquarie and Tuross Lakes are attached for the Committee's information (see Attachment 2).

### **Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries advised the Committee that the objective of the program was to assess the effectiveness of recreational fishing havens on catch and effort of recreational fishers. It was explained that the methodologies of the program needed to be varied to achieve the outcomes of the program by replicating the on-site creel surveys carried out in Lake Macquarie, Tuross Lakes and Botany Bay in 1999 before the declaration of the recreational fishing havens.

The recreational fisheries of Lake Macquarie and Tuross Lake were surveyed over a 12-month period from March 1999 to February 2000. The aims of the surveys were (1) to assess recreational fishing effort and catch in each estuary, and (2) to compare the estimated recreational catch to reported commercial catch in each estuary. A brief summary of the previous creel surveys was provided:

- Estimated total recreational fishing effort around 970,400 angler hours in Lake Macquarie and about 25,000 angler hours in Tuross Lake.
- Around 80% of Lake Macquarie fishers were of local origin, compared to 22% in Tuross Lake.

- 60 different types of species were observed as being kept by anglers in Lake Macquarie and 30 in Tuross Lake.
- The estimated recreational harvest of fish, crabs and squid from Lake Macquarie was around 295 tonnes and the reported commercial harvest around 274 tonnes.
- The estimated recreational harvest of fish, crabs and squid from Tuross Lake was around 8 tonnes and the reported commercial harvest around 25 tonnes.
- The top five species (by weight) for the Lake Macquarie recreational fishery were Blue Swimmer Crab (~109 tonnes), Luderick (~35t), Yellowfin Bream (~32t), Dusky Flathead (~21t).
- The top five species in Tuross Lake were Dusky Flathead (~2.5t), Luderick (~1.8t), Yelloweye Mullet (~1.2t) Yellowfin Bream (~1.2t) and Yellow-finned Leatherjacket (~0.3t).
- Relatively high rates of unsuccessful fishing trips were recorded from boat-based fishers in Lake Macquarie and Tuross Lake (42% and 45% respectively). 'Unsuccessful' trips are those where fishers failed to catch and retain any fish, crabs or squid.
- The population of boat-based fishers in Lake Macquarie and Tuross Lake was dominated by males (83% and 77% respectively).

The region 5 and region 7 representatives reported that they had been heavily involved in the previous surveys but had received little feedback from the research team. NSW Fisheries advised that the Lake Macquarie final report will be printed shortly and be available for distribution. Because the Tuross Lake creel survey is being repeated, a final report will only be completed once the after survey has been completed. However, summaries of each survey will be available for the general public.

**Recommendation:** That the variation to the methodology for the recreational fishing haven survey be accepted. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

## Agenda item 2c

## NSW Fisheries

### Issue

NSW Fisheries ongoing program reports - Licence Administration

### Background

#### Licence sales

The amount of money collected from the recreational fishing fee in the 2002/03 financial year was \$8.4 million. This represents an increase of approximately \$300,000 compared to funds collected in 2001/02 (\$8.1 million). The number of the different types of licences sold during this period is as follows:

Approximately

17,500 three year licences (3.8%);  
 210,000 one year licences (45.4%);  
 73,000 one month licences (15.8%);  
 148,000 three day licences (32%); and



13,500 prepaid three day licences (3%).

A report of monthly licence sales since the implementation of the licence is provided for the Committee's information (see Attachment 3).

#### New licence design

NSW Fisheries has redesigned the licence to the size of a credit card which can easily be kept in a wallet. The smaller licence can also be easily laminated using adhesive pouches, which can be readily purchased by the agents at major stationary warehouses for sale to anglers, if they require them. An example of the pouch is being sent to all agents to advise them of this service, if they wish to sell them.

Scanning software has been purchased and will be used to capture images of each new licence. Once scanned, licence images can be filed by licence number enabling electronic agent reconciliations and re-issuing of replacement licences. The software will also be used to check licences for compliance purposes.

#### **Outcomes**

NSW Fisheries presented examples of the new small licence design which is currently being implemented. It was noted that Recreational Management were investigating the option of sending plastic licences to anglers buying licences on the website and 1300 number.

At the recent Recreational Fishing Trusts subcommittee meeting the committee requested that NSW Fisheries investigate options for a licence renewal or reminder system.

A licence renewal system would involve mailing a renewal notice to approximately 230,000 one year and three year licence holders one month before their licence expires. Anglers wishing to renew their licence would submit the renewal form and NSW Fisheries would send the renewed plastic licence. Depending on the number of licences renewed and issued, the budget for such a system would vary between \$270K and \$310K.

The second option is sending monthly reminder notices informing one year and three year licence holders of the impending expiry of their licence, how they can renew their licence and enclosed advisory material. The budget for such a program would total \$160K for the mailout process. This would include attaching up to 3 advisory brochures to the reminder notice.

The Committee was informed that a set total of \$2.5 million of licence income is transferred to the Freshwater Trust for expenditure on inland programs. All remaining income is available for expenditure on saltwater programs. A reminder system has the potential to maintain and increase licence sales. Any deficits in licence income will be absorbed by the Saltwater Trust. The potential for deficits is concerning, particularly if lag effects in licence sales do materialise this year (that is, the effects of anglers not renewing their licence as soon as they expire). A renewal system is considered too expensive to justify the potential increase in income that could be expected. A reminder system is more feasible and also represents an important advisory opportunity.

The Committee recommended that NSW Fisheries prepare a detailed program proposal for the implementation of a licence reminder system.

**Action item:** NSW Fisheries to prepare a detailed program proposal for the implementation of a licence reminder system and forward to the Committee for out of session approval.

## **Agenda item 2d**

## **NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

NSW Fisheries ongoing program reports- Saltwater Anglers Catch Research Program

### **Background**

Angling activities at fishing competitions continue to be monitored. Data collected at these events is used to monitor the status of fish populations and the effectiveness of management strategies. This new research program is developing with the same level of angler support as has occurred in freshwater. The onset of winter and subsequent decrease in the frequency of angling events has given opportunity for the development of a number of initiatives to enhance the program.

### **Outcomes**

The Committee was informed that all data collected had been entered on the Angling Research database and appropriate reports generated. A scientist has been recruited to this program and will commence employment in September. Consultation with fishing clubs to obtain a comprehensive schedule of competitions has commenced as part of this program. It was noted that NSW Fisheries is undertaking a review of fishing competitions as part of the recreational fishery management strategy. A new plastic measuring ruler was presented to the Committee for distribution to anglers. Length/weight conversion tables for the major recreational saltwater species have been incorporated on the ruler. An increasing number of Fishcare Volunteers have now been trained in competition monitoring procedures to facilitate the ongoing expansion of the research. NSW Fisheries also advised that it is planned to monitor spearfishing competitions as part of this program.

## **Agenda item 2e**

## **NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

NSW Fisheries ongoing program reports- Licence Research database

### **Background**

Data entry of one year and three year licence holders has continued. The Committee and ACoRF allocated additional funding of \$20,000 in 2002/03 to enable ongoing data entry till the end of the 2002/03 financial. A backlog of data to be entered is developing following the reduction in staff numbers.

The database has been used to send a licence reminder to anglers in December 2002, for issuing replacement licences and for checking licences for compliance purposes. The database has also been essential for recreational surveys that have been carried out, including the Sydney metropolitan recreational fishing survey and the National Angling survey. The recently approved economic survey of 2 coastal towns will also utilise this data. The new scanning software for licence administration will not be able to scan the handwriting of the names and addresses on the new or old licence. At the last meeting, NSW Fisheries presented options for outsourcing data entry to the Committee. Outsourcing data entry is more cost effective than the current in-house system. It is proposed to continue with the Licence Research database. Annual funding of \$70,000 would be required to maintain the program.

### **Outcomes**

The Committee was informed that the current inhouse system of data entry had resulted in a backlog of data entry accumulating. Quotes for outsourcing the data were presented to the committee at the last meeting. These quotes included validation of data entry which ensures data accuracy and precision. A reminder system would require ongoing data entry of licence holders. The Committee discussed the value of the database which was clearly apparent in the results of the recently released National Angling Survey and preliminary results of the Sydney economic survey (presented to the Committee at this meeting).

### **Recommendation**

That funding of \$70,000 in 2003/04 for the Licence Research Database program **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: John Drew. **Carried.**

## **Agenda item 3a**

**John Wallace, Ernst & Young**

### **Issue**

External program reports - Striped marlin economic survey

### **Background**

Striped marlin *Tetrapturus audax* is a popular commercial and recreational species occurring in coastal waters off the East Coast of Australia. In recent years the species has been the centre of some conflict between fishing groups over access to the resource. Fishers have claimed that striped marlin are being exposed to excessive levels of fishing pressure and that the abundance of the species is in decline. In an effort to understand the relative value of the fishery to the community, the Trust is funding an economic survey of the striped marlin fishery which is currently being undertaken. The comparative economic benefits of the use of the striped marlin resource by recreational and Commonwealth licensed commercial fishers will be assessed. The outcome of the economic study will support well informed decision-making on the future use and management of the striped marlin resource.

**Outcomes**

The Committee was advised that the striped marlin economic survey was progressing well. Data sets for the commercial eastern tuna and billfish fisheries had been obtained from ABARE/AFMA. To ensure confidentiality and privacy of commercial catch records, regional data sets based on ABS statistical regions have been used to estimate commercial catches of striped marlin in NSW. Recreational fishers and charter boat operators had completed detailed survey forms and all recreational survey information had been entered onto a database. Response rates to the survey were reasonable.

Modelling scenarios are currently being undertaken to determine the economic benefits of the use of the striped marlin resource by recreational and Commonwealth licensed commercial fishers.

**Agenda item 3b****Stan Konstantaras, ANSA NSW****Issue**

External program reports - Angel rings

**Background**

The angel ring project is run by the Australian National Sportfishing Association (NSW Branch) with the support of the Department of Sport and Recreation and NSW Sporting Injuries Insurance. It involves the installation of angel rings (or life buoys) at known rock fishing black spots. Funds have been allocated from the Saltwater Trust towards the expansion of this important fishing safety initiative. This project not only contributes to saving lives but also identifies regional rock fishing black spots and encourages community awareness.

**Outcomes**

Stan Konstantaras, ANSA NSW Branch, updated the Committee on the progress of the angel ring program. It was noted that ANSA had been working very hard with local councils to obtain approval to install angel rings along the NSW coast. A major concern has been public liability, however, National Parks and Wildlife Service have approved the installation of a number of devices which is a major boost for ANSA volunteers involved in the program. Similarly, Randwick City Council have also recently approved the installation of rings in the area. The approvals process with other councils is continuing. It is envisaged that a further 40 rings will be installed by the end of 2003. The Committee was informed that the biggest loss of angel ring buoys and installations was not due to vandalism but rather damage from huge seas. A new robust installation device had been designed by the angel ring team to withstand huge seas. Mr Konstantaras also presented a proposal for additional funding for the program. It was explained that the rings are often installed in locations which were hard to access. This made the use of generators to power drilling equipment very difficult. The additional funds would be used to purchase portable drilling equipment which would aid the installation of the rings. The Committee deferred this Funding request to agenda item 9.

**Issue**

External program reports - Expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers

**Background**

The introduction of the general recreational fishing licence has created an information need to properly manage the expectations of NSW recreational fishers. Currently there is little understanding of the actual fishing patterns of NSW fishers and the links and importance of their activity to metropolitan areas and regional communities. An economic survey of Sydney's recreational fishers is being funded by the Trust and aims to gain a fuller understanding of recreational activity and behaviour across the state and in particular, to determine the expenditure generated by Sydney's large recreational fishing population. The information generated will greatly assist in setting direction for future management and research on recreational fishing in rural NSW and in the greater Sydney region also.

**Outcomes**

Dr Alistair McIlgorm from Dominion Consulting updated the Committee on the following program which is being funded by the Saltwater Trust: Identifying the recreational fishing expenditure patterns of Sydney's recreational fishers and their economic and social importance in regional communities of NSW. The Committee was informed that the report was draft only (for the Committee's information only) as the final analysis of results is not complete. The final report will be released later this year. Information on:

- Fishing activity among NSW licence holders
- Knowledge and use of Recreational Fishing Havens

The next presentation will have information on:

- Saltwater angling trips and travelling behaviour
- Trip expenditure, trips away from Sydney and community benefits
- Recreational fishers expectations and Socio-economic characteristics

The methods used in the survey involved a Roy Morgan Research telephone survey in 2 areas, all of NSW and Sydney. A total of 1,250 recreational fishing licence holders completed the survey (800 country, 450 city). Dr Alistair advised that baseline estimates of recreational fishing haven use have been established, including anglers who had fished in havens and anglers who intend to use havens. One clear outcome from the study was that there is a high level of awareness, use and intention to use recreational fishing havens.

For information.

### Agenda item 3d

**Issue**

External program reports – other programs

**Background**

Program managers of all other trust funded projects not presenting at this review meeting have prepared milestone/progress reports for the Committees information (see Attachment 4). These reports include details on project objectives, activities since the last meeting and any variations to the project.

For information.

### Agenda item 4

**Mick Palmer, Black Marketing Forum**

**Issue**

Presentation by Mick Palmer, Chair, Black Marketing Forum

**Background**

On 2 July 2003 the Minister launched a vision for the Seafood Industry that will maintain a sustainable industry into the future. All in all, the NSW seafood industry generates over half a billion dollars of economic activity along our 1,000 km coastline with about 4,000 people employed in commercial fishing and aquaculture, transport, marketing, processing, and retailing - forming a vital part of our State and regional economies.

Some of the Government's key objectives are to:

- develop models for a consensus-based approach for resolving resource sharing issues in the future.
- provide best practice services to industry from Government departments.
- work with industry to charge fairly for the costs of management and access rights, and
- develop new approaches to structural adjustment across the commercial fishing and oyster groups.

A copy of the statement is attached for the Committee's information.

The Government has already announced the first step in a bid to stop illegal fishing, oyster theft, and the associated sale of black-market seafood that undermines the seafood industry and presents a community health risk. The Government will also provide a higher level of reporting of compliance outcomes to stakeholders.

Mr Mick Palmer is Chair of the Black Marketing Forum and will provide an update at the meeting.

**Outcomes**

Mick Palmer was unable to attend the meeting and an invitation for him to present at the next meeting has been extended.

**Agenda item 5****Dr Carolyn Pettigrew****Issue**

Review of Fishcare Volunteer Program

**Background**

The Saltwater Fishcare Volunteer Program commenced in 2001 and has expanded extensively along the NSW coast. Fishcare Volunteers are community members involved in face-to-face education of the recreational angling community. Volunteers donate their time and effort, promoting awareness and advising anglers about the rules and values of sustainable recreational fishing. They assist in a range of activities such as fishing clinics, catch surveys and fishing community events.

Two years on, it is now appropriate to undertake an independent review of the program to evaluate its effectiveness. A scoping paper and draft terms of reference have been prepared for this purpose. Dr Carolyn Pettigrew is the external consultant who will be undertaking the review.

**Outcomes**

Dr Pettigrew presented an account of generic research on volunteering in Australia and a brief overview of the program. Currently there are over 350 volunteers in the program which is a large program by any standard. In total, volunteers contribute approximately 8,400 hours per annum. The volunteers are engaged in communication, education, research activities in support of recreational fishing. Some preliminary results of a survey of NSW Fishcare Volunteers in NSW were presented. Over 80 volunteers have responded in the survey so far. Most volunteers were involved in Fishcare to improve recreational fishing. There was a high level of satisfaction but a proportion of volunteers indicated there was room for improvement. Draft recommendations for the program included:

- Goals and objectives of the program need to be clearly defined
- Policies and procedures should be developed and documented
- An annual program should be developed clearly defining all elements of the program
- There should be clear reporting lines and mechanisms
- A volunteer management database needs to be fully developed

It was noted that the review should seek input from the Committee as well as volunteers. The Committee requested that the terms of reference for the review be forwarded to the Committee and that members will provide individual input to Dr Pettigrew.

**Action item:** NSW Fisheries to forward the terms of reference to the Saltwater and Freshwater Expenditure Committees.

## **Agenda item 6**

**NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

Recreational Fishing Trusts Sub Committee Meeting 1

### **Background**

The first meeting of Recreational Fishing Trusts Sub Committee was held on 19 June 2003. The Committee consists of Freshwater and Saltwater Expenditure Committee representatives and was set up to:

- Ensure Trust Fund program accountability and transparency in reporting;
- Ensure effective operation of ACoRF sub-committees;
- Adopt a strategic approach to consulting with relevant stakeholders about Trust Fund management; and
- Ensure consistency/coordination between Freshwater and Saltwater Trusts.

The draft minutes of the first meeting are attached for the Committee's information (see Attachment 5). A new application guide for the Recreational Fishing Trusts was reviewed by the Sub Committee, which includes specific guidelines that are used for evaluating applications. These include:

- Projects must specifically benefit recreational anglers
- Commercial ventures/interests or materials developed for a primarily commercial purpose will generally not be supported.
- The business of organisations/clubs will generally not be supported.

The new guide is attached for the Committee's information (see attachment 6).

For information.

## **Agenda item 7**

**NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

Incentive scheme for Recreational Fishing Trusts and gold agents

### **Background**

Incentives to renew interest in the Recreational Fishing Trusts were discussed at the first meeting of Recreational Fishing Trusts Sub Committee on 19 June 2003. An example of such a proposal is to run a competition for juniors titled: "How I would spend \$1,000,000 to improve fishing for future generations?" The Sub Committee agreed that a scheme needs to be developed to publicise the benefits of the trust funds.



Gold licence agents do not take commission on licence sales and are the preferred sellers of the NSW fishing licence. All money goes to the Recreational Fishing Trusts to be spent on improving recreational fishing. It is also proposed to implement an incentive scheme for gold agents as a reward for their voluntary services. Potential schemes will be discussed at the meeting.

### **Outcomes**

The Committee discussed the idea of an incentive scheme and agreed that a scheme aimed at encouraging people to buy a licence and for gold agents should be developed. It was noted that anglers who turn 18 years old and now require a licence have not been targeted. NSW Fisheries advised that a sponsored fishing boat was used as an incentive to buy a licence during the implementation of the general licence which worked very well. It was proposed that Committee members develop ideas about an incentive scheme which will be reviewed at the next meeting.

For information.

## **Agenda item 8**

**NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

Deferred program applications

### **Background**

At the ninth Committee meeting on 22 May 2003, the Committee recommended deferring a number of applications to the next meeting.

- 1) Capacity development for recreational fishing committee representatives – this program aims to appraise the needs of recreational fishers in the representative process in NSW and to develop strategies to address those needs. The Committee requested that the applicant present this proposal at the next meeting.
- 2) Bringing sustainable recreational fishing to Sydney schools and communities through the Marine Discovery Centre Bondi Beach – this education project will target primary schools and aims to introduce juniors to the sport of fishing and the conservation roles associated with it. The Committee requested that the applicant present this proposal at the next meeting.
- 3) An assessment of recreational fishing havens in NSW: Do havens improve recreational fishing in estuarine waters of NSW? – this program aims to determine the effectiveness of recreational fishing havens in northern NSW. This application was received late and was deferred to the next meeting.

### **Small grants**

- 4) Fish cleaning facilities - Sutherland Shire Council submitted 2 applications for the erection of fish cleaning tables which provide a direct service to anglers. The tables also promote a tidy environment and help prevent littering. The Committee requested that more budget details be provided.

The total funds requested by each applicant are summarised below:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Proponent</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>
Capacity development for recreational fishing committee representatives	Dominion Consulting	\$28,100		
Bringing sustainable recreational fishing to Sydney schools and Communities through the Marine Discovery Centre Bondi Beach	Marine Discovery Centre	\$50,000	\$50,000	
An assessment of recreational fishing havens in NSW: Do havens improve recreational fishing in estuarine waters of NSW?	Southern Cross University/NSWF	\$118,076	\$120,651	\$123,225
<b>Small grants</b>				
Hawkesbury Esplanade Reserve, Sylvania Waters-Fish cleaning facilities	Sutherland Shire Council	\$5,000		
Swallow Rock Reserve, Grays Point-Fishing cleaning facilities	Sutherland Shire Council	\$5,000		
<b>Total</b>				

### **Outcomes**

Alistair McIlgorm provided a brief outline of his application titled 'Capacity development for fishing committee representatives.' It was explained that most Fisheries committees were dedicated volunteers with a passion for their sport (fishing). Although many committees exist for each of the major fisheries and other areas (for example, conservation), there is little or no formal training for representatives. Members have a specified term on the relevant committee which often expires once members have built up valuable experience. It would be beneficial to have formal training upon appointment so that the functions of the recreational fishing committees are achieved from the outset.

Will Jones from the Marine Discovery Centre at Bondi advised the Committee that his program represents a powerful partnership that will enhance and extend the NSW Fisheries programs – Get Hooked its Fun to Fish; Fishing Clinics; Community Events & FishCare Volunteers. The Recreational Fishing Trust will be able to utilise the very successful Marine Discovery Centre Bondi programs and events to bring responsible recreational fishing to the wide range of schools and communities that come to Bondi Beach. It was explained that school excursion programs started in March 2002 and that over 3,500 students visited the centre in that year. Over 1,542 have visited in Term 1 in 2003. So far ten Marine Discovery Centre guides have been trained and employed. Schools come from all over Sydney area and as the program grows, it will be able to offer these excursions to schools from regional NSW. Free community open days, school holiday programs and fishing clinics are also held. It was noted that the centre is in discussion with Government and corporate sponsors to develop the centre into a world-class interactive visitor attraction. The centre was requesting \$50,000 for next 2 years and it should be financially self-sustaining in the third year.

**Action item:** The Recreational Fishing Trusts project agreement should include a clause on ensuring acknowledgment of the seed funding from the Trust during 2003/04 and 2004/05 **and beyond**.

The Committee was also informed that Sutherland Shire Council had provided more detailed information on the proposed erection of 2 fish cleaning tables.

### **Recommendations**

That funding of \$28,100 in 2003/04 for 'Capacity development for recreational fishing committee representatives' **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Malcolm Poole. Seconded: Lisa Terry. **Carried.**

That funding of \$50,000 in 2003/04 and 2004/05 for 'Bringing sustainable recreational fishing to Sydney schools and communities through the Marine Discovery Centre Bondi Beach' **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Lisa Terry. Seconded: David Turner. **Carried.**

That funding of \$118,076 in 2003/04, \$120,651 in 2004/05 and \$123,225 in 2005/06 for 'An assessment of recreational fishing havens in NSW: Do havens improve recreational fishing in estuarine waters of NSW?' **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Lisa Terry. **Carried.**

That funding of \$10,000 in 2003/04 for fish cleaning facilities at Sylvania Waters and Grays Point **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried.**

## **Agenda Item 9**

## **NSW Fisheries**

### **Issue**

Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust - new program applications

### **Background**

The following new applications have been received by NSW Fisheries for programs to be funded from the Saltwater Trust:

- 1) Safe, permanent launching facility at Currarong – Currarong Fishing Club has written to the Minister about the lack of a safe facility for launching and recovery of recreational boats.

### **Small grants**

- 2) Review of Environmental Factors for Marine Waste Reception Facilities – Gosford City Council have received State and Federal funding to provide Marine Waste Reception Facilities to enhance water quality in Brisbane Water estuary. Additional funding is required for a REF.
- 3) Seagrass savers – this project aims to install environmentally friendly sea grass savers on pre-existing swing moorings in Lake Macquarie. The structures are designed to reduce the amount of sea grass.
- 4) Impacts of a mooring anchor device (MAD) on aquatic habitats, NE NSW – this proposal was reviewed by the Committee at the last meeting. It has been included to allow a comparison with the above similar program (Seagrass savers).
- 5) Solar powered navigation lights at Shelley Beach – this project involves the installation of lights in Shelley Bay to aid navigation through the bar at night.

- 6) Shoalhaven legal limit education on fishing jetties - this project involves carving shapes of legal size fish of common species caught on the decks of 10 fishing jetties in the Shoalhaven. This will enhance education of anglers on bag and size limits.
- 7) Deepwater FAD trial – this project involves the deployment of 2 deepwater FADs off Sydney.
- 8) Population structure of the euryhaline sportfish, the estuary perch - this project aims to determine the population structure of estuary perch throughout its range to benefit the future management of the species. Matching funding is being provided by Deakin University.
- 9) Fish 4 Youth – This project aims to provide opportunities for disadvantaged youths to participate in recreational fishing and foster a greater appreciation for the marine environment.
- 10) Restoration of riparian fish habitats, Shoalhaven - Shoalhaven Riverwatch have resubmitted an application to improve fish habitat.
- 11) Boat Ramp Signage Upgrade Program – this inter-agency project aims to facilitate signage improvements at seven high profile boat ramps in the Gosford region. It will result in warnings, bag and size limits and other safety messages being conveyed more effectively to the recreational fishing and boating community.
- 12) Fish cleaning tables, Taree and Laurieton - The tables promote a tidy environment and help prevent littering.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Proponent</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>
Safe, permanent launching facility at Currarong	Currarong Fishing Club	-		
Review of Environmental Factors for Marine Waste Reception Facilities	Gosford City Council	\$3,000-\$5,000		
Seagrass savers	Australian Environmental Solutions	\$5,000		
Impacts of a mooring anchor device (MAD) on aquatic habitats, NE NSW	Swing Mooring Pontoons	\$5,825		
Solar powered navigation lights at Shelley Beach	Nambucca Heads Offshore Fishing Club			
Shoalhaven legal limit education on fishing jetties	Shoalhaven City Council	\$4,943		
Deepwater FAD trial	Recreational Fishing Alliance	\$3,782	\$1,125	
Population structure of the euryhaline sportfish, the estuary perch	Deakin University	\$5,000		
Fish 4 Youth	Programs for Youth	\$4,911	\$4,943	\$4,989
Restoration of riparian fish habitats-Shoalhaven River Estuary	Shoalhaven Riverwatch	\$5,000		
Boat Ramp Signage Upgrade Program	Gosford City Council	\$5,000		
Fish cleaning table-Laurieton	L.U.S.C. Fishing Club	\$2,500		
Fish cleaning table-Taree	Manning River Sustainable Fishing & Tourism Committee	\$3,800		

## **Outcomes**

The Committee discussed each proposed program and made one of the following recommendations:

1. Program to be supported by the trust
2. Program deferred to a future meeting
3. Program not supported by the trust at this time

Supported programs were generally considered to be a high priority for fisheries management with direct benefits to recreational fishing. Programs were deferred for a variety of reasons outlined below. Programs that were not supported were considered to be too costly; low priority for recreational fisheries management; or of minimal benefit to recreational fishing.

The Committee deferred the Deepwater FAD trial and Boat Ramp Signage Upgrade applications submitted by the Recreational Fishing Alliance and Gosford City Council, respectively. More details on the programs are to be provided at the next meeting.

**Action item:** NSW Fisheries to prepare a demographic list of all programs funded by the Saltwater Trust.

## **Recommendations**

That funding of \$5,000 in 2003/04 for the 'Population structure of the euryhaline sportfish, the estuary perch' program **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: Warren Buchan. **Carried.**

That funding of \$2,500 in 2003/04 for a 'Fish cleaning table-Laurieton' **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Lionel Jones. Seconded: Malcolm Poole. **Carried.**

That funding of \$3,800 in 2003/04 for a 'Fish cleaning table-Taree' **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: Bruce Mahony. Seconded: Lionel Jones. **Carried.**

That additional funding of \$2,750 in 2003/04 for the 'Angel Rings' program **be supported** from the Saltwater Trust. Moved: John Drew. Seconded: David Turner. **Carried.**

## **10. Action items from last meeting**

(See attached summary)

## **11. General Business**

NSW Fisheries informed the Committee that external funding of \$10,000 had been offered by Shimano for the Game Fish Tagging Program. The Australian Game Fish Foundation had also kindly provided \$5,000 to the program and was also seeking additional funding from other states involved in the program. It was noted that the new marlin tag will now also be used on sailfish as a result of this latter contribution.

The Committee was advised that a review of fishing clinics was being undertaken. Clinics are currently run by education officers, hatchery staff, Fisheries Officers and fishing organisations. It was highlighted at the recent Recreational Fishing Trusts Sub Committee meeting that the clinics program should be better coordinated and should have one program manager. NSW Fisheries is currently developing a proposal to better coordinate fishing clinics

The Committee suggested that photos of completed programs funded by the Trust, for example fish cleaning tables, should be included on Trust brochures which are distributed to anglers. The Committee was advised that all fish cleaning table and other infrastructural programs previously funded by the Trust were still ongoing and had not been completed. Photos of completed projects will be included in all future brochures, letters etc.

It was suggested that the order of agenda issues be reversed so that funding applications are reviewed by the Committee in the morning of the meeting. The Committee requested that project identification numbers be included on the project milestone reports for cross-referencing purposes. The year of funding for long term projects should also be included on the reports.

**Action item:** NSW Fisheries to revise the order of the agenda and to amend the milestone report with project identification numbers.

The Committee was advised that the Compliance Branch was investigating options for improving the current hotline service, including the option of a person manning the hotline instead of the current answering machine.

NSW Fisheries advised that regular inspection, cleaning to remove excess growth and maintenance of the FADs is essential to limit their loss. Often FADs are reported damaged or missing by recreational fishers. NSW Fisheries acts speedily to investigate these claims. However, on two occasions, claims of missing FADs could not be investigated because of the lack of access to an appropriate vessel. Subsequently these two FADs were lost, where otherwise they may have been retrieved. Anglers' boats have also assisted with deploying FADs. This is an Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) issue, as many of these vessels are not certified for commercial use, often lacking essential safety equipment. It is proposed to purchase a boat for the FADs program using funds from the 2003/04 budget. No additional funding is required from the Trust.

### **Recommendation**

That the Committee approves the purchase of a boat for deploying and maintaining the FADs (no additional funding is required from the Trust). Moved: Geoffrey Woolley. Seconded: Malcolm Poole. **Carried.**

### **Correspondence received**

Letter from the Baptist Community Services commending NSW Fisheries staff and Fishcare Volunteers on fishing clinics for disadvantaged kids.

Concern from the GFA representative regarding the lifting of all restrictions on the commercial exploitation of dolphinfish by the Federal Government, particularly as the Committee has allocated funds to the deployment of FADs along the NSW coast. Dolphinfish is the main target species of anglers fishing the FADs.

Email correspondence from David Longin acknowledging the creation of the recreational fishing havens.

## **12. Next Meeting**

25 November 2003