

Annual 18-19 Report



VR FISH
VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL
FISHING PEAK BODY



***Let's Make
Fishing Better,
for Everyone!***



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Chairman's Report

As the Chairman of VRFish, it is always extremely important to report we have maintained our continued financial management of our allocated funds from your Recreational Fishing Licence fees.

We are financially sound with many thanks to our Finance Committee Chair, Steven Relf. Good governance of financials has not been without a lot of due diligence and prioritisation of what we can achieve and/or provide input into within our allocated funding regime.

The Board and staff are finding it more difficult to address all the issues that are being raised every week by recreational fishers and agencies, on many occasions at short notice. Our financial budget is continuing to be extremely challenging and it is becoming very clear VRFish has a staff shortage. This is now placing more pressure on our volunteer Board and members.

Recreational fishing has been recognised as having a client group of over 838,000 fishers with a \$7-billion plus direct and in-direct contribution to Victoria's economy.

Future and important deliverables that are being requested by recreational fishers will require VRFish to source additional funds and more staff to maintain our requested independence as the peak body for recreational fishers.

New Exciting VRFish Representation

This year will go down in the history of VRFish as the "year of change" as we transitioned to a modern membership model. It has been rightly identified by Victorian fishers that they needed to increase their representation into the multitude of issues that VRFish is now involved in. To this end, the Board and staff have moved forward and provided very detailed information regarding a change to the membership model for consideration by all VRFish foundation members. Following extensive discussions and liaison with the proposed new model, the changes to our constitution were put forward to our foundation members to endorse at this year's Annual General Meeting. The members approved the changes to open up the membership to all Victorian fishing clubs and associations and all individual recreational fishers who wish to join VRFish and support our work.

The major issue for VRFish is to move forward and adequately address two-way communications and representation of this inclusive membership model.

As always, many out there are very unaware that VRFish continues to be involved in a huge number of

issues that we do not receive credit for. Many are being addressed by our volunteer members and include access, fish stockings, recreational water, agreed regulations, boating infrastructure, fishing piers and jetties, communications, habitat rehabilitation, environmental water, Victoria wide freshwater and saltwater issues, liaising with local government, agencies and authorities. VRFish is importantly providing comment on the ever-increasing number of submissions into draft management plans and strategies, some of which pose threats to our access and fishing experience.

Very clearly, VRFish is the only Victorian representation recreational fishing peak body that is promoting and addressing the huge multitude of issues facing Victorian fishers. I encourage all fishers to not become complacent, join VRFish and increase our organisations strength in representing your fishery and protecting your fishing rights for the future.

State Election

Following on from last year's report, the Victorian State Election was held and saw the Labor Government re-elected for another term. It was very pleasing to see many of our election requests, supported by VRFish members, were introduced as election commitments

by the Government. These will further enhance our recreational fishing opportunities and we look forward to working with the State Government in the delivery, implementation and completion of these fantastic initiatives. Big ticket items like a new Northern native fish hatchery, the buyout of commercial fishers in Gippsland Lakes, a Better Boating Victoria model to manage boating facilities Victoria wide, access to several water supply reservoirs and crown land frontage, more fish stockings and other initiatives were all promoted by VRFish.

VRFish Promoted Habitat for Fish

A real gamechanger that was promoted by VRFish was for a coordinated approach between agencies to recover large trees that were being removed by VicRoads when building freeways, roads and other works. We strongly promoted the use of this woody habitat to be reinstated as environmental offsets in our waters and waterways as fish and fauna habitat. Protecting, restoring and enhancing fish habitat in waterways was identified as a key priority for Victorian fishers. Many thanks to all agencies and the Government Ministers who worked together to make this happen. Woody habitat is vital to assist the protection of fish, more fish food and maintaining working rivers by creating turbulence and refuge areas for droughts and low water levels. Fish like the iconic Murray

cod and fauna such as our unique platypus all benefit from increased woody habitat.

RFL Review

Our members requested the Board of VRFish to write to the Minister of Fishing and Boating, Jaala Pulford, requesting an independent review of the Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) system. A review should evaluate our RFL system and RFL Trust Fund priorities to ensure it is meeting our sectors requirements now and into the future. A complete review of the RFL system has not occurred since its inception in the early 2000's. Following the writing of correspondence to the Minister requesting consideration, we have received a positive response and a review will commence in the second half of this year.

Regulation Review

The review of the Fisheries Regulations is another extremely important issue that VRFish has been dealing with. Many thanks to all fishers who have contacted our office suggesting proposed changes to some regulations. VRFish is fully supportive of this review as we are the major client group as users of our state-wide fish resources. It's very important to implement good regulations that reflect priority considerations from the recreational fishing sector.

Carp Virus

VRFish has continued to provide input into the further science deliberations regarding many issues that are continuing to be promoted to come to conclusions whether the Carp virus is effective or safe for release in Australia. The final decision time is continuing to be cancelled and it would appear it could be several years before any decisions are made.

Staff & Board

Once again, our EO and staff have provided magnificent management of the large number of requests being promoted by fishers and agencies as well as maintaining the running of the VRFish office. Our communications are now recognised as of a high quality and many thanks to our staff for their ongoing dedication in providing the best communication outputs in our history.

The Board has had to consider many issues this year, debate has been strategic, especially with the implementation of the new membership model and enhanced fisher representation. Many thanks to all Board members for their continued support of VRFish in providing considered directives.



Stay safe on or adjacent to the water and importantly only take the fish you need.



Rob Loats

Executive Officer's Report

It has been another fast-paced and dynamic year that has delivered tremendous outcomes for recreational fishers in Victoria.

With both a State and a Federal Election and exciting changes to the membership of VRFish it's fair to conclude the 2018-19 year was a defining year for the organisation.

We have included our largest list of highlights and achievements in our Annual Report to better reflect the breadth of work that VRFish has undertaken in influencing public policy, provision of representative and expertise-based advice, advocacy and above all making fishing better in Victoria. The breadth and depth of issues VRFish now deals with is extraordinary. We wouldn't be in a position to tackle these issues head on if it wasn't for the thousands of hours of volunteer time our Board and members have contributed and the incredible partnerships we have formed with like-minded organisations.

A major highlight was the successful advocacy of an 8 point plan to Make Fishing Better in the lead up to the State Election. We were able to secure significant and remarkable reforms specifically to boating infrastructure and the Gippsland Lakes Fishery. A new purpose-built native fish hatchery in Northern Victoria and on-water access to Tullaroop Reservoir was supported. I would like to thank all the recreational fishers who contributed to our fishing priority survey, our members who workshop many ideas and suggestions and our partner organisations who we worked extensively with to produce

clear and consolidated policy for the future of recreational fishing in Victoria.

We welcomed Jaala Pulford as Victoria's first Minister for Fishing and Boating and the delivery of Target One Million – Phase 2. A further \$35 million funding package will be invested into fishing over 4 years and \$47.2 has been committed in the Government 2019/20 budget for better boating. Again, further proof of the importance the Andrews Labor Government places on recreational fishing and is committed to fix our failed boating infrastructure.

We identified that our Recreational Fishing Licensing system and associated Trust Account was showing signs it is overdue for a review. Much has changed since it's introduction in 2000 and as the peak body for recreational fishing we have an important responsibility on behalf of license-paying recreational fishers that their funds continue to be invested in areas that improve fishing for them.

VRFish's change agenda kicked up another gear with the drafting and endorsement of a new Constitution. It has enabled an inclusive membership structure to be implemented which sets up VRFish as a modern and inclusive peak body for the future. I would like to thank our members for engaging with the best interests of all recreational fishers throughout the process.

A new 'fishing club supporter' and individual memberships are being rolled out. Fishing clubs have embraced the opportunity to join VRFish with over 80 clubs signing up and this number continues to grow. Any recreational fisher can now join VRFish in their own right through an individual membership. These changes enable more fishers to support the work of VRFish, exercise their influence on the direction of the organisation and better reflect the diversity of our sector.

This year we have invited our Foundation Member Organisations to prepare a brief report to be included in the VRFish Annual Report. I encourage everyone to have a read of the remarkable and diverse work our members are undertaking to make recreational fishing better in Victoria. We are immensely proud of their volunteer efforts and want to recognise these efforts. We also think it is a good way to demonstrate and explain that VRFish is a membership-based organisation and is merely the face of Victoria's largest fishing community who are contributing back to the sport they love.

VRFish communications have gone from strength to strength. Recreational fishers want to be kept informed and there is no such thing as too much information.



I want to thank the VRFish Board, staff, our members and Victorian recreational fishers for their support for another tremendous year.



Mike Burgess

Over 100 articles have been posted on the VRFish website and our active social media channels all experienced incredible growth and engagement. Our commitment has been to create quality, credible and meaningful content. Our regular Fishing Lines e-news reaches over 50,000 subscribers and a new member-based e-news is assisting to better communicate what VRFish is delivering and working on and where members can provide their input or support. Our decision to focus on digital communications is paying off.

The culmination of these efforts continues to build a strong brand for VRFish and communicate what values we stand for. Contact rates by recreational fishers through social media, email and phone has never been higher. More recreational fishers are recognising and understanding what representation and advocacy is, and that VRFish is not Government. We are the first point of contact for State and Federal Government agencies for our views about recreational fishing and other organisations are wanting to collaborate with VRFish and recreational fishers. We generate quality submissions on behalf of recreational fishers that demonstrate our clear position, an exceptional understanding of the issues and we offer realistic and pragmatic solutions.

These are some exciting times, but the reality is we are hamstrung by the limited resources VRFish has as an organisation. We are operating at over capacity. In response, we have re-allocated resources towards some additional staff time and have refreshed our Reference Group structure to enable fishers to play a more active volunteer role. The VRFish Board have doubled the frequency of their meetings from 4 to 8. Our policy renewal program is making progress so that VRFish has more predetermined policy and position statements to act with certainty on issues and more quickly. We are investing in technology and online workspaces so that we can be as efficient with our time and operate at any place any time.

The VRFish Board will be undertaking the development of our new Strategic Plan next financial year. This will be a significant piece of work to identify the key priorities and outcomes that will make the biggest difference for recreational fishers for the future. Increasing and diversifying our revenue pool will be a focus. Our analysis has concluded that other state sporting organisations such as Table Tennis Victoria and Badminton Victoria has more revenue coming in and environmental groups unsupportive of recreational fishing have budgets at least three times as large.

In conclusion, I want to thank the VRFish Board, staff, our members and Victorian recreational fishers for their support for another tremendous year.

We have a strong culture of continuous improvement and our new membership model will unlock an array of opportunities. As we wrap up this financial year, work is already underway for 2019-20.

About Us

Our Mission Statement

Let's make fishing better, for everyone.

Who We Are

Established as the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body, VRFish, is your not-for-profit, independent voice representing Victoria's recreational fishers since 1995. We are proud to be part of a huge and diverse community of 838,000 fishers that injects \$2.6 billion each year in economic contribution to the Victorian economy.

We are not the government. We are fishers that want to make fishing better for everyone. Whether it's fish habitat, water security and quality, fishing access and infrastructure or best practice, we aim to work in partnership to make sure Victoria's fishing experiences continue to improve, be sustainable and more enjoyable for all generations of Victorians.

To get the job done, we leverage the skills and passion of our membership and employ a small team of professional staff. The more support we have from Victorian fishers, the stronger voice we have to stand up and protect our fishing future.

What We Do

VRFish needs to be the voice of our fish. Threats to fishing are becoming more complex than ever before as we strive to look after the environment that our fish depend on and tackle issues such as pollution, water management, industrial development, diminishing fishing access, litter and illegal fishing.

VRFish works to raise the profile of fishing as a recreational activity with significant social, cultural and economic benefits. At the same time, we are protecting our fishing lifestyle so that you can get outdoors, connect with nature, relax and enjoy quality time with your family and friends.

We are passionate about supporting you to fish for the future by fostering the adoption of responsible fishing practices and behaviours. The next generation of fishers need our support so that they are given the same opportunities to get outdoors and get hooked on fishing as when we were growing up.

Our Priorities



Habitat

Improving our vital fish habitats through protection, restoration and enhancement.



Promote

Promoting fishing in Victoria, creating new and vibrant fisheries and supporting the next generation of fishers.



Best Practice

Supporting our fishers to take a lead role in the stewardship of our fish and waterways, fish responsibly and promote fish for the future.



Water

Keeping our rivers flowing and defending recreational and environmental water allocations.



Access

Fixing our boat ramps and defending your fishing rights to access our waterways.



We have implemented some exciting changes over the past 12 months to modernise our operations and ensure we continue to represent all Victorian fishers.

Our Board Members



Rob Loats, Chairman

Meetings Attended 7

Rob is a primary production business manager from rural Victoria. He has extensive experience of issues associated with natural resource and water management and skills associated with government and non-government state agency inputs and outputs.

Rob has provided long term representation for his local club as president and secretary, long term representation of two local angling associations as president and is a past member of the state Fisheries Co-Management Council. He has been on the Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee (FRAC), is the current Chairman the Recreational Fishing Licence Working Group, member of the Murray Darling Basin Murray Cod Fishery Advisory Group, the North Central Catchment Management Authority Community Leaders Group and is the regional representative at both the North West and South West Victoria Fish Stock and Cons meetings. He is a current member of the DELWP Riparian Advisory Group and Life Member of the Mid Northern and Wimmera Angling Associations and Donald Angling Club. Rob's efforts have also earned him the National Mal Ramsay Lifetime Achievement Award 2012.

Rob has a very strong affinity in habitat protection and reinstatement, and as a member of the National Fish Habitat Network continues to promote the values of fish habitat and projects that protect and



Steven Relf, Deputy Chairman

Meetings Attended 6

Steven brings a wealth of experience to the Board of VRFish and is experienced in dealing with a variety of complex issues, adding value to the organisation in an ever-changing environment. Now retired Steven has had over 26 years experience as a senior manager in local government. A member of the Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club (37 years) and Club President for the last 18 years, Steven has a strong commitment to our rivers and streams and a desire to see them returned to their natural condition. Steven is the President of the Howqua Association Angling Clubs, and has been a delegate of VRFish for the last 18 years. Steven is the current deputy chair of VRFish and chair of the finance committee

Steven believes fishers need a strong peak body with the ability to influence the development of sound policy in relation to fisheries management. As a VRFish representative he is able to give back to the sport he has enjoyed for many years by being able to provide an advocacy role on behalf of all Victorian fishers.



Russell Conway

Meetings Attended 6

Russell has been a keen and passionate recreational fisher for over 40 years. He enjoys fishing our quiet country streams and lakes chasing trout and native species just as much as the thrill of fishing for pelagic species around our magnificent coastline.

Russell is the President of the Metropolitan Anglers Association, Chairman of RecFish Australia, past Chairman of VRFish and a life member of the Greensborough & District Angling Club. Russell provides recreational fishing industry expertise to the Board of the Fisheries Research & Development Corporation (FRDC), is a member of the FRDC Recfishing Research Committee and is also a member of the Australian Fish Names Committee. Russell's various roles have provided him with a good understanding of the diverse issues challenging recreational fishers and the importance of effective representation and advocacy to ensure we can all continue to enjoy fishing in the future.



Franz Grasser

Meetings Attended 7

Professionally, Franz spent his career in various management roles in the energy sector. During this career, Franz commenced a journey of advocacy for the clean energy sector exposing him to the full range of challenges that advocacy organisations encounter.

The skills Franz brings to VRFish are based on this business and advocacy experience as well as his lifelong fishing experience. As the owner of a small business he also has knowledge of financial and general business matters but the main expertise that he brings to VRFish is the experience in advocacy and the leadership in business as well as decades of experience as a board member of advocacy organisations.

As an unaffiliated member of VRFish, Franz connects with fishers who are not part of formal fishing organisations. Franz joined VRFish and stood for election to the Board because of his love of fishing and the prospect that his input can make a positive contribution to sustaining recreational fishing into the future.



John Hotchin

Meetings Attended 6

John has been actively involved with VRFish since the beginning, he has actively participated in various subcommittees and brings a wealth of knowledge to the VRFish Board. He firmly believes in VRFish and strives to meet the goals set by the fishing community.

John is President of the Geelong Fly Fishing Club and Secretary/ Grants Officer of the Geelong and District Angling Clubs Association. He is a life member of the Geelong Sport and Game Fishing Club and Geelong and District Angling Clubs Association. For 30 years, he has actively promoted recreational fishing around the Geelong region through coordinating the Ron Nelson Memorial Junior Fishing Clinic on behalf of the Geelong and District Angling Clubs. John has also been very active in acquiring grants to improve recreational fishing opportunities around Geelong.



Joy Sloan

Meetings attended 7

Joy Sloan has 30 years experience in Natural Resource Management and 12 years with Fisheries Victoria. Joy has a very strong understanding of issues facing recreational angling and knowledge of the inter-relationships between Natural Resource Management Agencies and how these agencies can benefit or impact recreational angling and anglers.

She brings to VRFish strength in building relationships, developing partnerships, negotiating collaborative outcomes, facilitating and organizing people, information and events, developing logic based evaluation and evidence based collecting processes, developing innovative ideas and creative problem solving.

Joy is a passionate advocate for recreational fishing and recreational fishers and has a strong commitment to aligning professional work ethics with personal values centered on integrity, collaboration, environmental and social stewardship and as a member of the VRFish Board, she has the opportunity to continue to advocate for and provide advice to recreational anglers.



Kris Leckie

Meetings attended 6

After completing the Young Future Leaders course in 2016, Kris became an unaffiliated member of VRFish and was elected to the board soon after in 2017. Kris enjoys all methods of angling and targets a wide range of species, but predominately spends most of his angling days chasing trout with a fly rod. Kris is a passionate conservationist with a particular interest in restoring riparian vegetation, re-instating fish habitat, and promoting responsible land management practices that actively improve the health of our waterways.

Professionally, Kris has many years of management experience and holds a tertiary qualification in Conservation and Land Management. He has been an active member of numerous groups and committees such as the Trout reference group, the Spotted Tree Frog recovery advisory committee, and the Fish Habitat and Flows Roundtable. Kris is a member of the VRFish communications committee and actively contributes to the VRFish social media platforms, assists in the development of interpretative and educational material, and feels extremely privileged to have the opportunity to represent and advocate for anglers across Victoria.



Geoff Fisher

Meetings attended 3
Term concluded 19th January 2019

Geoff started fishing on Brighton Jetty in Adelaide at age 4. He regularly fishes in Melbourne's bays for King George Whiting and Calamari but his favoured fishing is offshore for pelagic species such as Marlin, Tuna, Yellowtail Kingfish and Mako Sharks. The reason Geoff loves game fishing is because it's challenging, requires teamwork, motivation, energy, mateship, goal setting, patience, persistence, humility & tolerance.

His passion for these wonderful pelagic fish has resulted in a desire to preserve them for future generations has influenced his fishing and willingness to volunteer for Club and State Association roles. The reason Geoff loves game fishing is because it's challenging, requires teamwork, motivation, energy, mateship, goal setting, patience, persistence, humility & tolerance. Geoff has spent many years as a committee member of the Victorian Game Fishing Club and the Game Fishing Association of Victoria and as a result is acutely aware of the threats challenges to saltwater fishing.

Geoff's professional career was in IT with diverse roles from writing program code through to Senior Project Management roles.



Neville Dance

Meetings attended 3
Term commenced 19th January 2019

Neville has been an avid fisherperson since he was 6 years old and fishing in the Hopkins and Curdies Rivers with his father. Around the age of 18, Neville developed a strong urge to start saltwater fishing. This passion encouraged Neville to join the Warrnambool Offshore & Light Game Fishing Club and the Game Fishing Association of Victoria. He is now a life member of both clubs.

Neville previously served as Vice-President of the Game Fishing Association of Victoria and still remains on their committee. He has also served as a member of the Recreational Fishing Licence Grants Committee. He currently represents the Game Fishing Association of Victoria to VRFish.



For the first time, any fisher and any club can join as a VRFish member. As we continue to grow, it will provide fishers with an even stronger and independent voice to protect the future of fishing in Victoria.



Halley Xu

Meetings attended 3

Term commenced 18th October 2018

Halley is the President of the Victoria Chinese Angling Association and represents more than 1400 registered members. The Victoria Chinese Angling Association aims to provide Australian Chinese fishing enthusiasts with comprehensive fishing related information including safety awareness, fishing techniques and locations.

Halley is passionate about safety awareness and providing safety information to recreational fishers with a particular interest in rock fishing safety. Many culturally and linguistically diverse communities participate in rock fishing which can be a risky activity, especially if fishers are not used to the local conditions. Halley believes that VRFish has an opportunity to deliver valuable outcomes for recreational fishers through delivering vital information about conditions at popular fishing locations to enable fishers to make informed decisions before embarking on fishing trips.

As a Board member of VRFish, Halley looks forward to connecting with VRFish members, delivering safety workshops, sharing vital sharing information with culturally and linguistically diverse communities and working together to translate important safety information to ensure all recreational fishers are able to access vital safety information.



Communication & Engagement



Communications



likes

8,637



followers

1,592



followers

1,037



subscribers

15



subscribers

52, 878

573 #VRFish

tagged posts across Instagram



Social Media

Top 5 Facebook Posts

- 1. Ferntree Gully Quarry**
(Engagement 8.8K / Reach 33.9K)
- 2. Tiger Trout**
(Engagement 6.9K / Reach 36.3K)
- 3. Walkerville South Boat Ramp Closure**
(Engagement 6.8K / Reach 31.9K)
- 4. Cray Time**
(Engagement 5.9K / Reach 35K)
- 5. Tullaroop Reservoir On Water Access**
(Engagement 5K / Reach 26.7K)

Shunt Reports

Over the past 12 months, VRFish have been recognised by Shunt, who provide quarterly social media audience reports and insights across the Australian sport and recreation industry.

VRFish have featured as the lead story on two occasions over the past 12 months due to our high engagement on Facebook through comments, shares and reactions.

13 December 2018 Everyone loves a good fishing story
5 June 2019 VRFish reels-in the comments and shares on Facebook.

The beginning of 2019, saw an average of almost 40 comments per Facebook post. Our strong advocacy on contentious issues through 2018 had Facebook fans seeing red. VRFish ranked second in the Victorian sport and recreation industry for average 'angry' reactions per post.

It has been noted that over the last year, VRFish have seen a 117.13% growth on our Instagram following.

**Robyn
Cleggett**

@hoodieshobieffishing





**Peter
Clinch**

@pclinchfishing





Website

Pageviews **125,390**

Users **57,187**

Articles Published **100**

Media Releases **24**



Face-to-Face

7 Fishing Club Events

15 Fisher Engagement Events

24 Ministerial Announcements

2 Conferences



Top 10 News Articles

1. Hopes for Tiger Trout to Roar into Victoria
2. Victoria's Best and Worst Boat Ramps Revealed
3. Nagambie to host Australia's Richest and Largest Fishing Competition
4. Cray Time
5. Booked Out, Locked Out of River Red Gum Parks
6. Record Recruitment of Snapper in 2018
7. Golden Opportunities for New Native Fisheries
8. Get On the Water at Tullaroop Reservoir
9. Bringing Native Fishing to Melbourne
10. Sea Urchins Taking Over Port Phillip Bay

Understanding motivations & behaviours of Murray cod fishers in Victoria



Fisher Type

- 39% Advanced
- 34% Active
- 10% Casual
- 17% Committed



Why do you like fishing for Murray Cod? (All that apply)

- 64% To relax
- 51% Sport
- 51% Be with friends & family
- 19% For competition
- 9% Fishing Club activity
- 9% For food

9%



Keep Murray cod to eat

84% support for slot limits

Cod friendly handling practices

- 1 When handling, support the body and keep fish held horizontally
- 2 Wet hands when handling fish
- 3 Use a rubber, knotless net (if netting is necessary)
- 4 Don't remove fish from the water and don't handle if possible
- 5 Use a circle, barbless hook (not J hook)

What do cod fishers also like to catch?

- 1 Golden Perch
- 2 Trout
- 3 Redfin
- 4 Flathead
- 5 Snapper



93%

of cod anglers think proper fish handling is important

Where did you hear about Murray cod regulations?

- 57% Government website or communications
- **41% VRFish communications**
- 31% Tackle store
- 29% Friends/ family
- 27% Fishing magazine
- 23% Facebook/ Twitter
- 10% Other
- 6% Television

78% had heard of VRFish prior to completing this survey

61%

were aware of the *Care for Cod* campaign educating fishers about better Murray cod handling

1 in 2

of these fishers said the campaign has positively influenced their behaviour

72%

of cod fishers want to see cod handling and release methods improved by anglers in general

VRFish Members



VRFish Foundation Member Organisations

- Albert Park Yachting and Angling Clubs Association
- Australian Anglers Association (Vic)
- Australian National Sportsfishing Association (Vic)
- Ballarat and Districts Anglers Association
- Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron
- Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs
- Game Fishing Association of Victoria
- Geelong and District Angling Clubs Association
- Gippsland Angling Clubs Association
- Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs
- Fishcare Victoria
- Howqua Angling Clubs Fish Protection Society
- Metropolitan Angling Association
- Midland and North Central Angling Association
- Mid Northern Association of Angling Clubs
- Native Fish Australia (Vic)
- North East Angling Association

- SCUBA Divers Federation of Victoria
- South Gippsland Angling Clubs Association
- South West District Association of Angling Clubs
- Torquay Angling Club
- Victoria Chinese Angling Association
- Victorian Piscatorial Council
- Wimmera Anglers Association

Fishing Club Supporters

- Anderson Inlet Angling Club Inverloch Inc.
- Bairnsdale Flyfishers Club Inc
- Balmoral & District Angling Club
- Barham Angling Club
- Bass Strait Game Fishing Club
- Bellarine Pirates Angling Club
- Bendigo & District Fly Fishers Inc
- Bendigo Legion Angling Club Inc
- Bentleigh RSL Angling Club
- Berwick Angling Club
- Blind Bight Boat Owners
- Brighton Central Angling Club
- Camperdown Angling Club Inc
- Casterton Angling Society Inc
- Central Vic Lure Casters
- Charlton Angling Club Inc
- Clayton RSL Angling Club
- Cobden Angling Club Inc
- Corio Bay Anglers Club
- Craigieburn Angling Club Inc
- Dandenong Club Sports Fishing Clubs
- Derrinallum Anglers Club
- Didyabringyarodalong Angling Club Inc
- Donald Angling Club
- Dunlop Bayswater Angling Club
- Fairfield-Alphington Fish Protection Society & Angling Club

- Geelong Gun and Rod Association Inc
- Geelong Western Beach Fishing Club
- Greenvale Sport and Game Fishing Club
- Healesville Angling & Fish Protection Society Inc
- Horsham Angling Club Inc
- Jingellic-Walwa Fishing Club
- Keysborough Angling Club Inc
- Kiewa Valley Fishing Club
- King River and District Fishing Club
- Kyneton Angling Club
- Lake Boga Sports Fishing Club
- Lake Mulwala Angling Club
- Lake Purrumbete Angling Club
- Lake Tyers Beach Angling Club Inc
- Leongatha Angling Club Inc
- Longwarry Angling Club Inc
- Lowhead Road Fishing Club Inc
- Loy Yang Recreational Angling Club Inc
- Maffra & District Angling Club
- Maldon Angling and Outdoors Club Inc.
- Maryborough Angling Club Inc
- Mitcham Angling Club
- Mordialloc Boating & Angling Club
- Mornington Peninsula Fly Fishers Inc
- Nagambie Angling Club Inc.
- Nicholson Angling Club
- Oakdale Angling Club & Fish Protection Society
- Ormond Angling Club
- Pakenham Angling Club
- Port Fairy Angling Club
- Preston Northcote Angling Club
- Ringwood and District Angling Club Inc
- Rochester & District Angling Club
- Rosebud RSL Angling Club
- Southern Boat Fishing Club
- Southern Fly Fishers (Aust) Inc
- Southern Peninsula Angling Club
- St Arnaud Angling Club
- Sunbury Angling Club Inc
- Sunshine Fly Casting Club
- Undera Angling Club
- Upwey Angling Club Inc
- Venus Bay Angling Club
- Victoria Police Angling Club Inc.
- Victorian Game Fishing Club
- Wangaratta Fly Fishing Club Inc.
- Warrnambool & District Anglers Club
- Warrnambool Fly Fishers Club Inc
- Warrnambool Offshore & LG Fishing Club
- Waverley and District Anglers
- Werribee and District Anglers Club
- Westernport Angling Club
- Williamstown Sportfishing & Game Club
- Wimmera Offshore Sport & Gamefishing Club
- Wonthaggi Angling Club
- Wy-Yung Angling Club
- Yaringa Fishing Club
- Yarra Valley Fly Fishers
- Yinnar Angling Club Inc.



Member Reports



Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club

Bob Pearce

APAYC Shellfish Reef Project

Our Shellfish (mussel and oyster) reefs keep going from strength to strength. There has been a number of dives on site over recent months and these have demonstrated just how successful the project continues to be. Every time we go to site, we find it teeming with fish, mainly Pinkie Snapper, but several other species as well. More recently, we have seen schools of Pike and Yellowtail Scad. There are also lots of other marine species calling the new reefs home. The oysters that were bred at Queenscliff Shellfish Hatchery are thriving and we now have lots of baby oysters on site

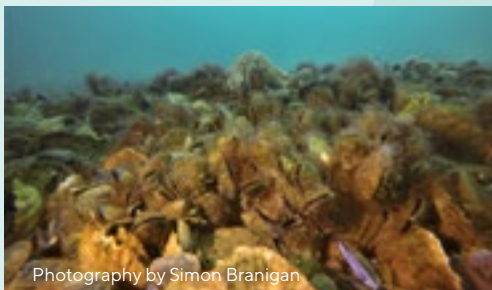
through natural recruitment. Shellfish are great for the Bay's marine ecology; they attract all sorts of marine species, thereby resulting in a huge increase in biodiversity. Shellfish are also filter feeders, so they greatly improve the water quality in the Bay. If we can continue to introduce shellfish into the Bay, the water quality will continue to improve.

Recently, The Nature Conservancy arranged to take Minister for Fishing and Boating Jaala Pulford and some of her colleagues to the St Kilda site (Margaret's Reef) to see the new reef first hand. Minister Pulford is a qualified scuba diver, as are two of her Colleagues. Whilst the visibility on the bottom was not as good as we hoped it would be, all who dived managed to get a good look at how well the new reef has done in what is a relatively short time.

We were also delighted to have the Minister and her Advisor, Heidi Flower, join us for lunch at the Club recently, which I think all who were there greatly enjoyed.



L-R Minister for Fishing & Boating, Jaala Pulford; Senior Advisor, Tim Mayfield; Member for Sunbury, Josh Bull; The Nature Conservancy's, Chris Gillies & Simon Branigan



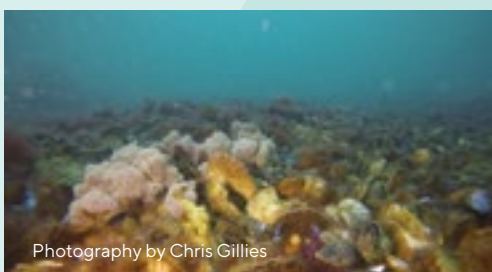
Photography by Simon Branigan



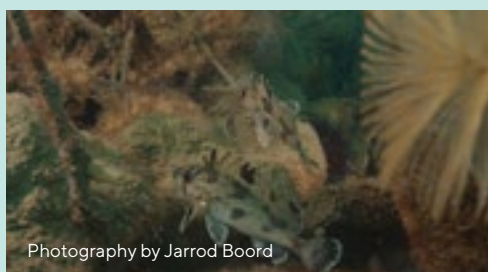
Photography by Chris Gillies



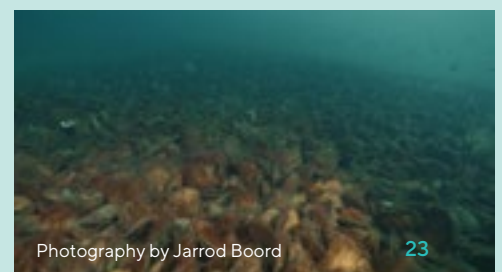
Photography by Jarrod Boord



Photography by Chris Gillies



Photography by Jarrod Boord



Photography by Jarrod Boord

Fishcare Victoria

Sarah van Stokrom Executive Officer

This is Fishcare Victoria Inc.'s 9th year of operation and has seen much success with staff and volunteers working together as a cohesive team to deliver on our mission and objectives. With 399 activities delivered and reaching over 8451 participants across Victoria this financial year, we have achieved record numbers of participation and delivery. Our staff and volunteers have worked with Victorian schools, angling clubs, community groups and government to positively impact communities at the local level. Fishcare volunteers have dedicated 2324 volunteer hours to the program which is more than a \$69,000 contribution back to the recreational fishing sector.

Reliance on the RFL commissioning program has been pleasingly reduced from a high of 97.5% in 2016/17 to 69.8% in the 2018/19 financial year thus reducing ongoing concern that the organization is dependant on a single source of funding. Fishcare Victoria is

going from strength to strength and it's the dedication of our volunteers that make this possible. It is evident that our volunteers are passionate about looking after our fisheries and our natural resources for future generations to enjoy. It is exactly this passion that fuels the Fishcare program and sees it continue to build on its successes.

Our small (but growing) staff team are to be commended for their hard work in delivering on projects and objectives whilst ensuring activity delivery, volunteer support, partnership development and engagement with community remains high. Staff continue to initiate new activities, source funding and work with volunteers to deliver new activities, all of which contribute to a robust Fishcare program.

Collaborating and working in partnership with schools, agencies, angling clubs and community groups is an essential ingredient to our success. These partnerships are based on an understanding of a mutual end goal – which is stewardship, protection, enjoyment and interaction with our fisheries, whilst value adding to current programs and initiatives. Fishcare would like to thank all our partners and collaborators for supporting the Fishcare program.

We have had an increased focus on communicating our successes with our quarterly e-news and spreading our achievements to stakeholders as well as members and subscribers via social media and our website. It is important to share our successes with the wider recreational fishing community and demonstrate the return on investment from the RFL commissioning program.

This coming year we look forward to celebrating more successes, championing our volunteers and delivering new and exciting programs that encourage stewardship of and engagement in one of Australia's most cherished recreational activities, recreational fishing.



Gippsland Angling Clubs Association

Robert Caune

Gippsland Angling Clubs Association conducts two major events each year. The Dr Mitchell Bream competition is held in May and the Dr Mitchell Trout competition in October. Clubs within the association take turns in hosting the event and this year Omeo Angling Club hosted the trout section and Nicholson Angling Club the Bream section.

The competitions are named in honour of the late Dr Mitchell who campaigned in the 1950's and 1960's to reduce commercial netting in the Gippsland Lakes.

In this regard Dr Mitchell would have likely been very pleased with the associations contribution to the campaign of having commercial netting banned from the Gippsland Lakes.

Our Benambra Angling Club, working in cooperation with the VFA, developed new signage for the Mitta Mitta River in regard to the conservation status and closed season for Macquarie perch. The signage explains how significant the Mitta Mitta population is in the national context, which helps to emphasise how important it is to comply with the closed season during their spawning run.

Our association looks forward to a brighter future for the Gippsland Lakes fishery in the coming years and the economic prosperity it will bring to the local community.





Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron

Greg Fitz Fishing Director

The Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron (BMYS) is a family orientated fishing and boating club. On Sunday April 7th 2019, the club invited members from the surrounding community to join them for a 'Junior Fishing Clinic.'

The day was sponsored by a grant from the Victorian Fisheries Authority and attended by 40 juniors and their parents. It involved expert tuition from members of the BMYS Fishing Committee and fishing off the club's main jetty. All juniors received info packs from the Victorian Fisheries Authority and BMYS supplied fishing rods, BBQ lunch, drinks and ice-creams. Success can be gauged by the fact that the kids enjoyed the day so much they continued to fish with their parents long after the conclusion of planned activities.



Victoria Police Angling Club (Australian Angling Association)

Tim Hose Secretary

Over the past three years, the Victoria Police Angling Club have contributed to supporting the Patterson Lakes

chapter of Dragons Abreast Australia and support ladies who have been affected by breast cancer. The ladies are known as Dragons Abreast Patterson Lakes Pink Lotus.

The Victoria Police Angling Club, through member Tamme Klaster who is an engineer, have built and donated two trailers for dragon boats so that the ladies can enjoy and participate in dragon boat racing. The Victoria Police Angling club are associated with the Australian Angling Association.



The Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs (CVFFC)

Doug Braham

The Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs (CVFFC) is an association of 22 fly fishing clubs across Victoria and advocates on behalf of all fly fishers.

The CVFFC main objective is to provide an effective voice from fly fishermen to VRFish and government agencies on the maintenance and development of the recreational fishery in Victoria.

The council has a significant input into the debate on recreational fishing. Its views and opinions are sought by policy makers here in Victoria and also throughout Australia.

During 2018-2019, CVFFC had many notable involvements and achievements. The CVFFC have a continued focus on habitat improvement and support for our members. The council receives active support for our members views at VRFish, Victorian Fisheries Authority and Statewide Roundtable forums. The council has provided active input against the proposed Rubicon River Hydro Scheme, involved in Fish Stocking forums, and discussions regarding logging in the Snobs

Creek Catchment and impact of logging operations on water quality, stream degradation and fish habitat. The CVFFC have also successfully negotiated on behalf of their clubs for competitive Public Liability insurance.





Midland & North Central Angling Association

Greg Hellsten

Midland and North Central Angling Association (M&NCAA) members are fully supportive and appreciative of the Victorian Fisheries Authority's (VFA) efforts to improve fishing opportunities in the Loddon and Campaspe Basins. Many fishers travel to our region, and recent boating access to local storages along with diversity of stocked species, will enhance the economic and social value of fishing in the region.

During the last financial year, July 2018 to June 2019, essential contributions have been made by M&NCAA members towards engaging fishers in supporting the Lake Eppalock Action Group, Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) with consultation over options for

improving the Eppalock's boating and angling opportunities. M&NCAA members willingly supported the VFA, DELWP and GMW opening of facilities at Eppalock, and launching of VFA initiatives with native fish stocking and boat access on Loddon/Campaspe basin waters.

At a club level, Maryborough Angling Club was successful in achieving its long sought after aim of man and electric powered boat access onto Tullaroop Reservoir. Bendigo and District Fly Fishers completed its 'Barkers Creek (Harcourt) Reservoir Trout Fishery Recovery Project' which will necessarily progress with project extensions towards habitat improvement and water level management negotiations.

Issues for the region remain re-establishment of in-water and riparian habitat to effective at varying water levels, especially at Eppalock and Barkers Creek reservoirs and strengthening of our member angling clubs with the help of VRFish and the VFA.

M&NCAA commenced a project to improve the water quality in Cairn Curran, by engaging "pt environmental" to carry out water testing for samples taken at various points around the reservoir, its feeder streams and the Loddon river. The pt environmental report "PT813 Cairn Curran Water Quality Risk Assessment report draft V2" is in the hands of GMW and it is expected that high levels of stakeholder commitment and involvement will need to be driven by M&NCAA.



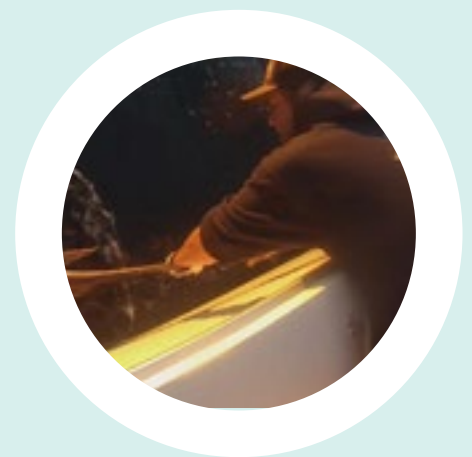
Game Fishing Association of Victoria

Anton Vogiatzis

The Game Fishing Association of Victoria have been working with researcher Sean Tracey from the University of Tasmania to help tag Swordfish in Victoria. The satellite tagging program will explore what happens to Swordfish after they are caught and whether they survive post-release. The tag also records

other information including water temperature, depth and light intensity daily. Satellite tags are programmed to stay on for up to 250 days before it automatically detaches and floats to the surface, from there, it transmits its data via satellite.

In May 2019, Steve Taranto and crew on Home Strait deployed the first tag in Victoria. The fish was estimated to be about 90kg. It swam away strongly and hasn't been heard from yet which is a good sign it survived the capture and release! Congratulations to Home Strait Captain Steve Taranto, angler Clint Adlington and all involved.



VRFish Priorities





Habitat and Water

Protecting, Restoring & Enhancing Where Fish Live

Our Vision

To improve fish habitat so that our recreational fisheries can thrive, through:

- Habitat protection, restoration and enhancement
- Co-management of natural resources
- Secure water allocations for recreational fishing
- Shared benefits for recreational fishing from environmental flows

Victorian fishers are passionate about fish habitat. We know that improved fish habitat delivers better fishing outcomes. VRFish continues to play a lead role in advocating for and participating in projects and consultative forums to secure positive outcomes and on-ground works for habitat protection, restoration and enhancement. VRFish is committed to promoting the role recreational fishers can play in not only identifying areas that require works but also the ways we can lead and participate in these activities. An ongoing topic of advocacy has been securing water allocations, particularly in the west of the State. Promotion of the importance of environmental water is ongoing to ensure our fishers understand the immense benefits it provides our rivers and fish stocks.



We know habitat is critical to ensuring the quality of our fisheries and fishing experiences. Put simply, habitat makes fishing happen.



2018/19 Highlights

- Successfully advocated for an innovative statewide felled timber program with VicRoads to restore in-stream fish habitat.
- Conducted a Victorian Inland Recreational Fishing Survey with Glenelg-Hopkins CMA to determine the economic value of recreational fishing at the river basin level and understand how habitat and water actions can contribute to these benefits.
- Promotion of the Angler Riparian Partnerships program, how recreational fishers can get involved in marine, estuarine and freshwater habitat restoration projects and planning for on-ground projects with the Corangamite CMA for the Barwon and Curdies River.
- Represented recreational fishers on the Freshwater Fish Habitat and Flows Roundtable.
- Advocated for improved water allocations and governance in the Murray-Darling Basin following catastrophic fish kills in the Darling River.
- Participation on the Macalister and Glenelg Environmental Water Advisory Group.
- Stronger relationship with Ozfish Unlimited through the delivery of the 'Reccies Restoring the Bay' project in Port Phillip Bay that enables recreational fishers to monitor and restore fish habitat in Port Phillip Bay.
- Advocated for the expansion of the Port Phillip Bay Living Shellfish Restoration Program through a partnership with The Nature Conservancy, support of our member organisation the Albert Park Angling and Yachting Club and participation in expert workshop.
- Working in partnership with the North Central CMA on the Native Fish Recovery Plan (NCCMA) Lower-Loddon Gunbower and Cohuna Irrigation Screens Steering committee.
- Advocated for more water for Toolondo and the benefits the Wimmera-Mallee Pipeline provides our recreational fishing lakes in the region.
- Supported the implementation of the Riparian Action Plan for Victoria to accelerate on-ground riparian management works, complementing the riparian actions and policy in the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy.



Access

Ensuring Better Access To Fishing Opportunities

Our Vision

Safe, easy and ongoing access, through:

- Maintaining and extending access to fisheries
- Improved pier and land-based fishing opportunities
- Better boating infrastructure, governance and investment
- Safe harbours for ocean fishing

Access is arguably the biggest issue facing recreational fishers in Victoria. A high priority for VRFish is ensuring better access and appropriate facilities so that all Victorians can enjoy the vast range of fishing opportunities across the state.

By providing adequate access, it will allow people of all ages, backgrounds, demographics and ability to enjoy wetting a line. The State's boating governance and funding system has been broken for many years. The past year has seen the first steps taken to unravel decades of neglect. VRFish is representing fishers to inform the development and delivery of Better Boating initiatives and reviews of the current management system.

Unfortunately, there are many areas where fishing is not permitted, restricted or not part of the fish stocking program. VRFish and its members spend countless hours advocating for access with some success reported in 2018/2019. These achievements have been the culmination of countless volunteer hours from many angling clubs, community groups and passionate, local community members.



2018/19 Highlights

- Successfully advocated for 'once in a generation' reforms to boating infrastructure governance and a hypothecated funding model from boating license registrations and fees.
- Developed a comprehensive VRFish Boating Infrastructure Position Statement to provide advice to Government's Better Boating Policy.
- Ongoing advocacy to protecting our rights to camp and have campfires through consultation with Parks Victoria on the River Red Gum Park Management Plan.
- Successfully campaigned for a fish recovery plan, inclusive of a compulsory buy-out of commercial netting licenses for the Gippsland Lakes, supported our regional members in their advocacy campaigns, presentations at public meetings in Sale and Lochsport, public rally at Paynesville and publishing of a comprehensive FAQ for recreational fishers and media.
- Held a Werribee River Access Public Forum with land manager and recreational fishers to identify fishing access barriers, priorities for infrastructure and better relationships with Parks Victoria, City of Wyndham, Melbourne Water and the Victorian Fisheries Authority.
- New partnership with RACV Marine and Boating Industry Association of Victoria to conduct Victoria's first annual 'Rate Your Ramp' survey with users of public boat ramps.
- Produced an updated 'Steer Clear in the Rip' brochure and maps in partnership with the Victorian Ports Corporation and local fishing clubs to secure safe and ongoing access to the kingfish fishery.
- Advocated to DELWP for ongoing fishing access to streams as part of the Draft Yellingbo Conservation Area Draft Plan.
- Hosted an angling forum with DELWP and GMW at Lake Eppalock to discuss the options for enhancing recreational boating and fishing at Lake Eppalock report and to hear anglers' thoughts and ideas about the proposals in the report.
- Represented recreational fishers in a Marine Spatial Planning Framework Symposium hosted by DELWP.
- Promoting metropolitan native fish stocking program to create more fishing opportunities closer to home for Victorian families.
- Successful on-water access campaign for Tullaroop Reservoir receiving bi-partisan support and supporting on-water access for other reservoirs in the Bendigo and Kyneton area.
- Continuing to support our members at the Metropolitan Angling Association for new boating infrastructure on the Maribyrnong River and local angler involvement in the VFA's native fish recovery plan for the river.
- Submission to the Hastings Foreshore Precinct Plan calling for the advice from the Westernport Angling Club to be incorporated to ensure proposed boat ramp upgrade plans meet the needs of recreational fishers.
- Strong advocacy in the Lower Patterson River Concept planning process to ensure Launching Way is recognised, managed and planned for as Victoria's premier recreational launching facility in the State.
- Advocate for major investment and upgrades in Warrnambool to create a safe harbour for recreational fishers and boaters.
- Participation on the land and on-water committees for Lake Eppalock and Lake Eildon to plan for and improve fishing experiences and access.



Participation


Increased Participation In Fishing

Our Vision

Increased participation and recognition of the benefits of recreational fishing, through:

- Promoting and growing participation amongst non-fishers, especially youth
- Affordable fishing opportunities
- Quality fishing experiences and catch rates
- Improved recognition and social and economic benefits
- Stronger fishing clubs and associations

VRFish is a membership organisation of people that love fishing. It's only natural our work is aimed at making fishing better for everyone and attracting new people to our wonderful sport. Victoria is blessed to have a diverse range of fishing opportunities and we are cognisant to promote affordable and family-friendly fishing as part of this amazing mix. We know how important recreational fishing is to the economy of Victoria and health and well-being of individuals and communities. Our role is to ensure recreational fishing is recognised for these benefits from members of Parliament, the media and the community as a whole. Fishing clubs and associations are an integral part of our recreational fishing sector, their local communities and VRFish. Our vision is to support clubs to thrive and become stronger.



We promote fishing as a great, family-friendly activity within the community. Fishing also has a range of benefits to improve your health and wellbeing. But above all else, it's a lot of fun!

2018/19 Highlights

- Supporting the roll-out of the Government's Target One Million Phase 2 initiatives to promote fishing and increase participation.
- New Fishing Club Supporter membership launched with over 80 clubs joined and growing.
- Partnership with GoFish Nagambie to promote the event and showcase the recovery of our native fishery and the economic and social benefits to regional Victoria.
- Steering group for an economic survey into growing new market opportunities for recreational fishing in the East Gippsland Shire.
- Engaged with recreational fishers at the Hooked on Portland, Hooked on Lakes and Hooked on Bellarine events.
- Supported the Against All Odds charity event in Ballarat to raise awareness and research funds into Amyloidosis.
- VRFish supported National Gone Fishing Day through promotion with Victorian fishing clubs, community groups and supported the National Campaign coordinated by the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation.
- Ongoing promotion of Family Fishing Lakes and the new metropolitan native fish stocking program as an affordable and enjoyable fishing experience for children and their families.
- Developed a partnership with Fishcare Victoria, Parks Victoria and Keysborough Angling Club to deliver school holiday junior fishing clinics at Launching Way.



Best Practice


Promoting Best Practice Fisheries Management & Informed Fishers

Our Vision

Best practice fisheries management
and informed fishers, through:

- Adoption of responsible fishing practices and behaviours
- Prioritised fish stocking
- Science-based and responsible fisheries regulation
- Greater investment into research, development and extension
- Legislative recognition of recreational fishing
- Improved aquatic pest management

VRFish are leaders in promoting best practice behaviours and attitudes within our sector, as well as raising awareness and helping the fishing community understand their rights and obligations. Our Code of Conduct is central in fostering greater stewardship within our fishers. Recreational fishers expect sustainably managed fisheries and strive for quality fishing experiences. Recreational fishers know too well the adverse impacts that pest species have on our aquatic ecosystems and our fishing. VRFish provides consolidated and expertise-based advice back to Government in the development of fisheries management plans and when management issues arise. To make fishing better for all Victorian fishers and regional communities, VRFish and our members play a vital role in shaping the annual inland fish stocking program.



We encourage our fishers to take a lead role in the stewardship of our fish and waterways.

2018/19 Highlights

- Worked with our national peak body, the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation (ARFF), to host a Southern Bluefin Tuna Forum in Melbourne with Commonwealth fishery managers, researchers and recreational fishing leaders.
- Represented recreational fishers on the Rock Lobster Resource Assessment Group which reviews annual stock assessment data, recreational tagging data and a standalone workshop for the Eastern Zone rock lobster.
- VRFish members and our associated clubs and associations helped shape Victoria's annual fish stocking plan and priorities across Victoria through participation at Vic Stock Meetings in August 2018 and a special stocking meeting in Bendigo in March 2019.
- Represented recreational fishers at the Marine Pest Sectorial Committee Partners Workshop, communicated marine pest incursions in Corner Inlet (Japanese seaweed) and Gippsland Lakes (Pacific seastar), added new specific content to the VRFish website and helped to promote Park Victoria's Check, Clean, Dry program to prevent the spread of marine pests.
- Support for, and awareness of, the National Carp Control Plan with recreational fishers including involvement in stakeholder meetings and report of research project findings.
- Contributed to a national workshop hosted by Recreational Fishing Research towards a Research, Development and Extension Strategy and enhanced communication to recreational fishers.
- Input into the targeted consultation phase of the Fisheries Regulation Review conducted by the Victorian Fisheries Authority.
- Supporting the delivery and implementation of the Tuna Champions stewardship program into Victoria and local member led initiatives such as the Warrnambool Offshore and Light Game Fishing Club tuna appreciation night.
- Promotion of angler citizen science projects, including tagging programs for mulloway, whiting and swordfish.
- Submission to Draft Pipi Fishery Management Plan and input in the plan for Revolutionising Fish Production and Stocking in Victoria.



Organisational Excellence, Advocacy & Partnerships

Striving For Organisational Excellence, Advocacy & Building Partnerships

Our Vision

Continually striving for organisational excellence, through:

- Quality governance and organisational processes
- Greater accountability to stakeholders
- Improved recognition and support from recreational fishers
- Strategic and effective communications and engagement
- Strong and constructive relationships with Government and Stakeholders

Through our endeavor for organisational excellence, we have built a strong foundation around our members and collaborative partnerships with other organisations. With our limited resources, we leverage our success and achievement through the passion and tireless advocacy of our volunteer membership and effective working partnerships with our stakeholders. As a strong and independent peak body for recreational fishing in Victoria, we continue to be open, transparent and accountable to maintain support from recreational fishers.



2018/19 Highlights

- Endorsement by members for new Constitution that enables a new and inclusive membership model.
- Roll-out of new membership model to fishing clubs and individuals, including upgrades to website, fishing club prospectus and individual member brochure.
- Refreshed VRFish's Reference Group structure to enable more fishers to become involved in policy development and provision of consolidated advice.
- Release of comprehensive State Election Policy platform that was the result of membership workshops and survey of recreational fishing license holders.
- Successful advocacy campaign for a new purpose-built native fish hatchery in northern Victoria to stop reliance on commercial fish hatcheries in NSW and increase capacity at Snob's Creek Hatchery for salmonids and cool-water threatened native fish.
- Called for a review for the Recreational Fishing License system and Trust Account to modernize the system and ensure the system meets the needs and aspirations of recreational fishers.
- New 'members first' email communications to keep our members better informed.
- Ongoing relationships with Government stakeholders including the Victorian Fisheries Authority, Victorian Environmental Water Holder, Catchment Management Authorities, DELWP, Department of Transport, Parks Victoria, Australian Fisheries Management Authority and Water Authorities.
- Significant growth in our social media channels with reach, engagement and followers and website traffic.
- Generation of significant VRFish content and messaging through the publishing of 100 articles on the VRFish website and generation of 24 media releases.
- Participation in all Statewide Recreational Roundtable meetings held by the Victorian Fisheries Authority to report on VRFish operations and sectorial issues to Government and other recreational fishing stakeholders.



Let's make fishing better, for everyone.



RECREATIONAL FISHING CODE OF CONDUCT

VRFISH HAS DEVELOPED THIS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RECREATIONAL BOAT, SHORE, RIVER, STREAM AND JETTY FISHERS IN VICTORIA.

Recreational fishers have a responsibility to look after fisheries resources for the benefit of the environment and future generations of fishers. This Code of Conduct provides guidelines to minimise conflicts on the water, demonstrate best practice for responsible fishing and result in a more enjoyable fishing experience for all.

1

Awareness of and compliance with fishing **REGULATIONS**.



6

Always seek **PERMISSION** when entering private property.



2

RESPECT the rights of other anglers and users.



7

Use **ESTABLISHED** access roads and tracks.



3

PROTECT and restore the environment and fish habitat.



8

ATTEND to your fishing gear and value your catch.



4

Carefully return **UNDERSIZED**, oversized, protected or unwanted catch back to the water.



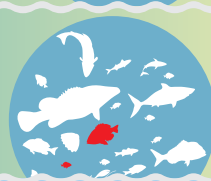
9

EDUCATION - pass on your knowledge.



5

Fish species and other organisms must not be **RELOCATED**/transferred into other water bodies.



10

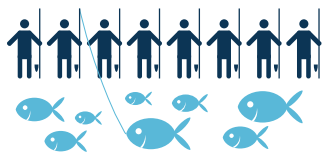
Respect Aboriginal sites, **CULTURE** and values.



vrfish.com.au

Let's make
fishing
better, for
everyone.

THE VALUE & BENEFITS OF FISHING



838,119

adult Victorians go fishing
every year

Average fisher spend



\$326
per trip

6.1 million
fishing trips
PER YEAR



on average, each fisher goes fishing

7.3 times per year



73%
prefer
bait fishing



34,000

jobs
supported
by rec fishing

\$7.1
billion

economic
contribution
to Victorian
economy



Health and Wellness benefits of fishing:

1. Fishing is a great way to spend quality time with family and friends
2. Fishing reduces stress and help you unwind
3. Fishing gets you outdoors
4. Fishing can improve your cardiovascular health
5. Fishing is a healthy lifestyle activity
6. Fishing increases your Vitamin D levels
7. Fishing promotes patience and self-fulfilment
8. Fish are a good source of protein and nutrition
9. Fishing lets you unplug from the digital world
10. Fishing supports conservation

Source: Economic Study of Recreational Fishing in Victoria (2015), undertaken by Ernst & Young and commissioned by VRFish.



VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624

Financial Report For The Year Ended
30 June 2019

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The directors submit the financial report of Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd ('the Company') for the financial year ended 30 June 2019 and the auditor's report thereon.

Directors

The directors of the company throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Rob Loats (Chair)	Joy Sloan
Steven Relf	Geoff Fisher
John Hotchin	Kris Leckie
Franz Grasser	Halley Xu
Russell Conway	Neville Dance

Secretary

Michael Burgess

Principal Activities

VRFish, the Victorian recreational fishing peak body, is the representative organisation for recreational fishers in Victoria. The principal activities is representing and advocating the interests of the 838,000 fishers located throughout Victoria.

Significant Changes

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

Operating Result

The operating result for the year amounted to a deficit of \$13,037.

Events Subsequent to Balance Date

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected, or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors.



Robert Loats
Chairman

Dated this 12th day of October 2019

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
INCOME		
Core Funding	466,824	456,552
Project Income	23,613	-
Other Income	5,112	(121)
Interest Income	1,692	1,781
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	497,241	458,212
 EXPENDITURE		
Salary and wages	354,190	301,503
Operating	102,310	116,764
Board and Meeting Expenses	13,789	10,966
State Council expenses	11,922	18,969
Depreciation and Amortisation	8,253	6,563
Exhibitions and conferences	3,603	3,196
Project expenditure	9,767	618
Membership	4,788	-
Affiliation Expenses	1,655	988
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	510,277	459,567
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(13,036)	(1,355)
 Other Comprehensive income for the year	 -	 -
	<hr/>	<hr/>
 Total Comprehensive income for the year	 (13,036)	 (1,355)
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	80,777	125,728
Receivables	3	48,925	-
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>129,702</u>	<u>125,728</u>
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	4	14,400	22,653
Intangible Assets		682	682
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>15,082</u>	<u>23,335</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u><u>144,784</u></u>	<u><u>149,063</u></u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other Payables	5	10,162	14,797
Provisions	6	31,277	17,885
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>41,439</u>	<u>32,682</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>41,439</u>	<u>32,682</u>
NET ASSETS		<u><u>103,345</u></u>	<u><u>116,381</u></u>
EQUITY			
Accumulated Surpluses		<u>103,345</u>	<u>116,381</u>
TOTAL EQUITY		<u><u>103,345</u></u>	<u><u>116,381</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD

ABN: 47 068 111 624

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

	Note	Accumulated Surpluses \$	Total \$
Balance at 30 June 2017		117,736	117,736
Comprehensive Income for the year		(1,355)	(1,355)
Transfers to Reserves		-	-
Balance at 30 June 2018		116,381	116,381
Comprehensive Income for the year		(13,036)	(13,036)
Transfers to Reserves		-	-
Balance at 30 June 2019		103,345	103,345

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from revenue		446,624	514,020
Payments to suppliers and employees		(493,267)	(485,098)
Interest received		1,692	1,781
Net cash provided by operating activities	7	<u>(44,951)</u>	<u>30,703</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of plant and equipment		-	(15,643)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from investing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>(15,643)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(44,951)	15,060
Cash at beginning of financial year		125,728	110,668
Cash at end of financial year		<u><u>80,777</u></u>	<u><u>125,728</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

Note 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the Corporations Act 2001, as appropriate for not-for-profit oriented entities.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis, are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The financial statements were authorised for issue on 12 October 2019 by the Directors of the Company.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of the financial statements.

- (a) Income Tax**
The association is exempted from income tax under the provisions of the Income Tax Assessment Act - 1997 Subdivision 50-5
- (b) Cash and Cash Equivalents**
Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.
- (c) Receivables**
Receivables consist predominantly of debtors in relation to goods and services and are recognised at amortised cost.
- (d) Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)**
Plant and Equipment are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the asset.

Plant and Equipment that have been contributed at no cost, or for nominal cost are valued and recognised at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a straight line basis over the assets' useful life to the Company, commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The
- (e) Impairment of Assets**
At the end of each reporting period, the company reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income and expenditure statement.

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

Note 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(f) Payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Company prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. Due to their short-term nature they are measured at amortised cost and are not discounted. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

(g) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the assets and liabilities statement are shown inclusive of GST.

(h) Employee Benefits

Short-term employee benefits

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in current liabilities in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Other long-term employee benefits

The liability for annual leave and long service leave not expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in non-current liabilities, provided there is an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. The liability is measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on Australian corporate bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible the estimated future cash outflows.

(i) Revenue and Other Income

Grant and donations revenue is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when the company obtains control of the revenue, it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the revenue will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant or donation can be measured reliably.

When grants and donations revenue is received whereby the entity incurs an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant or donations revenue is recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until the service has been delivered to the contributor, otherwise the grant or donation is recognised as income on receipt.

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised upon the delivery of goods to customers.

Interest revenue is recognised on an accruals basis.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

Note 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(j) New Accounting Standards for Application in Future Periods

The AASB has issued a number of new and amended Accounting Standards that have mandatory application dates for future reporting periods, some of which are relevant to the Company. The Directors have elected not to early adopt any of the new and amended pronouncements.

The application of these new and amended standards are not expected to have a material impact on the Company's financial statements.

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Note 2 Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash at Bank	80,777	125,728
Cash on Hand	-	-
	<u>80,777</u>	<u>125,728</u>
Note 3 Receivables		
Trade Debtors	<u>48,925</u>	<u>-</u>
Note 4 Property, Plant and Equipment		
Plant & Equipment at Cost	34,964	47,371
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(20,564)</u>	<u>(24,718)</u>
	<u>14,400</u>	<u>22,653</u>
Note 5 Trade and other payables		
Payroll Liabilities	7,956	17,226
GST	1,544	(1,570)
Other Payables	662	(859)
	<u>10,162</u>	<u>14,797</u>
Note 6 Provisions		
Provision for Annual Leave	<u>31,277</u>	<u>17,885</u>

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

Note 7 Reconciliation of Net cash provided by operating activities to operating surplus

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Operating surplus/(deficit)	(13,036)	(1,355)
<i>Non-cash items</i>		
Depreciation	8,253	6,563
<i>Movement in assets and liabilities</i>		
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(48,925)	-
Increase/(decrease) in payables	(4,635)	19,936
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	13,392	5,559
Net Cash provided by operating activities	(44,951)	30,703

Note 8 Events after the balance sheet date

Since 30 June 2019, there are no matters or circumstances that have arisen which require adjustments to or disclosure in the financial statements.

Note 9 Operating Lease Commitments

The company has a lease agreement for office space. Future minimum rentals payable under the lease are as follows:

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Within one year	23,113	16,133
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,780	56,467
	30,893	72,600

Note 10 Related Parties

The directors act in an honorary capacity and receive no compensation for their services. There were no related party payments or transactions to any director or related entities during the financial period.

Note 11 Economic Dependency

The company is dependent upon Recreational Fishing Licence revenue received from the Victorian State Government to ensure the continuance of its operations. The current funding agreement is from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020 and annual funding is determined based on submission of a business plan and budget.

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD
ABN: 47 068 111 624
DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The Directors of the Company declare that:

The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 2 to 10, are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001:

- a) Comply with Accounting Standards as described in Note 1 to the Financial Statements, the *Corporations Regulations 2001* and other mandatory professional reporting requirements; and
- b) Give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the Company in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the Financial Statements; and
- c) There are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



Robert Loats
Chairman

Dated this 12th day of October 2019



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