



# Media Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF VRFISH - VICTORIA'S  
RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY

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## STATUS QUO WIN FOR VICTORIAN TUNA FISHERS

VRFish, Victoria's recreational fishing peak body, have landed a massive win for Victorian fishers who enjoy our fantastic Southern bluefin tuna (SBT) fishery.

The Commonwealth Government's Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries, Jonathon Duniam has confirmed there will be no changes to Victoria's SBT recreational bag or size limits following the preliminary results of the 2019 National SBT recreational catch survey.

VRFish Chair, Mr. Rob Loats, said, "VRFish's strong advocacy and representation has negated any threat of bag or size limit changes for SBT. The great news for our fishers is they can continue to enjoy our world-class SBT fishery exactly as they are now."

The National SBT recreational catch survey was conducted by world leading experts from the University of Tasmania and was found to be comprehensive and scientifically robust.

The survey is demonstrating that our SBT recreational fishery in Victoria has evolved into a more mature and sophisticated fishery.

"Now that SBT are virtually catchable year-round, we are observing fishers shift from retained catch towards a quality recreational fishing experiences, including targeting larger fish, higher release rates and better-quality table eating fish."

"Our fishery is in a great space and our fishers are embracing the best practice principles of the Tuna Champions program. The small changes that our fishers are making while they are fishing for SBT are making a big difference."

"We have been able to develop effective working relationships with the Commonwealth, fishery managers and researchers and appreciate the outstanding support of our national peak body, the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation."

Recreational fishing for SBT delivers enormous economic benefit to our regional south west towns and is estimated to contribute as much as \$9 million to Portland's economy alone.

**Media Contact:** Michael Burgess 0407 294 254



**Media Contact:**  
(03) 5221 1104 [info@vrfish.com.au](mailto:info@vrfish.com.au)

PO Box 4574 GEELONG VIC 3220  
t: (03) 5221 1104 e: [info@vrfish.com.au](mailto:info@vrfish.com.au) w: [www.vrfish.com.au](http://www.vrfish.com.au)  
ABN 47 068 111 624

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