

# STATEWIDE RECREATIONAL FISHING ROUNDTABLE FORUM

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Introduction:

The Victorian Government's commitment to active and meaningful engagement with a broader range of recreational fishers has been strengthened through changes introduced in July 2009 to the *Fisheries Act 1995* and associated policy reforms. The new fisheries consultative framework provides for performance-based, fit-for-purpose consultation and engagement in partnership with the fisheries sector.

The amendments to the *Act* include a new section, 3A Consultation principles, which establish a number of principles that will guide the Victorian Government's consultation with recreational, commercial and Aboriginal fishers, aquaculturalists and conservation interests with regard to the future management of the Victorian community's fisheries resources.

The establishment of the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable Forum primarily provides an opportunity to discuss and provide advice on strategic matters and response options.

Other actions to provide opportunities for consultation with a broader range of fishers involve:

- o conducting Regional Roundtable Forums in major regional locations around Victoria on an annual basis, with participation generally based on a local group of fishers who collectively cover the range of fishing interests and matters in each region;
- o establishing a new Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group, comprising recreational fishers, to provide advice on the expenditure of RFL revenue; and
- o providing opportunities for local recreational fishers and DPI to engage on 'grass roots' matters on a needs basis;
- o providing other opportunities to seek input from recreational fishers on a needs basis, such as surveys of Recreational Fishing Licence holders to give them a greater say in setting priorities for the expenditure of the Recreational Fishing Licence revenue;
- o committing to fund VRFish for three years to provide advice that accurately reflects the views of the broader Victorian recreational fishing community (including people from all social and ethnic backgrounds), all organisations affiliated with VRFish and the VRFish Board (should it wish to provide additional advice);
- o establishing a new Fisheries Consultative Body to provide guidance on the consultation processes to be applied in addressing statutory matters specified in the *Fisheries Act 1995*.

Fisheries Victoria's management of fisheries is focused on securing a high quality natural resource base for the long term, as well as generating economic and social benefits in our communities. Its aim is to secure, share and grow Victoria's fisheries resources in an ecologically sustainable way for now and the future.

Effective engagement with stakeholders is essential to inform the development of good public policy, and is critical for its effective implementation and evaluation.

### Purpose of the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable:

The Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas about recreational fishing, which will assist Fisheries Victoria to achieve

its strategic vision. It also provides an opportunity for constructive interactions between leaders in the recreational fishing sector.

Fisheries Victoria will ensure that the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable Forum is kept informed about any strategic matters arising through the other fisheries consultation processes and seek advice from the Forum as necessary. It is not intended that the Forum will replicate the above arrangements to broaden consultation with recreational fishers and other individuals and groups with an interest in the management of Victoria's fisheries.

### **Participation:**

Participation in the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable Forum is based on a group of fishers who collectively cover the broad range of recreational fishing types, interests and issues across Victoria plus representatives of recreational fishing-related industries.

The Forum Chairperson and the Executive Director Fisheries Victoria will jointly determine the list of invited participants, and review the list as necessary over time. Participants will be identified based on their:

- personal knowledge of the recreational fishing sector,
- recognition amongst the recreational fishing community as leaders in their field,
- valued contribution to the management of recreational fishing in Victoria,
- willingness to engage in two-way communication with a broad range of recreational fishers, and
- willingness to work collaboratively with other recreational fishers, Fisheries Victoria and other individuals and organizations with an interest in the management of Victorian wild-harvest fisheries, to improve recreational fishing in Victoria, consistent with the objectives of the *Fisheries Act 1995* and associated policies.

It is expected that the participants in the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable would have a background and knowledge collectively covering the following key areas:

- Coastal fishing
- Aboriginal fishing
- Estuarine fishing
- Inland salmonid fishing
- Inland native fishing
- Sport/game fishing
- Charter fishing
- Hand gathering
- Fishing instruction and guiding
- Spearfishing
- Fishing clubs
- Fishing trade
- Multicultural communities
- Unaffiliated fishers
- Boating trade
- Fishing media
- Fishing project delivery
- Fishcare
- Fishing education & communications
- Fishing advocacy
- Fisheries science
- Fisheries management

It is also expected that Forum participants would include a good mix of males and females and age range to reflect the demographics of the broader recreational fishing community in Victoria. Participants may or may not be part of a recreational fishing organisation.

The list of current Forum participants is shown in Attachment 1.

Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable Forum participants are encouraged to participate in the Regional Roundtable Forum discussions in their region. However, they will not be members of the Fisheries Consultative Committee or the Recreational Fishing Grant Working Group, in order to maintain clearly defined roles for the people participating in these different functions and to help broaden the range of people involved in the overall consultative arrangements for fisheries.

Forum participants cannot nominate deputies to attend Forum meetings so as to maintain sufficient consistency in the overall discussions and provision of advice. However, Forum participants can submit items for discussion if they are unable to attend a meeting in person or

they can make arrangements with the Chairperson to telephone-in to join the discussion on specific items.

It will be assumed that participants who do not attend three consecutive forum meetings have decided to let their involvement in the Forum lapse, unless they provide notification of a reason for such absences to the Chairperson. This provision is necessary to help ensure that all key interests relevant to recreational fishing are actively involved in the Forum discussions.

Where a subject for discussion requires specialist comment or information, special guests may be invited to participate in Roundtable forums for that specific agenda item.

### **Objectives:**

- To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and the facilitation of interactions directly between the recreational fishing sector and Fisheries Victoria (and more broadly the Victorian Government).
- To hear first hand and provide a recognised pathway to commence actions to address agreed matters facing recreational fishers across Victoria.
- To provide an opportunity to identify areas of agreement on strategic issues, and aims to facilitate the development of policy options that will assist Fisheries Victoria to achieve its strategic vision.
- To provide an opportunity to identify information and knowledge gaps, including research needs relevant to recreational fishing.
- To provide an opportunity to further build effective relationships between Fisheries Victoria and stakeholders and between stakeholders themselves.
- To provide an opportunity for stakeholders to table issues of interest to Victorian recreational fishers and work directly with Fisheries Victoria and assist in developing outcomes acceptable to all parties.

### **Principals:**

- Forums will be conducted in line with DPI values and behaviours, in particular respect to others within and outside to Forum meetings;
- The Forum provides an opportunity for a range of recreational fishery stakeholder views to be expressed;
- The issues raised are high level or strategic rather than operational;
- Research and knowledge requirements can be identified within this forum;
- Efforts will be focused on those issues likely to have a high degree of success and significant benefits to recreational fishing;
- Success includes improved outcomes for recreational fishers and constructive communication between the recreational fishing sector and Fisheries Victoria.
- All Forum meeting outcomes should be reached by consensus.
- Participants will respect the confidentiality of relevant items as identified by the Chairperson or the participants. A summary of meeting outcomes will be circulated publicly via Fisheries Victoria's website.

### **Administration:**

Fisheries Victoria will provide the administrative support for the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable Forum, including engaging an independent Chairperson (subject to government procurement processes).

The Chairperson must act in an impartial way to seek to build relationships and consensus outcomes amongst all Forum participants, in a way that is consistent with the objectives for the *Fisheries Act 1995* and associated policies, the purpose, objectives and principals for the Forum and other relevant government policies for the operation of committees.

All participants in the forum participate on a voluntary basis.

Forum participants would be requested to declare any conflict of interest (ie direct financial or other potential personal benefit) with respect to any specific issue to be discussed at a Forum meeting.

Forum meetings will generally be held on a quarterly basis or at other times agreed by the Chairperson and the Executive Director Fisheries Victoria.

The Chairperson will invite all Forum members to submit items for discussion at Forum meetings so that the Chairperson can issue the proposed agenda at least two weeks prior to a meeting.

### **Meeting Outcomes:**

The Chairperson of the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable will produce a Chairperson's report of the mutually agreed outcomes for each forum meeting, which will be circulated to all meeting participants. Additionally a summary of meeting outcomes will be circulated publicly via Fisheries Victoria's website.

**Attachment 1: List of Participants for the Statewide Recreational Fishing Roundtable**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation (if any)</b>
Doug Joyner	Australian Fishing Trade Association
Brian Hayes	Australian National Sportsfishing Association
Mick Hall	Australian Trout Foundation Incorporated
Gordon Howlett	Boating Industry Association
Charlie Micallef	Charter Boat Operator
Marc Ainsworth	DPI Communications
Jeff Green	Fishcare Victoria
Anthony Hurst, Travis Dowling, Michael Hodder	Fisheries Victoria
David Kramer	Futurefish Foundation
Geoff Fisher	Game Fishing Association
Ron Lewis	Native Fish Australia
Rod Barford	Professional Fishing Instructors & Guides Association
David Thornton	Recreational Fishing Media
Ross Winstanley	Recreational Fishing Research
Geoff Cramer	VRFish

