



# Australian National Sportfishing Association Ltd

ANSA NEWS BULLETIN 30

21 December 2009

**2009 National AGM & Branch Delegates Meeting.** Was held in Sydney over the weekend of 21 October /1 November. Most state branches were represented and a great deal of national and state issues were addressed some of which are summarised in this bulletin. 2009 was an election year for the ANSA Board and all sitting members were returned to office. It is unfortunate that there were no expressions of interest or nominations by new candidates to join the Board. It is critical to ANSA's long term future and planning that we have fresh blood on the Board and remain relevant to our members. The 2009 ANSA annual report can be viewed at [www.ansa.com.au](http://www.ansa.com.au)

**National Board Contacts.** An updated contact list is attached.

**Rule Books.** Copies of the current 2008 Rule Book can be obtained via Joe Garufi , Membership Director or myself. The rule book marked up with all the new additions and changes made in 2008 can be viewed at [www.ansa.com.au](http://www.ansa.com.au) .

**ANSA Promotional Brochures.** These high quality colour brochures which are available free to clubs are an ideal tool for promotion of ANSA to new clubs and members. Contact Joe Garufi or myself if you want to place and order.

**National Code of Practice.** ANSA has complemented its longstanding code of ethics with a National Code of Practice for Recreational and Sportfishing which was jointly developed with Recfish Australia and several other recreational fishing bodies and government agencies over 2009. All ANSA members are encouraged to be aware of and to abide by the National COP which can be viewed at [www.ansa.com.au](http://www.ansa.com.au) . Copies of the COP can be ordered via Joe Garufi or myself.

**ANSA Capture and Release measuring mats.** We have recently added this new product to the ANSA Ware range. The brag mats which are made from high quality vinyl (see photo) feature the ANSA logo and the national minimum trophy size for all eligible capture and release species. The mats which are priced at a very reasonable \$10 plus postage can be ordered via Joe Garufi. Order forms for the mats and other ANSA Ware products are on the website [www.ansa.com.au](http://www.ansa.com.au) or you can contact Joe on 0296619297 or 0417491868.



**Neatfish Accreditation.** All branches and clubs running major tournaments or competitions are encouraged to have their event rated under the Neatfish process. Clubs can undertake a free self assessment of their event by accessing the Neatfish website at [www.neatfish.com](http://www.neatfish.com) and simply following the steps. For a small fee of around \$100 you can then submit for an official Neatfish accreditation which may help promotion and sponsorship of the event. It is probable that the marine park authorities will eventually require an acceptable accreditation as a condition precedent for consideration of a permit to conduct a competition within a marine protected area. Now might be the time to review your clubs competition rules with a view to making the event more environmentally and fish friendly.

**Released fish Survival.** Free information kits are available form Shirley Sawynok at [shirleys@zbc.com.net](mailto:shirleys@zbc.com.net) . Every club should have this material on hand for members.

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**Bioline.** ANSA has received considerable praise for its encouragement of members to use bio degradable line. Field testing of various breaking strains of bio line is currently in process and the results released shortly. Members wishing to purchase bio line can place orders via [www.digsfish.com](http://www.digsfish.com).

**National Record and Masters Claim forms.** New style claim forms are now available on the website at [www.ansa.com.au](http://www.ansa.com.au). The new style forms (copies attached) can be downloaded from the ANSA website and completed on line before printing which will make it easier for the claimant and the recorders. The new forms can be used for both branch and national claims. It was hoped that a new records/ masters tracker system would be up and running on the ANSA website by now. Unfortunately there are still a few system bugs to be ironed out but when the tracker system goes live it will enable members to keep a track on how their claim is progressing.

**IGFA World Records.** Members wishing to check out the IGFA world record list can do so by accessing the IGFA website at [www.igfa.org](http://www.igfa.org) and following the prompts to the world record listing. You will need to type Australian National Sportfishing Association into the members surname drop down box and 1152515 as the membership number. This will give you access to all record listings. If you are contemplating the submission of a joint IGFA world record and ANSA national record you will need to refer to the ANSA website and follow the procedures outlined.

**2009 Most Meritorious Capture.** The ANSA Board and Branch delegates at the 2009 AGM unanimously agreed that this years award be bestowed upon Anysia Oberg, a 9 year old member of the Australian Land Based Anglers Association for her capture of a 86.6 striped marlin on 37 kg. The capture made from a boat on the NSW south coast was not eligible for a national record due to a technicality but nevertheless was a remarkable feat for a sub junior member. Congratulations Anysia.

**Water Safety.** As a follow on to the successful and highly claimed “Angel Ring lifebuoys” and “Rock Fishing Safety Awareness/ Education” projects initiated by ANSA NSW, moves are now well advanced to expand these life saving programmes nationally. ANSA has entered into a strategic alliance with Surf Life Saving Australia, the NSW Recreational Fishing Alliance and Recfish Australia to develop a national rock fishing strategy featuring;

- National installation of Angel Rings.
- Safety workshops for specific at risk groups.
- Creation of specific fishing safety signage.
- Use of life jackets.

A national launch of the project was held in Sydney on 7 November by Minister Peter Garrett. With the support and financial resources of Surf Life Saving, the goal is to get the safety message out to all recreational fishers and save lives. All fishing safety awareness material will now be centralised under a single website [www.safefishing.com.au](http://www.safefishing.com.au).

**Future Leader Development.** ANSA is very keen to see its younger members develop their potential as future leaders within the recreational fishing sector by participating in professional self development programmes. Already a number of ANSA members have successfully participated in such programmes and moved into leadership roles within the broad recfishing community. It is acknowledged that participation in these leadership programmes does require a lot of self sacrifice in terms of time and money by individuals. ANSA as a gesture of support for those members contemplating participation in such leadership programmes will consider on a case by case basis a subsidy contribution of \$200 per member candidate for approved leadership programmes.

**Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery.** While there has been little progress in terms of resurrecting the gentlemen agreement with the commercial sector for restrictions on longlining inside the Australian eastern continental shelf, it is pleasing to report that AFMA (Australian Fisheries Management Authority) has written to all ETBF licence holders reminding them of their obligations under the ETBF code of practice for responsible fishing, to avoid where practical, fishing in areas where recreational fishing tournaments are in progress to minimise conflict. A number of GFAA and ANSA tournaments have been listed by AFMA. Recreational fishers are likewise obliged not to interfere with commercial fishing operations or to presume to act as officers of the law. This may seem a minor concession on the part of the commercial sector but at least it is a start in the right direction.

**Mako Sharks.** There has been wide criticism and concern over the Government's recent announcement that the capture of mako sharks by recreational fishers will be banned in Commonwealth waters after 29 January 2010. There is still some ambiguity over the effectiveness of the ban within state territorial waters and the subsequent announcement by Minister Garrett that capture and release of makos will now be allowed when carried out properly – whatever that means. ANSA in conjunction with Recfish Australia, GFAA and other concerned angling groups will continue to campaign for either a deferral or an exemption for recfishers pending a review of the Environment Protection and Diversity Act (EPBC Act) which has created the circumstances that have led to the ban being imposed. A copy of a joint media release issued by Recfish Australia and its members, including ANSA, is attached.

**Marine Parks.** There is frustration, annoyance and vocal objection to the ever mounting threat of access to long established and iconic fishing locations as a consequence of existing and newly proposed marine and terrestrial parks and reserves – every state has its own story to tell and it is evident that the threatened loss of fishing access is the number one concern for the great majority of recreational fishers.

The recent announcement of the Coral Sea conservation zone by Minister Garrett, without prior consultation with the recreational fishing sector is a classical example of disregard for recfisher interests. There is speculation that the Coral Sea decision was influenced by the aggressive lobbying of the USA based PEW Foundation. While at present Minister Garrett has imposed no fishing restrictions within the Coral Sea conservation zone there is strong pressure from the anti fishing lobby to introduce a total fishing ban throughout the conservation zone.

NSW, QLD and the NT are also in the firing line for the yet to be announced Commonwealth Eastern and Northern Marine parks. ANSA has participated in a number of stakeholder meetings across the eastern seaboard as part of the consultative process organised by DEWHA and will continue to actively engage with the Government on this very important development. It is expected that these new marine parks will embrace a range of zoning categories extending from highly protected to multi use. There will also be a geographic spread of the marine parks at numerous different locations across the entire coast to take into account the unique features of differing bio- regions and depths. A draft Eastern Bioregional plan will be released mid 2010 with the final plan due by end 2010. A minimum 60 day statutory public consultation period will follow release of the draft plan. An extension of the 60 days consultation period has already been requested to allow for an informed and appropriate response by stakeholders. It is intended that Recfish Australia will coordinate the recreational fisher response in conjunction with other peak bodies including ANSA. You can read more about the marine park creation process via the DEWHA website at [www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp](http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp).

To protect the sport of recreational fishing and access into the future it is essential that all recreational fishers become involved in the DEWHA consultation process and formally make their concerns known to Minister Garrett and their local Member of Parliament, regardless of political persuasion.

**Recfish Australia.** ANSA has renewed its membership of Recfish and retains a Board position currently held by John Burgess. The issue of ongoing funding for Recfish remains a major challenge and it is evident that the Commonwealth government for reasons unknown is not prepared to continue funding its own recognised peak recreational fishing representative body. All possible avenues of alternate funding continue to be explored but with no definite assurances. Sufficient funds are on hand to retain the full time Executive Officer, Len Olyott until the middle of 2010 but the board will need to make some hard decisions before then as to how Recfish Australia will continue to operate – it can either preserve what funding it has and revert to a volunteer body with no paid executive until a possible new source of funding can be found or it can continue to operate full steam until there is little cash left and then possibly be wound up which would be a great loss to the recreational fishing sector.

It is somewhat ironic that agreement was recently reached amongst the member bodies to rewrite the Recfish Australian constitution to facilitate an opening up of the membership to any group or body that has a legitimate interest or involvement in recreational fishing. The restrictive nature of the existing constitution has been a topic of past criticism by the government and by bodies that would like to join up with Recfish. The new constitution will go to a vote of members in the new year. Hopefully a number of interested new members will then sign up giving Recfish more kudos as a

broader based representative body and a better leverage with the commonwealth government for renewed funding.

Recfish has also joined as a member of the recently formed Boating and Fishing Council, a lobby group alliance established by AFTA, the BIA and others within the boating / fishing industry. The council will use its collective strengths to lobby the government on national issues affecting recreational fishers and boat users. A professional lobbyist, Dean Logan, has been engaged by the council and his initial focus will be on the Coral Sea conservation zone and the proposed eastern marine park. It is hoped the council may also be able to assist Recfish with renewed government funding.

ANSA members should take every opportunity to voice their concern over the future of Recfish Australia with their local members of parliament. We really do need to have an effective and well resourced national peak body to protect and advocate recreational fishing interests.

That's enough from me for now but its obvious that 2010 is going to be another challenging year for ANSA and all recreational fishers. To all members - best wishes for Christmas and a prosperous and productive fishing New Year from all the ANSA board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Burgess', written in a cursive style.

John Burgess  
Executive Officer / Director