



ADVOCACY  
COMMUNITY  
MEMBER DIVERSITY  
SUSTAINABILITY  
AWARENESS  
ACCOUNTABILITY

## annual report 2015 – 2016

Representing  
Victorian  
Recreational  
Fishers





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# foreword chairman



AS THE PEAK BODY FOR  
RECREATIONAL FISHERS,  
WE WILL CONTINUE TO  
PROMOTE VISIONARY  
OUTCOMES THAT WILL  
IMPROVE FISHING FOR  
ALL FISHERS.

It is with pleasure I present the 2015-16 Annual Report of the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body VRFish.

VRFish has moved forward over the year in a very positive way. Having consolidated itself as the “go to” state representative fishing organisation with a strategic plan and business plan, it is seen as the envy of other Australian state based fishing representative organisations.

This outcome has been achieved following some excellent outputs from our General Manager, Dallas D'Silva, Senior Program and Partnership Manager, Michelle Wenner (prior to her maternity leave) and our Communications and Marketing Officer, Katherine O'Shea-Korbut. Our communications have improved over the year and we are now being recognised electronically by the fishing community through controlled access to a large RFL database. Appreciation must also be given to our Finance Officer, Allison Wheeler, for her excellent financial assistance throughout the year.

VRFish relies heavily on the unpaid voluntary contribution from the eight State council appointed Board members and our valuable State Council members who are strategically located across Victoria. These committed and passionate volunteers contribute thousands of hours of their valuable time in promoting outcomes for the benefit of recreational fishers. The assistance from all the important Committees and Reference Groups is likewise appreciated.

Many positive outcomes have been achieved over the year by VRFish and our members which benefit all our states fishers. These include new boat ramps, boat ramp extensions, fishing platforms, solar lights, enhanced fish stocking agreements, maintaining access, promoting fish habitat enhancement, ongoing water for recreation, environmental flows and fishing opportunities. Due to ongoing consultation and collaboration with state government agencies, VRFish regularly generates submissions on a multitude of issues on behalf of Victorian fishers. This ensures the anglers voice is appropriately heard when decisions and outcomes that impact our current and future fishing experiences are being discussed.

Our close working relationship with the Boating Industry Australia and the Ports Minister, the Hon. Luke Donnellan is providing early signs of much needed governance and funding improvement to boating facilities and infrastructure. The outputs by VRFish and the BIA on this issue highlights that we have a comprehensive plan to achieve better boating facilities for the future.

VRFish is proud to have achieved a new way forward by running a future young leaders course and appointing several new future leaders to our State Council member base. We have made provisions for a new Future Young Leaders Reference Group and a Game Fishing Reference Group. These are two very positive steps that will hopefully promote future constructive outcomes and enhanced decision making processes.



VRFish has recently signed a MoU with the North Central CMA and we look forward to working closely with the CMA to assist the implementation of the Lower Loddon Gunbower Creek Native Fish Recovery Plan.

We have also signed a MoU with OZFISH Unlimited. We believe it is vital that all habitat projects in Victoria clearly demonstrate how VRFish and our state based agencies work in collaboration with each other to ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved.

Following a Federal government announcement regarding funding to move forward on a virus to control carp, VRFish invited Matt Barwick from Fisheries NSW to present a status report at a State Council meeting. Matt provided a detailed evaluation that also included a comprehensive recovery plan covering habitat enhancement, water flows, fish passage and a native fish restocking program.

*VRFish has moved forward over the year in a very positive way. Having consolidated itself as the “go to” state representative fishing organisation with a strategic plan and business plan, it is seen as the envy of other Australian state based fishing representative organisations.*

The overall plan if implemented appropriately would provide better habitat, cleaner water, increased river and waterway health and increased fishing opportunities. Following the presentation, the State Council offered support and endorsed moving forward with the implementation phase of this exciting carp control strategy. As the peak body for recreational fishers, we will continue to promote visionary outcomes that will improve fishing for all fishers. Several examples have been supported or are currently being considered by government agencies. The opening of Lake Eildon to year round fishing for Murray Cod was promoted by VRFish and we commend Fisheries Victoria for implementing this positive regulation.

VRFish is continuing to collaborate with Fisheries Victoria regarding lifting the closed salmonid fishing closure on three waterways in southwest Victoria. Our State Council members see this as a positive move as these waters are subject to catch limits and annual salmonid stockings in order to maintain viable fisheries.

We are also promoting an overdue new fish management regime for Rocklands Reservoir to include a summer native fish fishery. Since the implementation of the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline, Rocklands is now managed as a working reservoir with highly modified water management water regimes.

Several of our affiliated angler associations in the northwest of the State are also promoting better fisher access to Tullaroop Reservoir via kayaks and or electric motor

powered boats. This is another example of how VRFish and our members are working towards better fishing access and opportunities for all anglers.

As part of the current Labor Government *Target One Million* policy fishers are enjoying an unprecedented amount of funding towards growing fisher participation, commercial fisher buy-backs, fish stocking and other highly valued actions. If one was to add the funding for riparian action plans and CMA funding, a figure in-excess of one million dollars per week is being put towards better outcomes for fish resources and the States fishers. This is an excellent outcome that all anglers should be applauding.

In closing, I would like to extend my thanks and “all the best” to all the State Council members who have either considered or have submitted an application for one of the five vacant Board positions.

Let’s keep all our Victorian anglers fishing.



**Rob Loats**  
Chair  
VRFish



# report general manager



...ONE OF THE MEASURES  
OF SUCCESS FOR VRFISH IS  
THE AMOUNT OF FUNDING  
INVESTED BACK INTO  
RECREATIONAL FISHING.

In reflecting upon the 2015-16 year there are many achievements that VRFish can be proud of – either by directly implementing projects or by effective advocacy that leads to a favourable decision for recreational fishers.

The one thing that sticks out in my mind is the need to continue to embrace change and invest in tomorrow today. In June this year we delivered a leadership development program across the South East. The program was run in Port Fairy and involved a five day intensive live in course. The five new leaders have hit the ground running and are already contributing to make us a stronger organisation going forward. The program was supported by Fisheries Victoria and Fisheries Research Development Corporation, plus our partners from around the South East, including TARFish, RecFish SA and the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW.

Seeing future leaders develop and represent recreational fishers now and into the future is not only rewarding, it is helping to future proof fishing in the years ahead. The requirements to attend meetings, forums, committees and make sure recreational fishers have a say is constant and it is vital we help share this load better.

We set a high standard with respect to our code of conduct and business plan reporting to the Department. The Ernst and Young study was released in November last year measuring the economic contribution of recreational fishing in Victoria has been a significant achievement in its own right. Recreational fishing is estimated to generate \$7.1 billion in economic activity (including \$2.6 billion in direct output) and supports 33,967 full-time jobs in Victoria. This report has already paid for itself many times over and will continue to attract further funding and inform future planning.

The Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Jaala Pulford has been a strong supporter of VRFish and the need for a peak body to represent the views of recreational fishers. We have no regret in giving her the special title as Minister for Recreational Fisheries or for wearing her waders into Parliament! We thank her for her strong support to grow recreational fishing in this great State. I know that many fishing bodies at an interstate and national level are hoping to follow our lead here and attract a similar level of Government support for recreational fishing.

The Chairman has just signed a new four year funding agreement with the Government. The agreement recognises the valuable work that VRFish does to provide a voice on recreational fishing issues to all levels of Government and the community. We take this responsibility seriously and have invested in a new Strategic Plan that is underpinned by an annual business plan.

The new agreement better recognises the role that VRFish plays in advocating for better fish habitat, improved boating infrastructure and management of Commonwealth fisheries, in addition to our core role of promoting responsible and sustainable fishing practices.



Putting aside the many KPI's that sit in our annual business plan for one moment, one of the measures of success for VRFish is the amount of funding invested back into recreational fishing. The fact is that the total amount of Government *Target One Million* funding and investment from our licence fees are at an all-time high. That's not to say we can't do more, we all know we can, given the value of recreational fishing to the economy.

VRFish has been proactive on this front and we are pleased to say that the full cost of the removal of commercial netting from Port Phillip Bay, which is one of the signature commitments in the *Target One Million* policy, will be fully funded by Government and not from the Recreational Fishing License Trust. In years gone by, this may not have been the case but this timely advocacy means the existing services (eg. fish stocking, education and enforcement) and projects (eg. habitat improvements, research and monitoring) funded by the Trust can continue into the future.

*Seeing future leaders develop and represent recreational fishers now and into the future is not only rewarding, it is helping to future proof fishing in the years ahead.*

VRFish showed great leadership by supporting increases to the RFL fee on the basis that the changes were fair and reasonable and the extra revenue of some \$3 million annually will be invested back into improving fishing.

We have endured some staff changes this year with Michelle Wenner welcoming a newborn baby boy to the world. Michelle is on 12 months parental leave and we have welcomed Katherine O'Shea-Korbut as the new Communications and Marketing Officer. Katherine has been very enthusiastic. She has delivered a terrific edition of *Fishing Lines*, with the support of the Communication Committee in time for the Winter Boat Show.

The snapper survival project delivered by VRFish Board member Franz Grasser continues to break new ground in educating anglers and the community about barotrauma. We are seeing a higher survival of snapper over the last two years and this is a real positive outcome. This project has been recognised nationally as an industry leader.

VRFish stepped up its Federal Election campaign this year, in response to growing frustration within the local community and recreational fishers that appropriate action had not been taken to restore Long Jetty at Port Welshpool. Both major parties responded positively by committing the balance of \$4.8 million needed to get the job done. Regardless of the Federal Election outcome, fishers and the community can be sure that the Long Jetty Restoration Project will receive the required funding to complete the full suite of works.

VRFish sincerely thank Jaala Pulford, Minister for Regional Development and her predecessor, Peter Walsh, MP for

contributing \$5 million from the State Government. We also thank the South Gippsland Shire Council for allocating \$1 million towards the project.

A restored jetty will provide improved access for fishers of all abilities, especially families and elderly citizens. Improving fishing infrastructure such as piers, jetties and boat ramps will continue to remain a high priority for VRFish and our members.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board and State Council for their tireless support and dedication to the organisation. None of this would have been possible without the contributions from our members. Your commitment to VRFish and recreational fishing more generally is truly remarkable. A lot of this work is behind closed doors and tends to go unrecognised, so for the thousands of hours of unpaid volunteer work from our members, I say thank you.

Good fishing...stay safe on or near the water.



**Dallas D'Silva**  
General Manager  
VRFish



# company overview

OUR LEGACY:  
ENSURING FULL ACCESS  
TO A HEALTHY AND  
DIVERSE VICTORIAN  
RECREATIONAL FISHERY

## ABOUT US

The Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd ('VRFish') is the representative peak body that advocates for and represents recreational fishers in Victoria. VRFish is a not for profit organisation established in 1995 and is funded by Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) revenue.

VRFish commenced operations after a joint Parliamentary Committee recommended to the then Minister for Natural Resources that a peak body be set up to represent the interests of recreational fishers in Victoria. The organisation represents the interests of Victoria's 838,000 recreational fishers to government, the broader community and other interested groups. The organisation is the focal point for recreational fishing advice to and from the Government and is supported by a four-year funding agreement.

The organisation has gone through a considerable transformation over recent years, and has continued to evolve over the 2015/16 period to not only build on past successes but also to ensure it continues to stay in touch with evolving recreational fishing and broader community attitudes.

## VRFISH BOARD

VRFish is governed by a Board with a diverse set of business, policy, strategy, finance, information technology, administration and advocacy skills. These skills are complemented by an immense wealth of passion and experience in recreational fishing. The Board met a total of seven times in 2015/16. Board members during this period included:

Russell Conway - Chair  
(until 7 November 2015)  
Robert Loats - Deputy Chair  
(until 7 November 2015, Chair from November 2015)  
Steven Relf - Deputy Chair  
Trevor Buck (vale)  
Franz Grasser  
John Hotchin  
Priya Cardinaletti  
Geoff Fisher - Deputy Chair  
Joy Sloan

## VRFISH STATE COUNCIL

Pivotal to the organisation is the strong regional State Council structure that is in place with representatives from across Victoria. The State Council provides a transparent and democratic forum for members to develop policies on recreational fishing issues. It meets four times per year and is comprised of more than 60 delegates from inland and marine fishing clubs and associations across Victoria. We are also comprised of grass roots fishers from outside clubs and associations and have experience in the fishing tackle and retail industries. Our membership base is ever evolving and includes fishers from diverse cultural backgrounds.







# key successes

## advocacy *in fisheries management, investment and planning*

### WHAT IS FISHING WORTH TO VICTORIA?

In November 2015, VRFish was delighted to announce the results of the latest study into participation and economic contribution by Victoria's recreational fishing community.

The *Economic Study of Recreational Fishing in Victoria* undertaken by Ernst & Young and funded by the Recreational Fishing Licence trust fund provides updated figures on the number of people that participate in recreational fishing and the economic contribution made by recreational fishers to the State's economy, along with a range of other statistics.

Recreational fishing is estimated to generate \$7.1 billion in economic activity (including \$2.6 billion in direct output) and supports 33,967 full-time jobs in Victoria.

The Report also highlights the significant regional component to the economic contribution of recreational fishing to the Victorian economy, with Port Phillip region contributing \$1.3 billion, North West \$307 million, North East \$224 million, South West \$325 million and Gippsland region contributing \$381 million in direct output to the State economy.

The report is the only one of its kind in Victoria able to provide a benchmark on the level of participation and economic activity generated by recreational fishing. The Report will provide Government with a baseline to plan and measure growth in the sector. It highlights the importance of strategic planning and investment in improved access, infrastructure and stocking to support a growing and valuable activity and an important contributor to Victoria's economy, health and social fabric.

### RECREATIONAL FISHERS INVESTING IN BETTER FISHING FOR THE FUTURE

In March we welcomed moves by the Andrews Government proposing adjustments to the licence fee system for recreational fishing in Victoria. The changes are the biggest thing to happen to recreational fishing licences (RFL) in many years. We are pleased that our calls for a broad review of the current system have been acted on by the Government. The current system has been largely unchanged since it came into place more than 15 years ago.

The cost of improving recreational fishing opportunities (eg-fish stocking, habitat improvement and research) has risen over this period and it is important we have adequate resources to help maintain quality fishing opportunities in Victoria now and into the future.

VRFish is proud of the current investment model for recreational fishing in Victoria, having played a lead role in securing a dedicated Trust account in the Fisheries Act 1995 for all licence fee revenue raised when the 'all waters' licence was first introduced.

The RFL has since raised more than \$70 million and continues to fund a range of services and projects (eg. fish

stocking, fisheries officers, habitat improvement, fishing infrastructure, research and monitoring) that protect and enhance our valuable recreational fisheries. This system is the envy of many other jurisdictions across Australia.

When you add this to the Government investment from *Target One Million* funding, Victoria is leading the way in putting more money back into recreational fishing than ever before.



### A WORLD FIRST...TROUT COD FISHING IN THE NORTH EAST

We welcomed the official opening of recreational trout cod fisheries at Lake Kerferd and Lake Sambell near Beechworth in North East Victoria in August 2015.

In recent decades, State and Commonwealth governments along with recreational anglers have started to rebuild trout cod populations through stocking and habitat restoration efforts. Recreational licence fees have been used to stock trout cod into these lakes since 2008 with the intention of creating a put and take fishery allowing anglers to catch this iconic species.

This official opening occurred on the banks of Lake Sambell and is a key initiative of the Andrews Government *Target One Million* policy.

This is a great outcome for recreational fishers and the fishing related tourism benefits to the region will be significant – we have received calls from interstate fishers that can't wait to catch a trout cod from these stocked fisheries. It shows what can be achieved when recreational fishers, government and conservation groups work together.

The ability to legally target trout cod in these waters is a first - not only for Victoria, but for Australia. It is great that recreational fishers will be able to take their kids to these lakes to wet a line, many of whom may never have seen or caught a trout cod before.

*continued...*

# key successes

## advocacy in fisheries management, investment and planning



AS THE PEAK BODY FOR  
RECREATIONAL FISHERS  
WE WILL CONTINUE TO  
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OUTCOMES TO IMPROVE  
FISHING FOR ALL THE  
STATES ANGLERS.

### GAME FISHING UNDER THREAT

In May 2016 VRFish slammed calls from a faceless green group seeking the listing of recreational fishing as a key threatening process under federal environment legislation. A similar nomination was made in 2012 and it was rejected by the Federal Environment Minister.

The scientific tagging and data collection programs run by game fishers have helped fill vital information gaps and fishers continue to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars into research on game fish species.

VRFish strongly supports cooperative action by countries to ensure they address the real risk to game fish species such as thresher sharks, which includes targeted commercial fishing, by-catch, illegal and unregulated shark finning operations and the trade in shark fins. Targeted commercial fishing and trade in shark fins needs to be better managed and brought in line with Australian standards.

### PROTECTING OUR RECREATIONAL FISHERIES FROM THE GEELONG STAR

In February 2016, we called on the operators of the *Geelong Star* to stay away from our growing recreational game fishery for striped and blue marlin off East Gippsland.

VRFish worked closely with the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation (ARFF) and the Game Fishing Association of Victoria to submit a proposal that addressed many of the concerns that Australia's recreational fishers have about industrial scale commercial operations in the small pelagic fishery.

Under the plan outlined by ARFF, the proposal would have affected less than 10% of the 3 million square kilometres that the *Geelong Star* can fish as part of the Commonwealth SPF. The rejection of the ARFF proposal last year by SPFIA means that the *Geelong Star* is largely unrestricted in where and when it can fish.

The *Geelong Star* continues to work alongside game fishing boats on the south coast of New South Wales. This is simply unacceptable to the recreational fishing community and highlights the need to better incorporate recreational fishing values into the future management of Commonwealth commercial fisheries.

With warm waters off the east coast of Victoria in late summer and the emergence of a new broad bill fishery, Victorian fishers geared up to chase these mighty game fish out of Lakes Entrance and Mallacoota.

Recreational fishing in Gippsland is worth \$381 million to the Victorian economy annually and the lack of management by the Commonwealth to keep this vessel away from our key fishing grounds has potential to undermine the great work by the State Government to grow recreational fishing participation in Victoria.





advocacy *in fisheries management, investment and planning*

**CREATING A NEW MURRAY COD FISHERY IN ROCKLANDS RESERVOIR**

In April 2016, we challenged the previous thinking that has opposed the stocking of Victoria's most iconic freshwater native fish, the Murray cod into Rocklands Reservoir.

Rocklands Reservoir is a highly valuable water storage and is a popular site for fishing and boating.

This initiative would help offset the possible loss of fishing opportunities at Lake Toolondo should we not receive the required rainfall this year.

Translocation guidelines and a risk assessment would apply to the stocking and it is important this process is based on common sense and on real world experience.

Creating a Murray cod fishery in Rocklands would have many social and economic benefits to a region that has been impacted by dry weather conditions. Stocking Rocklands Reservoir with cod would also act as an additional source of genetic diversity that may assist future broodstock studies and stocking elsewhere in the Wimmera region.

**PORT PHILLIP BAY COMMERCIAL NETTING**

VRFish has had a strong stance against commercial netting in all bays and inlets for more than 20 years. The practice of setting hundreds of metres of nets across areas, such as the inner and outer harbour of Corio Bay, has been a longstanding problem for recreational fishers.

We pushed hard for a sliding cap on catches that will reduce commercial access as licences are removed. This is

a marked improvement on previous buyback programs that have tended to remove latent or less active licences, whilst commercial catch levels remain unchanged.

The Government has delivered a great outcome for recreational fishers in our biggest fishery, Port Phillip Bay, with close to 80% of commercial netting catch and effort removed in the first year of the program. This will mean better catch rates for recreational fishers for species such as snapper, King George whiting and calamari.

Over the last 15 years, commercial netting across Victorian bays and inlets has been phased out in places such as Mallacoota, Lake Tyers, Tamboon inlet, Shallow Inlet, Anderson Inlet, Sydenham Inlet and Western Port.

Over the last 12 months, VRFish worked closely with the Boating Industry Association (BIA) of Victoria and the Minister for Ports to improve boating infrastructure governance and investment in Victoria.

VRFish was successful in calling for the establishment of a new Ministerial working group on recreational boating facilities, which aims to achieve a better delivery model to address the gap between boat launching capacity and demand at peak times.

We have called for a funding model similar to our licence fees, where all boating fees are held in a special trust account and spent back on better boating. Franz Grasser, VRFish Board member, has been instrumental in working with the Government and Department to achieve a new and shared vision for the future. There is a huge amount of positive work going on behind the scene and we have much to be optimistic about in the coming years.



Murray cod fingerlings



# key successes

## advocacy *in boating and infrastructure*

### ANGLER ANGST OVER LACK OF PROGRESS ON SAFE HARBOUR BY WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL

In December 2015, we expressed our disappointment with the Warrnambool City Council on its decision not to proceed to a fully enclosed safe harbour.

This has been a long-standing issue and it is disappointing to see the Warrnambool City Council unable to reach a united position that will not only deliver safer fishing and boating, but also more jobs and investment in the region. The addition of a safe all weather boat launching facility would have increased the attractiveness of Warrnambool as a premier fishing destination throughout the year.

There is a multi-million dollar fishery just waiting to happen offshore from Warrnambool. Species such as tuna, snapper, kingfish, gummy sharks, mako sharks and thresher sharks mean the return on investment would be enormous. Much of this value currently bypasses Warrnambool and goes straight to Port Fairy, Portland or beyond to South Australia.

### BLUE ROCK LAKE REACHES ITS FULL POTENTIAL

VRFish has been a longstanding supporter of the need to remove fishing boat length and engine restrictions. In August last year, boating restrictions at Blue Rock Lake, near Moe, were relaxed to allow the use of larger vessels. We congratulate the Andrews Government for removing this red tape. In doing so, Blue Rock Lake will now become one of Victoria's best bass fisheries. Since 2002, more than 160,000 bass fingerlings have been stocked in addition to annual releases of trout. Jet skis and water skiing will continue to be deterred via a 15 knots speed limit that applies to all boats. We were thrilled to attend the official announcement by the relevant Minister's in August 2015.



Long Jetty, Port Welshpool

### SAFER FISHING AND BOATING FOR KINGFISH IN THE RIP

Kingfish stocks in Victoria are making a huge resurgence and with the increasing targeted fishing at the Port Phillip Heads there has been an increased risk of a serious interaction between large commercial ships and recreational fishing boats. The RIP is a high traffic area for commercial shipping and both anchoring and trolling is extremely hazardous and dangerous.

Led by VRFish Board Member, Franz Grasser, a grant was secured from the Boating Safety and Facilities Program. VRFish used the assistance of local angling clubs on the Mornington and Bellarine Peninsulas to distribute a map with safety messages specifically targeted to fishers in the RIP. This was an innovative low cost education project and it used a tailored approach to reach the specific target audience.

It has been regarded as a great success with the Port of Melbourne Corporation noting a higher level of awareness with the recreational fishers and a much reduced incidence of fishers potentially being unsafe in this critical area where commercial ships transit.

### THE LONG WAIT AT LONG JETTY OVER

In June 2016 we welcomed the announcement by both the Federal Coalition and Federal Labor Party to co-fund the full restoration of Port Welshpool's iconic Long Jetty.

Constructed in the late 1930s and at over 900 metres in length Port Welshpool's Long Jetty is the longest timber jetty in Victoria. A fire in June 2003 partially destroyed the historic structure and it was closed due to safety concerns.

VRFish stepped up its campaign, in response to growing frustration within the local community and recreational fishers that appropriate action had not been taken. Both major parties responded positively by committing the balance of \$4.8 million needed to get the job done.

VRFish would like to thank Russell Broadbent, Member for McMillan and Chris Buckingham, the Labor Candidate for McMillan for listening to the community and VRFish.

Regardless of the Federal Election outcome, fishers and the community can be sure that the Long Jetty Restoration Project will receive the required funding to complete the full suite of works.

VRFish thank Jaala Pulford, Minister for Regional Development and her predecessor, Peter Walsh, MP for contributing \$5 million from the State Government. We also thank the South Gippsland Shire Council for allocating \$1 million towards the project.



# advocacy *in fish habitat and water*

## LEAVING NO STONE UNTURNED AT LAKE TOOLONDO

Over the last 12 months we have left no stone unturned in helping to secure the trophy trout fishery at Lake Toolondo. Recreational fishing in the North West is worth more than \$300 million to the state economy annually and Lake Toolondo is a jewel in the crown. Fishers come from all over Victoria to fish the lake and visitation from other States is also common.

We called for a review of the Wimmera-Glenelg River and Environmental Water Entitlement determinations as changed climatic conditions and low water storage inflows over the last 30 years are impacting on water security supply and sustainable diversions.

Due to climate change Lake Toolondo faces long term challenges which will not dissipate with the predicted spring rains. The water levels are extremely low and there is a high level of urgency as the risk of a fish death event this summer is high.

VRFish supports secure water allocations for our premier stocked fisheries in lakes and impoundments and suggests a timely review regarding the current water allocations would provide an improved framework to secure the future of water resources and diversion capabilities in the region.

VRFish would like to thank the Andrews Government, Fisheries Victoria and GWM Water for the work they have done to date at Lake Toolondo. We would also like to thank local fishing gurus Trevor Holmes and Geoff Stock for their tremendous effort and support.

## RESTORING LOST SHELLFISH REEFS IN PORT PHILLIP BAY

VRFish has been a long-standing advocate and supporter for the restoration of shellfish beds in the Bay that were decimated by oyster, mussel and scallop dredging for more than 70 years. Restoring these shellfish populations will improve water quality and achieve a cleaner bay for future generations.

Our ex-Chairman, Bob Pearce has been instrumental in working with the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club, Fisheries Victoria and the Nature Conservancy to implement a pilot project aimed at testing the long term viability of restoring these once prominent reefs. We would like to acknowledge the support from both the previous and current Minister in the \$500,000 that has already been allocated for this project.

## NATIVE FISH RECOVERY PLAN AT GUNBOWER CREEK

Healthy and vibrant waterways are fundamental to the multiple shared benefits which they support. The Gunbower Creek is one such waterway which supports an array of very high recreational, social and environmental values. In this sense, we believe it should be a signature habitat and water project for inland waters. In recognition of the importance of this unique ecosystem, *The Gunbower-Lower Loddon Native Fish Recovery Plan* has been developed to help restore the health of the ecosystem and secure associated recreational

*continued...*



Lake Toolondo

# key successes

## advocacy in fish habitat and water

and tourism benefits which are of great importance to the social fabric of the regional community.

Under the plan, existing water entitlements are being delivered in a way which restores passage and connectivity for native fish and enhance fishery productivity, which in turn supports the recreational fishing for iconic species such as Murray cod in the area. The plan highlights the potential for existing water entitlements (including environmental and irrigation water) to be delivered and used in a way that has positive outcomes for a range of shared benefits and supports a multitude of values. We remain committed to working with the North Central CMA and other partners in attracting additional funding to implement the full plan.

### IMPROVING RIVER AND STREAM SIDE HABITAT

We also started the process to provide input into the *Regional Riparian Action Plan*, a key election commitment to develop a strategy to improve riparian land.

We applaud the Andrews Government for delivering an extra \$10 million in the May budget to improve riparian land including land that runs alongside waterways – across the State through on-ground works, such as fencing to manage stock and revegetation programs.

The five-year *Regional Riparian Action Plan* will accelerate on-ground work and introduce new initiatives to improve the health of waterways.

### VALUING AND PROTECTING THE YARRA RIVER

VRFish welcomes renewed focus on protecting the Yarra River and provided a detailed submission to the Discussion Paper released in June. The Yarra River is a popular fishing location in its own right with healthy populations of bream, eels, Murray cod, Macquarie Perch and mulloway to list just a few. The Yarra River is one of the most important drivers in determining the health of fish stocks in Port Phillip Bay.

### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PORT PHILLIP BAY

In February this year, we responded to the *Port Phillip Bay Environmental Management Plan Discussion Paper*. The new plan has potential to ensure a healthy ecosystem in the Bay for future generations. It is important to note that recreational fishers are one the largest direct users of the bay. From a state-wide perspective, it is our biggest and most valuable recreational fishery. We highlighted that recreational fishing is worth \$1.3 billion annually in the Bay, with more than 600,000 fishers and supports 8,400 jobs. Key recreational species are snapper, whiting, calamari, flathead, garfish and kingfish.

We emphasize the benefits of phasing out commercial net fishing in the Bay and how more investment is needed to address marine pests. We reinforced our long held view that marine national parks in the Bay are not a fisheries management tool and are not intended to provide for sustainable fisheries. Parks should not be seen as a panacea to achieving a healthy bay and sustainable fisheries.

### FISHERS FOR FISH HABITAT

Recreational fishers have attended and supported the 'Fishers for Fish Habitat Forums' across Victoria. These are a terrific opportunity for anglers to meet other anglers, share fish habitat stories and learn about how people can get involved in local projects.

Recreational fishers, other community members, CMAs, Fisheries Victoria and DELWP share common goals in fisheries and waterway management. The '*Fishers for Fish Habitat Forums*' provide an opportunity to strengthen these partnerships to work together for the improvement of fish habitat.

The Sale forum showcased fish and habitat restoration projects happening in Victoria and more locally in the Thomson River, La Trobe River and Tarwin River catchment. These initiatives are part funded by our licence fees.

### A NEW WATER PLAN FOR VICTORIA

VRFish was a member of and attended 4 meetings of the Stakeholder Reference Group overseeing development of the new Water Plan. We see this as a huge opportunity to set a new framework that better incorporates recreational fishing values into future water management decisions.

We pushed hard for greater recognition that better access to lakes and impoundments for recreational uses needs to be resolved and supported. This is critical from a health and wellbeing perspective for regional communities, especially during times of drought and water scarcity. Likewise, this applies to fish stocking and the importance of being able to stock lakes, impoundments and other drought refuges during times of water scarcity.





## community

In 2015 VRFish partnered with Fisheries Victoria to run the nine Regional Recreational Roundtable meetings across Victoria. These are a joint initiative that provide a great chance for recreational fishers to head first-hand what is happening across the State and raise local issues that are important to them. The meetings were promoted by VRFish through our membership and attendance at the forums was generally high.

VRFish convened four meetings of the State Council and advertised these meetings widely throughout the recreational fishing community. The Regional State Council meeting was held in Queenscliff in May 2016 and was attended by 40 member delegates from across Victoria. Key issues being addressed included the proposals to lift the closed season on Murray cod at Lake Eildon, tagging for rock lobsters, lifting the closed season on trout in the south west rivers, sand flathead management in the Bay and the formation of a new Statutory Authority to manage Victorian fisheries.

VRFish attended the Chinese New Year Festival in February at Footscray. This event was important in understanding Vietnamese fishing values, customs and raising awareness about regulations.



Future Leaders Course, Port Fairy

## member diversity

### GROWING FUTURE LEADERS

VRFish continue to actively review and enhance our membership diversity. We are especially committed to succession planning and knowledge transfer so that we have new leaders coming through the ranks.

After more than 12 months of planning, in June 2016 we ran the South East Future Leaders Course in Port Fairy. It was a unique opportunity for future advocates from four different States to experience cutting edge training and development and future proof recreational fishing in the years ahead.

The five day intensive course included fishers from NSW, Tasmania and South Australia. The course comprised of presentations from leading fishing personalities, scientists, managers and sector leaders.

The project was funded by our licence fees in Victoria and also NSW, plus Fisheries Victoria and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. We had great support from TARFish, the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW, Recfish SA, Recfishing Research and thank them all for investing in the future of recreational fishing.

### GROWING STATE COUNCIL DIVERSITY

VRFish has bolstered its State Council membership significantly, including a new member Mr Sam Cunsolo who administers the Murray Cod Fishing Facebook page with more than 11,000 members. Mr Cunsolo, given his cultural background, has added to the diversity of VRFish. This applies to new member Darren Gill, an unaffiliated fisher from Port Phillip Region who fishes a mix of salt and fresh water.

VRFish has worked closely with the newly formed Victorian Spearfishing Commission and the Australian Trout Foundation over the last 12 months. The VSC has agreed to join VRFish. We are currently in early discussions with the Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club about joining VRFish, who have close to 700 members.

### VALE TREVOR BUCK AND DON ELLIS

VRFish was saddened by the passing of long standing members Trevor Buck and Don Ellis. Trevor was highly regarded for his focus on fish habitat and environmental management. Don was President of the Metropolitan Angler Association of Victoria and was committed to achieving better access. With the support of Fisheries Victoria, both members will have their contributions recognised in a lasting way. The Torquay offshore artificial reef will be name Rev's Reef after Trevor and new fishing access platforms at Bemm River will be named after Don.

# key successes

## sustainability

### REMOVING RED TAPE AT SOUTH WEST TROUT RIVERS

In March 2015, the VRFish State Council considered a proposal from Scott Gray to remove the closed season for trout in south west Victorian rivers on the basis that trout populations in the rivers are not self-sustaining. The proposal aims to maximise fishing access and remove regulations that may be unnecessarily restricting fishing opportunities. Trout are an iconic freshwater species and are highly valued by anglers. In short this issue is perhaps a question of a trade-off between social values, rather than biological (sustainability) drivers.

This was followed by open discussion amongst members and guest attendees from outside the VRFish membership. Consensus for the proposal could not be achieved amongst the members, with some feeling that the management of trout in the south west of Victoria had sustainability implications, and others felt that management was purely on social grounds with limited rationale.

In May 2016, VRFish reviewed the results of the recent trout survey in the Hopkins and Merri Rivers. The survey aimed to help inform future management of trout fisheries in the south west of the state, especially the question about whether the current closed season should be maintained. Closed seasons are often designed to help protect spawning fish. The survey showed there was no evidence of natural recruitment from winter last year.

Previous studies from 1993 to 2003 have concluded that there is minimal natural recruitment and stocking is needed to continue the quality fishing opportunities now and into the future. There is no evidence of overfishing or non compliance by anglers. Fisheries Victoria believe this is primarily a social issue, rather than a sustainability issue.

The VRFish State Council considered the findings and a motion was put forward to remove the closed season from June to September in the Mt Emu, Hopkins, Merri and Moyne Rivers. A vote was taken by our members and the result was unanimous, with 100% support by all members present. VRFish will write to FV requesting regulatory change be made in 2017.

### COMMERCIAL NETTING AROUND GIPPSLAND LAKES RIVER MOUTHS

In March and April 2016, VRFish responded to the Government proposal to ban netting around Gippsland Lakes river mouths. Bream populations have been subject to heavy, opportunistic commercial netting at river mouths without the imposition of an effective catch control, such that it yielded a catch of 144 tonnes in 2007/08. To highlight the extent of the problem, catches in the years immediately before and after this year were only 49 and 36 tonnes respectively. No such corresponding three to four fold increase in recreational

catches occurred, which is far from satisfactory if resource sharing is to be taken seriously.

In providing our response, we discussed the matter with the Gippsland Association of Angling Clubs and other prominent local fishers from Gippsland that are not VRFish members. We consulted beyond traditional groups and sought feedback from concerned businesses and retailers in the region that have expressed concern with the decline in angler visitation to the region. We eagerly await the response from the Government.

### YELLOW BELLY CATCH LIMITS

In December 2015, VRFish was consulted on a proposal to reduce the catch limit for yellow belly in our lakes and impoundments. VRFish surveyed over 100 fishers across Victoria regarding their views and values in relation to the proposal. A large majority (85%) of respondents were supportive of the proposal to reduce catch limits.

The results of the broader survey align closely with the views of the State Council, which also expressed majority support for the proposal (approximately 80%). Fisheries Victoria utilised this information in making a final decision.

### UNDERSTANDING MURRAY COD FISHER BEHAVIOUR

Surveys have been used to assess fisher attitudes to and understanding of the new slot limits for Murray cod. Fisher behaviour and handling practices were also evaluated. VRFish repeated a survey of Murray cod fishers from December 2015-February 2016. Face-to-face interviews with fishers were undertaken during the Mulwala Cod Classic (which is a catch and release competition). Surveys were also conducted online via a Survey Monkey Questionnaire. Close to 900 valid surveys were completed. VRFish also developed a best practice handling poster which was distributed and communicated to respondents.

The results of the survey will yield a number of outcomes. Overall, respondents were highly supportive of the recently introduced slot limits for Murray cod (84.5% in support). This represents a significant increase in support (from 72.9%) from the survey conducted during 2014-15.

The importance of proper handling practices to recreational fishers has slightly increased since the previous survey and introduction of the slot limits for Murray cod (75.2% compared to 72% in 2014).



# awareness

## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The VRFish Communication Plan is all about improving our social licence and community understanding of the investment that recreational fishers make into protecting and enhancing our fisheries.

VRFish appointed a new Communications and Marketing Officer, Katherine O'Shea-Korbut who has been responsible for the production of our Fishing Lines magazine and organising events such as the Melbourne Boat Show.

VRFish produced two editions of *Fishing Lines* and monthly updates to our members. We maintained a strong visible presence with a stand at the Melbourne Boat Show which enabled us to integrate and communicate with members of the fishing and boating community. VRFish continues to update its website with current information and news.

After many years of hard work, VRFish has access to an email address database for recreational fishers who purchased their licences online. The database is currently 60,000 strong and is expected to exceed 100,000 in the coming year. Our communications will contain relevant information on all things fishing and will begin in the upcoming months. We expect to see a significant increase in followers to all of our social media platforms.

VRFish recognises the growth in social media and will explore alternate platforms such as Snapchat as a means of engaging younger fishers. We also recognise that social media has some limitations and face to face verbal dialogue is just as vital.

VRFish produced 25 media releases during 2015/16 on issues such as legislation to halt commercial netting in Port Phillip Bay, assessing Murray cod populations, changes in recreational fishing licence fees and Australia's first trout cod fishery.

# accountability

## FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

The Finance Committee met six times to help oversee management of our funds and provided regular reports to the Board. The VRFish Financial Audit was completed by LD Assurance and demonstrated a high level of governance with respect to our financial management systems and processes. For further details please refer to the summary in this annual report.

## NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOR VRFISH

The 2012-17 Strategic Plan is to be superseded by the new 2016-21 Plan. The new plan, in conjunction with the Business Plan, identifies the high level vision, objectives and actions to meet the broad VRFish outcomes. The Plan has been developed with the assistance of Dr Bruce Kefford, in close consultation with our Board, State Council members and recreational fishers starting in August 2015.

## NEW FUNDING AGREEMENT LOCKED IN

The Plan has helped inform the development of the next VRFish Funding Agreement, which expired on 30 June this year. A new four year agreement is now in place that better captures the expectations of recreational fishers on issues such as fish habitat, boating infrastructure and the management of Commonwealth fisheries, such as industrial commercial fishing of pelagic bait fish stocks.

The landscape for recreational fishing in Victoria has changed significantly since the last agreement was enacted. This is recognised in the new agreement and is due largely to the government's *Target One Million* policy. The *Target One Million* policy is the envy of other interstate recreational peak bodies and fishers.





Representing  
Victorian  
Recreational  
Fishers



# strategy



## OUR 5-YEAR VISION >

Enjoyable, responsible recreational fishing from  
abundant fish populations and safe, ongoing access

## OUR PRIORITIES >

### IMPROVE FISH HABITAT

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

### SAFE, EASY & ONGOING ACCESS

- > Maintain and extend access to fisheries
- > Improved pier and land-based fishing opportunities
- > Better boating infrastructure, governance and investment
- > Safer harbours for ocean fishing





# ic plan 2016 – 2021

n healthy habitat supporting  
ccess to fishing grounds.

**OUR GOAL >**  
Recreational fishing, for everyone,  
*...forever!*

INCREASE PARTICIPATION & RECOGNITION OF BENEFITS	BEST PRACTICE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT & INFORMED FISHERS	ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE, ADVOCACY & PARTNERSHIPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Promote and grow participation amongst non-fishers, especially youth</li><li>&gt; Affordable fishing opportunities</li><li>&gt; Quality fishing experiences and catch rates</li><li>&gt; Improved recognition of social and economic benefits</li><li>&gt; Stronger fishing clubs and associations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Adoption of responsible fishing practices and behaviours</li><li>&gt; Prioritised fish stocking</li><li>&gt; Science-based and responsible fisheries regulation</li><li>&gt; Greater investment into research, development and extension</li><li>&gt; Legislative recognition of recreational fishing</li><li>&gt; Improved aquatic pest management</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Quality governance and organisational processes</li><li>&gt; Greater accountability to stakeholders</li><li>&gt; Improved recognition and support from recreational fishers</li><li>&gt; Strategic and effective communications and engagement</li><li>&gt; Strong and constructive relationships with Government and stakeholders</li><li>&gt; Well tested and credible policy positions reflecting diverse membership</li></ul>



## young leaders



*Clockwise from top left:*

*Kris Leckie with a brown trout caught at Lake Wendouree.*

*Jo Howes with a 64cm brown trout.*

*Ross Therfall showing off his Murray cod.*

*Jesse Zaharin showing off his mighty cod.*

*Erhan Cinar caught this beauty fly fishing the Goulburn river in tight back water.*





# annual financial report **summary**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD  
ABN 47 068 111 624

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## DIRECTORS REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

The directors present their report together with the financial report of Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd ("the Company") for the year ended 30 June 2016, and the auditor's report thereon.

### DIRECTORS

The directors of the Company, at any time during or since the end of the financial period are:

Name:

Russell Conway (Chair) until 7 November 2015  
Rob Loats (Chair) from 7 November 2015  
Steven Relf  
John Hotchin  
Franz Grasser  
Trevor Buck  
Priya Cardinaletti  
Joy Sloan  
Geoff Fisher

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

### COMPANY SECRETARY

Dallas D'Silva

### COMPANY PARTICULARS

The registered office of the Company is: 10/158-170 Nelson Place, Williamstown VIC 3016.

Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd ('VR Fish') is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in Australia and having its principal place of business at the address listed above.

### 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.

### OPERATING & FINANCIAL REVIEW

The operating profit for the period ended 30 June 2016 amounted to \$8,959 (2015: profit \$11,302).

### EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO REPORTING DATE

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely, in the opinion of the directors of the Company to affect significantly the operations of the Company, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Company in the future financial years.

### INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE OF OFFICERS

No indemnities have been given or agreed to be given or insurance premiums paid or agreed to be paid, during or since the end of the financial year, to any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Company.

### LEAD AUDITORS' INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

The lead auditors' independence declaration forms part of the directors' report for the period ended 30 June 2016. This financial report is made with a resolution of the directors.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors:



Dallas D'Silva  
Director / General Manager



Rob Loats  
Director / Chairman

Melbourne 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016

STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
Revenue			
Core funding		436,665	425,923
Project Income		21,418	231,468
Other Income		80,714	32,043
		<u>538,797</u>	<u>689,434</u>
Expenses			
Administration		7,114	12,604
Advertising & Marketing		30,538	16,416
Audit		5,530	5,300
Board & Meeting Expenses		19,841	22,581
Conferences		-	8,653
Depreciation		2,109	3,433
Equipment Costs		4,237	3,305
Exhibitions & Conferences		7,228	4,684
Insurance		4,423	3,877
Motor Vehicle		1,564	984
Project Expenditure		80,078	251,683
Rent		16,140	19,665
Salary & Wages		286,975	266,785
State Council Expenses		28,973	25,514
Telecommunications		6,664	8,010
Travel		11,129	9,054
Other		17,295	15,584
		<u>529,838</u>	<u>678,132</u>
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year		8,959	11,302
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year		<u>8,959</u>	<u>11,302</u>

The above Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 24 to 28.

continued...



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	101,128	67,507
Trade and other receivables	4	17,494	22,500
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		118,622	90,007
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant & equipment	5	4,218	6,326
Intangible assets	6	682	682
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		4,900	7,008
TOTAL ASSETS		123,522	97,015
LIABILITIES			
Payables	7	492	492
Financial liabilities	8	(889)	244
Current tax liabilities	9	(809)	(3,782)
Provisions	10	29,694	13,986
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		28,488	10,940
TOTAL LIABILITIES		28,488	10,940
NET ASSETS		95,034	86,075
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		95,034	86,075
TOTAL EQUITY		95,034	86,075

The above Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 24 to 28.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

2016	ACCUMULATED SURPLUS \$	RESERVES \$	TOTAL EQUITY \$
Opening balance	86,075	-	86,075
Transfer to or from reserve	-	-	-
Comprehensive result for the period	8,959	-	8,959
CLOSING BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2016	95,034	-	95,034

2015	ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	RESERVES	TOTAL EQUITY
Opening balance	74,773	-	74,773
Transfer to or from reserve	-	-	-
Comprehensive result for the period	11,302	-	11,302
CLOSING BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2015	86,075	-	86,075

The above Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 24 to 28.

continued...

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Cash received from operations		597,114	723,216
Cash paid to suppliers and employees		(567,253)	(752,752)
Interest received		3,760	5,305
Interest and other costs of finance		-	-
Net cash provided by operating activities	11	33,621	(24,231)
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payments for fixed assets		-	(8,969)
Net cash provided by investing activities		-	(8,969)
<b>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Repayment of borrowings		-	-
Net cash provided by investing activities		-	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents held		33,621	(33,200)
Cash at the beginning of the year		67,507	100,707
Cash at the end of the year	3	101,128	67,507

*The above Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements set out on pages 24 to 28.*



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

### NOTE 1: CORPORATE INFORMATION

The financial statements of the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd (the "Company") for the year ended 30 June 2016 were authorised for issue in accordance with a resolution of the directors on 4 August 2016.

Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia.

### NOTE 2: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### (a) Basis of preparation

The financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Act 2001*.

Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

The ability of the Company to continue as a going concern is dependent upon continuance of existing financial facilities and support from related parties. The Financial Report has been prepared on the basis of a going concern as the directors expect the Company to pay its debts as and when they become due.

#### (b) Functional and presentation currency

These financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is the Company's functional currency.

#### (c) Use of estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future periods affected.

#### (d) Impairment

##### (i) Financial assets

A financial asset is considered to be impaired if objective evidence indicates that one or more events have had a negative effect on the estimated future cash flows of that asset.

An impairment loss in respect of a financial asset measured at amortised cost is calculated as the difference between its carrying amount, and the present value of the estimated future cash flows discounted at the original effective interest rate.

Individually significant financial assets are tested for impairment on an individual basis. The remaining financial assets are assessed collectively in groups that share similar credit risk characteristics.

All impairment losses are recognised in profit or loss. Any cumulative loss in respect of an available-for-sale financial asset recognised previously in equity is transferred to profit or loss.

##### (ii) Non-financial assets

The carrying amounts of the Company non-financial assets are reviewed at each reporting date to determine whether there is any indication of impairment. If any such indication exists then the asset's recoverable amount is estimated.

An impairment loss is recognised if the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount. Impairment losses are recognised in profit or loss.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the greater of its value in use and its fair value less costs to sell. In assessing value in use, the estimated future cash flows are discounted to their present value using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset.

Impairment losses recognised in prior periods are assessed at each reporting date for any indications that the loss has decreased or no longer exists. An impairment loss is reversed if there has been a change in the estimates used to determine the recoverable amount. An impairment loss is reversed only to the extent that the assets' carrying amount does not exceed the carrying amount that would have been determined, net of depreciation or amortisation, if no impairment has been recognised.

#### (e) Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purpose of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and investments at call, net of bank overdrafts.

*continued...*

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016 (CONTINUED)

### (f) Receivables

Receivables consist predominantly of debtors in relation to goods and services. A provision for doubtful receivables is made when there is objective evidence that the debts will not be collected. Bad debts are written off when identified.

### (g) Property, plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Any property, plant and equipment donated to the Company or acquired for nominal cost are recognised at fair value at the date the Company obtains control of the assets.

#### Depreciation

Items of property, plant and equipment (other than land) are depreciated over their useful lives to the Company commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets as follows:

Computer & IT Equipment	2-3 yrs
Office Equipment	3-5 yrs

### (h) Payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Company prior to the end of financial period which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

### (i) Employee benefits

Employee benefits comprise wages and salaries, annual, non-accumulating sick and long service leave, and contributions to superannuation plans.

Liabilities for wages and salaries expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in other payables in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date. Liabilities for annual leave in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date that are expected to be settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related services are recognised in the provision for annual leave. Both liabilities are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled and amounts expected to be settled after 12 months from the end of the reporting period are discounted. Liabilities for non-accumulating sick leave are recognised when the leave is taken and are measured at the rates paid or payable.

The liability for long service leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and 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 anticipated 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 national government bonds with terms to maturity and currencies that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

The Company pays contributions to certain superannuation plans. Contributions are recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income when they are due. The company has no obligation to pay further contributions to these plans if the plans do not hold sufficient assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in current and prior periods.

### (j) Leased assets and liabilities

Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense in the income statement on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

### (k) Revenue

#### Grants Funding

Grants from third parties (other than contribution by owners) are recognised as income in the reporting period in which the entity gains control, economic benefits are probable and the amount of the funding can be measured reliably.

#### Interest Income

Interest income is recognised as it accrues.

### (l) Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to a particular category they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

Support costs are those costs directly incurred in supporting the objects of the Company and include project management carried out by central administration.

Management and administration costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the Company and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016 (CONTINUED)

### (m) Income Tax

The Company is a tax-exempt entity for the purposes of Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

### (n) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as a current asset or liability in the balance sheet.

Cash flows are included in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows.

### (o) New standards and interpretations not yet adopted

The AASB has issued new and amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations that have mandatory application dates for future reporting periods. The application of these Accounting Standards and Australian Interpretations are not expected to have any significant impact on the Company's financial statements. Consequently, they have not been specifically identified here.

2016	2015
\$	\$

## NOTE 3: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

BB-CMTA	39,519	40,666
BB-CMTA - Project Account	61,520	26,037
BB-CMTA - Junior Fishing Fund	7	721
Petty Cash	82	83
	<u>101,128</u>	<u>67,507</u>

## NOTE 4: TRADE & OTHER RECEIVABLES

Trade Debtors	6,494	22,500
Prepayments	11,000	-
	<u>17,494</u>	<u>22,500</u>

## NOTE 5: PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT

Plant & Equipment		
At Cost	20,700	20,700
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(16,482)	(14,374)
	<u>4,218</u>	<u>6,326</u>

## NOTE 6: INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Patents and Trademarks - at cost	682	682
	<u>682</u>	<u>682</u>

## NOTE 7: PAYABLES

Trade Creditors	-	-
Superannuation Payable	492	492
	<u>492</u>	<u>492</u>

continued...



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016 (CONTINUED)

	2016 \$	2015 \$
<b>NOTE 8: FINANCIAL LIABILITIES</b>		
Visa Card	(889)	244
	<u>(889)</u>	<u>244</u>

## NOTE 9: CURRENT TAX LIABILITIES

FBT Payable	1,048	1,048
GST Clearing	205	(4,565)
PAYG Withholding Payable	(691)	1,244
Salary Sacrifice	(1,371)	(1,509)
	<u>(809)</u>	<u>(3,782)</u>

## NOTE 10: PROVISIONS

Annual Leave	29,693	13,986
	<u>29,693</u>	<u>13,986</u>

## NOTE 11: RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

### Cash flows from operating activities

Surplus/(loss) for the period	8,959	11,302
Add: Depreciation for the year	2,109	3,433
(Increase)/decrease in trade & other receivables	5,006	(11,487)
Increase/(decrease) in trade & other payables	17,547	(27,479)
Net cash from operating activities	<u>33,621</u>	<u>(24,231)</u>

## NOTE 12: SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of this report any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely, in the opinion of the directors of the Company, to affect significantly the operation of the Company, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Company, in future financial years.

## NOTE 13: CONTINGENCIES & OTHER COMMITMENTS

The Company has entered into a lease agreement for a Photocopier. Future minimum rentals payable under non-cancellable operating leases as at the reporting date are:

Within one year	2,045	2,045
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,873	3,918
	<u>3,918</u>	<u>5,963</u>

The Company has a lease agreement for office accommodation. Future minimum rentals payable under non-cancellable operating leases as at the reporting date are:

Within one year	-	-
-----------------	---	---

There are no other contingencies and other commitments as of 30 June 2016.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016 (CONTINUED)

### NOTE 14: 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 of the director or related entities during the period.

### NOTE 15: ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY

The Company is dependent upon Recreational Fishing Licence revenue received by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) to ensure the continuance of its operations. The current funding agreement is from 01/07/2016 to 30/06/2020 and annual funding is determined based on submission of a business plan and budget by VRFish to DEDJTR.

## DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The directors declare that in their opinion:

- a) The attached financial statements and notes thereto comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements
- b) The attached financial statements and notes thereto give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the Company
- c) The attached financial statements and notes thereto are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and the Corporations Regulations 2001

There are reasonable grounds to believe the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors:



Dallas D'Silva  
Director / General Manager



Rob Loats  
Director / Chairman

Melbourne 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016

Independent auditor's report to the members of  
VICTORIAN RECREATIONAL FISHING PEAK BODY LTD

## REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL REPORT

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016 and the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

## DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FINANCIAL REPORT

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Act 2001* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. Except as discussed in the qualification paragraph, we conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

## INDEPENDENCE

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001*. We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Corporations Act 2001*, provided to the directors of Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd, would be in the same terms if provided to the directors as at the date of this auditor's report.

In our opinion:

- a. the financial report of The Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd is in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:
  - i. Giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2016 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
  - ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

LDASSURANCE  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



Stephen O'Kane  
Partner  
Melbourne  
1 September 2016



**Auditor's independence declaration to under Section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001***

To: the directors of Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body Ltd

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit for the financial period ended 30 June 2016 there has been:

- no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the audit; and
- no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

LDASSURANCE  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



Stephen O'Kane  
Partner  
Melbourne  
1 September 2016

notes



# Recreational Fishing Code of Conduct

Representing  
Victorian  
Recreational  
Fishers



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. Recreational fishers should also show respect for other users of the aquatic environment. This Code of Conduct provides guidelines to minimise conflicts on the water, and should be adopted by all recreational fishers.



Awareness of and compliance with fishing regulations



Always seek permission when entering private property



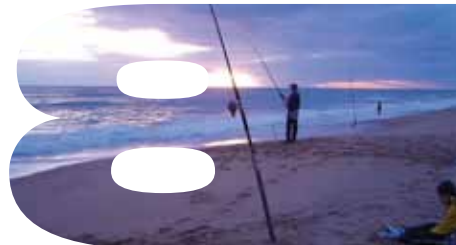
Respect the rights of other anglers and users



Use established access roads and tracks



Protect the environment



Attend to your fishing gear and value your catch



Carefully return undersized, protected or unwanted catch back to the water



Education - pass on your knowledge



Fish species and other organisms must not be relocated/ transferred into other water bodies



Respect indigenous sites and values

For a full version of the Code of Conduct, please go to:  
[www.vrfish.com.au/Corporate\\_Documents](http://www.vrfish.com.au/Corporate_Documents)

Savages Wharf PO Box 538 Williamstown VIC 3016

T 03 9397 6318

E [info@vrfish.com.au](mailto:info@vrfish.com.au)

W [www.vrfish.com.au](http://www.vrfish.com.au)

f [facebook.com/vrfish](https://facebook.com/vrfish)

t [twitter.com/vr\\_fish](https://twitter.com/vr_fish)



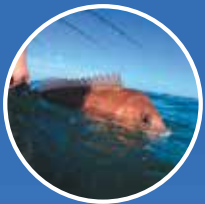
# Help released snapper survive



Fish shallow water  
to avoid barotrauma



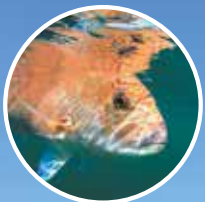
Leave snapper in the  
water for release



Minimise handling  
and netting



Use circle hooks  
or lures



Release snapper  
quickly

Snapper fishers  
can help the survival  
of released snapper  
by following these  
key points.

For further information  
on these points go to  
[www.vrfish.com.au/snappersurvival](http://www.vrfish.com.au/snappersurvival)

Representing  
Victorian  
Recreational  
Fishers



This project was funded by the Victorian  
Government using Recreational Fishing Licence fees

