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# *An Assessment of Licensing Arrangements for Tasmania's Marine Recreational Fisheries*

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Report prepared for the Department of Primary  
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## ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT

ACoRF	Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing (NSW)
AFANT	Amateur Fishermen Association of the Northern Territory (NT)
ALM	Alternative Licensing Model
AWFL	All Waters Fishing Licence (Vic)
CAREFISH	Cairns Recreational Fishing Industry Stakeholders (Qld)
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CR	Consolidated Revenue
DEFRA	Department of Food and Rural Affairs (UK)
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Canada)
DPI	Department of Primary Industries (Vic)
DPIPWE	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (Tas)
EBFM	Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management
EFTTA	European Fishing Tackle Trade Association
FAD	Fish Attracting Device
FCGP	Fishwise Community Grants Program (Tas)
FILMS	Fisheries Management and Licensing System (Tas)
FMA	Fisheries Management Agency
FRAC	Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee (Vic)
FRDC	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
IFS	Inland Fisheries Service (Tas)
IMAS	Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (Tas)
IR	Independent Revenue
IRO	Independent Revenue Option
MAST	Marine and Safety Tasmania (Tas)
MWL	Marine Waters Fishing Licence
NRIFS	National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey
PIRSA	(Department of) Primary Industry and Regions South Australia (SA)
PPV	Private Pleasure Vessel (Qld)
QAFCA	Queensland Amateur Fishing Clubs Association (Qld)
QFMA	Queensland Fisheries Management Authority (Qld)
RBFL	Recreational Boat Fishing Licence (WA)
RecFAC	Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee (Tas)
RFA	Recreational Fishing Account (WA)
RFAAB	Recreational Fisheries Account Advisory Body (WA)
RFL	Recreational Fishing Licence (NSW)
RFFTEC	Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (NSW)
RFFTF	Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Fund (NSW)
RFGP	Recreational Fishing Grants Program (Vic)
RFGWG	Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group (Vic)
RFIF	Recreational Fisheries Initiatives Fund (WA)
RFSTF	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Fund (NSW)
RFSTEC	Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee (NSW)
RFTLA	Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account (Vic)

RIS	Regulatory Impact Statement
RUF	Recreational Use Fee (Qld)
SARFAC	South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council (SA)
SMRCA	Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement (Tas)
SFR	Sports Fish Restoration (US)
SIP	Special Impoundment Permits (Qld)
TARFish	Tasmania Association for Recreational Fishing (Tas)
TCT	Tasmanian Conservation Trust (Tas)
VRFish	Victorian Recreational Fishing peak body (Vic)



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

The licensing of fishers is used world-wide as a key strategy in the management of many recreational fisheries. Contact details collected through the licence application process provides a database which can be made available for research and education as well as enabling estimations of fishing effort. Licence sales ensure that the level of management funding for recreational fisheries tracks the growth in recreational fishing and consequently management demands in developing fisheries.

This report has been prepared by an independent consultant and has been funded through the Fishwise Community Grants Program on the recommendations of the Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee (RecFAC). The report addresses the need to examine the strategic policy framework underpinning the current system of marine recreational fishing licensing in Tasmania, as identified by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) and RecFAC. In doing so, the consultant has worked collaboratively with DPIPWE in reporting on numerous issues including those relating to licence equity (i.e. the manner in which the pricing of licences accommodates differences in resource impacts and the capacity to pay among fishers), the perceived lack of strategy in the consideration of new licence endorsements and the instability in the licence revenue base.

In this report, the strengths and challenges of the prevailing licensing model for Tasmania's marine recreational fisheries are critically assessed. With a view to addressing the challenges identified, this report further investigates the potential suitability of alternative licensing models. In doing so, recreational fishing licensing models used interstate and overseas have been carefully considered. Structural features of these models have been 'condensed' into eight 'candidate models'. The models were then evaluated according to how well they addressed criteria developed in view of the challenges identified under the current licensing framework. While this report does not make explicit recommendations for the implementation of alternative licensing models, it is hoped that this research may provide valuable insight into addressing challenges identified for the current recreational fisheries licensing framework. It should be noted however, that there has been no change in policy regarding recreational fishing licensing arrangements by the Department.

The report is structured in three sections as follows:

- *Section 1* provides an overview of Tasmania's marine fisheries and the current licensing model.
- *Section 2* provides an overview of recreational fisheries licensing models and funding structures used in Australia and overseas.
- In *Section 3*, the licensing models outlined in Section 2 will be evaluated in terms of their perceived suitability as alternatives to the current model for Tasmania's marine fisheries.

## **Introduction and Overview of Recreational Fisheries Licensing in Tasmania**

The overall structure of the current licensing model has remained unchanged since 1995 and is based on the collection of licence fees from participants in fisheries deemed to be high value, high impact and/or requiring high management needs. As such, angling remains unlicensed and licence revenue is collected from around 17% of all marine fishers. Licence revenue is used to fund management activities, and programs and services conducted by the Recreational Fishing Section of DPIPWE. Additional State Government contributions provide for compliance services and research.

Between 1995 and 2008/09, overall licence revenue increased steadily and funds surplus to program allocations were available for disbursement through a community grants program. Thereafter however, licence revenue has declined considerably in line with resource based challenges in key licensed fisheries. A number of developments occurring as a result of a review of management program funding in 2009 have presented further budgetary challenges for the Recreational Fisheries Section. Consequently, program allocations have been curtailed, the community grants program has been suspended indefinitely and funding for the peak body (RecFAC) after 2014 appears uncertain. As these programs and services are wholly funded through licence sales, the absence of a strategic licensing policy framework presents obstacles in addressing budgetary and other challenges associated with the present licensing model.

While it could be argued that fluctuating revenues are a natural consequence of collecting licence fees from a specialised subset of fishers in predominantly single-species fisheries, budgetary issues are not the only challenges identified for the current licence model. The difficulties involved in contacting fishers outside licensed fisheries presents limitations for researchers and in the communication of management related information. Equity based limitations have also been identified. One limitation concerns deficiencies in the manner in which the licence fee structure accommodates the differing capacity to pay between individuals. Another limitation concerns the manner in which the licence fee structure addresses the relative impacts of fishers on fisheries resources.

## **Overview of Recreational Fisheries Licensing Models and Funding Structures used in Australia and Overseas**

### *Australia*

The variety of licensing and management arrangements in Australian States provides an opportunity to assess the merits of a range of alternative models. The Northern Territory remains the only jurisdiction with a fisheries management agency completely funded through consolidated revenue. All States have some type of licensed fishery access through permits, registration fees or explicit fishing licences. The 'coverage' of each access arrangement depends on the nature of the fisheries to which they pertain and the extent to which exemptions are offered. Changes to funding arrangements over the last decade or so indicate a general trend away from

a reliance on consolidated revenue towards a greater reliance on strategic revenue options, particularly fishing licences. This is consistent with a general trend of 'user pays' and cost recovery in natural resource management.

The applicability, popularity and success of a licensing model for a particular management jurisdiction is ultimately dependent on a unique blend of factors – resource-based, social, economic, cultural, political and historical. These factors make it particularly challenging to predict the success of alternative models in terms of addressing key objectives and gaining public support. While there are two recent Australian examples of proposed fishing licences that were not implemented due to a lack of public support, fishing licences that have been introduced have been generally endorsed by fishers. This has been largely due to the provision of additional programs and services of benefit to recreational fishers made available through extra revenue. The role of fishing licences in facilitating the engagement and representation of fishers in the decision making process, providing community grants funding and enabling effective communication and research also contributes to their general acceptance. For States without fishing licences, there is apparent overall support for them among management agencies and fisher representative bodies. Case studies of licence introductions in Australia and overseas, including issues surrounding community and political support are provided in Section 2. In Section 2.5.4, these case studies are summarised according to factors requisite in gaining public and political support.

#### *United States and Canada*

As in Australia, recreational fisheries in the US are managed by individual States. Of the 23 coastal States, only five have no recreational access requirements for marine fisheries. Otherwise, access arrangements vary markedly between States and include saltwater fishing licences, general (saltwater and freshwater) fishing licences and boat fishing licences. In seven States, fishers have the option of purchasing a freshwater licence, a saltwater licence or an all waters licence. Endorsements for high value species, specialised fishing gear and sensitive fishing environments are also offered as licence additions in most States. In Canada, saltwater fishing is managed at a Federal level while freshwater fishing is managed by individual provinces.

Most general access requirements for recreational fisheries in the US and Canada have similar examples among Australian States. However, there are two notable exceptions – a boat fishing licence whereby all boat fishers require a licence (Florida) and a 'conservation licence' whereby a two tiered pricing system distinguishes between high consumptive and low consumptive fishers (Ontario and New Brunswick). There are also a few 'features' of licensing models that may be of relevance for Tasmania if the current licensing framework is reviewed. These include higher licence fees for non-residents, exemptions or generous concessions for low income groups including tertiary students, lifetime licences, family licences and voluntary conservation contributions.

#### *Europe and the United Kingdom*

Most European countries have instituted freshwater license programs, and saltwater fishing licenses, permits or other access requirements exist in most coastal countries. Of the 21 coastal countries examined, nine have national marine fishing licences, seven have region-based marine licences or permits, six have boat fishing licences and two have combined saltwater and freshwater licences. In some countries, access provisions also pertain to gear types, fishing areas and high value species – either as endorsements to licences or as ‘stand alone’ permits. In the UK, saltwater fishing remains unlicensed while freshwater licences distinguish between migratory and non-migratory fish.

Notable features of recreational fishing access arrangements in Europe and the UK include decentralised management arrangements based on property rights and the prominence of fishing clubs and organisations. Due to these and other arrangements with longstanding historical legacies, most licensing and management models have limited relevance for Tasmania. Perhaps the most relevant model in terms of licensing for Tasmania’s marine fisheries is the recently introduced suite of fishing licences in Portugal which distinguishes between boat based and shore based fishing, with additional provisions for specialised fishing gear.

### **The Assessment of Alternative Licensing Models for Tasmania’s Marine Recreational Fisheries**

Informed by the challenges identified for the prevailing licensing model and by structural elements of licensing frameworks used outside Tasmania, eight general recreational fishing licensing models were presented. A two step process using ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’ criteria was used to assess the suitability of each model as an alternative to the current licensing model for marine recreational fisheries in Tasmania. During the first step, three models were eliminated from further consideration due to the identification of ‘fatal flaws’. The remaining five models are listed below:

1. A Marine Waters Fishing Licence (MWFL). This licence would require fishers to pay a standard fee for all marine fishing activities.
2. A MWFL with price differentiation between boat-based and shore based-fishers.
3. A MWFL with endorsements for high value and high impact fisheries. A MWFL would enable fishers to access most finfish fisheries whilst retaining the current system of endorsements. A variation of this model includes an additional endorsement for boat fishing.
4. An extension of the current endorsement model.
5. A boat registration levy.

The five models ‘shortlisted’ were assessed against their perceived capacity to address eight desirable criteria:

1. revenue security

2. revenue generating capacity
3. financial equity
4. resource impact equity
5. fisher engagement and representation
6. the ability to facilitate research and communications
7. community support
8. political support

Where possible, quantitative means of making assessments were used. Regardless, each model was given a score on how well they addressed each of the eight desirable criteria. The scores therefore provide a summarised comparison of the five models.

Some models 'performed' considerably better than others; both in terms of individual criteria and as an overall assessment. Of the latter, variations of the MWFL with endorsements received the highest aggregate scores. The combination of broadening the licence revenue base through a 'general licence' coupled with the use of licence endorsements to access high value and high impact fisheries was deemed to address the criteria most successfully. The ability to maintain a system of endorsements for high value and high impact fisheries, and its associated advantages, was deemed especially appropriate for the licensing of Tasmania's marine recreational fisheries.

# **1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERIES LICENSING IN TASMANIA**

## **1.1 PURPOSE AND OUTLINE**

Several years ago, the Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee (RecFAC) identified the need to examine licensing arrangements for marine recreational fisheries in Tasmania. This need was underpinned by a lack of strategic policy framework for recreational fisheries licensing and an understanding that the current model could be improved in terms of fairness and in its capacity to provide programs and services to recreational fishers. Subsequently, the Fishwise Community Grants Fund has provided funding for an independent consultant to work in collaboration with the Recreational Fisheries Section of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) to address licensing concerns of RecFAC, including:

- equity based issues (e.g. the collection of licence revenue from a small proportion of fishers)
- a lack of strategy in the consideration of new licence endorsements
- instability of licence revenue, and its effect on the capacity to fund the Fishwise Community Grants Program and the peak body for recreational fishing

The primary aim of this report is twofold: 1) to critically assess the current licensing model in view of the lack of a strategic licensing policy, and; 2) to investigate how identified challenges may be addressed through changes to the current model or the implementation of alternative models. The development of potential alternative models has been informed through investigating licensing models used interstate and overseas. The Department has supported the documentation and assessment of licensing models and has provided relevant information relating to licence revenue and expenditure. From the perspective of the Department, there has been no change in policy or political orientation with regard to licensing arrangements for sea fishing in Tasmania.

This report is structured in three sections as follows:

- Section 1 provides an overview of Tasmania's marine fisheries and the current licensing model to provide context for the study. The current budgetary position is examined in detail and information is provided in order to predict budgetary trends in foreseeable years. The last part of Section One identifies and discusses challenges and limitations associated with the current licensing model.

- Section 2 provides an overview of recreational fisheries licensing models and funding structures used in Australia and overseas. For reasons of relevance, the international component focuses on developing countries – New Zealand, United States, Canada, United Kingdom and European countries. Australian models are compared in detail according to their funding arrangements, the manner in which fishers are engaged in the decision making process and how well they facilitate communications and research. Case studies of recent fishing licence introductions and proposals in Australia and overseas are presented to provide the reader with an understanding of the process and issues involved, particularly as they relate to public and political support.
- In Section 3, the licensing models outlined in Section Two will be evaluated in terms of their perceived suitability as alternatives to the current model for Tasmanian marine fisheries. This will involve a three stage assessment process using essential and desirable criteria.

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION

Recreational saltwater fishing has traditionally been an important pastime for Tasmanians. While Tasmania is well established as a world-class trout fishing destination, readily accessible marine fishing opportunities are provided by a long coastline<sup>1</sup>. Being an island State, Tasmania has the highest coast to landmass ratio of all the Australian States. The convoluted nature of much of the coastline, particularly in the south-east, affords a diverse range of options to the fisher including bay and estuary fishing as well as offshore opportunities. The range of species caught is also diverse: in addition to finfish, a variety of shellfish, crustaceans and cephalopods are commonly targeted. It is likely that the diversity of fishing environments and target species coupled with the close proximity of fishing opportunities are largely responsible for Tasmania having the second highest recreational fishing participation rates in Australia. Despite having a world renowned trout fishery, 75% of all fishing effort in Tasmanian waters occurs in marine or estuarine waters [1].

Unlike other Australian States, marine and freshwater fisheries in Tasmania are managed by separate agencies. Freshwater fishing is managed by the Inland Fisheries Service (IFS), while marine fishing is managed by the Wild Fisheries Management Branch of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE). The IFS requires all freshwater anglers over 14 years to possess a fishing licence. For marine waters, recreational fishing licences are

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<sup>1</sup> The coastline length of mainland Tasmania is 4992 km. Including all islands (except Macquarie Island) the coastline length is 7997 km.

required to access fisheries deemed to be 'high value', 'high impact' and/or requiring high management needs. Such fisheries include rock lobster, abalone, gillnetting and scallops and generally required specialised equipment. Licences are not required for line fishing for any marine finfish or cephalopods, or for participation in 'minor' fishing activities such as spear fishing and the collection of oysters and mussels. Of the estimated 113,000 marine recreational fishers in Tasmania [2], about 17% currently participate in activities that require one or more licence types.

### **1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERY**

Unless specified otherwise, the information presented in the overview has been informed by the most recent survey of Recreational Fishing in Tasmania, which is for the 2007/08 fishing season [2].

#### **1.3.1 Fishing Participation and Effort**

Over the survey year, approximately 128,000 Tasmanian residents engaged in at least one type of recreational fishing activity. Of these, 88% (112,900), or 24.9% of the Tasmanian population aged five years or older, fished at least once in saltwater. Marine fishers accounted for about 493,000 fishing days over the 12 month period. While the median number of fishing days per fisher was five, the distribution was highly skewed with 20% of fishers comprising 56% of total fishing effort. Participation rates are highest in the rural and regional areas.

Fishing participation rates in Tasmania were reported to be the second highest in Australia in 2001 [1]; however, fishing participation and effort appears to be declining over time. Three surveys conducted since 1983 suggest a decrease in combined (saltwater and freshwater) fishing participation in both absolute and relative terms between 1983 and 2007<sup>2</sup>. In terms of effort, the average annual number of days fished (both saltwater and freshwater) per fisher in Tasmania fell from 6.55 in 2000 to 5.0 in 2007. Over this period, total saltwater fishing effort decreased by about 14%, which was largely attributed to a significant reduction in shore based effort.

#### **1.3.2 Fishing Effort by Fishing Platform**

Over 71% of all saltwater fishing activity occurred in inshore (<5km offshore) coastal waters, where boat-based fishing was more than twice as prevalent as shore based fishing. For estuarine fishing, which encompassed 26.4% of marine fishing activities, shore based fishing was about 1.6 times greater than that recorded for boat fishing.

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<sup>2</sup> Reported participation data for the 1983 and 2001 surveys did not distinguish between saltwater and freshwater participation



Offshore fishing (>5km offshore) accounted for about 2.2% of saltwater effort and was exclusively boat based. Overall, the breakdown of effort between boat and shore based fishing was about 62% and 38%, respectively. In terms of catch rates for finfish species however, relative attributions were less evenly distributed: boat fishers and shore based fishers caught about 84% and 16% of the total finfish catch, respectively. This demonstrates the effectiveness of boats in being able to access more fish than from the shore.

### **1.3.3 Fishing Effort by Fishing Mode**

Among saltwater fishers, angling was the most popular mode of activity, accounting for 77.5% of marine based effort. This was followed by lobster potting (9.8%), dive collection (6.5%), gillnetting (3.3%) and 'other' activities (2.8%). The latter includes beach seine netting, spear fishing and the use of bait traps. Overall, around 20% of all fishing effort in marine waters was for activities for which a recreational fishing licence is required.

### **1.3.4 Catch**

A wide variety of species are caught by recreational fishers in Tasmanian marine waters. In 2007/08, approximately 2.56 million finfish (excluding small baitfish) were caught – 1.44 million fish were retained while 1.12 million were released or discarded. Flathead dominated the catch with over 70% of all saltwater fish caught, followed by Australian salmon (7.4%), gurnard (3.1%), black bream (1.9%), tuna (1.8%), wrasse (1.8%) and mullet (1.5%). In terms of marine finfish *retained*, flathead were also the most dominant fish (71.0%) followed by Australian salmon (7.4%), flounder (2.2%), tuna (1.8%) and mullet (1.6%).

The 2007/08 survey also collected data to estimate state-wide annual recreational harvest per species. For many species, recreational catches were significant. In descending order, the five most significant species were flathead (292.6 tonnes), tuna (144.7 t), Australian salmon (48.1 t), trumpeter (19.1 t) and black bream (11.4 t). Over the survey period, recreational catch exceeded the annual commercial catch for numerous finfish species including flathead, flounder, mullet, cod, silver trevally and jackass morwong.

For non-fish species, around 0.84 million individuals were caught, of which 0.72 million were retained. In terms of numbers, scallops were the most commonly caught species group followed by rock lobster, Gould's squid, abalone, bivalves (i.e. mussels and oysters) and calamari squid.

### **1.3.5 Catch and Release Fishing**

The 2007/08 survey revealed that, while a large proportion of fish caught were released or discarded, few were done so according to the common perception of voluntary 'catch and release' fishing. Most fish were released to comply with regulations (i.e. fish were too small or bag limits were attained) or due to perceived poor eating qualities. Fishing with the intention of releasing fish for sports fishing purposes only appears to be a common practice among black bream and tuna fishers.

### **1.3.6 Demographics<sup>3</sup>**

Recreational fishing in Tasmania is considerably more popular among males than females, with participation rates of 35% and 18%, respectively in 2007/08. However, the participation declines mentioned above are more pronounced for males than for females.

In general terms, participation rates are highest among younger fishers. As such, the youngest age group (5-14 years) has the greatest proportion of active fishers (45% of males and 30% of females), whilst the oldest age group (>60 years) has the lowest proportion of active fishers (22% of males and 5% of females). Between the 2000/01 and 2007/08 surveys, participation declines were apparent for all age groups except for fishers aged over 60 years.

### **1.3.7 Boat Ownership**

Currently, over 28,000 recreational vessels are registered in Tasmania, while around 54,000 Tasmanians possess a motor boat licence [3]. It is estimated that around 80% of registered vessels are used for recreational fishing [4]. The number of licensed recreational boats has increased by 4.2% since 2001/02; however, since 2008/09, the rate of increase has slowed to an average increase of 1.8% per year [3].

### **1.3.8 Social Profile**

A recent study has evaluated the motivations, attitudes and awareness of Tasmanian fishers, both saltwater and freshwater [5]. In terms of fishing motivations, fishers nominated two non-catch related motives as being most important – “being outdoors” and “relaxing/unwinding”. This was followed by “catching fish for food”, which was rated significantly higher among saltwater fishers compared to freshwater fishers. The study indicated a growing focus on consuming recreationally caught fish amongst Tasmanians over time. In a broader context, Tasmanian fishers maybe

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<sup>3</sup> Values presented in this Section refer to all fishing in Tasmania, including freshwater fishing. Exclusive data for the marine fishery were not available.

somewhat unique as similar studies generally indicate a trend away from fish consumption as a motivating factor for fishing.

Tasmanian fishers demonstrated a clear preference for catching large fish over catching many fish. This sentiment was particularly evident among saltwater fishers. The vast majority of fishers also indicated that they prefer to retain enough fish for immediate consumption rather than keep all fish allowed within possession limits.

With regard to factors constraining participation, time demands relating to work were most frequently cited followed by time demands imposed by family commitments and issues of personal health or fitness. Compared with some related studies, activity constraints associated with fishing related expenses, crowding and a lack of accessible fishing opportunities were not prominent.

### **1.3.9 Economic Profile**

Recreational fishing related expenses represent economic activity for the regions in which they occur. In 2001, the average fisher in Tasmania spent \$416 on fishing-related expenses [1]. State-wide, over \$36 M was estimated to have been spent in Tasmania in 2000/01 that was directly attributable to marine-based recreational fishing [6]. Approximately 97% of this expenditure was by Tasmanians, whilst approximately 3% was incurred by interstate or overseas fishers. Almost 60% of total expenditure occurred in regional areas which illustrates the importance of economic activity in regional economies that is derived from recreational fishing.

In a recent economic valuation of recreational fishing in Tasmania's inshore saltwater line fishery and rock lobster fishery [7], survey respondents were asked about their maximum willingness to pay for their most recent days' fishing. Beyond what was already spent on consumables, the mean willingness to pay for line fishers and lobster fishers was \$78.18 and \$87.43, respectively. Interestingly, the number of fish or lobsters caught had no effect on mean willingness to pay. These figures demonstrate the value of recreational fishing to fishers and suggest that experiential dimensions are more highly valued than catch related dimensions.

## **1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE LICENSING FRAMEWORK**

### **1.4.1 A Brief History**

A licensing framework for Tasmanian marine recreational fishing has been in place since the early 1970s. At the time, three licence categories were evident: a lobster pot licence, a 'general dive licence' for the dive collection of rock lobster, abalone and scallops, and a recreational scallop dredge licence. In 1992, the Special Rock

Lobster Licence was introduced, allowing holders of a pot or 'general dive licence' an additional ten lobsters to their possession limit for a 14 day period.

A revision of the licensing framework in 1995 resulted in the splitting of the general dive licence into three separate licences for the collection of rock lobster, abalone and scallops. Three recreational netting licences were also introduced, which pertained to beach seine nets, mullet nets and graball nets (gill nets). While the regulations restricted the number of beach seine and mullet nets to one per licence holder, fishers were allowed to purchase two graball net licences each. The 1994 Policy Document and Fishery Management Plan [8] outlines the rationale underpinning the changes as follows:

*“To maintain charges for recreational fishing at reasonable levels and provide a fair basis of collection. To recover administration and management costs only in licensed recreational fisheries where gear used is similar to that used in the commercial sector, or where there is substantial expenditure by Government on enhancement or special management. Not to recover cost from, or introduce licensing in, low value high participation fisheries like line fishing for inshore species”.*

The new licensing framework was implemented under the *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995* (The Act). By disaggregating dive collection by fishery, and by introducing licences to access net fisheries, the new framework allowed catch and effort in high value and high impact recreational fisheries to be better defined and understood. As well as allowing for an estimation of overall impact of fisheries by knowing the number of licensed fishers, the contact details of fishers also provided a sampling frame for fisheries research and communications.

When the changes were implemented, the licence fee structure was changed. Rather than paying separate licence fees for each licence, a single recreational licence with 'endorsements' was introduced. Under this structure, fishers pay for a 'base' licence encompassing one licence 'type'. If more than one licence type is required, additional licences (or licence 'endorsements') would be charged at a far lesser rate. This system of licence endorsements was introduced to ensure that fishers were not charged multiple times for administrative costs when purchasing multiple licences.

In general terms, stakeholder groups supported the introduction of new licences providing that funds from licence sales would not be treated as additional Government revenue, but used for the benefit of recreational fishers.

Since 1995, the overall licence structure has remained unchanged; however, the following additions and removals of licence types have been made according to emerging management and research requirements.

- In 1999, a licence was introduced for catching rock lobster using up to four rings.
- In 2003, fishers were no longer entitled to purchase a second graball net licence.
- In 2007, recreational fishers were no longer permitted to catch scallops using dredges. Accordingly, the licence for this activity was rescinded.
- In 2010, a recreational set line licence was introduced<sup>4</sup>.

A review of the Scalefish Fishery was undertaken in 2009, from which fishers were consulted about the (then proposed) set line licence and game fishing licence. Numerous responses were received relating to these two licences as well as more general comments on recreational fishing licensing (see Appendix 1). These comments were broadly addressed in the *Tasmanian Scalefish Fishery Review: Final Report to the Minister on the Review of the Scalefish Fishery Management Plan* [9] in the following statement:

*“A contribution to the Fishwise fund to fund recreational fisheries management activities is not unreasonable, given the potential benefits the users reap and the requirements for the Department to manage the species taken. Revenue from licensing contributes to the special deposit and trust fund “Fishwise”. This fund collects money from a range of recreational licensed activities and contributes to the overall management of recreational sea fishing, including the production of the recreational sea fishing guide, fish measuring rulers, Fishcare Volunteer Program, recreational fishing surveys and the Fishwise Community Grants Program. A complete review of the recreational fishing licence framework is not in the terms of reference of this review. It is important to understand the importance of the endorsement system providing information about potential licence activities. A general licence system may provide a wider contribution, however may not provide the necessary information about potential fishing categories, as is the case with an endorsement system.”*

#### **1.4.2 The Current Licensing Framework**

While two licence types have been rescinded and two have been introduced since 1995, the overall licensing model has remained unchanged since the passing of the

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<sup>4</sup> A game fishing licence was also proposed during the 2009 Scalefish Fishery Management Plan Review which led to the introduction of the set line licence in 2010. However, problems associated with gear identification for game fishing activities, and limited public support through the public consultation process, were largely responsible for the proposal being withdrawn.

Act. The following activities remain unlicensed in Tasmania's marine waters - angling, spear fishing, the use of bait traps, small nets (i.e. landing, dip, bait and cast nets) and the collection of small shellfish such as oysters, mussels, clams, cockles and periwinkles. High value and high impact recreational fisheries are accessed through the following fishing licences:

- abalone;
- rock lobster (dive);
- rock lobster (pot);
- rock lobster (ring);
- scallop (dive);
- graball net (gillnet);
- mullet net (gillnet);
- beach seine net;
- set line; and
- special rock lobster licence<sup>5</sup>

For the 2011/12 season, a 'standard' licence costs \$49.00<sup>6</sup> (application fee of \$42.00 plus \$7.00 for the first licence). Additional licences cost \$7.00 each. Children under five years are exempt from requiring licences and concession rates<sup>7</sup> are available for holders of Commonwealth pension cards, Government issued seniors cards, and for persons between five and 16 years of age<sup>8</sup>. If fishers wish to add another licence type (in addition to ones/s already purchased) at any time during the season, an administration fee of \$7.00 is charged (to cover the cost of re-issuing a new licence card), in addition to the \$7.00 cost of the new licence type/s.

Aborigines are not required to hold fishing licenses for aboriginal fishing activities, but must comply with prevailing fisheries regulations. Aborigines may also apply for special permits for cultural or ceremonial activities.

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<sup>5</sup> The Special Rock Lobster Licence is not available as an endorsement on an existing licence, and requires the owner to be in possession of at least one recreational rock lobster licence. As such, the SRLC costs \$42.00, which is equivalent to the administration cost component of a standard licence.

<sup>6</sup> Licence fees are indexed to CPI inflation.

<sup>7</sup> The first concession rate licence for an individual costs \$28.00 (application fee of \$21.00 plus \$7.00 for first licence).

<sup>8</sup> A person under the age of 10 years cannot hold a rock lobster licence of any type

The recreational licensing year commences on 1 November and concludes on October 31; however, the season dates and closure periods for individual fisheries are set independently and do not necessarily align with the licensing year.

### **1.4.3 The Allocation of Licence Revenue**

Prior to 1995, (when the current licensing structure was introduced), all licence sales were paid directly into consolidated revenue and management services such as licensing and policy formulation were funded through a Departmental budget allocation. Since 1995 however, the disbursement of licence revenue and the allocation of funds required for recreational fisheries management has been restructured under the passing of the Act. Under the 'new' structure, \$255,000<sup>9</sup> from licence sales is collected as State Government revenue while the surplus is directed into the Fishwise Fund, which provides for several ongoing/core programs (Fishwise program allocations) and a community grants program (see below). When the Act was introduced, the Hansard report covering the parliamentary debate records that the (then proposed) Fishwise Fund was intended to "cover the administration of the licence system and for educational purposes and as a contribution towards the management of the resource".

#### *1.4.3.1 The Fishwise Fund<sup>10</sup>*

In broad terms, the Fishwise fund is a trust fund that provides revenue for both core management programs and the Fishwise Community Grants Program. Core funded programs are for ongoing management activities and are also termed Fishwise program allocations. Broad program categories are described as follows:

- *Licensing and Administration.* This includes funding for the recreational fisheries licensing system, database management, sales and distribution of licences, production and distribution of fishing guides and measuring tools for licence holders, a phone enquiry service, a Fishwatch phone service and the employment of one staff member at 0.44 full-time equivalent (FTE).
- *Recreational Fisheries Management.* Funds provide for core activities associated with recreational fisheries management, the employment of two staff (1 @ 1.0 FTE, 1 @ 0.4 FTE), and planning and policy development.
- *Communications.* Funds provide recreational fishing information services, the promotion of sustainable fishing practices, the production and distribution of

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<sup>9</sup> When the present licensing framework was introduced in 1995, it was agreed to retain \$255,000 in the consolidated revenue fund, which is the unindexed equivalent of the amount of licence revenue previously paid into consolidated revenue.

<sup>10</sup> Information outlined in this section has been provided through references [11] and [69]

recreational fisheries awareness materials and the appointment of one staff member (0.6 FTE)

- *Community Partnerships.* The Fishcare Volunteer Program, which was established to encourage responsible and sustainable fishing practices at a 'grass roots' level, employs three people (1 @ 0.8 FTE, 2 @ 0.6 FTE) and associated expenses within different areas of Tasmania.
- *Resource Management.* Funds are provided for the operation of the Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee (RecFAC)<sup>11</sup> which provides advice on fisheries management and policy issues and funding recommendations for the Fishwise Community Grants Program. Resource Management funding includes a contribution (0.16 FTE) towards the Recreational Fisheries Executive support Officer position to support RecFAC administration and a contribution (\$53,000) towards the Recreational Fisheries Research Officer at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS). Furthermore, this core funding component is also used to commission two recurrent research projects: the biennial recreational rock lobster and abalone survey and the general recreational fishing survey, which is conducted every 4-5 years<sup>12</sup>.

Following the allocation of \$255,000 into consolidated revenue and the funding of core programs described above, the surplus funds<sup>13</sup> (and any carryover funds from the previous year) are deposited into the Fishwise Community Grants Fund which provides monies for the peak angling body - the Tasmanian Association for Recreational Fishing (TARFish) – and the Fishwise Community Grants Program (FCGP). Both are described below.

#### 1.4.3.2 TARFish

Established in 2004, TARFish is the fully independent peak body representing the interests of recreational marine fishers in Tasmania. According to the TARFish website, the organisation provides the following benefits to recreational marine fishers [10]:

- The identification and resolution of issues causing concern to recreational marine fishers;

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<sup>11</sup> Most of the members are representatives from the recreational fishing community, plus a member each from DPIPW, IMAS, TARFish, TCT and the Marine Police. The committee also has an independent chair.

<sup>12</sup> Prior to 2009, both surveys were previously funded through the Fishwise Community Grants Program.

<sup>13</sup> Unlike other special deposit categories, Resource Management funds are managed independently and surplus funds are carried over within the Resource Management budget rather than deposited in the Community Grants Fund.



- The strength of a single unified voice speaking to government, industry and the community;
- The communication of information;
- The promotion of good fishing practices;
- The education of the community on respect for the environment;
- The pursuit of research into recreational marine fishing concerns and
- The promotion of happy fishing.

Prior to 2009, TARFish was funded from a Fishwise Community Grant Fund at a level of \$70,000 pa for the duration of a service agreement. At the time, TARFish received funds for additional projects through the Fishwise Community Grants Program (see below). As these additional projects were recognised as essential, the Minister agreed to fund TARFish \$130,000 per annum until June 2012. Of this total, \$120,000 has been funded from the Fishwise Fund while \$10,000 has been funded from State consolidated revenue. After considering a new service agreement proposal, and the advice from the Recreational Fishery Advisory Committee, \$132,000 and \$134,000 has been committed for TARFish for the next two years (Expiring June 2014). This entire amount is funded from the Fishwise Community Grant Fund, as the government's financial challenges precluded any extension of the funding agreement to be made from consolidated revenue.

#### *1.4.3.3 Fishwise Community Grants Program*

The FCGP awards funding for projects that aim to improve the management of marine resources and/or advance community awareness and knowledge of Tasmania's marine recreational fisheries. Since 1997<sup>14</sup>, the FCGP has funded projects pertaining to fishery assessments, biological research, social research, infrastructure, community engagement, education and awareness. The relative contributions of each of these funding categories per year since 1997 are illustrated in Figure 1.

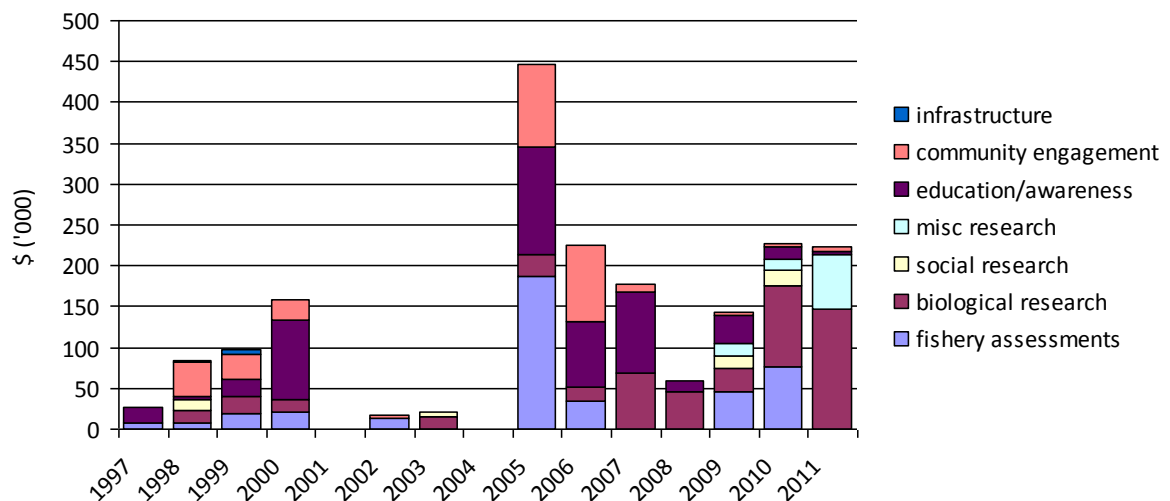
Applications for project funding rounds generally occur on an annual basis, depending on the balance of funds and in view of future funding commitments. The scheme is open to individuals, community groups, fishing clubs and associations, councils and research institutions. Applications are assessed on individual merit, including how well proposals accord with Fund objectives and research and development needs identified by RecFAC and the Department. The Funds commits funding for projects up to three years in duration. Notwithstanding the merits of individual applications, the amount of money allocated during a funding round is

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<sup>14</sup> Originally the Fund was called the Recreational Fishing Trust Fund. It was re-titled the Fishwise Community Grants Program in 2005.

also guided by the amount of funds available. As such, annual funding amounts have ranged between \$0 (2001 and 2004) and almost \$450,000 (2005).

Project proposals are assessed by the RecFAC which makes recommendations to the Minister, who has the ultimate authority to accept or reject applications. So far, the FCGP has funded almost 100 projects ranging from \$200 to \$157,000, with an average amount of almost \$21,000 per project.



**Figure 1.1.** Allocation of Fishwise community grants since 1997 according to project classification. Note: No grants were offered in 2001 due to insufficient funds, while no grants were offered in 2004 as the grants scheme was under Departmental review.

#### 1.4.3.4 Fisheries Adjustment Fund

The fisheries adjustment fund provides monies for shifts in resource allocations from the commercial fishery to the recreational fishery. Currently, \$122,000 remains in the Funds; however, recent contributions to or allocations from the Fund have not been made. The last time funds were accessed was in 2003 when remaining commercial fishing effort was 'bought out' from Georges Bay.

#### 1.4.3.4 Additional Expenditure on Recreational Fisheries

Total costs for the management of Tasmania's marine recreational fisheries are not fully cost recovered through licence revenue. The Tasmanian Government makes contributions to recreational fisheries in a number of ways, including through the broader management of Fisheries, legislation and policy development, compliance through policing and fisheries research service funding agreements with IMAS. It is estimated that the total cost of all State Government expenditure on marine

recreational fishing is in excess of \$2.5M p/a [11]. This amount includes Fishwise program allocations and monies allocated through the FCGP. Cost components that are not funded through Fishwise are outlined below.

- *Regulation Enforcement / Compliance Activities.* As DPIPWE does not have fisheries officers, compliance activities are conducted by the Tasmanian Police Marine and Rescue Division.
- *Research.* As noted above, the Fishwise Fund partially subsidises a recreational fisheries research officer at IMAS, and provides funding for costs associated with two recurring fisheries surveys, also at IMAS. The State Government also contributes funding through the Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement (SMRCA) with the University of Tasmania to maintain core research needs including the publication of fishery assessments. IMAS receives around \$120,000 from Tasmanian consolidated revenue for the appointment of recreational fishing research staff (one full time research officer plus other staff who spend at least part of their time on recreational fishing research). IMAS may utilise this funding and resources as in-kind support contributions for projects funded through external research funding bodies such as the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). Project funding or Co-contributions may also be considered through the FCGP.
- *Fisheries Management.* The Wild Fisheries Management Branch of DPIPWE employs staff who provide management services for all marine fisheries. Staff may be funded through a mixture of commercial fishing licence revenue and consolidated revenue. The interests of the recreational fishing sector are also accommodated through these management services.

## **1.5 CURRENT FISHWISE BUDGETARY POSITION**

### **1.5.1 Revenue**

In the 2011/12 year, \$1.174M was collected from licence revenue. Due to a decline in licence sales (see Figure 1.2), this value has been reduced from \$1.250M in 2009/10. After State Government consolidated revenue contributions have been taken into account, \$0.919M was retained in the Fishwise Fund and disbursed according to Fund principles and Ministerial directives. Licence sales for the last financial year represent an 8.5%<sup>15</sup> decrease in Fishwise operating revenue since 2009/10.

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<sup>15</sup> 9.1% when CPI adjusted

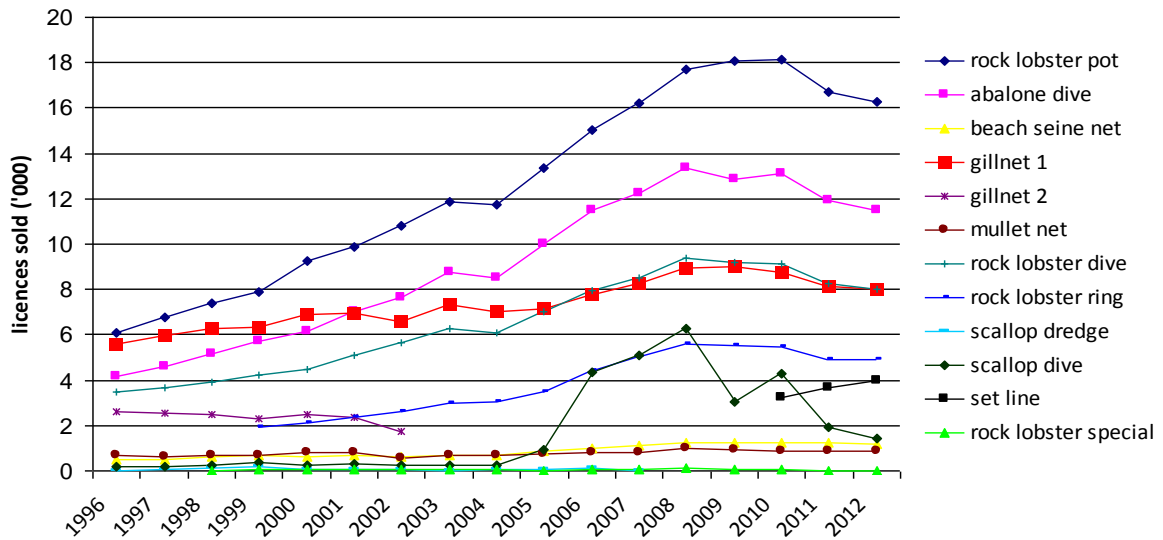


Figure 1.2. Number of licence holders for all recreational fishing licences since 1996.

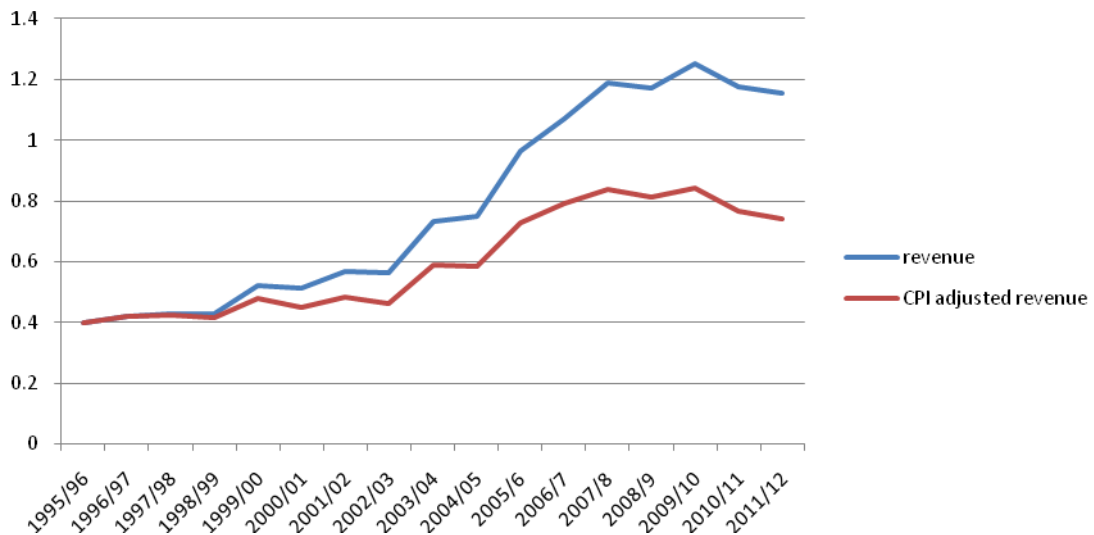


Figure 1.3. Actual and CPI adjusted recreational fishing licence revenue since 1996.

## 1.5.2 Expenditure

### 1.5.2.1 Fishwise Program Allocations

For the 2011/12 financial year, a total of \$852,898 was allocated across the five program divisions. However, resulting from a strategic budgeting exercise, a combined expenditure reduction of \$59,622 across four programs was made to address future commitments, decreasing revenue streams and increasing salary costs. Spending reductions were evenly spread between staff salaries and operating

expenses. Salary budgets were reduced for the the Executive and Administration Officer, the Communications Officer, and the State-wide Fishcare Coordinator roles. The reductions may be reinstated if Fishwise revenue increases. The budgeted and revised allocations for Fishwise programs are shown in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1.** Fishwise program budget allocations for 2011/12.

<b>Fishwise Program Allocations</b>	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Revised</b>	<b>Saving</b>	<b>Key Areas for Savings / Overspending</b>
Recreational Management	\$158,118	\$156,652	\$1,466	travel, printing
Licensing and Administration	\$156,745	\$157,542	-\$797	inflationary effects, printing
Communications	\$148,592	\$119,770	\$28,822	salary, travel for event promotions salary, meetings, volunteer
Community Partnerships	\$210,554	\$192,037	\$18,517	recruitment and training
Resource Management	\$178,889	\$167,275	\$11,614	travel, printing
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$852,898</b>	<b>\$793,276</b>	<b>\$59,622</b>	

#### 1.5.2.2 TARFish

As prescribed under a 2009 service agreement, TARFish was allocated \$120,000 from Fishwise funds in 2011/12, while a further \$10,000 was allocated to TARFish from consolidated revenue. However, under a new service agreement commencing July 1 2012, \$132,000 and \$134,000 will be paid to TARFish in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years, respectively. The agreed funding level effectively indexes the previous allocation to predicted inflation and replaces the \$10,000 State Government contribution with additional Fishwise monies.

#### 1.5.2.3 Fishwise Community Grants Program

At the commencement of the 2011/12 financial year, \$389,978 was uncommitted. During the 2011 FCGP funding round in September, \$223,007 in grants was awarded to fund seven projects. After accounting for monies that have been set aside to fund grant commitments and future TARFish commitments for the next two years, an uncommitted amount of \$40,099 was available in the Community Grants Fund at July 1, 2012. As the Community Grants Fund receives funds surplus to Fishwise program allocations, it is clear that without the spending reductions made in 2011/12, there would have been insufficient funds to cover budgeted expenses. The level of uncommitted funds will not enable a FCGP funding round to be conducted in 2012.

#### 1.5.2.4 Key Changes to the Fishwise Fund in Recent Years

To provide context for the current budgetary challenges, it is necessary to outline recent changes to Fishwise contributions and allocations. The following developments all occurred in 2009 and have impacted on the capacity of the

Fishwise Fund to provide services and programs, including the community grants program.

1. As mentioned, a service agreement with TARFish established the commitment of Fishwise funding at \$120,000 p/a till 2011/12. Previous to this, TARFish was allocated \$60,000 p/a<sup>16</sup> from the Fishwise Fund.
2. As a result of a review of Fishwise program allocations, an increased level of funding was allocated to Fishcare (Community Partnerships) to alleviate the reliance on the FCGP for items deemed to be core expenses. Previous to this, expenses associated with Fishcare volunteer training, the schools program, representation at major events and display materials were sought through the grants program.
3. During the same program allocation review, the amount allocated to the Resource Management component was increased to secure sufficient funds for fishery assessment surveys (conducted by IMAS). Previously, funds for these projects were sought through funding round applications to the FCGP. However, it was decided that these surveys, which are scheduled on a recurrent basis (i.e. the abalone / rock lobster survey and the general fishing survey), should be treated as core rather than discretionary expense items. In line with these changes, and in recognition of annual inconsistencies in funding non-annual research, any unspent Resource Management funds are carried over to the following financial year (rather than allocated to the FCGP).
4. Prior to 2009, the Recreational Fisheries Management program lines (i.e. planning and policy) were previously funded by an annual contribution from consolidated revenue. However, due to budgetary challenges experienced by the State Government, the entire program budget which in 2009 amounted to \$151,624 per year, is now sourced through the Fishwise Fund. When adjusted for inflation, this equates to a current value of \$161,853.

## **1.6 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED UNDER THE CURRENT LICENSING MODEL**

The challenges examined below have been identified and discussed by the RecFAC Subcommittee in a meeting held on Monday, April 16, 2012. Four broad challenges are examined: 1) insufficient licence revenue; 2) lack of funding security; 3) a limited contact frame for research and communications, and; 4) equity based issues. While Section Three will provide a detailed investigation of how alternative licensing

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<sup>16</sup> An additional \$10,000 p/a was also allocated from consolidated revenue

models may address these issues, factors underpinning the current challenges and ways in which they may be addressed will be outlined, where appropriate. It should be noted however that challenges associated with having separate management agencies for saltwater and freshwater fisheries in Tasmania (i.e. management resource inefficiencies and increased administration costs) will not be discussed. Such challenges are beyond the scope of this project as it pertains to marine fisheries only.

### **1.6.1 Insufficient License Revenue**

As outlined in the preceding section, licence revenue in recent years has not been sufficient to offset expenses. As a result, monies carried over in the FCGP Fund between budgetary periods in recent years have been continually eroded. Even with considerable savings made to Fishwise program allocations over the 2011/12 season, insufficient funds are available to pursue a community grants allocation round in 2012. Furthermore, while TARFish funding has been secured for the next two years, the ability to provide funding for the peak body thereafter remains uncertain and will depend upon a significant increase in revenue and/or further significant expenditure reductions.

Broadly speaking, the current budgetary challenges have largely arisen from a declining licence revenue base and structural changes to Fishwise program allocations introduced in 2009. At the time, it was hoped that licence sales and the CPI indexing of the price of licences would continue to increase in line with population growth and the fund would continue to have capacity to absorb the changes. Instead, licence sales have declined.

It is estimated that, in order to maintain the current (non-revised) level of funding for core expense items in coming years, approximately \$1.24M will need to be raised annually through licence sales. This amounts to \$66K more than was raised in the previous financial year. If this were achievable, there would still be insufficient funding for the community grants program, and Fishwise program allocations would not be increased from 2011/12 non-revised budget allocations.

To provide a community grants funding round consistent with the average annual amount awarded since 2005 (i.e. \$215K), \$1.455M would need to be generated through licence sales – an amount \$280K greater than the current level. At the conclusion of the current TARFish funding agreement (for which monies have been committed) on July 31, 2014, extra monies will need to be sought to extend funding for the peak body. Based on the 2013/14 funding level of \$134,000, an additional \$414K will need be generated beyond current licence sales to fund TARFish and a community grants funding round consistent with the average annual amount

awarded since 2005. This level of funding also assumes no increase in Fishwise budget allocations.

Clearly, the likelihood of generating licence revenue at this level appears remote and is dependent upon a considerable increase in participation within licensed fisheries. While the ability to predict participation trends is limited, an evaluation of the quality of fishing for each fishery in the foreseeable future may be instructive.

1. *Rock Lobster Fishery.* The decline in legal size lobster biomass over the past few years, particularly in areas accessible to recreational fishers, is well documented [12, 13]. As a result, catch limits were reduced; the personal daily bag limit was decreased from five to three lobsters for the eastern region. Assuming a correlation between fishing quality and participation, it is more likely that the downward trend in lobster licence sales will either continue or plateau rather than be reversed in the short term. In the longer term however, above average lobster recruitment over the last two years has been observed in stock assessment areas 1-4 which encompass the south-east, east and north-east coasts [14]. Over 85% of recreational effort occurs within these regions. Therefore, there is a reasonable likelihood that perceived improvements in lobster availability from 2014/15 may increase participation, and therefore licence sales.
2. *Abalone Fishery.* There is a decline in abalone stocks on the east coast. This decline is affecting the commercial fishery and does not appear to influence recreational participation [11]. Trends in licence sales indicate a strong correlation with sales of rock lobster dive licences (Figure 2). As such, the downturn in lobster (dive) licence sales, and the reasons underpinning this, are likely to be indicative when predicting abalone licence sales trends.
3. *Scallop Fishery.* As the overwhelming majority of fishing effort is concentrated in the D'entrecasteaux Channel, licence sales are largely pegged to whether or not the Channel is open for recreational scallop diving. The low number of licences sold over the past two years (Figure 2) while the Channel has been closed demonstrates this trend. Based on poor recruitment of scallops over the past few years [15], this trend is likely to continue in the foreseeable future. If recruitment is considerably increased in future years, it would take two to three years for scallops to attain legal size limits.
4. *Net Fisheries.* Licence sales for gillnets (both graball and mullet nets) have declined since 2008/09. While the reasons for the decline are not fully understood, the following factors are likely to be implicated. Firstly, compared to the general marine fishing population in Tasmania, net fishers are significantly older [16]. Over time therefore, a decrease in participation



should be expected as older fishers discontinue netting due to ailing health and fitness. Another study has shown a decreasing level of support for gillnetting between 2000/01 and 2007/08 for fishers aged between 30 and 59 [5]. This would suggest a continuation in the decline of gillnet sales, as fishers who are 'replacing' older fishers have lower levels of participation *and* are decreasing in their support of gillnetting. Observed participation declines may also be related to resource based challenges: a recent study has reported that between 1997 and 2010, the average number of fish retained per net set fell from more than six to just over four [16]. This observation is consistent with another study reporting a decline in the availability of key net fishing species including blue warehou and bastard trumpeter [17].

Based on these assessments, it is reasonably unlikely that licence sales over the next couple of years will be sufficient to address core expenses at their budgeted level, which would require an additional \$66K in revenue to what was collected in 2011/12. Unless additional revenue is sourced, the Recreational Fisheries Section will continue to undertake policy work and communications in a reduced capacity. Further possible budgetary implications include the following:

- the re-instatement of full-time hours for the Executive and Administration Officer, the Communications Officer, and the State-wide Fishcare Coordinator will be unlikely;
- the inability to address policy issues (i.e. broad recreational policy including recreational catch limits and charter boat fishery management plan) and limitation of Fishcare activities in schools; and
- previously funded communications services such as media advertisements (for responsible fishing) and representation at events such as Agfest may need to be suspended

Further to these issues, there is also uncertainty surrounding the cost of a number of operational expenses. Perhaps most prominently, a new contract for the manufacture of licence cards will need to be sought in 2012/13.

Clearly, prudent revenue predictions for the foreseeable future suggest that the Recreational Fisheries Section is unlikely to avoid a continued reduction in service capacity. Even less likely is the possibility of generating sufficient revenue to operate a community grants program. This scenario underscores the need to consider alternative or additional revenue sources, which will be presented in Sections 3 and 4 of this Report. In Sections 3 and 4, alternative licensing models will be assessed on their capacity to address the current lack of funding, as well as their potential to

provide funds *in addition* to the shortfalls outlined above. In view of this, the following section will outline how additional revenue could be used to extend programs and services to Tasmania's marine recreational fishers through both discretionary and non-discretionary expenditure. The programs and services described below have been informed through conversations with representatives from the Recreational Fisheries Section of DPIPW and IMAS as well as by observing projects funded in other Australian states (Section 2).

#### *1.6.1.1 Implications for Increased Funding*

Potentially, programs and services created or expanded as a result of increased funding can be classified as either non-discretionary (core funding allocations) or discretionary (i.e. disbursed through the FCGP). However, the separation of scope between the two is largely a function of the total amount of funds available. When greater funds are available, programs and projects previously regarded as peripheral to core roles and responsibilities may be annexed under an expanding set of core roles and responsibilities. This has been the case for the Recreational Fisheries Section since 2009, whereby funding for recurrent fishery assessments and the funding of TARFish and several Fishcare activities were enveloped as core expenditure components. As well as expanding the scope for core funding allocations, such developments also redefine the scope for discretionary funds by enabling a greater proportion of funds to be disbursed through the FCGP for community based funding proposals. In general terms therefore, a greater level of funds available to the Recreational Fisheries Section should shift the focus of the FCGP from financing projects deemed necessary by the Government to projects that reflect the concerns of the community. Therefore, unless specified, suggestions for programs and services that could be funded will not be made according to whether they accord with discretionary or non-discretionary expenditure.

*Fishing Access and Facilities.* A considerable proportion of additional funds made available for recreational fishing in Victoria and NSW in recent years have been spent on the provision of fishing amenities and the facilitation of access for shore based fishers. Of particular note is the building of fishing platforms and pontoons which have been extremely popular among fishers and are particularly effective in providing access to quality fishing opportunities to mobility impaired and elderly fishers. Other projects include the provision of fishing tables, measuring stations and shelters and the erection of signage at popular fishing areas<sup>17</sup>. Potentially, infrastructure based projects could involve collaborations with other Government

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<sup>17</sup> So far, approximately 60 fish identification and measuring signs have been erected near jetties, boat ramps and popular fishing spots around Tasmania. However, the Recreational Fisheries Section receives frequent requests from Fishcare officers and local councils for additional signs [11].

bodies (i.e. MAST, local councils), particularly for projects involving boat ramps, jetties and radio communications infrastructure for boat based fishers.

*Recreational Fishing Enhancement Programs.* Also recently popular in Victoria and NSW have been projects funded to enhance recreational fishing. These include the augmentation of fish stocks in overfished areas through supplementary stocking, the deployment of artificial reefs and fish attraction devices and the buy-out of commercial fishing effort in popular recreational fishing areas. Purchasing commercial effort in sheltered waters was instrumental in gaining public support for the implementation of recreational fishing licences in Victoria and NSW and may also be applicable in some Tasmanian waters<sup>18</sup>. Other ideas for potential projects that have been flagged by the Recreational Fisheries Section in recent years include scallop re-seeding in the D'entrecasteaux Channel to maintain a recreational fishery and the translocation of rock lobster to the east coast to promote fishing opportunities and ecosystem benefits [11].

*Research.* As pressures on fish stocks increase, expectations for the sustainable management of target and non-target species also increase. Accordingly, the scope for expenditure on fisheries assessments and more targeted biological research projects is continually expanding. Whilst fishers are the immediate beneficiaries of well managed fisheries, FMAs must also be accountable to the growing expectations from Federal Government (e.g. through ecologically sustainable development and ecosystem based fisheries management), environmental groups and the community at large (including non-extractive users).

As outlined earlier, funding allocations for research, including fishery assessments, represent a considerable proportion of non-discretionary (both Fishwise and Government funded) and discretionary (FCGP) funding. In fact, since 1995, 56% of all FCGP funds have been allocated to research projects (fishery assessments, biological, social and miscellaneous research). However, as the FCGP will be discontinued indefinitely, it is likely that some research needs of benefit to recreational fishers in the foreseeable future will not be addressed. Whilst additional funds could address research funding on an 'as needs' basis through the FCGP, a few recurrent research needs have also been flagged. These include the monitoring of inshore flathead stocks and offshore fishing surveys to assess fishing impacts on game (tuna and pelagic sharks) and deep water species (striped trumpeter and trevalla).

Furthermore, the recurrent general fishing survey could incorporate a social and economic survey component. This type of information may better inform FMAs in facilitating satisfying fishing opportunities, identifying and attending to diverse

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<sup>18</sup> Commercial effort was bought from commercial operators in Georges Bay in 2003. This has been popular with recreational fishers who consistently report improved fishing opportunities.

values and expectations, addressing non-compliance and understanding factors underpinning participation. It may also assist in understanding and addressing resource sharing and resource shifts.

*Compliance.* Numerous responses to the 2009 Scalefish Fishery Management Plan Review indicate general unsolicited support among fishers for an increased compliance presence. The responses further suggest such support is largely generated by fishers wanting to see 'value' from their licence fees and through observations of other fishers not complying with fishing regulations. Prior to the introduction of the 'all waters fishing licence' in Victoria, a survey [18] identified greater compliance presence as one of the most popular preferences for the allocation of (proposed) licence revenue.

*Community Partnerships and Engagement.* Additional funds could be used to reinstate a full time State Fishcare Coordinator. Scope exists to develop and expand the Fishcare in schools program and the Marine Links Program. Additional funds could also enable greater representation by the Recreational Fishing Section and Fishcare at community event such as shows and festivals.

*Communications.* Additional funds could be used to reinstate a full time Communications Officer. The reduced employment terms of the current Communications Officer has exposed numerous communications needs that are unable to be addressed. These needs include updating the DPIPWE website to incorporate interactive education and awareness material, greater advertising and promotions capacity including the sponsorship of responsible fishing segments on fishing television programs, and a greater level of cooperation with tackle stores in promoting responsible fishing material [11]. The rapid development of and increasing reliance on social media and interactive technologies has also exposed unaddressed communications needs. Additional funds could be used to address these through the appointment of a suitably qualified officer.

*Planning and Policy Development.* As outlined earlier, planning and policy development for recreational catch limits and charter boat fishing has not been addressed due to resource constraints. As Departmental staff are undertaking duties and roles that extend beyond their original prescription, their ability to undertake policy development has been limited. Projects that have been temporarily sidelined include a scalefish review that was scheduled for 2011/12. Furthermore, additional funds are required to progress a recreational fishing policy which has been identified by TARFish as a priority item.

*Summary of 1.6.1.1.* Community expectations of fisheries management agencies (FMAs) are increasing in Australia and overseas. To effectively attend to the numerous demands placed on FMAs, their capacity must grow more or less

consistently with growing expectations from increasingly diverse stakeholder groups. A reduced capacity to address mounting roles and responsibilities may undermine the ability of FMAs to perform their various roles in line with widespread expectations. It may also undermine effective co-management arrangements between FMAs and fishers and disenfranchise stakeholder groups when the ability to perform roles pursuant of ecologically sustainable and socioeconomically desirable outcomes is constrained. Ultimately, a decline in fisheries resource quality and/or insufficient means dedicated to facilitating rewarding fishing experiences may result in lower levels of fisher participation and effort.

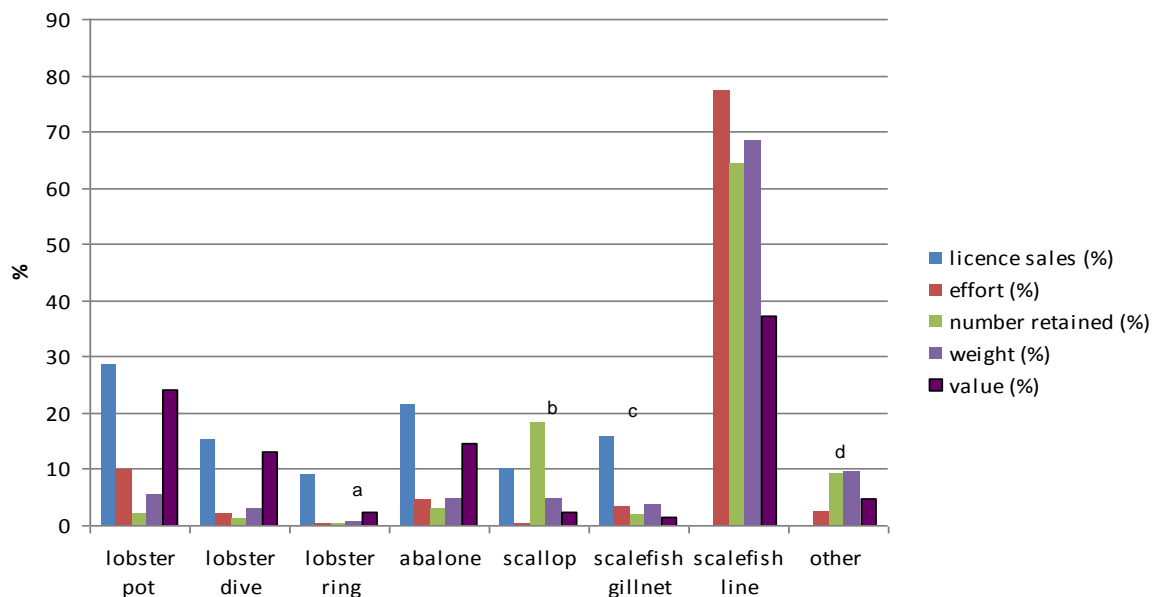
### **1.6.2 Lack of Funding Security**

Under the present framework, all monies used and administered by the Recreational Fisheries Section to manage marine recreational fisheries in Tasmania are derived from licence sales for fisheries encompassing approximately 22% of overall fishing effort (see Figure 1.4). The reliance on a small number of fisheries to provide funds for the entire marine recreational fishery represents a potentially unstable revenue base. This potential has begun to be realised over the past few years as the decline in rock lobster licence sales (coinciding with mounting resource challenges within this fishery) has resulted in a considerable decrease in licence revenue. Within the context of the overall recreational fishery, the rock lobster fishery constitutes about 12% of all effort but provides over 50% of licence revenue.

Whilst limiting licensing arrangements to high value fisheries only has equity based merit, the vulnerability of revenue to inter-annual fluctuations in resource viability is a natural consequence of collecting licence fees for fisheries representing a small proportion of overall catch and effort. In the case of the lobster fishery, the 10.8% decline in lobster licence sales over the last two years effectively reduces overall licence revenue by about 5.5%. The decline in abalone licence sales has further reduced licence revenue by more than 4% over the same period. As the abalone fishery has not experienced the same resource based challenges as the rock lobster fishery, it is likely that the drop in licence sales is pegged to the drop in lobster dive licence sales under the endorsement system: licence sales trends suggest that dive fishers who principally dive for lobster generally also purchase an abalone licence.

The recreational scallop fishery is another fishery that has experienced stock challenges in recent years. In 2008, the 6272 recreational scallop licences sold represented 13.7% of total licence revenue. However, the closure of the main recreational fishery (the D'entrecasteaux Channel) due to sustainability challenges has resulted in a dramatic decline in scallop licence sales. This has been particularly evident since 2009/10, which was the last season the Channel was opened for recreational fishing. Since this time, licence sales for the scallop fishery have decreased by 67%, which has translated to a 6.1% decline in total licence revenue.

As discussed earlier, predicted trends in resource viability (and cultural/values based shifts) for the next few years are likely to result in a continuation of the current trend in licence sales. While Tasmanian marine angling participation has also undergone a slow downward trend (since 1983), a broader based licence framework incorporating some or all angling activities would help ‘insulate’ against downward trends in licence sales in two ways. Firstly, by spreading ‘risk’ across a larger number of fisheries, participation declines in one fishery would have a lesser impact on overall licence revenue. Secondly, the potentially greater overall amount of revenue collected under a broader licence base would enable fluctuations in participation to be absorbed by the ability to maintain greater carry-over surplus funds or reduce discretionary spending.



**Figure 1.4.** Licence sales, fishing effort and retained catch (number, weight and market value) for individual fisheries expressed as a percentage of the whole marine recreational fishery for the 2007/08 season. Licence sales data were sourced from the Recreational Fisheries Section, DPIPWE. Data for fishing effort, retained catch and weight were taken from the *2007/08 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Tasmania* [2]. Gross weights were estimated by multiplying the number of animals retained by mean weights for individual species (for species where mean weight data was not provided, mean weights were estimated using values for ‘similar’ species). Data for fish values are based on average wholesale price per kilogram in 2007/08 and were provided by the Fisheries Monitoring Section, DPIPWE.

- (a) As lobster fishing using rings is a minor activity, data values for the number of lobsters caught were not provided in the 2007/08 general survey. As such, the relative percentages of catch numbers between the pot, dive and ring fishery (and therefore the values for gross weight and value that are based on catch numbers) were taken from the 2009/09 survey of recreational rock lobster and abalone fishing [12].
- (b) Licence sales for the 2007/08 scallop season were the highest on record. For the current season, the numbers of licences sold (1431), and presumably catch related measures, are significantly lower.

- (c) The annual number (and therefore gross weight) of fish retained in the recreational gillnet fishery as reported in the *2007/08 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Tasmania* [2] is considerably lower than reported in a subsequent and more targeted study – *Recreational Gillnetting in Tasmania: an Evaluation of Fishing Practices and Catch and Effort* [16]. Therefore, the graph may under represent the number, weight and value of fish retained.
- (d) “other” fisheries are predominantly cephalopods (i.e. squid and octopus)

### 1.6.3 A Limited Contact Frame for Marine Fishers

During the licence application process, the following personal details of applicants are obtained: name, date of birth, address and phone number. The recently implemented Fisheries Information and Management Licensing System (FILMS) will also collect email addresses in the upcoming fishing season. Records of these details in licence databases assist recreational fisheries management in the following ways:

1. by providing a sampling frame from which to conduct research on licensed fisheries;
2. by providing managers and researchers with a proxy measure of catch and effort in licensed fisheries; and
3. by enabling the targeted dissemination of management based information.

The manner in which the current licensing model enables each of these processes is discussed below. Particular attention is given to current limitations and how they may be addressed.

#### 1.6.3.1 Sampling Frame for Research

Researchers from IMAS conduct recurrent targeted surveys on all licensed marine fisheries by contacting fishers using contact details stored in licence databases. However, the absence of a database for the line fishery, which encompasses 78 and 68% of overall fishing effort and catch, presents challenges in identifying and contacting fishers for surveys. For the recurrent general recreational fishing surveys, respondents are identified through phone calls to randomly selected phone numbers from the White Pages directory. Identifying fishers in this manner adds significant costs and logistical difficulties to the survey process<sup>19</sup> and eludes the identification of the growing number of individuals who choose not to have a landline number<sup>20</sup>. It is estimated that this process of identifying fishers consumes approximately 30% of the survey costs for the general recreational fishing surveys [19]. Given the cost of the current general survey (\$200,000), 30% equates to approximately \$60,000. The

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<sup>19</sup> For the 2007/08 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Tasmania, attempted contact was made to 4632 households in order to identify 1192 eligible householders

<sup>20</sup> While people may choose to have their mobile phone number listed in the White Pages, a large proportion do not

exhaustive and expensive process required to access unlicensed fishers may also disqualify the conduct of smaller surveys on the line fishery which could be undertaken on a reflexive basis.

#### *1.6.3.2 Understanding Fishing Participation*

Annual sales data for licensed fisheries also provides valuable management information on fishing participation, from which overall catch and effort may be inferred. However, for non-licensed fisheries including most line fisheries, such data are not available. While fishing participation data for all fisheries is collected approximately every five years through the General Fishing Survey, a broader based licensing model that encapsulated line fishers would enable more accurate participation assessments to be made and on an annual basis. This would further enable participation trends to be better understood, including a better understanding of the factors influencing participation. As some factors constraining participation can be addressed by fisheries managers, the identification of factors causing downward participation trends may enable them to be addressed in a timely manner.

#### *1.6.3.3 Communications*

The absence of a sampling frame for most fisheries precludes the targeted dissemination of management based information relating to unlicensed fisheries. Such information includes fisheries management plan reviews and changes to rules and area closures. The ability to collect email addresses from licence holders through the recent implementation of FILMS will enable this type of information to be communicated more effectively and efficiently to fishers in licensed fisheries. However, for unlicensed fishers, less effective and more costly means of communicating information is required including television and newspaper advertising and the distribution of information brochures through fishing tackle stores. A wider contact frame would not only make communications more efficient, but targeted and timely communications may assist in rule compliance by ensuring that fishers receive the appropriate information.

### **1.6.4 Equity Related Issues**

The manner in which licence fees are structured raises questions about the performance of the current model in addressing equity related issues. While 'equity' is a broad term and may be used somewhat arbitrarily, the following section essentially addresses two 'types' of equity – *financial equity* and *resource impact equity*. Within the context of this study, financial equity refers to the degree to which the licence fee structure accommodates the differing capacity to pay between individuals while resource impact equity refers to the relationship between the



amount one pays for fishing and the impact one has on fisheries resources. While financial and resource impact equity are discussed separately in the following section, some aspect of the current licensing model that expose equity limitations are equally valid for financial and impact equity. As such, some measures that could be used to address both impact and financial equity may be valid for both. While some measures are suggested here, the manner in which alternative models can address equity is comprehensively discussed in Section Three.

#### *1.6.4.1 Resource Impact Equity*

Under a perfectly 'equitable' licensing model, a linear relationship exists between the amount an individual pays for fishing and an individual's impact on fisheries resources. While the logistical and administrative realities of implementing and managing access requirements for fishing would not enable a perfect model to be realised, licence fees may be structured to promote greater levels of resource impact equity. The current Tasmanian marine recreational fishing licence model is a good example of this as it is grounded in the premise that contributions are only required from high value and high impact fisheries, and/or those with high management needs. While these criteria are essentially equity-based, social and resource-based changes since the introduction of the licensing framework in 1995 justify a reassessment of these three categories to determine their current validity. This will be done by evaluating changes that question the distinction between licensed and non-licensed fisheries in terms of 'high value', 'high impact' and 'high management needs'.

1. *Value*. The market value of most finfish species has exceeded the rate of inflation since 1995, challenging the notion that scalefish fisheries are low value fisheries<sup>21</sup>. In fact, the market value for some finfish species caught in Tasmanian waters (e.g. bluefin tuna, yellowfin tuna, banded morwong, striped trumpeter) is comparable with scallops and rock lobster. Furthermore, the emergence of Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) challenges the concept of 'value' in terms of the significance placed on individual species within an ecosystem context.
2. *Impact*. Advances in fisheries science have led to the understanding that low levels of exploitation may have significant impacts on populations of some finfish species, thus challenging the concept of 'impact'. This is of particular relevance for long lived species (e.g. bream and snapper) and/or fishes with a

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<sup>21</sup> The Policy Document and Fishery Management Plan (1994) states the position of the (then) DPIWE to not charge licence fees for "low value high participation fisheries like line fishing for inshore species".

low reproductive potential (e.g. sharks). Also, from an EBFM perspective, the impacts of exploiting a particular species are not confined to target species.

3. *Management Needs.* In line with increased roles and responsibilities, core management costs have increased markedly, especially since 2009. Many of the increased costs are directly attributable to the management of line fishing including funding for TARFish and Fishcare and surveys on general fishing, striped trumpeter, sharks and tuna. As such, it is becoming increasingly difficult to assert that fisheries currently licensed are the only ones with high management needs. By extension, it is increasingly inequitable for a small percentage of overall fishers to provide revenue for the management of all marine fisheries.

These reassessments have clear implications for the type of fisheries that are licensed. Currently, only 17% of Tasmanian marine fishers participate in licensed fisheries and pay an average of \$56 each in licence fees. In addition to providing an insecure revenue base, this high concentration of revenue contributions from a small proportion of fishers is increasingly difficult to justify against a backdrop of rising management costs and responsibilities as well as social and resource-based changes.

While the manner in which resource impact equity can be addressed by broadening the licence base is discussed in Section 3, the lack of distinction in the financial contributions from avid and occasional fishers within licensed fisheries also exposes an equity limitation. Put simply, a licence holder who fishes for one day per year pays the same amount as somebody who fishes every day of the year. To address this, the introduction of short term licences, such as those available for freshwater fishing in Tasmania, could be considered. Inequity issues associated with catch retention are more difficult to address. However, DPIPW is currently investigating issues surrounding the introduction of maximum personal season limits for rock lobster.

#### *1.6.4.2 Financial Equity*

In practical terms, the financial equity within a licensing model is generally consistent with the manner and extent to which exemptions and concessions are offered, or if the fee structure recognises proxy measures of disposal income (i.e. through boat ownership). Currently, concession rates are offered to the licence application fee component for holders of Commonwealth pension cards, Government issued seniors cards, and for persons under 16 years of age. Potentially, and in view of concession structures used elsewhere (see Section 3), the range of social categories eligible for a

concession rate licence could be extended to other groups including tertiary students and holders of health care cards.

The high concentration of revenue contributions from a small proportion of fishers may also be viewed as sub-optimal in terms of financial equity. In effect, the cost burden of fisheries management is borne by a small proportion of fishers resulting in higher licence costs per licence holder than if the same level of licence revenue was collected from a higher proportion of fishers. The relatively high cost per fisher in licensed fisheries may discourage participation or encourage non-compliance, especially for low income social groups not covered under the current concession structure.

## **1.7 SUMMARY OF SECTION ONE**

In Tasmania, total funds for the management of marine recreational fisheries are broadly derived from two sources: 1) consolidated revenue contributions for compliance services and research and; 2) licence revenue for management activities, programs and services. Of the latter, the overall structure of the current licensing model has remained unchanged since 1995 and is based on the collection of licence fees from participants in fisheries deemed to be high value, high impact and/or requiring high management needs. As such, angling remains unlicensed and licence revenue is collected from around 17% of all marine fishers.

Between 1995 and 2008/09, overall licence revenue increased steadily and 'surplus' funds were available for disbursement through a community grants program. Thereafter however, licence revenue has declined considerably in line with resource based challenges in key licensed fisheries. This, combined with changes to Fishwise program allocations in 2009, have presented further budgetary challenges for the Recreational Fisheries Section. Consequently, program allocations have been curtailed, the community grants program has been suspended and funding for the peak body after 2014 appears uncertain.

While it could be argued that fluctuating revenues are a natural consequence of collecting licence fees from a specialised subset of fishers in predominantly single-species fisheries, budgetary issues are not the only challenges identified for the current licence model. The difficulties involved in contacting fishers outside licensed fisheries presents limitations for researchers and in the communication of management related information. Equity based limitations have also been identified. One limitation concerns deficiencies in the manner in which the licence fee structure accommodates the differing capacity to pay between individuals. Another limitation concerns the manner in which the licence fee structure addresses the relative impact

of fishers on fisheries resources. All challenges identified in Section One will be addressed through alternative licensing options in Section Three.

## **2. OVERVIEW OF RECREATIONAL FISHERIES LICENSING MODELS AND FUNDING STRUCTURES USED IN AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE**

In Australia, the management of recreational fisheries is the responsibility of individual States and Territories. Consequently, management and/or licensing models have evolved largely independently of each other. This independence has resulted in management models and revenue sources of Fisheries Management Agencies (FMAs) that are markedly different and reflect the diversity of fishing opportunities as well as social, cultural and political factors unique to individual States and Territories.

The two main sources of funding for recreational fisheries management in Australia are consolidated revenue and independent revenue streams derived from fishers i.e. licences, levies and gear registration fees. However, consistent with a general long term trend towards 'user pays' and cost recovery principles in natural resource management, FMAs are becoming increasingly reliant on independent revenue streams, particularly from fishing licences. With the exception of the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, all States have, to varying degrees, at least one independent revenue stream. Based on recent developments in Australia and overseas, fishing licences are an increasingly preferred revenue option as they have the capacity to provide sufficient revenue for ever growing needs and expectations from the recreational fishing sector. Compared to other independent revenue streams, fishing licences may also enable a better understanding of catch and effort, provide sampling frames for researchers, and facilitate the engagement of fishers in the decision making process.

In this Section, funding and management models of FMAs in Australia and overseas will be presented. Particular attention will be paid to licensing models, and where applicable, the issues surrounding recent fishing licence introductions will be discussed. The Section is structured as follows:

- Section 2.2 reviews the funding and management arrangements for recreational fisheries in Australia. Case studies for successfully implemented (Victoria, NSW, WA) and unsuccessfully proposed (Queensland, WA) fishing licences are provided.
- Section 2.3 compares funding and management arrangements for FMAs in Australian States, including Tasmania. Comparisons are based on type and level of funding, the manner in which management and licensing models foster research and communications, and the manner in which fishers are engaged in the decision making process. Particular focus is given to how Tasmania 'performs' relative to other States.
- Section 2.4 reviews the funding and management arrangements for recreational fishing in New Zealand, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Europe. At the end of the Section, key insights from the reviews

are provided, particularly with regard to their perceived applicability for Tasmania.

The information presented in this Section will be used to inform the development of alternative licensing models for Tasmania in Section Three.

## **2.2 AUSTRALIA**

### **2.2.1 Victoria**

Prior to 1999, Victoria had an 'amateur fishing licence' which was required for fishing inland waters and for rock lobster. In 1999, an 'All Waters Fishing Licence' (AWFL) – a general recreational fishing licence – was introduced in accordance with State Government policy. The licence covers all species and methods of fishing including angling, spear fishing, bait collection, dive collection and hoop netting (for crustaceans). Fishers on charter vessels also require a licence which may be purchased from charter boat operators.

In addition to annual licences, short term (2 day and 28 day) and long term (3 year) licences are also available. Unlike Tasmanian licences, Victorian licences are not season based: licences generally take effect from the date of purchase. However, fishers may choose to purchase a licence for a nominated time period starting within one year from the date of purchase.

Currently, an annual licence costs \$24.50. Both longer term (3 year: \$66.00) and shorter term licences (28 days - \$12.00: 2 days - \$6.00) are available. Exemptions are offered to fishers less than 18 years and over 70 years. Also exempt are holders of a Victorian Seniors Card (or interstate equivalent), Veterans Affairs Pensioners Card, Veterans' Affairs Repatriation Health Card or a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card. It is estimated that licence exemptions and non-compliance accounts for approximately 50% of all Victorian fishers<sup>22</sup>.

Costs associated with the management of recreational fishing in Victoria are funded through three revenue streams – licence revenue, consolidated revenue and the Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund. While some cost components are wholly funded through one revenue stream, others receive contributions from more than one source. The three revenue streams and associated expenditure components are outlined below.

#### *2.2.1.1 Licence Revenue and Expenditure*

Monies from licence sales are administered through the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account (RFLTA) which was established with the introduction of the all waters licence to improve recreational fishing opportunities in Victoria. The distribution of

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<sup>22</sup> This figure is based on the number of licences sold in 2010/11 (286,000) and the number of Victorians who fish at least once annually (550,000), as reported in the National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey [1].

RFLTA funds is determined by the Minister, based on advice from an expenditure advisory committee called the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group<sup>23</sup> (RFGWG). The RFGWG is comprised of eight fishers<sup>24</sup> and industry representatives appointed by the Minister based on their knowledge and experience in recreational fishing issues, and one independent Chairperson.

In 2011/12, almost \$6M was generated from the sale of over 268,000 licences<sup>25</sup>. In broad terms, monies from the RFLTA are used to fund a grants program plus expenses not covered by recurrent expenditure (consolidated revenue) or through the Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund. Non-grant related cost items funded through the RFLTA for 2011/12 include:

- operational funds for the recreational fishing peak body (VRFish);
- operational funds for the Victorian Fishcare program;
- operational funds for the RFGWG;
- salaries and operating expenses of some Fisheries Victoria Field Services staff;
- licence sales commissions;
- costs associated with the administration of fishing licences, the grants program and the RFGWG;
- advertising and publicity for the Recreational Fishing Licence and the Recreational Fishing Grants Program; and
- a contribution to Fisheries Victoria for fish stocking<sup>26</sup>

The Recreational Fishing Grants Program (RFGP) is an ongoing program that provides funds for projects of benefit to recreational fishers. Funding is allocated through three programs – a Small Grants Program, a Large Grants Program and a Commissioning Grants Program. For small and large grants, applications are open to individuals, groups and organisations. For commissioning grants, applications are restricted to the DPI.

*Small Grants Program.* The Small Grants Program provides funds up to \$5,000 for small projects. The Program is continuously open to applicants, year round, subject

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<sup>23</sup> The RFGWG replaced the Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee (FRAC) in 2009 through an amendment to the *Fisheries Act 1995*. The FRAC contained two representatives from the Department while the RFGWG has no Departmental representation.

<sup>24</sup> One working group member is nominated by the recreational fishing peak body (VRFish), while another member is appointed to reflect the views of fishers as identified by persons involved in the Victorian recreational business sector.

<sup>25</sup> A total of 268,484 licences were sold. This figure comprised 27,575 three-year licences, 134,890 one-year licences, 27,411 28-day licences and 78,608 two-day licences

<sup>26</sup> An annual contribution of \$200,000 per year is made

to the allocation of available funds for any given period. Funds are provided for, but not limited to, the following types of projects:

- The implementation or upgrading of fishing facilities. This includes solar lighting above fishing platforms, fish cleaning facilities, information displays and signage.
- The conduct of events or programs to promote responsible fishing practices, to improve angling skills and knowledge, or to increase participation in recreational fishing.
- The preparation of educational material to promote responsible/sustainable recreational fishing practices

Since its inception in March 2010, the Small Grants Program has funded 110 projects worth more than \$302,000.

*Large Grants Program.* The Large Grants Program provides funds between \$5,000 and \$100,000<sup>27</sup> through annual funding rounds held in February. In the 2010/11 funding round, over \$1M was allocated to ten projects. Funds are awarded for projects in the following four categories:

1. *Recreational Fisheries' Sustainability and Habitat Improvement.* Projects in this category should aim to maintain or improve catch rates. Broad examples of project types include fish habitat improvement programs and assessments of recreational fishing catch and effort.
2. *Recreational Fishing Access and Facilities.* Projects include fishing platforms and shelters, fencing, fish cleaning facilities, information displays and signage.
3. *Recreational Fishing-Related Education, Information and Training.* Examples of projects include the development of educational programs and displays to promote sustainable fishing, recreational fishing training programs, and the preservation of angling history.
4. *Recreational Fisheries Research.* This includes biological, ecological, social and economic research. Projects should provide outcomes that enable better management of recreational target fish species.

*Commissioning Grants Program.* These are generally awarded to large (>\$100,000) high priority projects that take more than one year to complete. They are also restricted to funding applications within the Department of Primary Industries. Four new projects were funded in 2010/11 at a total cost of over \$2.5M. These projects are: 1) the co-funding of nine artificial reefs; 2) the co-funding of the Building Northern Native Fisheries project; 3) the Angler Diary Program, and; 4) the production and distribution of education products to fishers. The latter include the

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<sup>27</sup> Multi-year projects of a total value of more than \$100,000 may be considered, though no more than \$100,00 is allocated to any project per year



Recreational Fishing Guide, rulers, measuring tools for lobster and abalone, and *Know Your Limits* pocket cards printed in different languages.

#### *2.2.1.2 Consolidated Revenue*

Cost components funded through consolidated revenue include policy development, field services, compliance services and fish stocking programs. Estimating total consolidated revenue funding for recreational fishing in Victoria was not possible due to the difficulties in disaggregating expenditure for programs and services that confer benefits to non-recreational fishing stakeholders. For example, compliance programs and fisheries research may also be of service to commercial fishers. However, when comparing State FMA funding levels in Section 2.3, it will be assumed that the amount of consolidated revenue funding in 1999 is still applicable. At the time, when the AWFL was introduced, the State Government pledged to maintain its \$4M annual contribution of consolidated funding for at least five years.

#### *2.2.1.3 Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund*

In 2011/12 budget, the Victorian Government announced a \$16M investment to improving fishing opportunities in Victoria through a grants scheme. The scheme is open to statutory bodies/Government agencies and incorporated bodies/associations. Applicants need to have their proposals endorsed by fisher representative bodies (e.g. VRfish) and where necessary, land managers such as local councils. Applications are assessed by a panel assembled by the DPI. Approximately \$4M will be spent annually over four years. Funding categories and examples of project types are outlined below:

##### *1. Fishing Access and Facilities*

- The co-funding of eight new artificial reefs
- Improving fisher access to jetties and roads
- Upgrading boat launching facilities
- The installation of fishing platforms and cleaning tables

##### *2. Fish Stocking*

- Re-stocking waterways affected by drought and bushfires
- An extension of native fish production capacity at the State hatchery
- The establishment of new native fisheries

##### *3. Fisher Engagement*

- The establishment of a multi-cultural liaison team
- The development of information products including a Victorian Fisheries smart phone application and multi-lingual signage

##### *4. Fish Ladder Installation*

##### *5. Protecting Fish Spawning From Commercial Netting*

##### *6. Fisheries Compliance*

##### *7. Fisheries Research*

- Artificial reef monitoring

- Re-evaluating fish stocking strategies

#### 2.2.1.4 Case Study: *The Introduction of the All Waters Fishing Licence*

The 'all waters licence' was introduced in 1999 as a result of Victorian Government policy. Prior to this, no licences were required for any type of marine angling and fishers were not engaged in the decision making process. Before publicly announcing a proposal for a fishing licence, the DPI commissioned two surveys [18, 20] to determine community support for an 'all waters licence' and establish public preferences for the allocation of licence revenue. Key outcomes from the surveys are as follows:

- When asked about their support for an AWL, 63% of fishers were supportive. When fishers were told that all licence revenue would be used to support recreational fishing, the level of support increased to 84-87%.
- Among fishers who were not supportive, the three most common reasons/concerns were: 1) revenue would not be used for recreational fishing; 2) a general opposition to new fees or taxes, and; 3) a licence would contravene fishers 'right to fish'.
- Five spending priorities were nominated as essential for fishers to consider supporting a licence: 1) improvement works on fish habitats; 2) the stocking of fresh and marine waters with fish; 3) new facilities such as fishing jetties, fish cleaning areas and access for disabled fishers; 4) greater compliance presence, and; 5) the availability of short term licences.
- The single most important uses of licence revenue were: 1) the stocking of fresh and marine waters with fish; 2) greater compliance presence, and; 3) improvement works on fish habitats.
- On average, fishers were prepared to pay \$26.75-\$31.80 for a licence; including those who indicated they would not pay at all. When these responses were excluded, the average willingness to pay was \$31.75-\$35.35.
- Anticipated compliance was conservatively estimated to be 81%.

The engagement of fishers in the allocation of licence funds was an important component of the 'all waters licence' introduction. At the time, the Fisheries Revenue Allocation Committee (FRAC) was assembled to provide fisher representation in the allocation of licence revenue, including monies disbursed through the RFGP, which was established to provide community grants from licence revenue. Another development was a greater level of transparency in funding decisions through making detailed annual reports relating to the RFLTA publicly available.

During the public consultation process, feedback from the fishing community provided a number of preferred terms and conditions which were incorporated within the 'all waters licence'. One was an agreement to maintain the existing level

of consolidated revenue funding for at least five years. This meant that licence revenue was not used to compensate for rescinded consolidated revenue.

Another development that helped garner public support for the AWFL was a voluntary buy-out of commercial fishing effort and licences from bays and inlets, including Port Phillip Bay and Westernport Bay. A portion of this was latent effort, and most of this was done on a voluntary basis. Initially, 108 operators left the fishery. Funding for this was procured through an interest free Treasury loan (Treasurer's Advance) which was repaid over the first few years after the AWFL was introduced. Since then, more operators have been bought out, mostly voluntarily except for commercial fishers in Lake Tyres, Shallow Inlet and Mallacoota in 2005. In total, 138 operators have left the commercial fishery [21].

### **2.2.2 New South Wales**

A general Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) was introduced in New South Wales in 2001. This supplanted a freshwater licence which was re-introduced in 1998 (after being cancelled in 1988) amid pressure from stakeholders who claimed their fishing experiences deteriorated from a lack of expenditure within the sector. Community recognition of the link between fisher contributions through licenses and benefits to recreational fishers was instrumental in the expansion of the freshwater licence to incorporate saltwater fishing [22].

As well as angling, a RFL is required for spear fishing, hand lining, hand gathering, trapping, bait collecting and prawn netting or when in possession of fishing gear in, on or adjacent to waters. Currently, an annual licence costs \$30.00. Both longer term (3 year: \$75.00) and shorter term licences (1 month - \$12.00: 3 days - \$6.00) are available. Exemptions are available to fishers less than 18 years, aboriginal persons, and holders of a Veterans Affairs Pensioners Card, Veterans' Affairs Repatriation Health Card or a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card. Also exempt are clients on charter boats or guided fishing tours if the charter boat operator or guide has a Recreational Fishing Fee Exemption Certificate. It is estimated that approximately half of all fishers in NSW are recreational fishing licence holders. This assessment is based on an annual participation rate of around 1 million fishers reported in the National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey [1] and the number of current licence holders (~500,000). As fisher compliance with the RFL is estimated to be around 85% [23], the proportion of fishers eligible for licence exemptions is further estimated to be around 43%.

Since the RFL was introduced, annual licence revenue has ranged between \$8M in 2001/02 and \$13M in 2011/12. The NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts Investment Plan estimates that licence revenue will fluctuate between \$10M and \$12M in future years [24]. Costs associated with the management of recreational fishing in NSW are funded through both licence revenue and consolidated revenue. While some cost components are wholly funded through one revenue stream, others receive contributions from both. Both revenue streams and associated expenditure components are outlined below.

### 2.2.2.1 Licence Revenue and Expenditure

All licence fee revenue is paid into either the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust Fund (RFSTF) or the Recreational Fishing (Freshwater) Trust Fund (RFFTF), which in turn provide funds for the improvement of saltwater and freshwater fishing, respectively. The distribution of monies between the two Trust Funds is done according to fishing participation patterns; a 70%/30% split for saltwater and freshwater Trust accounts, respectively. While most of the funds are used for projects within the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), anyone is eligible to apply for funding including individuals, fishing clubs and organisations, universities, councils and community groups.

Monies from the trust funds are allocated through the Small Grants Program (<10,000) and the Large Grants Program (>\$10,000). While submissions for the former are accepted year-round, funding applications for the Large Grants Program are accepted during an annual funding round.

Two expenditure Committees – the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFSTEC) and the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee (RFFTEC) – assesses funding applications, set funding priorities, and oversee expenditure for each of the two trust funds. The Committees are composed of eight anglers (each representing a different region within NSW), a representative from both the DPI and the Australian Fishing Tackle Association and a Chairperson. The RFSTEC also consists of representatives from the Nature Conservation Council, the State recreational fishing peak body (Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW), the Australian National Sportfishing Association and the NSW Game Fishing Association<sup>28</sup>.

In assessing funding proposals, expenditure committees provide advice to the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing (ACoRF), which in turn makes recommendations to the Minister for Primary Industries, who is ultimately responsible for funding decisions. ACoRF is a statutory body established under the *NSW Fisheries Management Act 1994*. It is comprised of 17 persons including a Chairperson, fishers with a diverse range of experiences across numerous fishing modes, fishing club and association representatives, a communications specialist, and a representative from both the fishing tackle retail industry and the Nature Conservation Council.

The Trusts continue to provide funds for a broad range of programs under seven categories. These categories, associated key programs and expenditures for both the RFSTF and RFFTF over 2011/12 are:

1. *Recreational Fishing Enhancement Programs* (RFSTF – \$1.1M: RFFTF – \$1.2M)
  - Freshwater native fish and salmonoid stocking

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<sup>28</sup> The RFSTEC has broader representation than the RFFTEC as saltwater fishers are more numerous and diverse

- Trial stockings of mulloway and prawns
  - Fish aggregation devices
  - Artificial reefs
2. *Aquatic Habitat Protection and Rehabilitation* (RFSTF – \$0.67M: RFFTF – \$0.38M)
    - Increase scrutiny of development and works proposals to mitigate impacts on aquatic habitats
    - The removal of barriers to fish migration
    - Building waterways and removing weirs
    - Replanting and protecting riparian and marine vegetation
    - Replacing snags in rivers
  3. *Research on Fish and Recreational Fishing* (RFSTF – \$1.41M: RFFTF – \$0.48M)
    - Maximising survival of released fish
    - Research on key recreational species
    - Effectiveness of artificial reefs
    - Angler surveys
    - Improving effectiveness of freshwater stockings
  4. *Enforcement of Fishing Rules* (RFSTF – \$1.51M: RFFTF – \$0.78M)
    - Recreational fishing mobile squads
    - Fisheries officers
  5. *Recreational Fishing Education* (RFSTF – \$1.45M: RFFTF – \$0.36M)
    - Fishcare volunteers
    - Fishing workshops
    - “Get hooked....it’s fun to fish” primary schools education program
    - Fishing guides
  6. *Fishing Access and Facilities* (RFSTF – \$0.47M: RFFTF – \$0.23M)
    - Fishing platforms and fish cleaning tables
    - Enhancing angler access in NSW
  7. *Fishing Fee Co-ordination and Payment Network* (RFSTF – \$1.15M<sup>29</sup>: RFFTF – \$0.58M)
    - Recreational fishing havens
    - Trust Executive Officer
    - Recreational fishing fee agent network

Clearly, based on the nature of many projects, funds are sourced entirely from either the RFSTF or the RFFTF. For projects that may benefit both sectors however, the allocation of monies between funds is suggested by the applicant and re-evaluated by the Expenditure Committees. Overall, funding priorities are guided by the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts Investment Plan [24] which provides a framework for planning and allocating funds to address priorities and expectations. The Plan also

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<sup>29</sup> This value does not include an annual contribution of \$2M in treasury loan repayments for the creation of 30 Recreational Fishing Havens

enables longer term commitments for ongoing programs (i.e. artificial reef deployments and monitoring, fish stocking, fishing guides, longitudinal studies, funding of employment positions) to be made and partnerships with other Government programs to be developed.

#### *2.2.2.2 Consolidated Revenue*

Consolidated revenue also provides funding for a variety of programs and services including planning and policy development, communications, research and compliance. Estimating total consolidated revenue funding for recreational fishing in NSW was not possible due to the difficulties in disaggregating expenditure for programs and services that confer benefits to non-recreational fishing stakeholders. For example, compliance programs and fisheries research may also be of service to commercial fishers. However, when comparing State FMA funding levels in Section 2.3, it will be assumed that the amount of consolidated revenue funding in 2001 is still applicable. At the time, when RFLs were introduced, an annual contribution of \$3.5M<sup>30</sup> was committed from consolidated revenue alongside licence fee revenue [25]. As a condition when implementing the RFL, the NSW Government pledged to maintain this level of funding for at least five years.

#### *2.2.2.3 Case Study: The Introduction of the Recreational Fishing Licence*

The impetus to investigate a recreational fishing licence was provided through submissions to a review of saltwater recreational bag and size limits in 1999 – a large number of submissions demonstrated unsolicited support for a fishing licence [26]. Later in the same year, considerable support for a general licence and requests for a discussion paper on the issue were made by fishers at a recreational fishing summit. Similar requests for a discussion paper were also made by the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing [26]. It is the view of the Minister that these requests for a fishing licence were due, in part, to the success of the freshwater licence and the introduction of recreational fishing licences in Victoria [27].

As a result of this apparent support for a fishing licence, collaborations between DPI and key stakeholders helped to refine the details of a licence proposal in light of the needs and expectations from Government, industry and the fishing community. An independent telephone survey of 500 fishers confirmed community support for a fishing licence [28]. Around 80% of respondents expressed support when asked the question “would you support such a licence if all the fee went exclusively to improving fish stocks and recreational fishing?” Fishers were also asked about priorities for expenditure – the greatest level of support was given to “conservation” and “more fisheries officers for enforcement of rules and regulations”. When asked about a proposed licence price, 68% of respondents indicated their support for a \$25 fee.

Early in 2000, a ten week public consultation period was held to provide a public forum on the proposed licence and other fisheries related issues. A discussion

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<sup>30</sup> This was also the amount of consolidated revenue received for recreational fishing prior to the introduction on the RFL.

paper<sup>31</sup> titled 'Sustaining our Fisheries' [29] was released and numerous public meetings were held across NSW. While the paper outlined strategies to enhance recreational fishing and management and protect fish stock and habitats, the key element was the introduction of a general recreational fishing licence. The Paper outlined the issues surrounding the proposed licence and potential benefits derived from licence revenue. Benefits included the creation of Recreational Fishing Havens in popular fishing areas through a commercial fishing buy-back scheme, expanded fish stocking programs, the extension of the Fishcare volunteers program, the deployment of artificial reefs and fish attracting devices (FADs) and angler education programs. Other issues pertinent to the proposed licence discussed in the Paper included:

- a commitment to minimise administration costs;
- A commitment to retain the existing level of consolidated revenue funding for at least five years; and
- a recommendation by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal that recreational fishers should be subject to cost-recovery for the costs of management, research and compliance

The Paper also outlined reasons why alternative models were discounted from consideration. These included the licensing of fishing gear, a boat operator's licence, a boat registration levy, a tax on fishing gear, separate licences for freshwater and saltwater fishers and a single licence with saltwater and freshwater endorsements. While providing an assessment of each model as reported in the Consultation Paper [29] is beyond the scope of this Section, NSW Fisheries favoured a general fishing licence due to simplicity for fishers, ease of issue for agents and minimal administration costs.

Nearly 1000 submissions to the discussion paper were received. According to the Hansard Report, the Minister stated "the great majority of those who took time to prepare their own submissions supported the principle of a saltwater licence" [26]. Nonetheless, the public consultation process led to "significant refinements" to the recreational fishing licence, which was introduced in 2001.

While the RFL continues to be popular among fishers, the substantial proportion of fishers who remain unlicensed has posed challenges for researchers. Essentially, the RFL 'inherited' the manner in which exemptions were offered to social groups from the previous freshwater fishing licence. When the licence model was being developed, the implications of issuing free licences for groups now exempt were investigated. However, this option would have consumed an additional proportion of total licence revenue on administration costs, in addition to the 10% currently consumed [23]. As the minimisation of administration costs was an important factor

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<sup>31</sup> Two additional discussion papers were also released at the same time – 'A Fisheries Policy Consultation Paper for Recreational Fishers: a General Recreational Fishing Licence?' [30] and the 'General Recreational Fishing Fee – Position Paper' [25].

in gaining community support, this option was not pursued. This decision was furthermore consistent with a general NSW Government policy to reduce 'red tape'.

### 2.2.3 Western Australia

Among Australian States, the recreational licensing model in WA, which includes licences for 'high value' species is most similar to the Tasmanian model. For decades, a licence has been required for freshwater fishing in south-west WA, net fishing (using gill, seine and cast nets), and fishing for rock lobster, abalone and marron. In 2010, an additional licence type – a Recreational Fishing from a Boat Licence (RFBL) was also introduced<sup>32,33</sup>. The new licence is required to fish for any species (including finfish, crustaceans and shellfish) from a boat in marine waters, or when using a boat to access land based fishing locations. When fishing from a boat, non-licensed fishers may also fish providing the total retained catch does not exceed the bag limit of the licensed person or persons present on the boat. For charter boat fishers who don't have a RBFL, a \$15 charge is applied per trip.

With the exception of the RFBL which costs \$30 per year, each licence costs \$40 per year. A 10% discount applies for the purchase of more than one licence type<sup>34</sup>. Furthermore, 50% concessions are available for the following categories of fishers:

- persons under 16 years of age;
- persons receiving an age, disability support or widows' pension or allowance;
- pensioners under the *Coal Industry Superannuation Act 1989*;
- pensioners as widows of a member of the forces;
- recipients of service pensions under the *Veterans Entitlements Act 1986*;
- spouses, widows or widowers of pensioners referred to above; and
- senior's Card holders

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<sup>32</sup> A general recreational fishing licence was also considered but abandoned due to a perceived lack of community and political support.

<sup>33</sup> A demersal boat fishing licence was also proposed at the time. However, it was not introduced due to community and political opposition. The justification for its introduction was also flawed: it was hoped that the licence would provide contact details of fishers and reduce catch and effort on demersal fish species by pricing the licence to act as a deterrent for some fishers. However, contact details provided through the RFBL and recent management changes implemented for the demersal scalefish fishery have respectively addressed these objectives.

<sup>34</sup> Prior to the introduction of the RBFL, an all categories/umbrella licence was available which provided a considerably cheaper option to purchasing all licences individually. The licence was abandoned with the introduction of the RBFL in an effort to gain an improved understanding of fisher numbers in different fisheries and for survey purposes. Previously, under the umbrella licence, fishers were often licensed for fisheries in which they did not participate.



**Table 2.1.** Western Australian fishing licence types and numbers sold in 2010/11

<b>Licence Type</b>	<b>No. sold</b>
Rock lobster	32,045
Abalone	16,768
Marron	10,413
Freshwater fishing (south-west WA)	7,856
Net fishing	13,738
Fishing from Boat Licence (RBFL)	116,128
<i>Total Licences Sold</i>	<i>196,948</i>

Source: Ben Fraser, WA Department of Fisheries (28/05)

### 2.2.3.1 Licence Revenue and Consolidated Revenue

Expenditure on recreational fishing programs and projects is derived from both licence revenue and consolidated revenue. Annually, about \$19M is spent on the management and enhancement of WA recreational fisheries – approximately \$13M and \$6M from consolidated revenue and fishing licence revenue respectively. In the 2010/11 financial year, \$6,123,000 was generated from the sale of recreational fishing licences – an increase of approximately \$1.14M from the previous year. The increase is attributed to the introduction of the RBFL in 2010. In the current financial year (as at 3 January, 2012), \$5,969,180 was raised from the sale of 142,314 licences [31].

State Government contributions through consolidated revenue have increased by almost 70% over the last five years, despite a considerable increase in licence revenue collected through the RBFL. The WA Department of Fisheries has worked closely with the Minister, who has recognised the value of recreational fishing in WA and has provided a high level of support for publicly funded recreational fishing related programs [32].

Both consolidated and licence revenue is managed through the Recreational Fishing Account (RFA). As such, all monies are pooled; however, some expenditure items are nominally attributed to licence revenue. These include the Western Australian Recreational Boat Fishing Survey (\$3.2M), funding for the peak representative body Recfishwest (\$600,000<sup>35</sup>), an artificial reef pilot study<sup>36</sup> and a community grants program known as the Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund (see below). Monies nominally allocated from fishing licence revenue are done so with a high level of representation from the fishing community, with the peak body for recreational fishing, Recfishwest, providing recommendations to the Minister for Fisheries on funding activities through a Recfishwest subcommittee – the Recreational Fisheries Account Advisory Body (RFAAB). The Minister has the ultimate discretion over

<sup>35</sup> The funding arrangements for Recfishwest are currently under review. It is likely that future funding levels will be linked to licence sales [31].

<sup>36</sup> A total of \$2.38M is being used to fund a pilot study on the effectiveness of artificial reefs and to create opportunities for fishers in Geopraphe Bay. Licence revenue will contribute \$0.52, with the remainder funded through the Royalties for Regions program.

funding decisions. In assessing funding allocations, strategic guidance is generally provided by the Department of Fisheries, and if necessary, technical advice is provided by a panel of experts.

#### *2.2.3.2 Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund*

The Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund (RFIF) was developed soon after the introduction of the RBFL. As part of the public discourse prior to the introduction of the RBFL, fishers expressed a requirement for additional funds from licence sales to be made available as grants for projects benefitting the wider fishing community and allocated with representation from fishers. Since then, between \$1-1.5M<sup>37</sup> from annual licence sale revenue is used to fund a grants program for projects that support or promote recreational fishing in Western Australia. Any academic institution, community, government, or non-government organisation is eligible to apply.

The RFIF provides monies for both large grants (>\$15,000) and small grants (<\$25,000). Annually, over \$1M is provided through the large grants program while the total funds available for the small grants program is \$50,000. The funding allocation process for the large grants program is the same as for other RFA revenue (see above). However, the allocation of funds under the small grants program is at the discretion of Recfishwest and Ministerial approval is not required.

#### *2.2.3.3 Case Study: The Introduction of the Recreational Fishing from a Boat Licence*

The Department of Fisheries and Recfishwest have supported the introduction of a broader licence base for over two decades. Since 1990, Recfishwest have requested to introduce a general fishing licence on several occasions [33]. Furthermore, in a 2002 report to the WA Minister for Fisheries, an expansion of the licence framework to support fisheries research and management was recommended by the Integrated Fisheries Management Review Committee [34].

The process which ultimately led to the recent introduction of the RBFL began with a proposal by Recfishwest in 2008 to introduce a general fishing licence. Compared to the existing licence model, the proposed general fishing licence would have broadened the licence base and reduced the average amount payable per licence holder. The proposal received strong support from the Department of Fisheries and the Minister but was rejected by Cabinet.

Soon afterwards, the failed general fishing licence proposal was reconceptualised by the Minister and the Department of Fisheries in light of resource based challenges experienced in the West Coast Demersal Species Fishery. To complement measures accounting for 50% catch reductions in the commercial sector, comparable catch reductions for demersal species were sought for the recreational sector. Amid a raft

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<sup>37</sup> Currently, the funding arrangements for the RFIF are under review. It is likely future funding levels will be linked to licence sales [31].

of measures to reduce recreational catch in the fishery<sup>38</sup>, a demersal fishing licence (for targeting specific demersal species) and a boat fishing licence were developed in light of independent management and scientific reviews [35]. Annual licence fees were provisionally priced at \$150 and \$30, respectively. It was planned that the two licences would provide more accurate estimates of fishing effort, a sampling frame for surveys and additional funding to support management measures for the ailing fishery. The price of the demersal licence was determined by the Minister and based on an attempt to 'bridge the gap' between licence revenue received at the time and total anticipated revenue under the failed general licence proposal [33]. The raft of proposals was accepted by Cabinet.

In July 2009, plans for licence introductions and other measures to address challenges in the West Coast Demersal Species Fishery were publicly released [35]. The changes were not subject to a public consultation period due to political opportunism and the perceived need to act quickly to address fishery declines in the demersal fishery [33]. In broad terms, the imminent changes were very unpopular. It was widely reported in the media that the measures would result in Western Australia having the world's highest access fees for saltwater fishing and the price of the demersal licence would be used to restrict access to the fishery. A website was developed [36] urging fishers to write letters of protest to their Members of Parliament. Over 18,000 were received. Based on media reports and online forums at the time, most fishers were not opposed to reducing catch in the demersal fishery [37], but were opposed to the price of the demersal licence and the manner in which it would restrict fishing to those unable or unwilling to pay for it.

As a result of widespread community opposition, the Minister urged Recfishwest to develop an alternative strategy to reduce recreational catch in the west coast demersal fishery by 50% without the implementation of expensive licences. A series of meetings were held to discuss the issue among industry representatives, the Department of Fisheries and fishing and boating associations. Eventually a 'package' of reforms was developed to reduce catch by the required level without the need for a demersal fishing licence. The package included further reductions to individual and boat possession limits and changes to the terms of the boat fishing licence such that a person accompanying an RBFL holder could fish on a boat with any catch attributed to the RBFL holder's catch limits. The changes were agreed to by the Minister and Cabinet, were publicly announced in September 2009 [38] and were introduced in March 2010.

While opinion surveys have not been conducted, the RBFL appears to be well received by the Western Australian fishing community and additional projects made possible by the extra licence revenue have been well publicised. According to the former Executive Director of Recfishwest:

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<sup>38</sup> Other measures included lowering bag limits, introducing boat possession limits, a requirement to carry a release weight to mitigate the effects of barotrauma, and a two month season closure.

*“Fishers are often resistant to change and can stay angry over new measures for up to six months. With initiatives like a new licence, you should be able to demonstrate clear benefits within twelve months. If fishers can still be angry over licences or other new management after 18 months, you should seriously reform them” [33].*

Despite eventual success in the implementation of the RBFL, a general fishing licence, or a licence that encompasses all fishers is the preferred model of Recfishwest [33], the Department of Fisheries [32] and Treasury [31]. While a general fishing licence proposal was rejected by Cabinet in 2008, Recfishwest suggests that the overall community support for a general fishing licence is around 60% providing fishers have a say in the manner in which funds are spent [33].

#### **2.2.4 South Australia**

Fisheries management in South Australia is administered by the Department of Primary Industry and Regions South Australia (PIRSA). Although not termed ‘licences’ fishers are required to pay registration fees for rock lobster pots and gillnets. Currently, the annual fee for registering either one or two lobster pots per fisher is \$62.50 and \$173.00, respectively. As the use of gillnets is being phased out, registration only applies to nets registered prior to the mid 1980’s. Concession rates are offered for the registration of gillnets, but not for lobster pots.

##### *2.2.4.1 Revenue and Expenditure*

During the 2011/12 financial year, around 8600 rock lobster pots were registered, generating around \$0.72M in revenue. Over the same period, the registration of approximately 1300 gillnets raised around \$20,000. While lobster pot registrations have been relatively static over recent years, the phasing out of gillnet use has resulted in a steady decline in gillnet revenue.

Approximately \$3.9M is contributed by the South Australian Government to the operating costs of the Fisheries Division in South Australia. While both gear registration revenue and consolidated revenue is used for licensing and compliance costs, other expenditure categories are wholly attributed to either revenue stream: gear registration revenue is used to fund research, the peak representative body (SAFRAC) and Fishcare volunteers while consolidated revenue is used to fund policy development and general administration costs. Currently, recreational fishers are not represented in decision making regarding the allocation of licence revenue or consolidated revenue. However, PIRSA are in the process of applying for external funding to investigate management structures and processes that foster a greater level of co-management between PIRSA and the recreational fishing community [39].

##### *2.2.4.2 Implications for Fishing Licences*

While there have been indications of support for a fishing licence from PIRSA, SARFAC and the fishing community, there has been insufficient political support to progress the issue. A general ‘all waters’ type fishing licence was recommended as a

means of addressing cost recovery for the recreational fishing sector in a 2010 report by the Sustainable Budget Commission [40]. However, the recommendation was resisted by the former Premier, Mike Rann, who maintained a general lack of support for any fishing licences. Since then, a new Premier has been elected; however, an official position on recreational fishing licences has not been announced. While PIRSA offers tentative support for the consideration of fishing licences, a range of related issues require further investigation before firmer support can be offered [39]. These issues include the minimisation of administration costs and the structures and processes underpinning the collection and allocation of licence revenue.

The peak representative body for recreational fishers, the South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council (SARFAC) have been strongly supportive of a general fishing licence in South Australia. Public documents released by SARFAC have acknowledged the benefits and services to recreational fishers in Victoria and NSW afforded by their general fishing licences and have concluded that a similar licence in South Australia is necessary to fund similar initiatives. The following statement by the SARFAC Chairman is taken from a 2002 SARFAC newsletter:

*“SARFAC strongly support the introduction of a licence on the condition that all funds are received into a dedicated trust fund established under legislation to be spent for the benefit of recreational fishing, research into those fisheries and the ecosystems that sustain them, the cost of consulting with participants in the fishery, and ensuing compliance with regulations. Those in the community holding current pensioner entitlements and children under 16, and Indigenous people fishing in areas subject to native title claims or indigenous land use agreements should be exempted” [41].*

An independent survey commissioned by SARFAC in 2002 indicated 73% community support for a general licence if all revenue was used to improve fish stocks and recreational fishing [42].

### **2.2.5 Queensland**

The only recreational fishing licences required in Queensland are Special Impoundment Permits (SIPs) for fishing in 32 routinely stocked dams. The permits were introduced as a partial contribution towards the costs of fish stocking. Introduced in 2000, the SIPs currently cost \$36.05 per year or \$7.20 per week. Fishers under the age of 18 years are exempt and a 10% concession applies to pensioners, and holders of health care cards and Queensland Seniors cards. In an initiative to encourage recreational fishing among family groups, the permits also cover spouses or de facto partners of licence holders.

Since 1994, revenue has also been collected through levies on private boat registrations. For each vessel greater than 4hp that is registered, an allocation of

\$17.75 known as a Recreational Use Fee (RUF)<sup>39</sup> is collected by Queensland Transport and Main Roads on behalf of Fisheries Queensland for a range of programs and services to enhance recreational fisheries.

#### 2.2.5.1 Revenue and Expenditure

In the 2010/11 financial year, \$0.84M was raised through the sale of 47,000 SIPs. Of this amount, approximately 75% was used for fish stocking and the remaining 25% was used to fund SIP administration costs [43]. In the same year, approximately \$4.38M was received from RUF revenue and allocated to a number of project areas as part of the budget cycle (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2.** The allocation of revenue from the Recreational Use Fee in 2010/11

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>(\$)</b>
Marine habitat assessment	115,593
Fishway teams	275,137
Non SIP fish stocking and extension	198,393
FRDC grant	120,000
Suntag grant	53,000
Sunfish grant	153,000
Community projects	58,500
Assessment and monitoring	726,955
Recreational fishing surveys	727,051
Consultation on management	694,877
Fishcare volunteers	121,180
Education and communication	279,127
Recreational fishing Unit	352,368
Compliance (Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol)	371,873
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,247,054</b>

*Source: Cairns Recreational Fishing Industry Stakeholders (CAREFISH) 2011. The Bones of Contention: A discussion paper on the management of recreational fishing issues in Queensland.*

In the 2010/11 financial year, Fisheries Queensland received \$51.5M; approximately \$16M of this was expended on recreational fisheries. Taking into account a combined total of \$5.22M from SIPs and RUFs, the consolidated revenue contribution is approximately \$10.78M, or 67% of total revenue.

Decisions over the expenditure of all revenue are undertaken solely by Fisheries Queensland. The peak recreational fishing representative body, Sunfish, are opposed to this arrangement. In a recent media release, Sunfish expressed their commitment to encourage Fisheries Queensland to enact a committee with recreational fisher representation to advise on the allocation of funds from RUFs [44]. The Cairns Recreational Fishing Industry Stakeholders (CAREFISH) has expressed similar sentiments based on a recommendation from the 1992 Burns Inquiry into Recreational Fishing in Queensland [45]. They claim the inquiry, from which the RUF

<sup>39</sup> The RUF was previously known as the Private Pleasure Vessel (PPV) levy

(then PPV) revenue stream was developed, made recommendations that additional revenue should be used to fund non-core programs in consultation with recreational fishers.

#### *2.2.5.2 Proposed Snapper Fishing Licence*

In 2010, Fisheries Queensland released a *Regulatory Impact Statement for the Rocky Reef Fin Fish Fishery* [46] to address reported declines in the snapper fishery. One of the four options discussed in the paper to address reported challenges was the introduction of an annual snapper fishing permit for boat-based anglers. The two price points suggested were \$70 and \$90, without exemptions or concessions. The RIS, whilst explaining the need for additional revenue to support associated management measures, was clear that the proposed fee was designed to limit effort to those fishers willing and able pay the permit. After the public consultation period, the permit proposal was abandoned due to an overwhelming lack of public support. Sunfish were also unsupportive: they disagreed with the stock assessment methodology underpinning the RIS and the use of price mechanisms to limit recreational fishing activity [47].

#### *2.2.5.3 A Broader Based Licensing Framework in Queensland?*

Insufficient funds for recreational fishing programs and services have been noted by Fisheries Queensland and fisher representative bodies. Sunfish have observed a decline in staffing levels within Fisheries Queensland and an associated reduction in services to the recreational fishing sector [44]. Sunfish, the Queensland Amateur Fishing Clubs Association (QAFCA: [48]) and CAREFISH [49] have expressed a need for additional funding for fishing infrastructure, research, education, limited fishing access in MPAs, recreational only fishing areas and the removal of commercial fishing from popular recreational fishing areas. A Fisheries Queensland representative [43] suggests that a broader-based licensing model may be the only feasible option in providing the funds necessary to buy out commercial effort, particularly netting in popular recreational fishing areas. Sunfish have indicated tentative support for a broader based licence pending numerous conditions including the abolishment of SIPs and RUFs<sup>40</sup> and the engagement of fishers in deciding how licence revenue is spent. In 2011, QAFCA offered conditional support for fishing licences in the following statement:

*“The fishing licence issue is still being bandied around by some, and it is inevitable that we will eventually have a fishing licence sometime in the future, but QAFCA will oppose it until we can agree with the terms to be proposed, the main one being the majority of money raised should go back into enhancing recreational fishing in Queensland and this money should be distributed by a committee of recreational fishers”[48].*

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<sup>40</sup> Sunfish have suggested that, if a broader licence was considered, the existing revenue instruments should be abolished so that fishers only pay one fee [47].

Tentative support for fishing licences has been expressed by the Queensland Fish Management Authority (now Fisheries Queensland) in 1994. The following is taken from a conference paper written by a QFMA employee, in which the implications of addressing the recommendations from the Burns Inquiry were discussed:

*“The harder management options will become increasingly necessary and will include the introduction of recreational fishing licences. This can certainly be ‘sold’ to the public on the basis of low fee levels, exemptions for the young and aged, ensuring funds do not go to consolidated revenue, involving anglers in the management and distribution of funds, providing representation on Management Advisory Committees, and material benefits to anglers including access to fisheries resources, artificial reefs and fishing piers” [50].*

While the recently deposed Bligh Labor Government was opposed to fishing licence reform, the new Coalition Government is yet to declare an official position on the matter. Fisheries Queensland has a standing policy to brief all new Governments on licence introductions and is currently preparing a submission for Treasury [43].

## **2.2.6 Northern Territory**

No licences are required for fishing in the Northern Territory. However, recreational fishers need a temporary permit to fish on aboriginal granted land and adjoining waters. All funds used for recreational fisheries management are derived from consolidated revenue. It was not possible to obtain revenue data for the Northern Territory due to the difficulties involved in identifying discrete cost components attributed to recreational fishing [51]. However, since 2008, approximately \$1M per year has been spent on recreational fishing related infrastructure, including artificial reefs, fishing pontoons and boat ramps. The peak fisher body, the Amateur Fishermans Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT) are funded at \$200,000 per year. The recently deposed Labor Government were opposed to the introduction of any fishing licences; however, the new Country Liberal Government is yet to indicate its position on the matter.

## **2.3 A COMPARISON OF RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENSING AND FUNDING MODELS BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN STATES**

In this Section, recreational fishing licensing and funding models of FMAs in Australian States and Territories is summarised and compared as they relate to the following:

- funding arrangements;
- the engagement of fishers in the decision making process; and
- the facilitation of communications, research and understanding fisher participation



Particular attention is paid to the 'performance' of the Tasmanian licensing and funding model relative to other State models. As FMAs in other States manage both saltwater and freshwater fisheries, efforts have been made, where appropriate, to disaggregate quantitative measures used to compare models as they relate to saltwater fishing only.

### **2.3.1 Funding Arrangements**

*Explanatory Notes for this Section (in Italics)*

*The data from which this section is based refers to FMA revenue for the 2010/11 financial year (Table 2.3). Consolidated revenue for Victoria and NSW were not available due to reasons outlined in their respective sections, above. As such, estimations of consolidated revenue for Victoria and NSW are based on Government contributions received by FMAs prior to the implementation of recreational fishing licences. Therefore, consolidated and total revenue reported for these States should be seen as indicative only.*

*Compared to the separation of saltwater and freshwater recreational fisheries management in Tasmania, the management of both fisheries by other Australian State FMAs presents challenges when comparing funding arrangements for saltwater recreational fisheries. To address this, consolidated revenue funding for State agencies has been 'split' according to relative aggregate fishing effort between saltwater and freshwater fishing reported in the National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey. For independent revenue sources, the division of revenue between saltwater and freshwater fishing is, where possible, based on whether or not the revenue applies for saltwater or freshwater fishing. For example, rock lobster pot registration fees for SA are attributed wholly to saltwater fishing whilst the marron fishing licence on WA is attributed wholly to freshwater fishing (and thus excluded from analysis). For the general fishing licences in Victoria and NSW, the division is based on relative aggregate fishing effort between saltwater and freshwater fishing reported in the NRIFS [1].*

The funding arrangements between Australian States and Territories vary markedly. With the exception of the Northern Territory, which receives all funding through consolidated revenue, States are funded through a combination of both consolidated revenue and independent revenue (Figure 2.3). A variety of independent revenue options (IROs) are employed encompassing fishing licences, gear registration fees (SA) and boat registration levies (Qld.). Not including the Northern Territory, the reliance upon IROs as a proportion of overall revenue for saltwater fishing varies between 18% (SA) and 79% (NSW).

**Table 2.3.** A comparison of funding arrangements for state-based recreational fisheries management agencies within Australia for 2010/11. Values are provided for independent revenue (IR) funding, consolidated revenue (CR) funding and total revenue. For each of the three funding measures, the amount of revenue per saltwater fisher in each State has been estimated.

	Number of SW fishers (‘000) <sup>1</sup>	IR (\$M)	IR as % of total revenue	CR (\$M) <sup>2</sup>	CR as % of total revenue	Total revenue (\$M)	Total revenue p/fisher (\$)	IR p/fisher (\$)	CR p/fisher (\$)	% of SW fishing IR contributors	Mean licence cost per IR contributor (\$)
<b>Tasmania</b>	113	1.15	46.0	1.35	54.0	2.50	\$22.10	\$10.18	\$11.95	17	\$56.13
<b>Victoria</b>	441	3.4 <sup>3</sup>	42.5	4.6 <sup>8</sup>	57.5	8.00	\$18.10	\$7.67	\$10.43	50	\$17.31
<b>NSW</b>	884	9.9 <sup>3</sup>	78.6	2.7	21.4	12.60	\$14.30	\$11.20	\$3.05	43	\$21.12
<b>WA</b>	467	5.5 <sup>5</sup>	32.0	12.4	68.5	17.90	\$38.30	\$12.42	\$26.55	30	\$39.30
<b>SA<sup>9</sup></b>	303	0.74	18.3	3.3	81.7	4.04	\$13.30	\$2.44	\$10.89	2	\$120.91
<b>Queensland<sup>9</sup></b>	746	4.2 <sup>4</sup>	30.4	9.6	69.6	13.80	\$18.50	\$5.63	\$12.87	25 <sup>7</sup>	\$17.75
<b>NT<sup>6,9</sup></b>	38	0	0	N/A	100	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A

<sup>1</sup> The number of saltwater fishers in Tasmania was determined through the 2007/08 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Tasmania [ref]. As this information was not available for other Australian States, it was estimated using participation and effort data from the National Recreational and Indigenous Recreational Fishing Survey [1]. In the NRIFS, the total number of fishers per State and the relative proportions of saltwater and freshwater effort per State was presented. However, a proportion of the fishing population engage in both saltwater and freshwater fishing. To account for this 'overlap', it was assumed that the proportion of fishers who engage in *both* freshwater and saltwater fishing, relative to 'saltwater only' and 'freshwater only' fishers was consistent with data available for Tasmania.

<sup>2</sup> Consolidated revenue funding for FMAs in all Australian States except Tasmania applies to both freshwater and saltwater recreational fisheries. The relative attribution of CR funding for saltwater fishing (as opposed to freshwater fishing) was made according to the relative total effort (fishing days) between the two water types reported in the NRIFS.

<sup>3</sup> It is not possible to disaggregate the saltwater and freshwater components of licence revenue collected through 'all waters' licences. Therefore the relative proportions are attributed to relative total annual fishing effort as reported in the NRIFS

<sup>4</sup> Revenue collected by Special Impoundment Permits was not included as it relates to freshwater fishing only. Revenue collected through the Recreational Use Fee (RUF) component of boat registration fees was included. However, because some boat owners may fish in freshwater only, the process applied to estimating the number of fishers in each State was applied to estimate the number of boat owners who use their boats in saltwater.

<sup>5</sup> Licence revenue from marron and south-west freshwater fishing was excluded

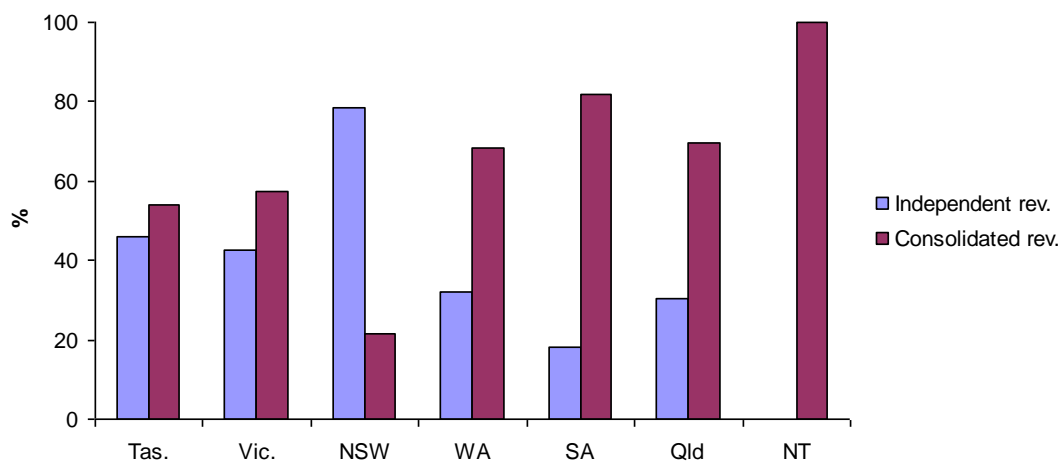
<sup>6</sup> Revenue data were not available for the Northern Territory

<sup>7</sup> See footnote #4 for the process by which the number of boat owners who used their boats in saltwater was estimated. To determine the percentage of these boat owners who use their boats for fishing, data for Queensland were not available. As a result, the percentage of boat owners who use their boats for fishing in Tasmania was applied - 80% [3]

<sup>8</sup> This value included monies provided through the Victorian Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund

<sup>9</sup> Surveys conducted since the 2001 NRIFS suggest a reduction in fisher participation rates since 2001. However, to maintain consistency with the values reported for other States, participation data from the NRIFS have been used. Nonetheless, it should be observed that values reported in this Table are likely to underestimate the percentage of saltwater fishing IR contributions and the three measures of income per fisher reported for SA and Queensland.

Four states – Tasmania, NSW, Victoria and WA – receive independent revenue through fishing licences. Compared to States with independent revenue from gear registration (SA and Qld.), these states derive a greater amount of independent revenue per fisher and as a proportion of overall revenue. The discrepancy between relative proportions of both revenue sources in Victoria and NSW, both of which have a general fishing licence, is largely due to the extra Victorian Government funding provided through the Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund.



**Figure 2.1.** Relative proportions of independent and consolidated revenue funding for Australian State FMAs attributed to saltwater recreational fishing.

### 2.3.1.1 Standardised Revenue Comparisons

Due to differences in overall fishing activity between States, FMA revenue comparisons have been standardised according to the number of saltwater fishers and overall saltwater fishing activity (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4 for values and explanatory notes on calculations and analysis). According to both measures, standardised revenues for recreational fishing are highest in WA (\$38.30 per fisher; \$5.14 per fishing event) and lowest for SA (\$13.30 per fisher; \$2.17 per fishing event). While standardised independent revenue for WA is comparable to other States with fishing licences, the relatively high level of total standardised funding is largely due to generous consolidated revenue contributions. Such contributions may reflect additional management requirements for a long and sparsely populated coastline and monies made available to the WA Government through burgeoning mining industries.

In terms of both fishers and fishing events, the highest contribution from independent revenue sources are for the four States with fishing licences. In comparing standardised revenue between Tasmania and other States with fishing licences, the standardisation based on fishing events (Table 2.4 and Figure 2.3) is a more confident indicator of relative revenue contributions. This is because the standardisation procedure based on saltwater fishers (Figure 2.2) is underpinned by

**Table 2.4.** A State-wide comparison of the amount of FMA revenue per unit of saltwater fishing effort (fishing events). Values are provided for independent revenue (IR), consolidated revenue (CR) and total revenue.

	% of fishing effort in SW	Effort (annual SW events) [M] <sup>1</sup>	IR (\$M)	CR (\$M) <sup>2</sup>	Total revenue (\$M)	IR p/event (\$)	CR p/event (\$)	Total revenue p/event (\$)
<i>Tasmania</i>	75	0.68	1.15	1.35	2.50	\$1.69	\$1.98	\$3.67
<b>Victoria</b>	57	1.61	3.4 <sup>3</sup>	4.6 <sup>7</sup>	8.00	\$2.12	\$2.86	\$4.98
<b>NSW</b>	76	5.82	9.9 <sup>3</sup>	2.7	12.60	\$1.70	\$0.46	\$2.17
<b>WA</b>	95	3.29	5.5 <sup>5</sup>	12.4	17.90	\$1.67	\$3.77	\$5.44
<b>SA</b> <sup>8</sup>	84	1.86	0.74	3.3	4.04	\$0.40	\$1.78	\$2.17
<b>Qld</b> <sup>8</sup>	89	5.13	4.2 <sup>4</sup>	9.6	13.80	\$0.82	\$1.87	\$2.69
<b>NT</b> <sup>6,8</sup>	71	0.25	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A

<sup>1</sup> The number of saltwater fishing events in each State was reported in the National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey [1].

<sup>2</sup> Consolidated revenue funding for FMAs in all Australian States except Tasmania applies to both freshwater and saltwater recreational fisheries. The relative attribution of CR funding for saltwater fishing (as opposed to freshwater fishing) was made according to the relative total effort (fishing events) between the two water types reported in the NRIFS.

<sup>3</sup> It is not possible to disaggregate the saltwater and freshwater components of licence revenue collected through 'all waters' licences. Therefore the relative proportions are attributed to relative total annual fishing effort as reported in the NRIFS.

<sup>4</sup> Revenue collected by Special Impoundment Permits was not included as it relates to freshwater fishing only. Revenue collected through the Recreational Use Fee (RUF) component of boat registration fees were included. However, because some boat owners may fish in freshwater only, the process applied to estimating the number of fishers in each State in Table 2.3 was applied to estimate the number of boat owners who use their boats in saltwater.

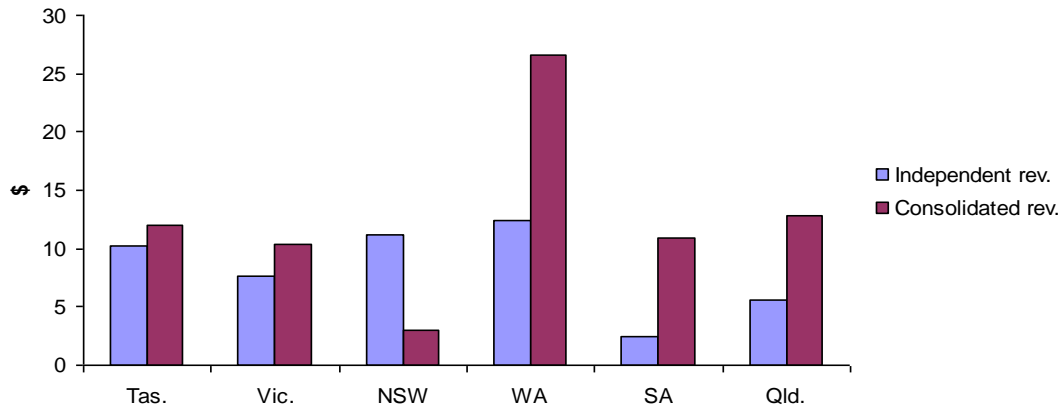
<sup>5</sup> Licence revenue from marron and south-west freshwater fishing was excluded.

<sup>6</sup> Revenue data were not available for the Northern Territory.

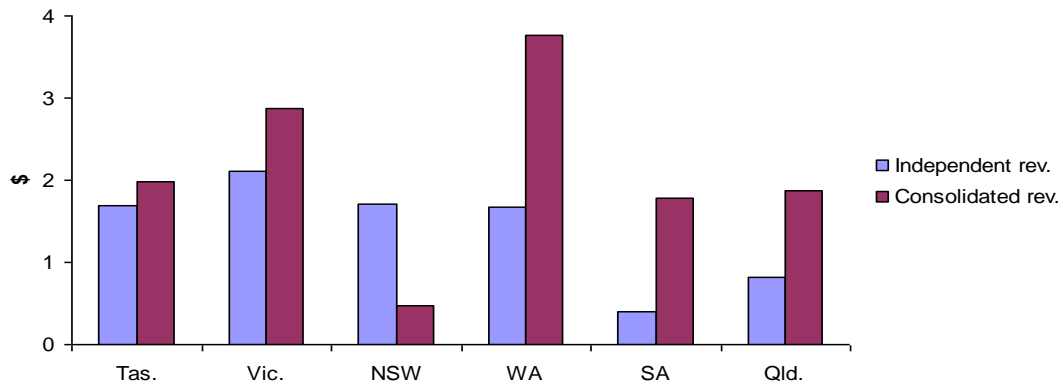
<sup>7</sup> This value included monies provided through the Victorian Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund.

<sup>8</sup> Surveys conducted since the 2001 NRIFS suggest a reduction in fisher participation rates since 2001. However, to maintain consistency with the values reported for other States, participation data from the NRIFS have been used. Nonetheless, it should be observed that values reported in this Table are likely to underestimate the percentage of saltwater fishing IR contributions and the three measures of income per fisher reported for SA and Queensland.

a greater number of assumptions, which are outlined in Table 2.3. According to events-based standardisation, total revenue per fishing event for Tasmania (\$3.67) is lower than for Victoria (\$4.98), but higher than for NSW (\$2.17). In light of financial challenges currently experienced in the management of Tasmania's marine fisheries, these figures may appear unexpected. However, they probably reflect higher standardised revenue requirements for Tasmania due to economic inefficiencies associated with separate fisheries management agencies, economic scale effects due to a small State population and a higher proportion of management resources attributed to fisheries with greater management needs (e.g. rock lobster and abalone). Further, the values used to estimate current consolidated revenue funding in Victoria and NSW may underestimate actual Government contributions for those States.



**Figure 2.2.** Independent and consolidated revenue per saltwater fisher



**Figure 2.3.** Independent and consolidated revenue per saltwater fishing event

### 2.3.1.2 Individual Contributions to Independent Revenue

The two States with general fishing licences, Victoria and NSW, have the greatest proportion of revenue contributors – approximately 50% of the fishing population (Table 2.3). From this, it can be assumed that licence exemptions extend to around half of all fishers. With the exception of the NT, which is funded entirely through consolidated revenue, SA has the lowest proportion of contributing fishers – around 2%. However, due largely to the high cost of rock lobster pot registration, the average contributing fisher in SA pays around \$120 per year. Whilst not to the same extent, the Tasmanian recreational fishing licensing framework follows a similar pattern of sourcing revenue from a relatively small proportion of fishers who pay relatively high licence costs per fisher.

### 2.3.2 Engagement and Representation of the Fishing Community

For comparative purposes, two measures of engagement and representation are used: 1) the role of peak bodies and fishers in funding decisions, and; 2) the degree to which funding is made available through community grant schemes. However, for

States without recreational fishing licences, fishers are not directly represented in funding allocations and grants schemes are not available. Therefore, effective comparisons are limited to Tasmania, Victoria, NSW and WA.

### *2.3.2.1 The Role of Peak Bodies and Fishers in Funding Decisions*

As a proportion of total agency expenditure, monies allocated under the discretion of fisher representatives, in ascending order, are as follows: NSW (72%); Victoria (42%); WA (31%); and Tasmania (9%). The wide range of values (see Table 2.5) reflects individual management arrangements within each State FMA, and is summarised below.

- In NSW, decisions over the expenditure of all licence revenue are made with representation from recreational fishers and the recreational fishing industry in a three step process. With regard to saltwater fishing expenditure, the assessment of funding applications and the setting of funding priorities is done by the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee which includes regional representatives, the peak body, other angler representative bodies and a Departmental representative. The Committee provides funding advice to the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing (ACoRF) – a statutory body independent of the Department. The ACoRF, which includes fishers and representatives from fishing clubs, associations and the fishing tackle industry, makes funding recommendations to the Minister
- In Victoria, the expenditure of all licence revenue is based on recommendations to the Minister by the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group (RFGWG). The RFGWG comprises recreational fishers and a representative from both the peak body and fishing tackle industry. Unlike the expenditure committees in NSW, the RFGWG is not split according to saltwater and freshwater fishing.
- In WA, under a co-management model between the Department of Fisheries and Recfishwest, all licence revenue is allocated with representation by a Recfishwest subcommittee (RFAAB). RFAAB provide funding recommendations to the Minister with strategic guidance from the Department. However, the allocation of funds under the small grants program is at the sole discretion of Recfishwest and Ministerial approval is not required.
- In Tasmania, the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RecFAC) provides funding advice relating to funding applications to the Fishwise Community Grants Program. Most of the members are representatives from the recreational fishing community, plus a member each from DPIPW, IMAS, TARFish, TCT and the Marine Police.

**Table 2.5.** FMA expenditure with representation from fishers, peak bodies and/or the recreational fishing industry. All values relate to the 2010/11 financial year and for saltwater fishing only.

	Total funds allocated with fisher representation (\$M)	% of total expenditure <sup>1</sup>	per SW fishing event <sup>2</sup>
<b>Tasmania</b>	0.223	8.9	\$0.33
<b>Victoria</b>	3.36	42.0	\$2.09
<b>NSW</b>	9.1	72.2	\$1.56
<b>WA</b>	5.5	30.7	\$1.67
<b>SA</b>	0	0	0
<b>Queensland</b>	0	0	0
<b>NT</b>	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Total agency expenditure relating to saltwater fishing was calculated using the method outlined in Table 2.3

<sup>2</sup> Based on the number of saltwater fishing events as reported in the National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey

### 2.3.2.2 Grants Programs

The provision of grants programs fosters the engagement and inclusion of fishers in the allocation of discretionary funds. This is achieved by providing funds that individuals and community groups are eligible to apply for and the funding of projects and services facilitating the engagement of fishers. As a proportion of total agency expenditure on recreational fishing, monies allocated through grants programs, in ascending order, are as follows: NSW (60%); Victoria (47%); Tasmania (9%); and WA (6%) (Table 2.6). However, due to different management and funding structures between States, these values should not be interpreted as funds disbursed through community grants programs. With the exception of Tasmania, and WA, the majority of grants monies are allocated to within-Department programs. Furthermore, grants are also awarded to research programs conducted within Departments or through Government research institutions, including universities. Therefore, comparisons between States based on total grant allocations have limited value as funds for Departmental programs including Government sponsored research are also provided through consolidated revenue and through independent revenue not made available through grants schemes.

It is possible, however to compare States according to funds (total and standardised) made available as grants to organisations and individuals not affiliated with State Government departments<sup>41</sup> (Table 2.6). These include fishing clubs and associations, local councils, environment groups and independent researchers. These types of projects are only funded through grants schemes underpinned by fishing licence revenue. In terms of both total and standardised community grant allocations, Victoria leads the other States. This is largely due to the funding of a large number of projects relating to fisher access/infrastructure, and education/engagement through both the small and large grants programs. NSW, in comparison, allocates a larger proportion of grant monies to research programs, most of which are Government affiliated.

<sup>41</sup> This includes universities and other Government research institutions

**Table 2.6.** A comparison of monies disbursed through grant programs between Australian State FMAs. As a component of these funds, grant monies for community based projects are also compared. All values relate to the 2011/12 financial year and for saltwater fishing only.

	Total funds allocated through grants (\$M)	% of total expenditure <sup>1</sup>	Total funds for community grants <sup>2</sup> (\$M)	% of total expenditure	Community grant \$ per SW fishing event <sup>3</sup>
<b>Tasmania</b>	0.223	8.9	0.028	1.15	\$0.04
<b>Victoria</b>	3.79 <sup>4</sup>	47.4	0.339	4.24	\$0.21
<b>NSW</b>	7.6	60.2	0.324	2.57	\$0.06
<b>WA</b>	1.1	6.1	0.2	1.12	\$0.06
<b>SA</b>	0	0	0	0.00	\$0.00
<b>Queensland</b>	0	0	0	0.00	\$0.00
<b>NT</b>	0	0	0	0.00	\$0.00

<sup>1</sup> Total agency expenditure relating to saltwater fishing was calculated using the method outlined in Table 2.3

<sup>2</sup> Community grants refer to grant allocations to non-Government entities

<sup>3</sup> Based on the number of saltwater fishing events as reported in the National Recreational and Indigenous Fishing Survey

<sup>4</sup> This included monies made available through the Recreational Fishing Initiative Fund which will provide supplementary funding for recreational fishing between 2011/12 to 2015/16

### 2.3.3 Communications and Research

The collection of personal contact details through fishing licences and gear registration provides FMAs with a valuable reference frame for surveys and communications purposes. An understanding of the number of participants within a fishery also assists managers and researchers to understand the level of fishing impact, with clear implications for stock assessment and regulation. Licensing and management models of FMAs address these needs to varying degrees.

The licensing frameworks in Tasmania and WA and the gear registration system in SA allow targeted research and communications for high value and high impact fisheries. The recent implementation of the RBFL in WA also provides a sampling/communications frame for boat fishers – this has been instrumental in facilitating a recently completed \$3.2M survey on the boat fishery. Furthermore, the recent abolition of the ‘umbrella licence’ in WA has enabled an improved understanding of fisher numbers in high value and high impact fisheries. The provision of concessions rather than exemptions for economically disadvantaged groups in Tasmania and WA, and the absence of either exemptions or concessions in SA, enables surveys of fishers to be conducted that are cross-sectional and representative. It also enables the dissemination of management information to all fishers within licensed fisheries, or for fisheries for which gear is licensed.

In Victoria and NSW, general fishing licences provide contact details for approximately half of the fishing population due to the provision of generous exemptions. While this type of licence structure facilitates sample selection for general fishing surveys, the omission of data from large and well defined social groups presents challenges to researchers, particularly for social and/or economic research. Partly due to these challenges, researchers undertaking a recent economic study on recreational fishing in Victoria [52] chose not to select their samples from



the Victorian licence database [53]. Such challenges are also recognised by fisheries managers in Victoria and NSW, but for reasons explained in their respective sections, licence concessions or free licences for exempt groups were not implemented.

The absence of any fishing licences for marine fishers in Queensland and the Northern Territory does not permit direct access to recreational fishers for surveys and/or communications purposes.

## 2.4 INTERNATIONAL RECREATIONAL FISHERIES LICENSING AND FUNDING MODELS

### 2.4.1 New Zealand

Freshwater fisheries are managed by Fish and Game New Zealand and saltwater fisheries are managed through the Department of Primary Industries. While all marine recreational fisheries remain unlicensed, a licence is required to fish for freshwater sport fish (trout, salmon and coarse fish). An annual licence costs \$NZ116 and a winter season licence is available for \$NZ70. Annual family licenses may be purchased. One day licenses are also available. Concession licences are offered for juniors (12-18 years) while children less than 12 years can fish for free. Nonetheless, children are still required to obtain a licence for data collection purposes.

Fish and Game NZ do not receive any Government funding and is run by 13 regional councils elected by fishing and hunting licence holders who receive voting rights upon receipt of a licence<sup>42</sup>. The National Council is elected by the 13 regional councils. Therefore, the democratic structure of Fish and Game NZ enables it to act as both a management body and a representative body for fishers and hunters. Its \$6M annual budget is comprised largely from the sales of approximately 125,000 fishing licences. The licence fees are determined by dividing anticipated management costs by the number of licences expected to be sold within a particular year, taking into account fishers' willingness to pay and other market based factors. An overview of itemised expenditure for Fish and Game NZ is outlined in Table 2.7.

**Table 2.7.** Annual budget allocations for Fish and Game New Zealand

<b>Expenditure Item</b>	<b>% of Budget</b>
Habitat protection	17
Provision of services to fishers and hunters	15
Licensing costs (including guide books)	12
Planning and financial reporting	10
Community engagement	8
Compliance	7
Running costs for fish and game councils	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: [www.fishandgame.org.nz](http://www.fishandgame.org.nz)

<sup>42</sup> New Zealand residents who purchase an adult whole season licence to either hunt or fish, or are the primary licence holder of a Family Licence, have a choice to be on the electoral roll. Licence holders who wish to vote have to sign a separate authority at the time they purchase their licence to have their name placed on the electoral roll.

A Backcountry Licence is also required to fish in specified waters. These licences, which are effectively an endorsement on the freshwater licence, are issued without charge and are used to monitor fishing activity in sensitive wilderness areas. Licence holders are required to cooperate in the collection of fishing information by Fish and Game NZ if requested. An alternative fishing licence from the Department of Conservation is required to fish waters in the Lake Taupo area at an annual cost of \$90.

## **2.4.2 United States**

Funds for managing, enhancing and administering recreational fisheries are collected through a combination of Federal taxes, State taxes, fishing licences and other innovations including allocations from State lotteries and voluntary income tax contributions. Funding requirements differ between States, as does the relative contribution from the different revenue streams. On average, over half of total funding for fisheries and wildlife management comes from fishing and hunting licence fees, about a quarter through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program (see below) and the remainder through State taxes and miscellaneous revenue streams.

### *2.4.2.1 Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) Program*

State FMAs receive funding from the Federal Government through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) Program. Under the SFR program, revenue is collected through the following four taxes:

- an import tax on fishing tackle and personal watercraft;
- a excise tax on fishing tackle;
- a tax on boat fuel; and
- a sales tax on electric outboard motors and sonar devices.

Funds from these taxes are allocated to State FMAs as grants to complement State based revenue instruments, including fishing licences. Programs funded relate to aquatic resource education, development and maintenance of fishing infrastructure, fisheries research, habitat management and restoration and fish stocking. Grant allocations available to individual States are based on a formula taking into account the number of (licensed fishers) and the land and water area of each State.

The SFR programme is based on a cost-reimbursement system whereby the States must provide all funds for approved projects before applying to have up to 75% of the costs reimbursed – at least 25% of the project costs need to be incurred by the States (usually through licence revenue). Over the 2010/11 financial year, almost \$365M was apportioned to the States through the SFR Program.

#### 2.4.2.2 Recreational Fishing Licences

The management of freshwater and marine recreational fisheries is under State jurisdiction and recreational fishing licences are required for fishing in most States. Of the 50 States in the US, 23 have a coastal boundary. As these States have marine fisheries, and thus greater relevance to this study, they will be the focus of this Section.

For all 23 States with a coastal boundary, a licence of some description is required to access either saltwater fisheries, freshwater fisheries or both (Table 2.8). A licence to fish in freshwater, whether in the form of an explicit freshwater licence or an all waters licence (which exist in five States), is required for all 23 States. For saltwater fishing, five States do not require fishers to be licensed. In seven States, fishers are offered a combination saltwater/freshwater licence at a discounted rate.

A boat fishing licence (BFL) has also been introduced in four States. In Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, the BFL enables non-licence fishers to fish from a vessel providing the vessel owner possesses a BFL. However, in Florida, where saltwater shore-based fishing is unlicensed, all fishers on a vessel are required to hold a BFL.

With the exception of North Carolina, Virginia and Maine, both saltwater and freshwater fisheries are managed by the same agency. Apart from Hawaii, hunting and wildlife management are also administered by the same State agency. While fee structures and licence entitlements vary considerably between States, some elements of the licensing models are present in all or most States. These include:

- higher licence fees for non-residents<sup>43</sup>;
- exemptions and/or generous concessions for various groups including minors, the elderly, native Americans, war veterans, disability pensioners;
- heavily discounted licences for active military personnel;
- combination licences for both fishing and hunting;
- the availability of short term licences<sup>44</sup>;
- the availability of lifetime licences; and
- non-reciprocity of licences between States<sup>45</sup>

Fourteen States have separate provisions for high value or vulnerable species. These consist of separate licences, permits, stamps, tags and endorsements. The purchase of a saltwater, freshwater or all waters licence is usually requisite to purchasing

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<sup>43</sup> All States charge higher licence fees for non-State residents. The price differential between residents and non-residents ranges between 1.5 (Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine and New Hampshire) and 6 (Louisiana and Alaska).

<sup>44</sup> While short term licenses are available to residents in all States, they are only available to non-residents in four States - Delaware, New Jersey, Alaska and Hawaii

<sup>45</sup> Some reciprocal arrangements exist for fishing in waterways or water bodies that straddle State borders

stamps, tags and endorsements. However, for species-based licences and permits, the pre-purchase of a broader licence is often not required. In Hawaii, a permit required to fish for seven vulnerable species of demersal saltwater fish is issued free of charge; however, the permit system affords managers a better understanding of fishing effort. Nine States also require permits for the use of additional fishing equipment including nets, traps, spears, buckets and second rods. In Alaska, a Personal Use Fishing Licence, available to residents only, allows fishers to use a range of fishing gear including gillnets, crab pots and dipnets (for salmon). Here, requirements vary between different regions and licence holders also need to possess a Sport Fishing Licence.

**Table 2.8.** Summary of recreational fishing licences in all US States that have coastal boundaries. Note: provisions for species, areas or gear refer to either licence endorsements or separate licences required.

	SW Licence (\$)	FW licence (\$)	All waters Lic. (\$)	SW/FW comb. (\$)	Boat fishing lic. (\$)	Fish/ hunt lic. comb.	Military licences	Species provisions	Gear provisions	Area provisions	Lifetime licences	>1 Year licences	Med. term lic.
<b>Washington</b>	28.05	27.50		52.25			•	•	•				
<b>Oregon</b>			33.00					•	•				
<b>California</b>			44.85			•		•	•	•			
<b>Texas</b>	35.00	30.00		40.00		•	•	•	•	•			
<b>Louisiana</b>	15.00	12.00				•	•	•			•		
<b>Mississippi</b>	10.00	8.00				•	•				•		
<b>Alabama</b>	21.20	12.10					•		•		•		
<b>Florida</b>		17.00		32.50	17.00	•	•	•			•	•	
<b>Georgia</b>			9.00			•		•		•	•	•	
<b>Sth. Carolina</b>	10.00	10.00					•			•	•		•
<b>Nth. Carolina</b>	15.00	15.00		35.00		•		•		•	•		•
<b>Virginia</b>	25.00	23.00		40.00	126.00				•	•	•		•
<b>Maryland</b>	15.00	20.50		5.00*	50.00			•					
<b>Delaware</b>			8.50		40/50^			•					
<b>New Jersey</b>		22.50				•		•					
<b>New York</b>		29.00				•	•				•		
<b>Connecticut</b>	10.00	28.00		32.00		•	•	•	•				
<b>Rhode Island</b>		18.00					•	•					
<b>Massachusetts</b>	10.00	27.50				•		•					
<b>New Hampshire</b>	11.00	35.00				•	•	•			•		
<b>Maine</b>		25.00				•	•				•		•
<b>Alaska</b>			24.00				•	•	•				•
<b>Hawaii</b>		5.00**					•	•		•^^			•

\* available to senior citizens only

\*\* licence allows fishing for introduced freshwater game fish only

^ price depends on length of vessel. A \$40.00 fee applies to vessels below 20'; a \$50.00 fee applied for vessels over 20'.

^^ the permit is issued free of charge

ˆ only available to non-resident fishers

#### 2.4.2.3 State-based Taxes

In some States, additional revenue for recreational fishing is raised through sales taxes. Both Missouri and Arkansas commit 0.125% of total sales tax revenue towards natural resource conservation, including fisheries and wildlife management. Other States including Texas and Virginia dedicate a portion of tax revenue from the sale of boats and fishing and hunting equipment towards fisheries and wildlife management. Furthermore, fisheries and wildlife agencies in California, Texas and Alabama receive a share of the proceeds from State tobacco taxes.

#### 2.4.2.4 Other Revenue Instruments

Numerous States have innovative means to complement the revenue streams of fisheries and wildlife management agencies. Three of these innovations are:

- *Wildlife and fisheries vehicle licence plates.* In some States, including Washington, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Georgia, motorists have the option of purchasing specially designed licence plates incorporating a wildlife/fisheries/conservation design when registering their vehicles. These plates are sold at a higher price (usually between \$20 and \$30 more) than standard plates and the additional revenue is directed to fisheries and wildlife management. While a one-off payment is required for Pennsylvania plates, most other States require an annual renewal fee, and therefore a more stable revenue source.
- *State lotteries.* In some States (i.e. Minnesota, Oregon, Colorado, Maine and Arizona) a percentage of the revenue generated through State lotteries is allocated to conservation, wildlife and fisheries management.
- *Voluntary income tax contributions.* Eighteen States provide an 'income tax check-off' on annual income tax forms whereby taxpayers have the option of making a donation towards a conservation based fund through their tax refunds. Pioneered by Colorado, this system was initially lucrative; however, the increase in the number of conservation and charity organisations utilising the same system over the years has seen a gradual reduction in fisheries based income from this source.

### 2.4.3 Canada

Recreational saltwater fishing is managed at a Federal level, through the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) while freshwater fisheries are managed by Provinces.

#### 2.4.3.1 Saltwater Licences

A Tidal Sport Fishing Licence is required for any saltwater recreational fishing activity on the west coast of Canada. Annual licence fees for residents and non-residents are \$21.00 and \$101.00, respectively. A Salmon Conservation Stamp (\$6.00) is also required if licence holders intend to retain any species of Pacific salmon<sup>46</sup>. Short

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<sup>46</sup> A portion of the proceeds are directed to the Pacific Salmon Foundation to fund salmon habitat and restoration projects

term (1, 3 and 5 day) licences are also available. Concession rates are available for senior residents only. Children below 16 years are exempt from payment but must be licensed for data collection purposes.

#### 2.4.3.2 Freshwater Licences

Similar to the United States, most Provincial agencies responsible for fishing are also responsible for wildlife management. However, combined fishing /hunting licences are only available in Manitoba and Ontario. Fishing licence prices are similar to the US, though most Provinces offer separate licences (or endorsements to a basic licence) for iconic, high value or threatened species (Table 2.9). These additional charges are often higher than the basic licence charge. For example, in New Brunswick a general fishing licence fee is \$8.00 (plus conservation stamp fee), while a salmon fishing licence is \$21.00 (plus conservation stamp fee).

**Table 2.9.** Summary of freshwater recreational fishing licences in all Canadian Provinces. Note: provisions for species or areas refer to either licence endorsements or separate licences required.

	FW licence (\$)	Conservation endor. (\$)	Res. price structure*	Fish/ hunt lic. comb.	Species provisions	Area provisions	exemptions^^	concessions ^^	Short term Licences	Med. term licences	Family licences	>1 Year Licences
<b>Alberta</b>	25.66		2		•		C,S,NA		•			
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	29.44		3			•	C,S		•			
<b>Manitoba</b>	19.83	13.94	3	•			C,S,NA					
<b>Ontario</b>	37.44**		3	•			C,S		•	•		•
<b>Quebec</b>	20.41 <sup>^</sup>		2		•		C,ST	S	•			
<b>New Brunswick</b>	8 <sup>##</sup>	5	2		•			S	•			
<b>Prince Edward Is.</b>	10	20	1				C,S <sup>#</sup>		•		•	
<b>Newfoundland / Labrador</b>	17		2		•						•	
<b>Yukon</b>	15		3		•		C,S,NA		•			
<b>British Columbia</b>	36		3		•	•		S, D	•	•		

\* Residential price structure refers to if and how licence charges are structured according the place of residence of licence holders. The three structural types are as follows: 1) no price distinction based on residency; 2) non-Provincial residents pay more than Provincial resident, and; 3) three licence price points distinguish between Provincial residents, non-Provincial Canadian residents and non-Canadian residents.

\*\* In Ontario, fishers must first purchase an 'Outdoors Card' before purchasing a fishing endorsement. Two types of fishing licences are available: a retention endorsement and a catch and release endorsement. This value represents the cost of an Outdoors Card plus and retention endorsement

<sup>#</sup> Seniors (>60 years) and youth (16-18 years) need to possess a free 'courtesy licence'.

<sup>##</sup> There are 17 classes of angling licences in New Brunswick. Anglers may choose to angle for 'salmon and all other species' or 'all species except salmon'. Salmon anglers may choose to purchase a 'retention licence' which includes salmon tags and allows them to keep a limited number small salmon or they may choose a 'live release' salmon licence which does not include salmon tags, therefore all salmon must be released.

<sup>^</sup> A licence is not required for certain species ie smelt, Atlantic tomcod, and crustaceans

^^ Codes for exemption categories are as follows: C = children; S = seniors; NA = Native Americans; D = disabled persons; ST = students

All Provinces except Labrador and Newfoundland offer licences exemptions or concessions for groups including seniors, children, disabled persons and Native Americans. Short term licences are issued in all Provinces except Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador. However, in Alberta and New Brunswick, short term licences are only available to non-residents.

With the exception of Prince Edward Island, licence charges are structured at two or three tiers depending on the residential status of the licence holder. Under a two-tiered framework, non-Provincial residents are charged higher licence fees than Provincial residents while a three tiered framework distinguishes between two classes of non-Provincial residents – those that reside in Canada and those who do not. While residents and non-residents pay the same for a fishing licence in Prince Edward Island, only Provincial residents are able to receive a free ‘Courtesy Licence’ for seniors (>60 years) and youth (16-18 years) fishers.

Some Provinces (e.g. British Columbia) charge a licence endorsement to fish nominated waters in an effort to raise additional management costs and limit fishing effort. In Saskatchewan a free licence endorsement for specific waterways is required in an effort to gain a better understanding of fishing effort in vulnerable fisheries. To further lessen the impact of fishing in vulnerable areas, non-residents of Saskatchewan are not permitted fishing access.

A noteworthy feature of the licensing models in Ontario and New Brunswick are the different licences for high consumptive and low consumptive fishers. In Ontario, a Sport Fishing Licence allows fishers full possession privileges while under a Conservation Fishing Licence, a lower possession limit is allowed. The relative prices of the two licences reflect the differences in resource impact. In New Brunswick, a limited number of tags are issued with a general salmon licence while under a Live Release Salmon Licence, all salmon are required to be released. Unlike in Ontario however, there is no price distinction between the two licences.

## **2.4.4 United Kingdom**

### *2.4.4.1 Freshwater Licences*

Freshwater fisheries in the UK are administered by the Environment Agency. Licences are required to fish in freshwater, but not in saltwater. Two broad licence categories are available based on the type of fish targeted:

- non-migratory trout, char, freshwater (coarse) fish, smelt and eels; and
- salmon and migratory sea trout and non-migratory trout, char, freshwater (coarse) fish, smelt and eels

The respective annual licence fees for categories 1 and 2 are £27 and £72, respectively. Concessions are available for juniors (12-16 years), seniors (>65 years) and disabled persons. Children less than 12 years do not require a licence. Short term (1 and 8 day) licences are also available. In addition to purchasing a licence, anglers often need to purchase fishing permits from the owner or lessee of a waterway or waterbody, usually a fishing club.

#### 2.4.4.2 Case Study: Proposed UK Saltwater Fishing Licence

Marine fisheries in the UK are managed by the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). While saltwater recreational fishing remains unlicensed, a proposal to create the legislative framework for the introduction of a marine angling licence was outlined in a Marine Bill White Paper released in 2007. According to the White Paper, additional revenue generated through a licence would improve services and benefits to recreational fishers. Soon after releasing the White Paper, DEFRA published a consultation paper [54] on a recreational sea angling strategy for England in which a sea fishing licence was considered:

*“All fisheries stakeholders have a responsibility to share the cost of science and fisheries management. A combined mechanism that would raise money for the benefit of sea anglers, provide an effective communication tool, gather information to better understand anglers’ needs, promote fuller participation in management fora, and enable effective monitoring and enforcement would underpin other elements of the Recreational Sea Angling Strategy. A sea angling licence (operating in a similar way to the freshwater angling licence) could meet these needs. The costs and benefits must be transparent, justifiable and clearly understood. Additional revenue would need to be returned to the angling sector through a range of projects and programmes that would enhance the angling experience” (pp 13-14).*

Due to considerable public opposition during the public consultation period, the proposal was withdrawn in 2008. From assessing public online commentary of fishers over the consultation period, it appears that there was a large degree of uncertainty over the use of licence revenue and the potential benefits to recreational fishers were not well articulated by DEFRA. A summary of stakeholder responses by DEFRA suggests that there was broad support from environmental groups and public bodies. However, fisher representative organisations were largely neutral or offered conditional support based on a need to observe improvements in fishing quality before endorsing a licence. Nonetheless, the majority of responses were from fishers who were critical of the proposal. Some of the main reasons for their opposition were:

- a perception that recreational fishing had minimal impacts on fish stocks compared to commercial fishing and pollution;
- a perception that a licencing system would be ‘stealth taxation’;
- other recreational water users were not subject to licences;



- concerns that a licensing system would be costly, bureaucratic, would incur large administration costs and be difficult to enforce;
- a general scepticism that fishing quality would not improve under a licensing scheme;
- a concern that young people may be deterred from fishing;
- a perception that a licence would be contrary to peoples perceived right to fish, as prescribed in the *Magna Carta*; and
- a perception that introducing licences would decrease participation and therefore revenue for the tackle and tourism industries

While the proposal for a sea angling licence was withdrawn, the Minister who withdrew the proposal stated that he will “reconsider the arguments for introducing a recreational sea angling licence at some stage in the future” [55].

#### **2.4.5 Europe**

Compared to Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada, participation in recreational fishing is low, and is estimated to be around 5% [56]. However, participation in recreational fishing is highly variable between countries, and very high rates of participation are particularly evident for Nordic countries. Also highly variable are recreational fishing access arrangements among European countries. Comparisons between countries are difficult as the definition of recreational fishing, as different from subsistence or commercial fishing, is inconsistent. In some countries (e.g. Greece and Italy), there are no legal distinctions between recreational and commercial fishing [57], while for other countries where legal distinctions exist (e.g. Norway and Sweden), recreational fishers are able to sell their catches. Further, some countries explicitly differentiate between fresh and saltwater fisheries in their management framework, while others do not. To make comparisons even more challenging, the meaning and management implications of ‘recreational fishing’, ‘sport fishing’, ‘angling’, ‘leisure fishing’, ‘household fishing’ and ‘subsistence fishing’ varies between countries, and between regions within some countries.

In 2003, the European Anglers Alliance estimated that there were at least 25 million recreational anglers in Europe [58]. Another estimate from a 2006 Green Paper on Maritime Affairs by the European Commission suggests that annually, 8-10 million people fish in saltwater and more than 20 million fish in fresh-water [59]. Most European countries have instituted freshwater license programs, and saltwater fishing licenses, permits or other access requirements exist in most coastal countries (see Tables 2.10 and 2.11). Based on information available at the time of writing the only country that issues a combined freshwater and saltwater licence at the national level is Denmark. Freshwater fishing in particular is comprehensively regulated in most European countries and license revenue is used, to varying degrees, by Government agencies to fund recreational fishing related management and conservation activities. License schemes vary between countries; in some countries, recreational fishing organisations are represented on boards that decide how these funds should be spent [60].

Fishing licences and permits, where required, may be issued at a national level, a regional level or for an individual waterway or waterbody (or a section of a waterway or waterbody). Indeed, two or three permits may be required to fish a particular water as the issuing of a permit at a lower jurisdiction is often dependent on the purchase of a permit at a higher jurisdiction. This decentralisation of management jurisdiction, particularly for inland waters, is entrenched in a long-standing system of property rights whereby the owner has the ultimate authority in providing access to fishing waters. Often, these rights of access are purchased by fishing clubs or associations, who in turn sell (usually short term) permits to fishers. The cost of permits to fish particular rivers or lakes can exceed \$200 AUD a day in Iceland, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. While this system of access rights is common for freshwater fisheries, permits may also be required to access marine waters within a certain distance from a privately owned shoreline in some countries (i.e. Finland and Sweden).

The diversity of fisheries and management arrangements across Europe makes generalisations difficult (see Table 2.3 for a summary). However, a number of noteworthy features, some of which appear to be unique among some European countries, are listed below.

- The requirement of a theoretical examination on responsible fishing. The latter is required in Germany, Austria, Poland, Switzerland and Czech Republic, before somebody can apply for a (freshwater) fishing licence.
- The requirement of membership in a fishing club or organisation as a prerequisite to acquiring a licence or permit. While this is most prominent for individual waters managed by clubs and associations, it is also required at the national level in Italy and Slovenia.
- Minimum age requirements to fish certain waters e.g. Italian inland waters
- Fishing licence differentiation between salmonids and other freshwater fish i.e. France, Norway and the Czech Republic.
- A provision that allows the use of specified fishing gear for country residents only (i.e. Norway and Finland). These allowances are sometimes provided for residents within particular regions or villages only and generally refer to subsistence style fishing.
- Separate licences required for spear fishing in countries including France, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, Croatia and Greece. In Spain, permits are issued subject to a medical examination.
- Free fishing for tourists only as a measure to promote tourism i.e. Morocco
- The licensing of shore-based fishing but not boat-based fishing i.e. Morocco and Serbia-Montenegro.

- A boat fishing licence whereby the boat is licensed rather than the fisher. This system exists in Spain and a licensed boat may be subject to an annual total allowable catch.

While a detailed description of licensing models for each European country is beyond the scope of this Project, three case studies have been provided relating to licensing frameworks in the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden. These three countries have been chosen as they contain both saltwater and freshwater fisheries and are sufficiently different in their management structure to warrant separate investigations. Furthermore, each case study has aspects to their management and licensing models that may be of relevance when considering alternative models for Tasmania in Section 3.

**Table 2.10.** Summary of access requirements for marine recreational fisheries in Europe.

	National licence	Regional licence	Regional permits	Boat licence	Spearfishing lic.	Gear provisions	Species provisions	Area provisions	Comments
<b>Poland</b>	•							•	Handlines exempt from licensing. A licence or Fishing Card is required for each piece of equipment including nets, lines, spears, harpoons etc
<b>Estonia</b>	•					•			
<b>Slovenia</b>	•			•	•				A person must be affiliated with the National Federation of Sport Marine Fishing who sells licences. Permits are different for marine and 'recreational' fisheries
<b>Serbia-Montenegro</b>	•				•				No licence required when fishing from a boat
<b>Morocco</b>	•				•				No licence required when fishing from a boat. Free fishing for tourists
<b>Greece</b>				•	•				Licences are not available to non-EU residents
<b>Albania</b>				•					
<b>Croatia</b>	•			•	•				
<b>Spain</b>		•		•	•		•		Spearfishing permits are subject to a medical examination. Boats intended for recreational fishing need to be licensed as such and may be subject to annual catch quotas
<b>France</b>					•				
<b>Latvia</b>							•	•	Some area and species permits are issued free of charge
<b>Lithuania</b>		•							
<b>Cyprus</b>					•	•			A licence is required for fishing using SCUBA, spearguns, longlines and traps. Licences not issued to children less than 12 years. Boats intended for recreational fishing need to be licensed and may be subject to annual catch quotas
<b>Norway</b>									While no licence is required, owners of land adjacent to water own access rights to catch anadromous salmomids and may charge fishers to fish for them.
<b>Finland</b>			•		•		•		Additional permits required to fish private waters. Limited angling and ice fishing is unlicensed though waters within 500m are often owned by adjacent landowners and require permits.
<b>Italy</b>									While no licence is required, gear, area and time restrictions exist.
<b>Germany</b>		•							Of the three Provinces with marine borders, licences are required but issued free (in one Province a fishing duty is added). Licences are reciprocal between Provinces
<b>Denmark</b>		•							Licence is required for east coast only, which has different regulations for sport fishing and subsistence fishing.
<b>Sweden</b>	•		•						
<b>Portugal</b>	•	•		•	•				
<b>The Netherlands</b>	•								

**Table 2.11.** Summary of access requirements for recreational freshwater fishers in Europe.

	Participation (%)*	Sport/Subsistence**	National licence	Regional licence	Additional permits	FW/SW licence	Species provisions	Examination***	Comments
<b>Poland</b>	1.6		•		•			•	Fishers pay extra for boat fishing, lure fishing and fishing in trout streams. Fishing rights generally owned by the Polish Angling Association, water-companies, fishermen cooperatives and also by private persons
<b>Estonia</b>	3.6		•				•		Handlines exempt from licensing. A licence or Fishing Card is required for each piece of equipment including nets and FW lobster pots
<b>Slovenia</b>	1.3	•	•		•				fishers must be affiliated with the National Federation of Sport Marine Fishing who sells licences
<b>Croatia</b>		•		•	•			•	Regional licences to target salmonids are more expensive. They are also more expensive when fishing in the two premier river systems
<b>Spain</b>	6.8			•		•			In some regions, combined FW & SW licences are available.
<b>France</b>			•	•	•		•		2 categories of national licence - (1) for waters with salmonids and (2) for all other fresh waters. Fishers must be a member of an association who own access rights to most waters to purchase a regional permit in addition to their licence
<b>Latvia</b>	8.3		•		•				
<b>Lithuania</b>			•		•		•		A special licence is required for sea trout and salmon
<b>Belgium</b>	3		•		•				A Licence is required to fish in 'running waters'. A more expensive licence variation is required to fish from a boat, pier or wading.
<b>Iceland</b>	18.3				•				For premier rivers, permits generally pertain to river sections and are very limited and expensive
<b>Cyprus</b>	0.4		•						
<b>Norway</b>	32.2	•	•		•		•		
<b>Finland</b>	26.7	•	•	•	•		•		No licence required for simple angling and ice fishing in FW in many waters. A regional permit is required for lure fishing in many areas.
<b>Italy</b>	1.6			•	•				FW fishers must also be members of Federazione Italiana della Pesca Sportiva e Attività Subacquee which manages 90% of Italian waters.
<b>Switzerland</b>	4.9				•			•	
<b>Austria</b>				•	•			•	
<b>Germany</b>	4			•	•			•	
<b>Czech Republic</b>	2.6		•	•			•	•	On top of state licence, a whole of state or region based permit is required. Permits are either for salmonids or other fish. Some waters that require a short term additional permit don't need a licence or other permits as a prerequisite
<b>Denmark</b>	8.5	•			•	•			
<b>Sweden</b>	22.7			•	•				
<b>Portugal</b>	6		•	•					
<b>The Netherlands</b>	9.4		•		•				

\* Figures for participation are taken from <http://www.eaa-europe.org/index.php?id=14>

\*\* Entries in this column denote a differentiation in the licensing requirements between sport fisheries and subsistence fisheries

\*\*\*Denotes a requirement for fishers to pass an examination on responsible fishing as a precursor to holding a fishing licence

#### 2.4.5.1 The Netherlands

Like many European countries, access rights to inland fisheries in Holland are usually privately owned and leased to fishing clubs or associations, who in turn make licences available to members. Rather than purchasing permits particular to individual waterways however, a fishing permit enabling access to approximately 85% of inland waters may be purchased from Sport-visserij Nederland (Sportfishing Netherlands) – an umbrella fishing organisation and peak fishing body encompassing over 1000 fishing clubs. Sportvisserij Nederland is also a statutory body responsible for fisheries management under an agreement with the Dutch Government. The purchase of a fishing licence confers membership within Sportvisserij Nederland which has over 550,000 members and employs 45 full time staff. It may be argued that the delegation of authority to the national angling association to sell licences provides greater incentive for recreational fishers to buy licenses that directly benefit their organisations and activities [60].

Two broad inland licence types may be purchased through Sportvisserij Nederland – a VISpas (fish pass) and a KleineVISpas (little fish pass). Essentially, the KleineVISpas is a limited version of the VISpas in terms of accessible waters and the type of tackle and bait permitted<sup>47</sup>. The KleineVISpas also does not allow fishers to retain their catch. To purchase a VISpas, one must also purchase a membership fee to at least one of the fishing clubs represented by Sportvisserij Nederland. The annual cost of an adult VISpas and KleineVISpas is €30 and €10.50, respectively. A JurgdVISpas (youth fish pas) is also available for children aged between 14 and 16 at a cost of €12. Children 13 years and younger do not require a fish pass.

Until recently, marine fishing in the Netherlands was unlicensed. However, in 2007, the zeeVISpas (sea fishing pass) was introduced. As sea fishing is also covered by a VISpas, a zeeVISpas is only required for anglers who fish exclusively in marine waters. Membership with a fishing club is required to purchase a zeeVISpas, which costs between €20 and €25. Proceeds from licence sales fund various programs including campaigns against vertical rigging in popular fishing areas, stocking of bass, and lobbying for various causes including the creation of commercial fishing exclusion zones and the preservation of bait digging on beaches.

#### 2.4.5.2 Sweden

Fisheries management and interests in Sweden are a complex mix of official and private stakeholders at different scales and a confusing intersection of spatially variable recreational fishing classifications. In general terms, recreational fishing is recognised as either ‘sport fishing’ or ‘recreational fishing’. The latter refers to the use of equipment such as nets, fish traps, cages and longlines with the catch *primarily*<sup>48</sup> consumed within the fishers’ household (to prevent confusion,

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<sup>47</sup> VISpas holders can use two rods and all permissible forms of bait while the KleineVISpas permits the use of one rod only and a small selection of baits

<sup>48</sup> Up to 10kg of fish are allowed to be sold or traded without being reported. Sales greater than 10kg must be reported to the National Board of Fisheries

'recreational fishing' will be hereafter referred to as 'subsistence fishing'). Sport fishing specifically refers to angling for recreational purposes with retained catch to be consumed by the fishers' household. These distinctions apply to both freshwater and saltwater fishing. Management responsibilities are shared between the State (through the National Board of Fisheries and 21 county administrations) and owners of fishing rights. Since 1995, the Swedish Government has been responsible for managing marine waters, the five largest freshwater lakes, and all rivers from the coast up to the first obstacle (i.e. waterfall) for migratory fish. Landowners generally devolve responsibility to manage fisheries above these obstacles to fishing clubs/associations or local collectives.

A licence is not required for sport fishing in marine waters in Sweden. However, as landowners also own the fishing rights to waters adjoining private property up to 300m from the low tide mark, permission often needs to be sought when fishing from shore. Subsistence fishing (as described above) is restricted to Swedish residents only and is also unlicensed along the west and south coasts; however, a regional licence is required for subsistence fishing along the east coast. The same rules apply regarding fishing in private waters. Regional permits are required all along the Swedish coast for trolling from both motor boats and row boats and a permit is also required to fish for salmon off the Norrland coast.

Free access to freshwater fisheries (both sport and recreational) applies only to the five largest lakes in Sweden. Otherwise, fishing rights are privately owned and fishers usually require the permission of landowners and/or regional permits. In many cases, fishing in public waters may not require a fishing rights permit, only a regional permit/licence. For example, in the province of Åland, 16 waters require a regional permit only while a further 56 require both permits [61].

#### *2.4.5.3 Portugal*

Freshwater and saltwater fisheries in Portugal are managed by different Government departments. While fishing licences have been required to fish in fresh waters since 1962, a new suite of licenses was introduced in 2007 requiring saltwater fishers over the age of 16 years to also possess a licence<sup>49</sup>.

*Saltwater Licences.* Marine based licences are administered by the Directorate General of Natural Resources, Safety and Maritime Affairs (NRSMA). Licences are available that cover the whole of mainland Portugal or apply to one of five regions – North, Central, Lisbon, Alentejo and Algarve. Licences are further categorised according to three modes of fishing – shore fishing, boat fishing and spear fishing – and may be issued annually, monthly, daily or for three years. While a shore based licence (national 12€/year; regional 6€/year) restricts fishers to shoreline fishing only, a boat based licence (national 60€/year; regional 30€/year) allows licence holders to fish from boats and from shore. A spear fishing licence (national 80€/year; regional 40€/year) permits licence holders to engage in all three activities. An

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<sup>49</sup> Unlicensed children must be accompanied by a licence holder

additional licence to fish in marine protected zones at certain times of the year has been recently discussed by the NRSMA .

*Freshwater Licences.* Most inland waters in Portugal are managed by the National Forests Authority. Freshwater licenses are considerably cheaper than saltwater licences and may be issued at the national (€5.99 /year), regional (€2.99/year) or local level (€0.90/year). A ‘Sunday Licence’ (€0.60/year) allows a licence holder to fish on Sundays and public holidays within certain municipalities. Unlike some countries where two or three region-based licences may be required to fish, only one region-based licence is required to fish in waters under the jurisdiction of the licence issued. While most inland waters in Portugal are accessible to licensed fishers, some privately managed fisheries exist whereby fishers are generally charged daily fees for fishing access. However, under Portuguese law, managers of private waters cannot charge daily access fees of more than €2.00 or €4.99 to local and non-local residents, respectively.

#### *Case Study: The Introduction of Marine Recreational Fishing Licenses*

The justification for the introduction of sea fishing licenses in 2007 was to “create the best conditions for recreational fishing, protect this activity, ensure the sustainability of marine resources and prevent professional (commercial) fishing activity disguised as recreational fishing” [62]. The licences have been controversial and were implemented amid a raft of other measures (i.e. bag and size limits, area closures and localised season closures) to regulate recreational fishing in Portugal<sup>50</sup>. Factors implicated in the lack of public support for fishing licences include the manner in which licence revenue has been spent and the price of licences, especially for boat fishers and spear fishers. While official information on the use of licence revenue is difficult to find, a Portuguese fisheries researcher suggests that 60% of the proceeds are meant to fund administration costs associated with licensing and enforcement and the remaining 40% is directed to compliance authorities [63]. However, the European Fishing Tackle Trade Association (EFTTA) suggests that a large portion of licence revenue is used to fund compensation schemes for retired commercial fishers [64].

In the first year after the licences were introduced, approximately €3.5M was raised through the sales of 201,522 licences. However, only 172,754 licences were sold in 2010 [65] – a reduction of almost 15%. In recognition of the flow-on effects on fishing tackle sales, the EFTTA has been particularly vocal its opposition to the licences. They claim that tackle sales may have decreased by up to 60% [66]. Nonetheless, the EFTTA does not appear to be unsupportive of fishing licences *per se*. In a press release, the EFTTA President states “we do not feel that sea licences for recreational fishermen are a bad thing if the money raised by those licences is put back into improving fishing habitats, conservation and better and more access to fishing waters for anglers” [66].

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<sup>50</sup> Prior to the introduction of these measures, recreational marine fishing was largely unregulated in Portugal



As the sea fishing licences were introduced within a raft of measures to regulate recreational fishing activity, it is very difficult to disentangle public opposition to licences and apparent declining participation from other restrictive measures. Such measures included the prohibition of fishing from many popular fishing locations<sup>51</sup>, which has generated considerable community angst. In a recent survey of shore based fishers, 46% partially agreed with the introduction of fishing regulations (including licences), whilst 42% disagreed [67]. While these figures suggest a modest level of support for fishing regulations, lower levels of support may be expected from boat fishers and spear fishers by virtue of the higher fees paid for their licences.

## **2.5 SECTION SUMMARY AND KEY INSIGHTS**

### **2.5.1 Australia**

The variety of licensing and management arrangements in Australian States provides an opportunity to assess the merits of a range of alternative models. The Northern Territory remains the only jurisdiction with a fisheries management agency completely funded through consolidated revenue. All States have some type of licensed fishery access through permits, registration fees or explicit fishing licences. The ‘coverage’ of each access arrangement depends on the nature of the fisheries to which they pertain and the extent to which exemptions are offered. Changes to funding structures over the last decade or so indicate a general trend away from a reliance on consolidated revenue towards a greater reliance on strategic revenue options, particularly fishing licences. This is consistent with a general trend of ‘user pays’ and cost recovery in natural resource management.

The applicability, popularity and success of a licensing model for a particular management jurisdiction is ultimately dependent on a unique blend of factors – resource-based, social, economic, cultural, political and historical. These factors make it particularly challenging to predict the success of alternative models in terms of addressing key objectives and gaining public support. Among Australian States however, fishing licences that have been introduced have been largely popular among fishers, both pre and post implementation. For States without fishing licences, there is apparent overall support for them among most management agencies and fisher representative bodies. While ‘necessary requirements’ in gaining public support for proposed licences are explained later in this Section, the post-introduction popularity of fishing licences in Australia is largely due to the provision of additional programs and services of benefit to recreational fishers made available through extra revenue. Clearly therefore, a fishing licence implemented to replace a comparable level of consolidated revenue would be less popular.

A comparison of Australian States also underscores the role licences play in facilitating the engagement and representation of fishers in the decision making

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<sup>51</sup> Originally, fishers were prohibited from fishing from jetties and in navigation channels. However, after strong public criticism, this initiative was withdrawn for shore based fishers

process, providing community grants funding and enabling effective communications and research programs. For States without fishing licences, the inability to fund grants programs not only excludes fishers from applying for funding but also excludes the representation of fishers in the allocation of funds. While databases of licensed fishers facilitate sample selection for research, feedback regarding the administration of general licences in Victoria and NSW highlight limitations associated with uniform-type licences and generous licence exemptions.

### **2.5.2 United States and Canada**

Similar to Australia, recreational fisheries in the US are managed by individual States. Of the 23 coastal States, only five have no access requirements for marine fisheries. Otherwise, access arrangements vary markedly between States and include saltwater fishing licences, general (saltwater and freshwater) fishing licences and boat fishing licences. In seven States, fishers have the option of purchasing a freshwater licence, a saltwater licence or an all waters licence. Endorsements for high value species, specialised fishing gear and sensitive fishing environments are also offered as licence additions in most States. In Canada, saltwater fishing is managed at a Federal level while freshwater fishing is managed by individual provinces. A saltwater fishing licence is required to fish on the east coast only.

While most general access requirements for recreational fisheries in the US and Canada have similar examples among Australian States, two licensing models do not and will be assessed on their applicability as alternative licensing models for Tasmania in Section Three. The first is a boat fishing licence whereby all boat fishers require a licence (Florida). The second is a 'conservation licence' whereby a two tiered pricing system distinguishes between high consumptive and low consumptive fishers (Ontario and New Brunswick). There are also a few 'features' of licensing models that may be worthy of consideration if the current Tasmanian licensing framework is reviewed:

- higher licence fees for non-residents;
- exemptions and/or generous concessions for low income groups including tertiary students;
- lifetime licences;
- family licences; and
- voluntary conservation contributions.

In the US, FMAs are also funded through Federal taxes. State-based taxes and other revenue instruments such as State lottery contributions and voluntary income tax contributions also provide additional funding for recreational fishing in some States. While these revenue options address funding objectives, their applicability for Tasmania will not be considered in Section Three as they lack the capacity to address other objectives that may be addressed through licensing models i.e. sampling frames for research and communication and the engagement of fishers in the

management process. Furthermore, Australian Governments are likely to resist tax hypothecation [21].

### **2.5.3 Europe and the United Kingdom**

Compared to Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada, participation in recreational fishing is low, especially for marine fisheries. Nonetheless, most European countries have instituted freshwater license programs, and saltwater fishing licenses, permits or other access requirements exist in most coastal countries. Of the 21 coastal countries examined, nine have national marine fishing licences, seven have region-based marine licences or permits, six have boat fishing licences and two have combined saltwater and freshwater licences. Licences for spearfishing are also required in eleven countries, either at a national or regional level. Furthermore, in some countries, access provisions also pertain to gear types, fishing areas and high value species – either as endorsements to licences or as ‘stand alone’ permits. In the UK, saltwater fishing remains unlicensed while freshwater licences distinguish between migratory and non-migratory fish.

Prominent features of recreational fishing access arrangements in Europe and the UK include decentralised management arrangements based on property rights and the (often) close link between fishing participation and affiliation with fishing clubs and organisations. Due to these and other arrangements with longstanding historical legacies, most licensing and management models have limited relevance for Tasmania. Perhaps the most relevant model in terms of licensing for Tasmania’s marine fisheries is the recently introduced suite of fishing licences in Portugal. Whilst controversial, the licensing model makes price distinctions between boat based and shore based fishing, with additional provisions for specialised fishing gear (i.e. spear guns).

### **2.5.4 Licence Proposals and Introductions**

Case studies on fishing licence proposals and introductions were provided for Victoria, NSW, WA, Queensland, the UK and Portugal. Common themes were evident across studies, including factors requisite in gaining public and political support. These factors are summarised below.

- Details of licence proposals, particularly key objectives, need to be clearly articulated. If objectives are better addressed through other management options, they should be considered as an alternative or an addition to fishing licences.
- Licences should be widely affordable and not be introduced to limit fishing effort.
- Licence prices need to be structured according to the relative capacity to pay between individuals. This can be addressed through exemptions, concessions and short term licences.
- Stakeholders, particularly fishers and representative bodies need to be enfranchised in the design and development of licensing models.

- Licence proponents need to be receptive to public scrutiny and be prepared to amend proposals accordingly.
- Licence revenue needs to be spent on the management and/or enhancement of recreational fishing opportunities. This needs to be particularly well articulated during public consultation.
- Licences should not be implemented to replace consolidated revenue funding.
- Fishers should be engaged and represented in deciding how licence revenue is spent.
- Licence administration costs should be minimised.
- To be acceptable to both managers and fishers, the design of a licence model needs to successfully navigate a trade-off between effectiveness in addressing objectives and simplicity in its use.
- The development of a model needs to consider its historical context. Unless prevailing fishery access requirements are very unpopular, the potential for public disapproval of a proposed model are likely to be somewhat proportional to the scope and degree of proposed changes.

### **3. ASSESSEMENT OF ALTERNATIVE LICENSING MODELS**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE**

In the previous Section, models for the funding and management of fisheries management agencies (FMAs) were presented for Australian States and for numerous international jurisdictions. Particular emphasis was placed on models with perceived relevance for Tasmanian marine recreational fisheries, especially in light of the challenges outlined in Section One. Consistent with this, additional information was sourced relating to community and political issues surrounding the development and implementation of licensing frameworks thought to be most relevant.

In this Section, the licensing models previously investigated will be evaluated in terms of their perceived suitability as alternatives to the current model for Tasmanian marine fisheries. The evaluation process will involve three steps:

1. From the diverse range of recreational fisheries licensing and revenue options discussed in Section 2, eight general models will be presented and described in Section 3.2. These models will form the basis for a three stage assessment process.
2. In Section 3.3, all models will be 'screened' during a preliminary assessment process according to criteria deemed essential. If a model cannot successfully address one or more essential criteria, it will be eliminated from further consideration.
3. In Section 3.4, remaining models will be assessed and compared against eight desirable criteria. Where applicable, more than one variation will be evaluated for each general model. While criteria will be assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively, objective means of making assessments will be employed where possible.

#### **3.2 ALTERNATIVE LICENSING MODELS**

A summary of licensing and management frameworks outlined in Section Two is outlined below.

1. *Boat licence for all boat fishers.* With the exception of Albania, all jurisdictions that have introduced boat fishing licences have separate licenses for other fisheries such as shore-based fishing (Portugal, Slovenia and Croatia), highly valued species (i.e. Florida) or high impact activities (i.e. Greece).
2. *Boat licence for boat operators only.* This type of licence, which has been implemented in Western Australia, Virginia, Maryland and Delaware requires the boat operator to be a licence holder. Under the WA model, non-licence holders may retain fish providing the retained total number of fish on a vessel does not exceed the individual possession limits for the licensed boat

operator. As for Alternative Licensing Model (ALM) #1, other jurisdictions with a licence of this nature generally have complementary licenses.

3. *A Marine Waters Fishing Licence.* As the licensing and management of marine and freshwater fisheries is undertaken by separate agencies in Tasmania, a marine waters licence is the ALM most similar to the all waters licences introduced in Victoria and New South Wales. Poland and the Netherlands have a general saltwater licence without separate arrangements for specific fisheries or gear, as do Mississippi and South Carolina.
4. *Boat Based / Shore Based Marine Waters Fishing Licence.* This licensing framework exists in Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Croatia, Virginia, Maryland and Delaware and effectively encompasses all fishers. Depending on the fee structure, this ALM may be seen as a two-tiered general licence (whereby boat fishes generally pay more than shore based fishers) or a general licence with a boat fishing endorsement.
5. *A Marine Waters Fishing Licence distinguishing between catch and release fishers and retention fishers.* This type of licence has been implemented for freshwater fishing in Ontario and for salmon fishing in New Brunswick. In Ontario, a lower licence fee applies for non-retention fishers is a reflection of their comparatively lower impact on fisheries.
6. *A Marine Waters Fishing Licence with endorsements for high value and high impact fisheries.* Under this framework, a general or basic licence would enable the fisher access to most finfish fisheries while the current suite of endorsements would be retained. Additional endorsements could be considered for other high value fisheries such as game species and/or striped trumpeter. Boat fishing could also be considered as an endorsement.
7. *An extension of the current endorsement model.* The current framework could be expanded to incorporate other high value fisheries such as game species and/or striped trumpeter. Boat fishing could also be considered as an endorsement. In the latter case, all fishing with the exception of shore based angling for non high-value species would require a licence.
8. *A Boat Registration Levy.* While a boat registration levy is not a licensing framework *per se*, it could be used in conjunction with the existing framework to provide additional revenue and potentially a sampling frame of fishers who own boats.

### **3.3 PRELIMINARY SCREENING PROCESS – METHODS**

To streamline the screening process, licensing models described above will firstly be assessed against their perceived ability to successfully address four essential criteria, as described below:

1. *The capacity to provide annual licence revenue in excess of \$1.6M<sup>52</sup>.* Clearly, an inability to provide this means that a licensing model cannot successfully address the budgetary challenges described in Section One.
2. *The capacity to facilitate research and communications at a level greater than the present model.* The current framework provides a comprehensive database for fishers of high value species (rock lobster, abalone, scallops) and for high impact fisheries. The databases for these fisheries provide a valuable sampling frame for ongoing targeted research programs, which need to be preserved or augmented within ALMs under consideration. Broader level licensing will therefore need to enable research and communications access to these fisheries.
3. *The ability to be implemented under existing institutional arrangements.* If institutional frameworks or Government policy does not facilitate the implementation of an alternative licensing or management model, it clearly cannot be considered as a candidate model.
4. *Applicability to the nature of marine recreational fishing in Tasmania.* As licensing models take into account target species and fishing modes within a management jurisdiction, existing models used interstate or overseas may not be appropriate for consideration in Tasmania.

If an alternative licensing models cannot successfully address one or more essential criteria, they are considered to be ‘fatally flawed’, and therefore will not be assessed during the second stage assessment process.

### **3.4 PRELIMINARY SCREENING PROCESS - RESULTS**

Fatal flaws were identified for three of the eight proposed models (see Table 3.1). For both models whereby boat fishing licences are the *only* licence type, a sampling frame of licensed fishers would not provide contact details pertaining to the currently licensed high value and high impact fisheries. While this may be partly addressed through a licence application process requesting applicants to nominate intended fishing activity type, shore based fishers of high value species (i.e. shore based rock lobster and abalone divers) would be excluded. An additional fatal flaw evident for a boat licence for boat operators is an insufficient revenue capacity<sup>53</sup>.

A Marine Waters Fishing Licence that distinguishes between fishers based on fish retention was also eliminated from further contention on the grounds that very few Tasmanian marine fishers release all their catch [2]. While voluntary catch and

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<sup>52</sup> In Section One, it was estimated that \$1.455M would need to be raised from licence sales to resume a community grants program consistent with average allocations since 1995. This value assumes no increase in budgeted Fishwise program allocations. Upon termination of the current TARFish funding agreement in 2014 however, \$1.588M would need to be raised to undertake another funding agreement at the same level of TARFish funding.

<sup>53</sup> At \$40 per licence, a boat licence for boat owners would provide an estimated revenue of \$0.8M. This figure is based on the estimated current number of registered recreational vessels used for marine recreational fishing (20,000).

release fishing is practiced by some black bream and tuna fishers in Tasmania, it was not deemed sufficient to consider the introduction of a separate non-retention licence. A model of this nature would also pose considerable administrative and compliance challenges.

Potentially, administrative and structural problems may impede the consideration of a boat registration levy as a revenue source for Tasmania’s marine recreational fisheries. If all boat owners are charged levies, questions of fairness arise for those who do not use their boats for fishing. If levies were only charged for boats used for fishing, challenges would arise concerning the identification of fishing boats from non-fishing boats. Further equity problems are apparent as a proportion of boat owners (fishers and non-fishers) use their boats exclusively in freshwater<sup>54</sup>. These problems aside, there are probable legal complications as MAST is a statutory body and therefore all monies received by MAST are retained. Further to this, any developments may be opposed by MAST through fears of a reduction in boat registrations [3]. Whilst these problems would pose considerable challenges, they are potentially not insurmountable; therefore a combined boat levy / endorsement model will still be considered in the second stage assessment process.

It should also be noted that sales-tax based revenue instruments used in some States in the US will not be considered in this report. Firstly, they are not licensing frameworks *per se* and therefore cannot address all the licensing challenges outlined in Section 1A. Whilst they could be used in conjunction with the existing framework to provide additional revenue, there is strong resistance to tax based revenue raising for the recreational fishing sector in Australia [21].

**Table 3.1.** Assessment of alternative licensing models against essential criteria

<b>Licence Type</b>	<b>Revenue Capacity</b>	<b>Research and Communications Capacity</b>	<b>Existing Institutional Arrangements</b>	<b>Locally Applicable</b>
Boat licence for all boat fishers	✓	x	✓	✓
Boat licence for boat operators only	x	x	✓	✓
Boat Licence / Shore Licence Comb.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marine Waters Fishing Licence (MWFL)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Retention / Non-retention MWFL	✓	✓	✓	x
MWFL with endorsements	✓	✓	✓	✓
Extension of the endorsement system*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boat Registration Levy**	✓	✓	✓	✓

\* In order to generate sufficient licence revenue, an extension of the current endorsement requires a boat fishing or boat owning endorsement. Without this, revenue derived from the addition of other minor fisheries (i.e. game fishing, striped trumpeter) would be insufficient to address revenue capacity.

\*\* Whether or not a boat registration levy in combination with the current suite of licensed fisheries would attain the \$1.6M threshold would depend on the levy price and the manner in which the levy was applied. See Section 3.6.1.5 for more information on predicted revenue calculations

<sup>54</sup> A boat registration levy that provided funds for both the Recreational Fisheries Section of DPIPW and the Inland Fisheries Service (IFS) could address this problem. Revenue could be split between agencies based on overall fishing effort or through nominations from boat owners. However, further investigations involving revenue models for the IFS will not be considered as they are beyond the scope of this report.



### 3.5 SECOND STAGE ASSESSMENT PROCESS – METHODS

In this Section, the five ALMs that were not eliminated during the preliminary screening process are subject to a further and more comprehensive assessment. The assessment process involves evaluating how well each of the five ALMs address eight assessment criteria which have been developed through the following processes.

1. The identification of challenges facing the existing licensing framework for Tasmania’s marine fisheries (Section 1).
2. Through consultation with the RecFAC subcommittee<sup>55</sup>.
3. Through extensive research on licensing and management frameworks implemented in other Australian States and overseas (Section 2).

#### 3.5.1 Assessment Criteria

##### 3.5.1.1 Revenue Generating Capacity.

This refers to the ability of a licensing instrument to generate an adequate level of income.

##### 3.5.1.2 Revenue Security.

This refers to the ability of a licensing model to *consistently* generate a desired level of licence income. Therefore, a licensing framework with a high level of revenue security will be able to withstand significant downward fluctuations in overall licence income. In view of the positive relationship between licence sales and fishing quality, a licensing system encompassing multiple species, fisheries or fishing methods should be less exposed to revenue fluctuations than a licensing model based on a small number of species or fishing methods.

##### 3.5.1.3 Financial Equity.

This refers to the degree to which the licence fee structure accommodates the differing capacity to pay between individuals. In practical terms, the financial equity within a licensing model is generally consistent with the manner and extent to which exemptions and concessions are offered, or if the fee structure recognises proxy measures of disposal income (i.e. through boat ownership). While these examples are common structural elements that address financial equity, less common initiatives include a boat fishing licence fee based on boat length (i.e. Delaware) and lower licence fees for low income households (i.e. Washington).

##### 3.5.1.4 Resource Impact Equity

This refers to the relationship between the amount one pays for fishing and the impact one has on fisheries resources and may be seen as ‘user pays’ within a

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<sup>55</sup> A meeting with the RecFAC subcommittee was convened on 16/04 to discuss this issue, and other issues.

fisheries impact context. Under an 'equitable' licensing framework, a fisher with a greater impact would pay more for fishing than a fisher with a lesser impact. Examples of licensing features that promote a greater level of resource impact equity are short term licences and individual annual personal quotas such as stamps or tags for high value species. The targeted licensing of high value and high impact fisheries under the current Tasmanian marine recreational fishing licence is also a good example of a framework with resource impact equity values.

#### *3.5.1.5 Fisher Engagement and Representation.*

This refers to the capacity of a licensing/management model to engage fishers as stakeholders in the decision making process. Practical examples of initiatives that foster a greater level of co-management between Government and the fishing community include a well resourced peak fisher representative body, community grants programs, transparency and accountability in decision making, a high level of public consultation and the representation of fishers on fund allocation committees.

#### *3.5.1.6 Ability to Facilitate Research and Communications.*

Underpinning the development of most broad based licence models has been the need for a more complete sampling frame for research purposes. The collection of contact details through the licensing process enables the creation of a database from which licence holders may be sent information or contacted for survey participation. Clearly, if a greater proportion of the fishing population is licensed, the scope for contact is increased. A licence framework that distinguishes between different types of fishing will further increase the potential for targeted surveys and the targeted dissemination of information from FMAs to fishers.

#### *3.5.1.7 Community Support.*

The licensing of recreational fishing can be controversial and divisive. Therefore community support is necessary for the implementation and maintenance of any licensing model. The level of support for proposed models can be influenced by many factors including the manner in which licence revenue is spent, the effectiveness of information campaigns to promote benefits, associated costs, perceived fairness, the nature and popularity of existing licensing models and numerous socio-economic factors.

#### *3.5.1.8 Political Support.*

Political support is clearly necessary for the success of implementing a new licensing model. As political support would reasonably be expected to reflect the level of community support, it may also be influenced by the factors outlined above for community support. However, this is not always the case. For example, in South Australia a general fishing licence was supported by SARFAC and the fishing community (as evidenced by an opinion survey of fishers) but has not attracted political support. Conversely, a licensing model may gain political support without a commensurate level of community support (i.e. Portugal). A lack of political support

may occur when a proposal is inconsistent with a Government's broader policy objectives.

### **3.6 SECOND STAGE ASSESSMENT PROCESS – RESULTS**

#### **3.6.1 Revenue Generating Capacity**

For each ALM, potential combinations of fee structures are almost endless and predictions of licence revenue generated by ALMs are indicative only. Therefore, for each ALM examined, more than one variation is presented. This will provide the reader with a basic understanding of the potential revenue range for each ALM, given changes to the key variables underpinning each general model. Some of the information and assumptions informing these variables are as follows:

- *A potential licensed population of 100,000 marine fishers in Tasmania.* Based on the 2007/08 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Tasmania [2], approximately 112,900 Tasmanians aged five years or older, fishes at least once a year in saltwater. However, rates of non-compliance need to be factored in. While it is not possible to foresee exact rates of compliance, it is assumed that they will be similar to compliance rates observed for other jurisdictions. The range of compliance rates reported in Section Two was between 85 and 92%. The assumption therefore that 100,000 of the 112,900 fishers will comply with a prevailing requirement to obtain a licence is based on a comparable compliance rate of 88.6%.
- It is estimated that approximately 75% of marine fishers in Tasmania fish from a boat at least once per year [19].
- The current number of registered recreational boats in Tasmania is approximately 28,000 [3]. Approximately 80% of boat owners use their boats for fishing [4]; therefore, around 22,400 registered boats are used for fishing in Tasmania. As a small proportion of boat owners use their boats exclusively in freshwater, the number of boat owners who fish at least once per year in saltwater is estimated to be about 20,000. This value suggests that around 18% of Tasmanian marine fishers own boats that are used for fishing at least once annually.
- *Retention of the existing arrangements for licence concession rates.* Currently, exemptions are only offered for aborigines undertaking aboriginal fishing activities and persons under five years old. Half price concessions (on a persons first licence) are available for holders of Commonwealth pension cards, Government issued seniors cards, and for persons under 16 years of age.
- *A full rate to concession rate ratio of 1 : 0.235.* Under the current licensing model, 23.5% of licences sold are concession rate licences. The same relative proportions will be assumed for revenues calculated for this Section.

- *Only Annual Licences have been considered.* While short term licences are a feature of many recreational fishing licensing models, they have not been incorporated in the calculations for this section. This may result in a modest overestimation of annual revenue.
- For all models incorporating a MWFL component, proposed licence prices are consistent with ‘similar’ models in other Australian states

### 3.6.1.1 Marine Waters Fishing Licence (MWFL)

Assuming an annual non-concession rate of \$35 per year, the anticipated total annual revenue is \$3.09M. With an annual (non-concession) licence fee of \$25, total anticipated revenue is \$2.21M.

### 3.6.1.2 Boat Fishing Licence / Shore Fishing MWFL Combination

Anticipated licence revenue from two variations to this generalised licensing model are offered, based on whether or not boat licences are required for all boat fishers or boat owners/captains only. Two revenue predictions are made for each depending on the following licence price structures: (1) \$40 full rate / \$20 concession rate, and; (2) \$30 full rate / \$15 concession rate. For the models incorporating a licence for boat *fishers*, anticipated total revenue ranges between \$2.43M and \$3.31M. For the models incorporating a licence for boat *owners/operators*, anticipated total revenue ranges between \$1.94M and \$2.82M.

**Table 3.2.** Estimated annual revenue collected under a boat / shore licence MWFL

	No Boat fishers	No Boat owners	No. shore fishers	BL (full rate)	SL (full rate)	Total Revenue (\$M)
Boat fishers / shore fishers MWFL 1	75,000	N/A	25,000	\$40	\$30	3.309
Boat owners / shore fishers MWFL 1	N/A	20,000	80,000	\$40	\$30	2.824
Boat fishers / shore fishers MWFL 2	75,000	N/A	25,000	\$30	\$20	2.427
Boat owners / shore fishers MWFL 2	N/A	20,000	80,000	\$30	\$20	1.941

### 3.6.1.3 Marine Waters Fishing Licence (MWFL) with Endorsements

Under this type of model, a MWFL is supplemented with the prevailing suite of endorsements for high value and high impact fisheries. As a model of this nature lends itself to a range of structural variations, revenue estimates for four models are presented in Table 3.3. Total estimated licence revenues range between \$2.61M and \$4.10M.

**Table 3.3.** Estimated annual revenue collected with a Marine Waters Fishing Licence with endorsements

	MWFL full rate	Total MWFL rev. (\$M)	Total HV & HI rev. (\$M)	Boat end. (\$M)	Total Rev. (\$M)
MWFL with endorsements (1)	\$35	3.089	0.4	N/A	3.489
MWFL with endorsements (2)	\$25	2.207	0.4	N/A	2.607
MWFL with endorsements (3)	\$35	3.089	0.4	0.525	4.104
MWFL with endorsements (4)	\$25	2.207	0.4	0.525	3.132

In practical terms, the MWFL component is analogous to the current licence application fee, but would be required for all fishers. The annual revenue estimates for high value and high impact fisheries endorsements are based on the number of licences currently sold (57,000), and at the current price of \$7 per endorsement. The different models vary according to the cost of the MWFL and whether or not an additional endorsement for boat fishing (\$7) is incorporated in the model.

#### 3.6.1.4 Extension of the Current Endorsement Model

The results from basic modelling for six variations of an extended endorsement framework are shown in Table 3.4. The revenue effects of three additional endorsements – boat fishing, game fishing and fishing for striped trumpeter – are assessed. Annual participation values for game and striped trumpeter fishing are estimated to be 7500 and 5000 persons, respectively. While the current endorsement charge of \$7 is used, three of the six models costed the boat fishing endorsement at \$14. Overall, total estimated revenues ranged between \$1.675M and \$2.287M.

**Table 3.4.** Annual estimated revenue collected through an extension of the current endorsement model

	Total HV & HI rev. (\$M)	Boat end. @ \$7 (\$M)	Boat end. @ \$14 (\$M)	Game fish end. @ \$7 (\$M)	ST fishing end. @ \$7 (\$M)	Total Revenue (\$M)
Endorsement extension (1)	1.15	0.525	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.675
Endorsement extension (2)	1.15	N/A	1.05	N/A	N/A	2.2
Endorsement extension (3)	1.15	0.525	N/A	0.052	N/A	1.727
Endorsement extension (4)	1.15	N/A	1.05	0.052	N/A	2.252
Endorsement extension (5)	1.15	0.525	N/A	0.052	0.035	1.762
Endorsement extension (6)	1.15	N/A	1.05	0.052	0.035	2.287

#### 3.6.1.5 Boat Registration Levy

Under this proposed framework, a boat registration levy would provide supplementary income to what is currently received from endorsement-based licence sales. In addition to information and assumptions provided in Section 3.6.1, revenue predictions are based on two levy prices; \$17.50 and \$25.00. The first price

is the equivalent of the Recreational Use Fee (RUF) in Queensland. Concession rates for boat levies have not been considered.

At both price levels, three structural scenarios were investigated. Under the first scenario, the levy is charged for each boat registered. Under the second scenario, levies are only charged for registered boats used for recreational fishing<sup>56</sup>. Under the third scenario, levies are only charged for registered boats used for marine recreational fishing.

**Table 3.5.** Annual estimated revenue collected through a combination of a boat registration levy and the current endorsement system

	Cost of levy (\$)	Levy on all reg. boats (\$M)	Levy on all reg. boats used for fishing (\$M)	Levy on all reg. boats used for SW fishing (\$M)	Total HV & HI rev. (\$M)	Total Revenue (\$M)
Boat Levy (1)	\$17.50	0.49	N/A	N/A	1.15	1.640
Boat Levy (2)	\$17.50	N/A	0.392	N/A	1.15	1.542
Boat Levy (3)	\$17.50	N/A	N/A	0.35	1.15	1.500
Boat Levy (4)	\$25.00	0.7	N/A	N/A	1.15	1.850
Boat Levy (5)	\$25.00	N/A	0.56	N/A	1.15	1.710
Boat Levy (6)	\$25.00	N/A	N/A	0.5	1.15	1.650

Total anticipated revenues ranged from \$1.5M to \$1.85M (Table 3.5). Clearly, for the purposes of providing revenue for marine recreational fishing, a levy structure requiring contributions from the registration of boats used for marine recreational fishing only would be most appropriate. If this were possible, a levy charge of around \$25 would be necessary to provide the minimum revenue threshold of \$1.6M, as discussed in section 3.3. Any levy that did not discern boat use on the basis of saltwater fishing may present issues of levy revenue sharing with the IFS.

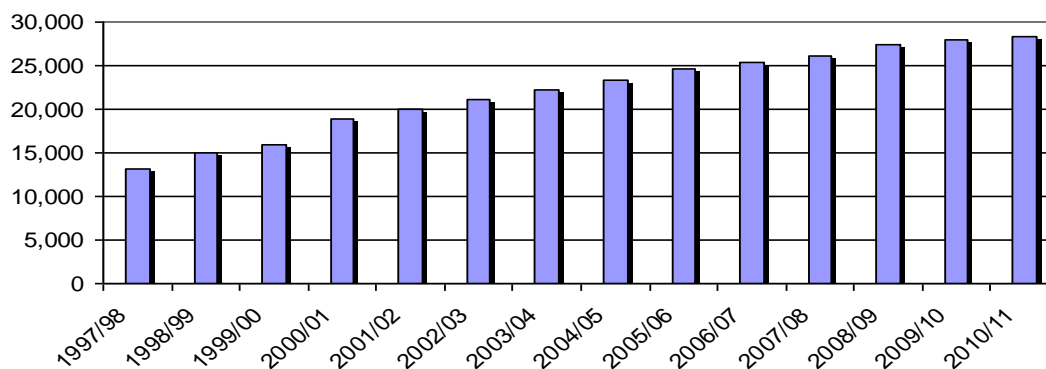
### 3.6.2 Revenue Security

In broad terms, a licensing framework encompassing all or multiple species, fisheries or fishing methods should be less exposed to revenue fluctuations than a framework based on fewer species or fishing methods. Therefore, a revenue base generated from the three licensing models that cover all marine fishers should be subject to less variability than an extension of the endorsement system or a boat registration levy / endorsement licence model. For these two models, the boat fishing endorsement and boat registration levy components would be less prone to revenue fluctuations (see Figure 3.1 for trends in boat registration) than the high value and high impact fishery endorsement components which are inherently susceptible to fluctuating licence sales. As such, pricing a boat fishing endorsement in an extension of the endorsement system at \$14 would represent a potentially more secure source

<sup>56</sup> The difficulties in identifying boats used for recreational fishing are discussed in Section Two.

of income rather than a \$7 boat fishing endorsement. See Table 3.9 for a comparative assessment of the five general models.

**Figure 3.1.** Registration of recreational powered watercraft in Tasmania from 1997/98 to 2010.11. *Data provided by Marine and Safety Tasmania*



### 3.6.3 Financial Equity

Before discussing financial equity within each ALM, it needs to be mentioned that licence prices suggested in the preceding section are consistent with licence and levy charges in other Australian States. In relation to the all waters licence in Victoria (\$24.50/year) and NSW (\$30/year), financial equity issues surrounding licence prices have reportedly not been significant [21].

In addition to maintaining overall licence fees at an affordable rate, equity may be 'built in' to a licensing model through the following means.

1. *By offering concession or exemptions to low income earners.* While it may be argued that a licensing model offering exemptions is more equitable than a licensing model offering concessions, the lower percentage of licensed fishers under an exemptions-based ALM poses challenges for research, communications and revenue capacity. Such challenges, as they relate to research have been identified by FMA personnel in NSW [22] and Victoria [20], where the licensing frameworks do not encompass the whole recreational fishing community. While it may be possible to alleviate this through issuing free licences to exempt persons, this would add significant administration costs which is generally unpopular among fishers [24]. If maintaining the current system of concessions (rather than exemptions) is a preferred option for the ALMs under consideration, the range of concessions could be extended to incorporate other low income groups such as students, war veterans and unemployed persons. The potential revenue bases for some ALMs, as outlined in the preceding section, would provide additional scope for more a more generous concession structure than currently exists.

2. *By structuring licence fees according to proxy measures of financial equity.* Under the ALMs under investigation, boat ownership can be viewed as a proxy measure of disposable income. Therefore, the models offering a boat-based MWFL, boat endorsement or boat levy could be seen as more equitable than the models that do not. However, this assertion is only valid for licences or endorsements that recognise boat ownership, not boat fishing *per se* – assumptions about financial capacity cannot be made about fishing associates of boat owners. With regard to the proposed boat registration levy, the logistical difficulties in distinguishing recreational boats used for fishing from other boats will probably result in a proportion of non-fishing boat owners paying for a levy used to fund recreational fishing<sup>57</sup>. This has been the situation in Queensland since 1994 and equity issues surrounding the levy have attracted frequent criticism from affected groups.
  
3. *By distributing management costs among a broader population of resource users.* Under the present system, 83% of marine fishers in Tasmania do not contribute to the costs incurred through managing the fishery. In other words, all current licence revenue is collected from the contributions of only 17% of fishers. While the effects of this on resource impact equity will be discussed in the following section, individuals who currently possess a licence are paying considerably more money than if the same amount of money was collected from a greater number of people. At present, the ‘average’ Tasmanian licence holder (including concession rate fishers) with three endorsements pays over \$61 per year – the highest average licence contribution for marine based fishing of all Australian States. Therefore, it could be argued that the present model is inherently inequitable. All of the proposed models however, address this inequity by widening the base from which revenue may be collected, to varying degrees. At the lesser end of the scale, a boat registration levy would increase recreational fisheries management cost recovery to about 26% of marine fishers<sup>58</sup>. At the other end of the scale, potentially 100% of recreational fishers (with the exception of children under five and aborigines) would contribute to licence revenue through a Marine Waters Fishing Licence, a Marine Waters Fishing Licence with Endorsements or a Boat Fishing / Shore Fishing Licence Combination. An extension of the endorsement system to encompass boat fishing would increase the recovery base from 17% to around 75% of marine fishers.

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<sup>57</sup> It would be similarly difficult to distinguish boats used for marine recreational fishing from boat used for freshwater only

<sup>58</sup> This figure is based on boat ownership values for recreational rock lobster fishers in 2008/09 [70], and it is assumed that other licensed marine fisheries in Tasmania will have comparable levels of boat ownership. In the study, 55.5% of recreational lobster fishers owned boats used for marine fishing. Accordingly, it is estimated that approximately 10,700 of the estimated 20,000 registered boats used for marine fishing in Tasmania are owned by marine recreational fishing licence holders.



**Table 3.6.** Annual non-concession licence fees for four 'types' of fishers: (1) shore based line fisher; (2) boat based line fisher; (3) shore based line fish who also dives for abalone from shore, and; (4) boat based fisher who dives for abalone and lobster and uses a gillnet

Licensing Model	% Cover	Fisher 1	Fisher 2	Fisher 3	Fisher 4
<i>Current Model</i>	17	\$0	\$0	\$49	\$63
MWFL (@\$35)	100	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35
MWFL (@\$25)	100	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25
BF / SF MWFL (\$40/\$30)	100	\$30	\$30/\$40*	\$30	\$30/\$40*
BF / SF MWFL (\$30/\$20)	100	\$20	\$20/\$30*	\$30	\$20/\$30*
MWFL (@\$35) with endorsements	100	\$35	\$35	\$42	\$56
MWFL (@\$25) with endorsements	100	\$25	\$25	\$32	\$46
MWFL (@35) with endor., inc.boat.end	100	\$35	\$42	\$42	\$63
MWFL (@25) with endor., inc.boat.end	100	\$25	\$32	\$32	\$53
Endor. extension (boat end.@ \$7)	75	\$0	\$49	\$49	\$70
Endor. extension (boat end.@ \$14)	75	\$0	\$56	\$49	\$77
Boat levy / endorsement system	26	\$0	\$0/\$17.5**	\$49	\$63/\$80.5**

\* Two prices are offered based on whether the boat component refers to boat fishing or boat ownership

\*\* Two prices are offered based on whether or not the fisher is the owner of the boat

### 3.6.4 Resource Impact Equity

The resource impact equity within a licensing model concerns how the pricing structure reflects a fisher's impact on fishing resources. In assessing 'impact' however, one needs to consider both the nature of the fishing activity and the scale or duration of the impact. With regard to the latter, this may be addressed by offering short and medium term licences whereby occasional fishers pay less for fishing than avid fishers. While short and medium term licences were not included in the revenue predictions presented earlier, they should be considered if further modelling is required. Clearly however, short and medium term boat registration levies are not feasible, with implications for the boat levy / endorsement system model. With regards to ALMs that maintain the current endorsement system, lower fees for short term licences could be applied to the application fee component.

In relation to the nature of the fishing activity, understanding and addressing impact is less straightforward. The rationale underpinning the introduction of the current model in 1995 was that contributions towards partial cost recovery were only required from fishers in high value and high impact fisheries, and/or those with high management needs. To provide informed consideration of equity issues under the proposed models, the terms 'high impact', 'high value' and 'high management needs' were reconceptualised in Section 1 in light of changes to resource conditions and management needs over the past 17 years. A logical extension to this reconceptualisation is that the licence collection base of any ALM under consideration should be expanded in accordance with these changes. Moreover, it needs to be recognised that there is no such thing as impact free fishing, and under a 'perfect' equity-based model, there would be a linear relationship between resource impact and the amount paid for fishing. Clearly, a 'perfect' model is logistically impossible. However, equity values may be maximised in a model that recognises resource impact on *all* fisheries, but also has the flexibility to make licence price differentiations based on impact measures. These assertions about widening the

base for cost recovery are consistent with growing funding expectations from the recreational fishing community, revenue instability associated with the small concentration of licence fee contributions and a general movement towards 'user pays' licensing and management models in contemporary natural resource management.

In view of these arguments, three desirable criteria relating to the fee structures of the five ALMs have been developed for comparative purposes.

1. The recognition of less fishery impact from shore based fishers through the smallest licence fee contribution.
2. The recognition of boat based fishing as a fishing mode facilitating higher potential resource impacts<sup>59</sup> than shore-based fishing.
3. The recognition of additional activity within higher impact fisheries.

The only ALM that successfully addresses all three criteria is the MWFL with endorsements, including a boat endorsement (Table 3.7). Such a model requires a small contribution from shore based fishers, a larger contribution from boat based fishers, and the greatest contribution from boat fishers who undertake fishing activities requiring extra endorsements. If the MWFL component was priced at \$25, as calculated earlier, a fisher undertaking higher impact fishing activities would still pay considerably less than they do at present (Table 3.6).

An extension of the current endorsement model and the boat levy / endorsement system combination do not require contributions from shore based anglers. A further criticism of the boat levy model is that, without means of distinguishing between recreational boats on the basis of recreational fishing, owners of boats not used for fishing would likely make contributions to recreational fishing without contributing to resource impacts. Similarly, boat owners who fish exclusively in freshwater may make contributions to marine recreational fishing.

The model that addresses the criteria least successfully is the MWFL. Under this model, all fishers would make the same contribution, regardless of their impact. The shore based / boat based MWFL addresses this, in part, by differentiating between shore and boat fishing in the price structure.

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<sup>59</sup> In Section 1A, it was reported that marine boat based fishing in Tasmania accounted for 62% of fishing effort, but 84% of the total catch. The discrepancy in catch rates between fishing modes provides sufficient justification for a price discrepancy on a similar scale.

**Table 3.7.** An assessment of relative resource impact equity between alternative licensing models. This includes the percentage of fishers required to make contributions and how the contributions are structured

Licence Type	% coverage	Equity-based contributions from....		
		shore based fishers	boat based fishers	high impact fishers
A Marine Waters Fishing Licence	100	x	x	x
Boat Licence / Shore Licence Combination	100	✓	✓	x
MWFL with endorsements	100	x	x	✓
MWFL with endorsements (inc boat fishing)	100	✓	✓	✓
Extension of the current endorsement system	75	x	✓	✓
Boat Registration Levy / Endorsement comb.	26	x	✓	✓

### 3.6.5 Ability to Facilitate Research and Communications

Limitations in accessing fishers for research and communications were identified in Section One as challenges with the current licensing model. Through subsequent research on interstate licensing models in Section Two, similar challenges have also been noted by FMA personnel in New South Wales and Western Australia, despite the recent introductions of broad based licensing frameworks.

Within the context of this study, the capacity of a fishing licensing framework to enable research and communications initiatives by providing access to fishers largely depends on three criteria.

1. Whether licence concessions or exemptions are offered.
2. The proportion of fishers whose contact details are recorded in licence databases.
3. The specificity of contact details as they relate to individual fisheries.

These criteria will be used guide the following assessment process, including the information presented in Table 3.8.

It is estimated that up to 50% of fishers in NSW and Victoria are exempt from obtaining an all waters licence. Therefore, approximately half of the fishing population in those States are excluded from research and communications access. If a system of exemptions rather than concessions is seen as a preferred option for Tasmania, it is unlikely that all fishers will be accessible to researchers<sup>60</sup>. The implications of excluding access to a large demographic segment of fishers are particularly salient for social and economic research. While the current proportion of concession rate licensed marine fishers in Tasmania is 23.5%, the percentage of

<sup>60</sup> See Section Two for a discussion on the effectiveness of means used to identify fishers in specific fisheries in the absence of a fishery-specific or gear-specific database

fishers who would be eligible for a concession or exemption under a broader based model is assumed to be higher<sup>61</sup>.

If exemptions are not offered, three of the five general models – a MWFL, a MWFL with endorsements and a shore licence / boat licence MWFL – have the capacity to encompass all licensable fishers, and hence their contact details (Table 3.8). This will facilitate ‘whole of fishery’ research and communications and enable managers a better understanding of the total fishing effort, both annual estimates and inter-annual trends. An extension of the current endorsement model and a boat registration levy / endorsement system combination could provide contact details for 75% and 26% of the marine fishing community, respectively. However, there may be legal and/or administrative challenges in gaining access to fisher’s details collected through Marine and Safety Tasmania.

Since the introduction of the current endorsement model, fishery specific databases have provided an invaluable sampling frame for research, and an exhaustive list of contact details for fishery specific communications. The databases also enable fishery specific participation, effort and trends to be better understood. The only ALM that will provide targeted access to high impact fisheries, shore fishers and boat fishers is the MWFL with endorsements (including a boat endorsement). Three other models – MWFL with endorsements (not including boat endorsement), an endorsement system extension, and a boat registration levy / endorsement system combination – would provide access to fishers in high impact fisheries but wouldn’t enable both shore and boat based fishers to be targeted separately. While the ability to distinguish between boat and shore fishers could be useful for researchers, the imperative to preserve the current system of specific databases for high impact fisheries should be viewed as a high priority in light of the routine surveys that are conducted on these fisheries.

**Table 3.8.** A comparative assessment of the capacity to enable research and communications among alternative licensing models.

Licence Type	% coverage	Ability to target...		
		shore based fishers	boat based fishers	high impact fishers
MWFL	100	x	x	x
Boat Licence / Shore Licence MWFL	100	✓	✓	x
MWFL with endorsements	100	x	x	✓
MWFL with endorsements (inc boat)	100	✓	✓	✓
Extension of the current endorsement system	75	x	✓	✓
Boat Registration Levy / Endorsement comb.	26	x	?	✓

<sup>61</sup> This assumption is based on the observation that activities covered under the current model are almost exclusively boat based and lower income earners are less likely to own boats

### **3.6.6 Fisher Engagement and Representation**

The manner in which recreational fishers are engaged and represented in the management process is largely a product of institutional arrangements. Unlike some Australian States (i.e. Queensland and South Australia), marine recreational fishers in Tasmania are represented in the decision making process through the RecFAC, who provide advice on fishery reviews, policy changes and the disbursement of discretionary funds through the Fishwise Community Grants Program (FCGP). While the role of RecFAC is unlikely to change under an alternative licence model, the scope for representation in the allocation of discretionary funds will vary according to the amount of discretionary funds available. Therefore, ALMs that provide a greater level of licence revenue will also provide a greater level of funding for the FCGP which translates to a greater amount and proportion of overall funds spent with fishing community representation.

The relationship between available discretionary funds and the representation and engagement of fishers is also valid as it influences the following:

- the amount of money that individuals and community groups, including fishing clubs and associations are eligible to apply for through the FCGP;
- the amount of money available through the FCGP for projects and services facilitating the engagement of fishers; and
- the level of funds available for TARFish to provide representation of fisher's interests to Government and industry

Due to budgetary pressures currently experienced, a FCGP funding round will not be offered this year and is unlikely to be offered in the foreseeable future. While the implications for community benefits are clear, the scope for fisher representation and engagement will also diminish. The capacity for the ALMs under investigation to address this problem will be largely related to the level of funds generated. See Table 3.9 for a comparative assessment.

### **3.6.7 Community Support**

The level of community support for an ALM is very difficult to anticipate. Proposals and introductions of licensing models are generally set against a backdrop of resource-based, historical, social and political factors that are, to varying degrees, unique to a particular jurisdiction. As discussed in Section Two, the reasons affecting the level of support for a licensing model, both pre and post implementation, are many and varied. However, common themes do exist (see Section 2.5.4) and understanding issues of community support for recently proposed and introduced licensing models can be instructive in predicting local community reaction to the five ALMs under consideration.

Generally speaking, in order to generate public support, proponents of a licensing model need to effectively demonstrate the following three conditions to the recreational fishing community:

1. the need for and benefits of proposed changes;
2. why the preferred licensing model is the best means of addressing needs and providing benefits; and
3. that the identified benefits will be delivered according to terms and conditions acceptable to recreational fishers

To successfully address these, an effective communications campaign will clearly be required. In the following section, these three conditions will provide the framework for summarising information relating to community support for licensing models as discussed in Section Two. In doing so, the means by which community opposition has been successfully countered and its implications for Tasmania will also be discussed.

1. *Demonstrate the need for and benefits of proposed changes.* Licensing models may deliver a suite of benefits to fishers such as greater representation and greater accountability and transparency in the decision making process. However, the level of public support for a proposal largely depends on establishing a clear case for requiring additional funds and a demonstration of the benefits likely to be accrued through allocating the funds. It is therefore essential that the anticipated level of services and projects provided by a new licensing model will be greater than what is currently provided and is aligned with the perceived funding needs of fishers. In the case of NSW and Victoria, telephone surveys of recreational fishers [16,19] were used to determine fisher's funding priorities, which were used to inform the licence proposals. The surveys indicated that fishers were largely supportive of licences if proceeds were used to improve recreational fishing<sup>62</sup>, particularly on the following types of projects – habitat rehabilitation and enhancement, fishing infrastructure (e.g. pontoons, platforms, cleaning tables), greater compliance activity and fish stocking programs. In both States, the use of licence revenue to fund buy-outs of commercial fishing effort in popular recreational fishing areas were identified as 'big ticket items', and are thought to be an important factor in the high level of public approval for both licence introductions.

As seen in Section Two, unsuccessful or unpopular licence model introductions usually fail to convince fishers of their benefits. With regard to the failed saltwater fishing licence proposal in the UK, it is widely acknowledged that DEFRA were unsuccessful in demonstrating their ability to deliver sufficient benefits to fishers. A continued lack of popularity for the licence introduced in Portugal in 2007 concerns the lack of benefits to fishers as a large proportion of licence revenue has not been used for recreational fishing. The Portuguese Government has not been clear about what the

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<sup>62</sup> The two surveys undertaken in NSW reported licence approval rates at 83% [18] and 87% [20] on the grounds that revenue would be used for recreational fishing program and services.

money has been used for but it is commonly understood that a large proportion has been used to fund pensions of commercial fishers.

2. *Demonstrate why the chosen licensing model is the best means of addressing needs and providing benefits.* This is more difficult to do if a fishing licence is introduced to replace consolidated revenue funding. However, in jurisdictions where a 'user pays' system already exists (i.e. Tasmania), or if licence proceeds are used to supplement consolidated revenue, the relationship between licence fees and benefits to fishers should be easier to demonstrate. In recent situations where licences have been proposed as a means of reducing fishing effort by making licences restrictive to some fishers (i.e. snapper fishing licence in Queensland and a demersal fishing licence in WA), a lack of public support has resulted in proposals being withdrawn. The lack of support concerned excessive licence costs and a failure to convince fishers and peak bodies that the proposals were the best means of addressing resource-based challenges.
3. *Demonstrate that the identified benefits will be delivered according to terms and conditions acceptable to recreational fishers.* To determine what is acceptable to fishers requires considerable engagement and collaboration. A key concern of fishers in the face of any proposed change or increase in licence costs is that revenue will be used for Government expenditure not related to recreational fishing and/or be used in an inefficient manner. Consultation with fishers in NSW and Victoria determined that fishers were concerned about ensuring the following safeguards:
  - the 'ring fencing' of licence proceeds within dedicated trust funds;
  - the representation of fishers on committees determining the expenditure of licence revenue;
  - the transparent reporting of licence revenue expenditure;
  - the pricing of a licence at an affordable level<sup>63</sup>;
  - the issuing of exemptions or concessions on grounds of financial equity;
  - the issuing of short and medium term licences for occasional and less avid fishers;
  - the minimisation of administration costs; and
  - the maintenance of existing levels of consolidated revenue funding

These 'demands' were all addressed with the introduction within the licensing and management framework associated with general fishing licences. As the first four of these requirements are already in place in

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<sup>63</sup> Two surveys conducted in Victoria prior the implementation of the All Waters Fishing Licence determined that fishers were prepared to pay, on average \$31.80 and \$26.75. Excluding a small percentage of fishers who indicated they would not pay anything, the average willingness to pay was \$35.35 and \$31.75.

Tasmania, terms and conditions acceptable to Tasmanian fishers are difficult to predict.

*Predicting community support for ALMs in Tasmania.* The fact that three of the five general models under consideration have, to my knowledge, not been implemented increases the difficulties in predicting their relative level of community support. Despite the high level of uncertainty, it may be insightful to predict community support on both quantitative and qualitative grounds. A quantitative assessment assumes that the potential level of acceptance or non-acceptance will be proportional to the amount of fishers affected. With this line of reasoning, the models proposing licence coverage of all fishers (i.e. MWFL, a boat/shore MWFL and a MWFL with endorsements) have the potential to generate opposition from a higher number of fishers than models affecting less fishers (i.e. an extension of the current model and a boat levy / endorsement combination). However, predicting community support for the boat levy / endorsement model is further complicated by the difficulties likely to be encountered as discussed in Section 3.4. If effective means of distinguishing fishing boat owners from non-fishing boat owners are not developed, community disapproval could extend beyond the fishing population.

A qualitative assessment assumes that the models most similar to the current model will generate more support from fishers through familiarity. (This line of reasoning also assumes that fishers are largely satisfied with the current model). Therefore, proposals for models incorporating the current endorsement scheme may generate less opposition than entirely new models. A proposed comparative ranking of how models address issues of community support is presented in Table 3.9.

### **3.6.8 Political Support**

“Selling licences to Governments and politicians involves many of the same issues as selling licences to other stakeholders” [21; p125]. From a political viewpoint, a better understanding of fishing effort and the benefits of additional revenue to complement expenditure on programs such as research, education and compliance have clear merit. However, as licence framework reforms have the potential to be controversial and divisive, there may be political risks involved in supporting a proposal. A lack of support may also occur if politicians are ideologically opposed to proposed changes and may be persuaded by lobby or special interest groups. For example, a proposal to introduce a saltwater fishing licence in North Carolina in 1999 was unsuccessful amid pressure from the commercial fishing industry [68]. The industry feared the increased level of political power and representation that would occur under a licence system, and the revenues generated.

A change to the current model of recreational fishing licences can not occur without political support. In Victoria, NSW and WA, strong Ministerial support was instrumental in the implementation of fishing licensing reforms. In contrast, political opposition in NT and SA has effectively stifled any attempts to introduce fishing licences. In SA, political opposition is contrary to the high level of support from fishers [41], SARFAC, and the Sustainable Budget Commission [39]. A similar



situation has existed in Queensland, though the recently elected Coalition Government is yet to announce a position on the matter.

Due to the high level of uncertainty, the five ALMs will not be assessed on their relative ability to garner political support. In general terms however, case studies of recent fishing licence proposals and introductions in Australia (Section Two) may provide insightful for politicians wary of public support. Generally speaking, the licences that have been introduced (in Victoria, NSW and WA) to provide additional benefits to fishers and priced at an affordable rate have been largely supported by the fishing community and its representative bodies. In contrast, proposals to introduce fishing licences priced to reduce fishing effort have gathered little public support.

### **3.7 SECTION SUMMARY**

Eight general recreational fishing licensing and revenue models were presented. A two step process using essential and desirable criteria was used to assess the suitability of each model as an alternative to the current licensing model for marine recreational fisheries in Tasmania. During the first step, three models were eliminated from further consideration due to the identification of 'fatal flaws'. The remaining five models were assessed against their perceived capacity to address eight desirable criteria – revenue security, revenue generating capacity, financial equity, resource impact equity, fisher engagement and representation, the ability to facilitate research and communications, community support and political support.

While models were compared using quantitative means where possible, the nature of the information from which the comparisons were made meant that this was not always achievable. Therefore, the 'scores' provided as a summarised comparison of models should be viewed as indicative only. Nonetheless, some models 'performed' considerably better than others; both in terms of individual criteria and as an overall assessment. Of the latter, the MWFL with endorsements and the MWFL with endorsements (including a boat fishing endorsement) received the highest aggregate 'scores'. The combination of broadening the licence revenue base through a 'general licence' coupled with the use of licence endorsements to access high value and high impact fisheries was deemed to address the criteria most successfully. (This conclusion is consistent with recommendations for Tasmania provided in the 2008 report *Scoping Study of Options for Strategic Revenue Sources for the Recreational Fishing Sector in Australia* [22]). However, compared to an extension of the current endorsement model and the boat registration levy, the broad fishery 'coverage' of this model type (100% of licensable fishers) may increase the potential for community and political disapproval.

**Table 3.9.** A comparative summary of how the current and alternative licensing models address all eight assessment criteria.

Licensing Model	revenue capacity (\$M)	revenue security	financial equity	resource impact equity	research & communications	engagement & representation	community support	political support
<i>Current Model</i>	1.15	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	N/A	N/A
MWFL (@\$35)	3.1	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	?
MWFL (@\$25)	2.2	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	?
Boat fishers / shore fishers licence (\$40/\$30)	2.9 - 3.3	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	?
Boat fishers / shore fishers licence (\$30/\$20)	2.1 - 2.4	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	?
MWFL with endorsements	2.6 - 3.5	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	?
MWFL with endorsements, (inc. boat endorsement)	3.1 - 4.1	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	?
Endorsement extension (boat end.@ \$7)	1.7 - 1.8	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	?
Endorsement extension (boat end.@ \$14)	2.1 - 2.3	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	?
Boat levy / endorsement system	1.5 - 1.6	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	?

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## **APPENDIX 1: Licensing related responses to the 2009 Scalefish Management Review.**

The responses have been categorised across 12 categories. The categories relate to respondent's level of support for additional licensing, conditions required for support, and attitudes relating to recreational fishing licensing. Some responses that address more than one category have been included more than once. Grammatical errors have not been corrected and information linking respondents with responses have not been provided.

### **1. Apparent confusion about licenses as a form of input control.**

Simply being in attendance of all set gear is all that is necessary. I believe that there are enough separate licence costs borne by fishers already in a tight economy with house hold budget constraints. I support responsible fishing practices not increasing revenue as I already inject enough hard earned money into this fishery, to increase licencing is making it harder to justify indulging in this favourite recreational pastime.

We already have enough licences. It is very difficult to catch these fish and costs a lot already. It is just a way of getting more money from us. These fish are not even here all the time, you could not restock them nor could you have any real impact on them. If you are really wanting to do something good for these fish then use the size and catch limits. It is always the recreational that has to pay for problems that we don't cause. Stop the commercial taking these fish around Australia and we won't have a problem.

We are being priced out of the sport, boat prices; petrol prices; equipment; new compulsory equipment; energy and effort to conform to ever increasing rules and regulations. I only would catch 5 tuna a year because I only go to the east coast one week a year and you would like to charge me a yearly licence for 7 days of fishing, the recreational fishers do not deplete this east coast resource. Fishing used to be a cheap pastime but it is approaching a pastime of the rich. Possession limits will work fine, licences are not required for small guys like me and 90% of the recreational population.

Catch can be managed through bag limits and hook numbers. Fish stocks should be managed not taxed. Most recreational anglers will stick to bag limits/gear restrictions. A licence fee will be seen as a fundamental shift in policy and a money grab- it will not help fish stocks!

Disagree. Recreational impact on these species is so tiny compared to commercial fishery (esp tuna and deepwater species generally targeted by recreational fishers), that it seems pointless. What would you be trying to achieve by licencing these activities?

This would be discriminatory and could lead to all line fisherman - recreational being licensed like the mainland. Fish quotas and size limits would be better.

Lowering bag limits would be easier to introduce and gain acceptance from fishers rather than a new licence.

There's too many licenses now. The public isn't a bottomless pit when the govt wants more money. Set realistic bag limits instead.

No need for licences as bag limits will manage fishery adequately.

I don't believe the introduction of extra licences will have any beneficial effects on fish stocks. Most pelagic/tuna fisherman practice catch and release

There is a small limit, both personal and boat on Shark and Tuna now introducing a licence would be seen as revenue raising only and would not improve the fishery as they are pelagic species that come and go from our waters and the fishery could not be improved upon from a DPIWE standpoint. Most anglers now on a whole that target these species are tagged and released by game fisherman with only small numbers kept. Tagging information could be obtained from Tasmanian game fishing clubs to support this argument.

Recreational fishers are already overlicensed. We are seeing that all we are doing is paying for marine police to harass us when there is little need for such policing. Most fishermen have already moved towards sustainable fishing practices through education. We need to see more of where our money is going and hopefully see that commercial fishing is better regulated than it seems to be at the moment, before we start contributing more money to State coffers. Apply catch limits if there is a real concern but we would like to see more limits on commercial fishing in recreational areas.

Recreational fishers using a rod and line have a very minimal impact on the fishery. Bycatch can be easily released in healthy condition. Many people are very occasional fishers with rod and line and may only fish a few times in a year and catch only a few fish.

In stead of introducing more LICENCE FEE'S why not reduce the catch limit for both recreational fishers and commercial operators. If you catch 5 good blue fin what are you going to do with it. Why not set the limit to a maximum based on number of people on board.

By reducing the catch limit of some of the premium fish Blue eye, stripy etc and the amount of hooks to be used their requirement to introduce more licence fee's in the highest taxed state in the country will be reduced whilst protecting the various species

Possession limits and number of trips per boat per season a better way to manage fishery. Some 'recreational' fishers really fish in excess of what they (and immediate family) can reasonably consume

Surely the strict catch and keep limit numbers or bag numbers deem this unnecessary.

no way as the bloody government get enough taxes now. we are sick of being hounded more money more licences every way we go .just let us get on to have a good day out fishing with out having to worry about breaking some stupid bloody regulation .most people i know look after the fishery. a small minority do the wrong thing.

## **2. Provisionally support, based on conditions**

Only if fees are responsibly used for scientific research and collection of population data

not in favour of any increases in number of licences. May support licence for set lines if it could be guaranteed that the fees would be returned to the fishery (TARFish funding, research funding, fishcare etc)

I work a longline for a few shark occasionally and would be happy to pay an additional fee provided it was the same as others.

I think you could do this the same way that you do now as an endorsement on your licence

All fishing methods should be user pays. Money raised could go towards research management and a miscellaneous fund to pay for future unknowns.

Fisherman can choose type of fishing which would be an extension of current add-ons ie Pot/cray dive/ abalone etc

I DO NOT FEEL WE ARE AT A STAGE FOR LICENSING YET, HOWEVER "REC" FISHING LICENCES (ANNUAL) WOULD BE A VIABLE WAY TO : ENSURE THE FISHING PUBLIC ARE ARMED WITH KNOWLEDGE OF ANY RESTRICTIONS ETC (IE, DISTRIBUTED AT LICENCE RENEWAL)

Depends how the licence money is returned to fisher. Could be seen as an all waters introduction by stealth.

Charging fees for any type of fishing should not only be for revenue. If they are to be introduced, then it needs to be put to more fisheries officers, very few checks ? to be made.

More information distributed on a regular basis to recreational and commercial fishers would be good, both need to work together to ensure that Tasmania retains this valuable resource. The department appears to be achieving good results with the way the industry is monitored. Advertising eg: "Only take what you need for a feed" needs to be constantly reinforced.

While a recreational game fishing licence is not opposed, the funds generated from such a licence would need to be seen to be going back into the management/conservation of these species. The pricing of any licence would need to be in line with other hi

As a commercial fisher I pay \$2000 per annum to go fishing, recreational fishers should also pay to access these resources if only to increase revenue for fisheries research and protection.

Fishing licence fees are high enough. Only introduce a licence if money is needed to protect the fishery ie; more policing or research

I think that to enjoy fishing it should be user pay for all categories. The more funds that are put back into fisheries the better for all concerned.

Longlines & droplines could be an attachment to the current fishing licence. We need to keep this simple and fees to a minimum. The Tasmanian economy is very small & small changes have large effects!!

Agree on the basis that licence fees do not go into consolidated revenue but are used for research or enhancement of the fisheries.

revenue gained could be used for education and promotion of sustainable fishing and provision of facilities for that sector.

3a-- I agree to a licence fee but suggest not something expensive as most recreational fishers are required to hire boats which in themselves is an expensive exercise

IF LICENCES COULD BE ADDED TO REGULAR FISHING LICENCE WITHOUT TOO MUCH ADDITIONAL COST AND THE PROCEEDS ARE USED FOR COLLECTING INFO FOR RESEARCH I COULD LIVE WITH THAT AS LONG AS LICENCES REQUIRED DO NOT EXCEED ANOTHER 3 LICENCE TYPES WITH OUT RESTRICTING YOUR CATCH

At least you would have an idea how many were using this type of gear

### **3. Generally unsupportive of fishing licenses**

The only way you can have a licence is for every sea fisherman (best not to have one at all). A lot of shark fishing for mako and blue shark is tag and release. As a member of the sthelens game fishing

club we mostly tag our sharks. We spend thousands of dollars each year fishing for game fish, we tagged all but 4 albacore last season. Why do you want to charge us even more money just to catch fish and let them go again? I usually just fish with my 3 children 11, 13 and 15 years old, it costs me heaps i dont need another cost.

Licences are only a means of collecting money off honest people.

we are surrounded in enough red tape as it is surely we have a right to go and catch fish to put on our table. we pay for tackle, fuel, boats, etc.

AS FISH IS NOT BEING SOLD, THERE SHOULD BE NO FEES.

“No”, on the basis of additional expense

I don't disagree with fishing licences altogether, but Tasmania already has the highest fees in Australia and with compulsory licences is basically a tax grab and specially within the Charter industry it would make the operators, policemen on who can and cannot fish onboard.

It costs a recreational fisherman enough now with the costs of fuel, boat lic, trailer rego, car rego. Another licence cost will just add to the pressure that we already have

Simply being in attendance of all set gear is all that is necessary. I believe that there are enough separate licence costs borne by fishers already in a tight economy with house hold budget constraints. I support responsible fishing practices not increasing revenue as i already inject enough hard earned money into this fishery, to increase licencing is making it harder to justify indulging in this favourite recreational pastime.

We already have enough licences. It is very difficult to catch these fish and costs a lot already. It is just a way of getting more money from us. These fish are not even here all the time, you could not restock them nor could you have any real impact on them. If you are really wanting to do something good for these fish then use the size and catch limits. It is always the recreational that has to pay for problems that we don't cause. Stop the commercial taking these fish around Australia and we won't have a problem.

The only way you can have a licence is for every sea fisherman (best not to have one at all). A lot of shark fishing for mako and blue shark is tag and release. As a member of the St Helens game fishing club we mostly tag our sharks. We spend thousands of dollars each year fishing for game fish, we tagged all but 4 albacore last season. Why do you want to charge us even more money just to catch fish and let them go again? I usually just fish with my 3 children 11, 13 and 15 years old, it costs me heaps i dont need another cost.

We pay enough money already in tas to the Government in petrol and we pay MAST enough for boat rego and licence etc. It would be a laugh to need a licence to catch a tuna or shark or dropping a line in for a flattie.

Revenue grab unless they are a \$5.50 option on current sea fisheries license. The sport is costly enough for amateurs already. Exemptions for charter operators clients?

most recreational fisherman would already possess multiple endorsements who under take these types of fishing and the cost of these is starting to have effect with the rising cost of fuel, rego, insurance, national park fees, camping fees for example setting your craypots while trolling or shark fishing or maybe diving for rocklobster and abalone after a days trolling

We are being priced out of the sport, boat prices; petrol prices; equipment; new compulsory equipment; energy and effort to conform to ever increasing rules and regulations. I only would catch 5 tuna a year because I only go to the east coast one week a year and you would like to charge me a yearly licence for 7 days of fishing, the recreational fishers do not deplete this east coast resource.

Fishing used to be a cheap passtime but it is approaching a passtime of the rich. Possession limits will work fine, licences are not required for small guys like me and 90% of the recreational population. The recreational fisher pay enough for licences now to get a feed of fish.

It is expensive enough now to go fishing with mileage travelled in the car to get to the destination and then distance travelled in the boat to get to fishinf areas.

dont we pay enough money now especially for families.

Due to the cost of fishing for these another licence is just a revenue making process.

Additional licences would discourage tourists to do a spur of the moment fishing charter - cost would be prohibitive. The present system seems to be working perfectly well and these new licences just seem to be a revenue raising exercise. This proposal would not be a big issue for those who will get a pot, net and dive licence anyway. It those who don't have one of these other licences that it becomes a big issue for. It is a big issue for charter operators and will definately effect business if it proceeds. Tourism Tasmania put a lot of effort into attracting fishermen to the state and this will not help.

Why would a licence be introduced for pelagics when every year I put approx \$15000 into the economy in maintaning, servicing, rego, insurance, and fuel. I think I pay enough not to mention I already pay for a heap of licences; diving ( scallop, cray, cray pot), boating, freshwater fishing, hunting.....

We now pay boat registration, boat drivers licence, other various fishing licences and high price for fuel so I don't think we need any more costs to try and get a feed.

Just another tax for little or no gain

Fishing for most is food on the table and pensioners (with all the other licences, insurance, nost other registrations) we need another lot of licence fees like (a hole in the head

It costs a lot of money to "game fish" for tuna and shark etc. Why make it even dearer? Would it deter people from targeting the species. I would suggest no. So why introduce such a licence? What would it achieve

you pay enouth for licences now with cray,abalone,nets etc. if you are going to do that you have one licence for everything, and stop ripping off the every day fisherman,who just wants to go out sit back and relax catch a fish for the dinner table. theres enouth expenses already without you trying to make more so people cant go fishing at all.

I think ther is already enough recreational boating and fishing expenses ie fuel, insurance, cray ,dive, abalone fees, game fish club

I userd to live in Victoria and with a \$25 licemce I could target salt and fresh water fish species, southern rock lobster and abalone. I pay more than \$150 here with access to gill nets and cray pots. Seriously, you charge more than enough now!!!

no way as the bloody goverment get enough taxes now.we are sick of being hounded more money more licences every way we go .just let us get on to have a good day out fishing with out haveing to worry about breaking some stupid bloody regulation .most people i know look after the fishery.a small minority do the wrong thing.

I think there is enough licenses ie "fees". The cost for a recreational fisherman to have the safety gear for six or eight trips to the shelf per year (if lucky) it is not really worth paying more fees.

We pay enough (fuel, registration, licence, boats). Let us catch something.

Is this another money grab? I understand these types of fishing are covered under our recreational fishing licence?

If our already excessive taxes

#### **4. Expression of support for a broader based fishing licence (including a GFL)**

I feel that an appropriately priced general fishing licence as used in NSW would be a better way to go, however this should be cheap enough to not create a burden whilst still contributing funds towards recreational fisheries research and management. Ideally this would apply to fresh and saltwater though a solely saltwater licence may be more practical though priced more reasonably than the freshwater licence.

The only way you can have a licence is for every sea fisherman (best not to have one at all). A lot of shark fishing for mako and blue shark is tag and release. As a member of the St Helens game fishing club we mostly tag our sharks. We spend thousands of dollars each year fishing for game fish, we tagged all but 4 albacore last season. Why do you want to charge us even more money just to catch fish and let them go again? I usually just fish with my 3 children 11, 13 and 15 years old, it costs me heaps I don't need another cost.

In my view the present recreational licence system undervalues the fishery. This aspect will be expanded upon at the end of the review.

People value those things that they have to pay for. The present licencing system gives the impression that the recreational fishery is not valuable and consequently does not need to be looked after. All fishers over the age of, say, 14 should be required to pay a fee equivalent to the cost of issuing the licence to fish with a rod and line. Appropriate fees should then be applied to all other methods with quite considerable increases to the very valuable rock lobster and abalone fisheries. An end note. Everyone involved in fisheries management should be required to read *The Unnatural History of the Sea*. Author C. Roberts and *The End of the Line*. Author C. Clover

Don't see why these recreational fisherman should be penalised. Better to introduce a licence for all recreational fishermen.

Give us a licence to cover all. We don't have a problem paying. We have a big problem with the thought of losing our angling freedom and limits.

All fishing methods should be user pays. Money raised could go towards research management and a miscellaneous fund to pay for future unknowns.

I DO NOT FEEL WE ARE AT A STAGE FOR LICENSING YET, HOWEVER "REC" FISHING LICENCES (ANNUAL) WOULD BE A VIABLE WAY TO : ENSURE THE FISHING PUBLIC ARE ARMED WITH KNOWLEDGE OF ANY RESTRICTIONS ETC (IE, DISTRIBUTED AT LICENCE RENEWAL)

I think we recreational fishers pay enough licences for pots and nets etc where as fishing with a rod and tackle don't have to pay a licence to fish for anything, so a licence should be introduced for them and a more accurate number of fishers would be known.

A one off licence fee to cover all salt water scale fish is acceptable, only if the money raised returns to support the fishery.

I use droplines probably once or twice a season, to impose a licence for doing this only add to the already massive cost of boating, my idea for licencing would be the availability of a total licence pack at a reduced rate, (everything on one ticket) this would also help with compliance and be easier to police, it would probably result in more funds raised than the current system?

although i would rather see droplines banned, a licence system would certainly be an improvement. maybe consideration should be given to a salt-water licence, the same as a fresh water licence??

suggests that current system is inadequate, too complex, unfair and a "tax system" not licencing.- "doubt about whether it is legitimate!" Introduce a general fishing licence - all recreational fishers required to be licensed. Say \$10 with concessions for others. Ecotourists should have a levy and contribute to management, research and regulation. (RecFish Tasmania)

you pay enough for licences now with cray, abalone, nets etc. if you are going to do that you have one licence for everything, and stop ripping off the every day fisherman, who just wants to go out sit back and relax catch a fish for the dinner table. theres enough expenses already without you trying to make more so people cant go fishing at all.

I used to live in Victoria and with a \$25 licence I could target salt and fresh water fish species, southern rock lobster and abalone. I pay more than \$150 here with access to gill nets and cray pots. Seriously, you charge more than enough now!!!

""TARFish is ambivalent to a General Fishing Licence at present, however believe that there is more strategic advantages to be gained for fisheries management in debating a General Fishing Licence with stakeholders than considering a proposal for another marine fishing licence component."" TARFish believe that rather than single out each and every recreational fishing method for a separate licence that a better strategic approach is to foster further debate on the merits of implementing a General Fishing Licence. This would provide the opportunity to consider the costs and benefits for a coordinated strategic approach to all recreational fishing licences, including salt & freshwater licencing arrangements. TARFish notes that the issue of a General Fishing Licence was raised by a number of recreational fishers who gave evidence at the ongoing Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Recreational Marine Fishing in Tasmania. TARFish is ambivalent to a General Fishing Licence at present, however believe that there is more strategic advantages to be gained for fisheries management in debating a General Fishing Licence with stakeholders than considering a proposal for another marine fishing licence component. (TARFish)

You, the Department should abolish all licence requirements for lobster, nets etc and introduce one overall fishing licence for everybody. Less impost on "specialised" fisheries, more income for Dept, less police work.

Recreational fishers in one form or another (provided properly policed) provide a revenue base which flows throughout the State. So of course does commercial fisheries. However, amongst both groups there hides a segment of the population that is avaricious and flagrantly ignore the rules to the detriment of everyone but mainly the sustainability of fish stocks for the future - eg overcatches of tuna by recreationals, over (and by-catch) of flathead by seine nets. Whilst this is a scalefish survey, consider the totally unacceptable greed of pillaging of scallops from the lower channel in the last few months - in some cases up to 20 times over the legal (recreational) limits - in a single day! It happens with birdlife, wildlife and nearly every aspect of marine life. The answer? Can only be restricting catch numbers a size now or there will be no stocks left (and subsequently no jobs) in the future. Increased funding for education and policing may be possible through a scalefish licensing fee - or at least the threat of one if people don't (or won't) learn. (Community NGO – unspecified).

Whilst we do not support a licence for set and longlines, we support the licensing of line fishers (rod and reel) in salt water as this would give a more accurate assessment of fisher numbers. (West Fish).

O don't agree with adding anymore specific species licences, but do agree that a general fishing licence could be introduced.

If there is a Licence introduced it should be 1 fee that covers all recreational fishing not a fee for each type as there is now. There is a feeling that we dont get any thing for the licence fee now so another fee seems to be unjustified.

## 5. Unsupportive of additional Licenses

not in favour of any increases in number of licences. May support licence for set lines if it could be guaranteed that the fees would be returned to the fishery (TARFish funding, research funding, fishcare etc)

We already have enough licences. It is very difficult to catch these fish and costs a lot already. It is just a way of getting more money from us. These fish are not even here all the time, you could not restock them nor could you have any real impact on them. If you are really wanting to do something good for these fish then use the size and catch limits. It is always the recreational that has to pay for problems that we don't cause. Stop the commercial taking these fish around Australia and we won't have a problem.

If there is to be any further licencing then it has to be across the board. If absolutely necessary then make it an addition to the current licence. I.e. the basic licence required now for pots, diving etc plus 5-6 dollars per additional sector of the rec fishery the fisher wishes to participate.

I think there are enough licences already. Would not like to see game fishing license as I go on a charter once a year. Any additional cost would probably push it to being out of my reach financially. I would not like to see Recreational fishing become a rich mans sport.

We don't need any more licences, restrictions or quotas. The existing ratio is right especially if seals were factored in.

most recreational fisherman would already possess multiple endorsements who under take these types of fishing and the cost of these is starting to have effect with the rising cost of fuel, rego, insurance, national park fees, camping fees for example setting your craypots while trolling or shark fishing or maybe diving for rocklobster and abalone after a days trolling

Why do we need more licenses?

Licences control bandits and pirates. This would be good. No problems when you are honest and genuine fishing for the right reasons. The only problem that would be raised is how many licences can you pay for. Abalone, cray, net, dive, game fish, drop line, long line, etc etc. It would get ridiculous as you would have to name your fish and buy the licence.. Flat head, gurnet, shark etc etc... There is too many options now....

I see licensing as a method of revenue raising, it has no effect on the type of fish you can catch on a rod and line. I caught a small mako at St Helens in March, on a TUNA lure. Do I need to pay for all types of licence you may issue in case I catch that type of fish? Do I get sent to jail if I am chasing Australian salmon and catch an albacore without the correct type of endorsement? I would consider having to pay a licence fee for a rod and reel to be a low act. I do however have no issues paying for an endorsement on my sea fishing licence for a long line, or drop line. As I use the same line for both activities, the same endorsement should cover drop and long lines.

Don't place another licence burden on the recreational fisherman!

Why would a licence be introduced for pelagics when every year I put approx \$15000 into the economy in maintaining, servicing, rego, insurance, and fuel. I think I pay enough not to mention I already pay for a heap of licences; diving ( scallop, cray, cray pot), boating, freshwater fishing, hunting.....

we pay for everything (rods line lures fuel boats insurance ect surveys maintenance equipment checks brochures travel to meetings fishing memberships donations )we already pay for a recreational licence for other things such as craypot, rings, abs, dive, our clients come for the experience on mainly limited budgets I have people ask all the time about pricing already due to the costs of everything else that affect them bills food petrol fares accommodation car maintenance and rental before they can come



and have been known to drop my prices just to enable them to still go something that is better than not having them go because its not just us that would miss out its the petrol place the eatery the supermarket the accomadation and the word of mouth to get other people to come to our small place for the sake of a few dollars then where will we be? they quite simply cant afford another increa nor can charter boats find another way to absorb the costs for someone else

IT ALREADY TAKES ENOUGH GENERAL LICENCES TO START FISHING AS IT IS: (BOAT, CAR, TRAILER ETC

suggests that current system is inadequate, too complex, unfair and a "tax system" not licencing.- "doubt about whether it is legitimate!" Introduce a general fishing licence - all recreational fishers required to be licensed. Say \$10 with concessions for others. Ecotourists should have a levy an dcontribute to management, research and regulation. (RecFish Tasmania)

I am against adding more and more licenses to go fishing. A recreational game fishing licence, recreational set line licence what's next you pay enouth for licences now with cray,abalone,nets etc. if you are going to do that you have one licence for everything, and stop ripping off the every day fisherman,who just wants to go out sit back and relax catch a fish for the dinner table. theres enouth expenses already without you trying to make more so people cant go fishing at all. theres too many licenses now.the public isn` t a bottomless pit when the govt wants more money.set realistic bag limits

""TARFish is ambivalent to a General Fishing Licence at present, however believe that there is more strategic advantages to be gained for fisheries management in debating a General Fishing Licence with stakeholders than considering a proposal for another marine fishing licence component."" TARFish believe that rather than single out each and every recreational fishing method for a separate licence that a better strategic approach is to foster further debate on the merits of implementing a General Fishing Licence. This would provide the opportunity to consider the costs and benefits for a coordinated strategic approach to all recreational fishing licences, including salt & freshwater licencing arrangements. TARFish notes that the issue of a General Fishing Licence was raised by a number of recreational fishers who gave evidence at the ongoing Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into Recreational Marine Fishing in Tasmania. TARFish is ambivalent to a General Fishing Licence at present, however believe that there is more strategic advantages to be gained for fisheries management in debating a General Fishing Licence with stakeholders than considering a proposal for another marine fishing licence component. (TARFish)

I think there is enough licenses ie "fees". The cost for a recreational fisherman to have the safety gear for six or eight trips to the shelf per year (if lucky) it is not really worth paying more fees.

Recreational fishers are already overlicensed. We are seeing that all we are doing is paying for marine police to harass us when there is little need for such policing. Most fishermen have already moved towards sustainable fishing practices through education. We need to see more of where our money is going and hopefully see that commercial fishing is better regulated than it seems to be at the moment, before we start contributing more money to State coffers. Apply catch limits if there is areal concern but we would like to see more limits on commercial fishing in recreational areas.

O don't agree with adding anymore specific species licences, but do agree that a general fishing licence could be introduced.

a]there are enough licences to get already. b]]just in that one question your dept. would introduce 4 extra forms of control! Is this the unsaid unwritten adgenda and your dept. is being used as useful fools?

If there is a Licence introduced it should be 1 fee that covers all recreational fishing not a fee for each type as there is now. There is a feeling that we dont get any thing for the licence fee now so another fee seems to be unjustified.

## 6. Unsupportive of licenses for scalefish

Do not believe it would be appropriate to introduce a fishing licence to fish in salt water for scale fish. Most recreational fishermen do not catch more than they are allowed and as it would be hard for DPIW to restock the ocean as they do with the trout/salmon in fresh water what would be the point

I'm not sure of the regulations regarding the species/practices mentioned BUT I am against introduction of recreational angler licences for sea fishing.

Licences for recreational anglers should not be introduced to fish for scale fish species in our tidal waters.

## 7. Expression of general support for fishing licenses

Development and Conservation Assessment Branch It is important that there is reliable information on the number of fishers involved, their impact and some means to target educational information to them. A licence provides this and would enable the appropriate management activities to be targeted to licence holders. The static nature of the gear also presents some potential for impact on wildlife such as marine homeotherms through bycatch and entanglement. Again it would be helpful to have reliable information of the prevalence of use, the impact and a contact database so that information could be provided to users. Implementing a licence would aid in achieving this. Concern about seal interception of release of tuna

If licences are required for targeting of game species and/or use of longlines it will enable an opportunity to gather data on the targeting of these species and the use of the equipment. This data will assist in the sustainable management of these species.

In my view the present recreational licence system undervalues the fishery. This aspect will be expanded upon at the end of the review.

People value those things that they have to pay for. The present licencing system gives the impression that the recreational fishery is not valuable and consequently does not need to be looked after. All fishers over the age of, say, 14 should be required to pay a fee equivalent to the cost of issuing the licence to fish with a rod and line. Appropriate fees should then be applied to all other methods with quite considerable increases to the very valuable rock lobster and abalone fisheries. An end note. Everyone involved in fisheries management should be required to read *The Unnatural History of the Sea*. Author C. Roberts and *The End of the Line*. Author C. Clover

Give us a licence to cover all. We don't have a problem paying. We have a big problem with the thought of losing our angling freedom and limits.

All fishing methods should be user pays. Money raised could go towards research management and a miscellaneous fund to pay for future unknowns.

Recreational Game Fishing Licences should be introduced as soon as possible in conjunction with an educational program and a very low catch allowance. This could include: educational program with brochures etc distributed about the value and threatened status of these fisheries, the importance of research into their population dynamics, and tight management of these important species, as per international best practice. (Environment Tasmania)

As a commercial fisher I pay \$2000 per annum to go fishing, recreational fishers should also pay to access these resources if only to increase revenue for fisheries research and protection.

I think that to enjoy fishing it should be user pay for all categories. The more funds that are put back into fisheries the better for all concerned.

although i would rather see droplines banned, a licence system would certainly be an improvement. maybe consideration should be given to a salt-water licence, the same as a fresh water licence??

Recreational fishers need to be known to check the amount of resource being targeted and taken.

We the commercial fishers have to pay a licence fee to catch these, what gives the recreational fisher the right to think that he should be allowed to do it for free. (Commercial fisher)

ALL ADULTS SHOULD BE LICENCED. The TCT believes that all adults who fish in the sea should be licensed to do so, including those who line fish. This would result in three benefits: i) More revenue for research and management Fisheries and other research in the marine environment is expensive and funds are not available to undertake basic research that that would assist sustainable management of most target species. The relatively lucrative rock lobster and abalone fisheries have relatively well funded research programs, but other fisheries are lacking much basic scientific information. Research into the ecosystems that underpin all wild fisheries and impacts of fishing activities is also in need of much better funding. More information about participation and catch is also needed. ii) More data on fishing activities and participation Simply requiring fishers to have licences will provide useful information on participation. Collection of participation and catch return data could be piggybacked on the licensing process to reduce costs. iii) More value placed on a natural resource If people are required to pay for access they may place a higher value on it and be more willing to look after it, or require better management of it. If the Tasmanian Government can justify charging people just to go for a walk in a National Park, there should be no problem with charging people for an extractive use of a publicly owned resource, such as fishing in Tasmanian marine waters. (TCT)

## **8. Expression of concern about a GFL or additional licenses**

WHAT NEXT- a general fishing licence ,FOR ALL-

Depends how the licence money is returned to fisher. Could be seen as an all waters introduction by stealth.

Is this not the thin edge of wedge, once one section of the angling fraternity is licensed it would be relatively easy in my opinion to introduce a general marine fishing licence in the future.

if this becomes law next everyone who puts a line in the water will have to have a licence

## **9. Expression of concern over the use of current licence fees**

WHY SHOULD REC FISHERS PAY MORE FEES ONLY TO HAVE THESE FEES USED AGAINST US IN CLOSING DOWN OR RESTRICTING SAFE FISHING AREAS.

## **10. Miscellaneous**

Do you want to take all the fun and enjoyment away from the 'public'

Tighten regulations as required, licences for high value game species ie.tuna and mako. Do not agree with introduction of licences for other species. More than enough licences and registrations required now to use a vehicle and boat.

The present licence system allows for fishing purchases to change during a season without need for further highly restrictive licenses.

## **11. Expressions of cynicism towards Government**

Do you want to take all the fun and enjoyment away from the 'public'

We already have enough licences. It is very difficult to catch these fish and costs a lot already. It is just a way of getting more money from us. These fish are not even here all the time, you could not restock them nor could you have any real impact on them. If you are really wanting to do something good for these fish then use the size and catch limits. It is always the recreational that has to pay for problems that we don't cause. Stop the commercial taking these fish around Australia and we won't have a problem.

WHY SHOULD REC FISHERS PAY MORE FEES ONLY TO HAVE THESE FEES USED AGAINST US IN CLOSING DOWN OR RESTRICTING SAFE FISHING AREAS.

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This is just another money grab by another government department. The amount of fish caught by the recreational fisherman in this area would be minuscule compared to commercial operators. Your time would be better spent protecting our fisheries in the south from foreign fishing vessels!

I do think a long line licence would be ok, but not a game fishing one. Seems to be only a money grabbing scheme that one!!

Just another money grab by Government

I don't see how introducing a licence/fee would change anything to do with the fishery apart from another money grab from the government.

Additional licences would discourage tourists to do a spur of the moment fishing charter - cost would be prohibitive. The present system seems to be working perfectly well and these new licences just seem to be a revenue raising exercise. This proposal would not be a big issue for those who will get a pot, net and dive licence anyway. It is a big issue for those who don't have one of these other licences that it becomes a big issue for. It is a big issue for charter operators and will definitely affect business if it proceeds. Tourism Tasmania put a lot of effort into attracting fishermen to the state and this will not help.

What more does the government want from us. We pay taxes in our boat and trailer registrations, fuel at an all time high, more safety equipment than a car, more rules, more licences I'm sorry but the red tape in this state fishery is getting out of control. A good day's fishing with family or friends is one of the few past times that encourages outdoor activity and relationship and everything that seems to be thrown at fishermen over the past 10 years to complicate a simple day's fishing is getting too much to handle. More rules and regulations for fishing and owning a boat than driving or owning a car. Where is all this heading?

Just another tax for little or no gain

Is this not the thin edge of wedge, once one section of the angling fraternity is licensed it would be relatively easy in my opinion to introduce a general marine fishing licence in the future.

Any more restrictions might as well stop home. Want to buy a boat and gear.

Is this another money grab? I understand these types of fishing are covered under our recreational fishing licence?

do we really have to go down that path having to have licences for every thing

a) there are enough licences to get already. b) just in that one question your dept. would introduce 4 extra forms of control! Is this the unsaid unwritten agenda and your dept. is being used as useful fools?

## **12. Expression of support for a simpler licensing system**

IF LICENCES COULD BE ADDED TO REGULAR FISHING LICENCE WITHOUT TOO MUCH ADDITIONAL COST AND THE PROCEEDS ARE USED FOR COLLECTING INFO FOR RESEARCH I COULD LIVE WITH THAT AS

LONG AS LICENCES REQUIRED DOSE NOT EXCEED ANOTHER 3 LICENCE TYPES WITH OUT RESTRICTING YOUR CATCH











