



2007-2012 VRFish Strategic Business Plan

'representing and advocating the interests of the Victorian recreational fishing community'

Marine House
Ground Floor, 24 York Street
South Melbourne Victoria 3205
P 03 9686 7077 F 03 9682 1066
info@vrfish.com.au
www.vrfish.com.au

Christopher Collins – Executive Officer
Alison Gibson – Administration Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This five year Business Plan is the result of a comprehensive process of engagement with stakeholders over a period covering a number of years as detailed below. The rationale for taking the plan to 2012 is to ensure that VRFish has vision beyond the 2009 State Election.

A 2002 VRFish Strategic Planning Workshop identified four key areas concerning recreational fishers:

- managing fisheries on a sustainable basis
- recreational fishing access and infrastructure
- water conservation and fish habitat improvement
- educational and promotional programs

The 2002 Workshop identified 51 areas for improvement within these four areas. A review of this plan was scheduled for late 2006.

A three year Business Plan was developed covering the years 2005-2008 and identified five goal areas:

- Goal A: Services – deliver proactive policy directions and outcomes which improve recreational fishing
- Goal B: volunteers – productive pool of active volunteers staffing our projects
- Goal C: recreational fishers – an active well informed membership drawn from diverse experiences
- Goal D: financials – a well resourced peak body capable of delivering its mission
- Goal E: brand management – when there is a recreational fishing issue we are the first point of call

In January 2006 the VRFish Board held a workshop in Marysville to develop the 2006-2007 Business Plan and four key areas were identified

- Key Area 1 – representation and advocacy
- Key Area 2 – preserving and enhancing the fish resource, infrastructure, access and the experience
- Key Area 3 – develop a broader, more effective communications profile
- Key Area 4 – corporate governance

It is interesting to note that similar issues have been raised by recreational fishers in Fishing Show surveys and also during the brand survey undertaken in late 2006. Through further analysis of these issues, it was

identified that these issues also align with the five year vision, demonstrating that VRFish is heading in the right direction. The top five areas were:

- more water allocation for environmental purposes (comment featured strongly from the rural communities)
- more fish stocking
- better and more boat ramps (comment featured strongly from the Port Phillip & Westernport area)
- better access
- ban commercial netting (comments featured from the Port Phillip, Westernport and estuarine areas)

In March 2007, VRFish held a strategic planning workshop of the State Council in Snobs Creek to consider future directions in the business plan for VRFish. The key areas selected by the State Council were:-

1. Proactively managing fisheries by ecosystem based fisheries management (EBFM)
2. Improve and maintain recreational fishing access and infrastructure
3. Environmental sustainability (climate change) water conservation and fish habitat improvement
4. Coordination and communication between key fishing stakeholders (public relations) – educational and promotional programs
5. Security of VRFish funding arrangements

These Key Areas were work-shopped by the State Council and the results of this form the new 5 year business plan outlined in this document.

VRFISH

The Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body, VRFish, is a not for profit organisation established in 1995 and is funded by Victorian Recreational Fishing Licence (RFL) revenue. VRFish commenced operations after a joint Parliamentary Committee recommended to the then Minister for Natural Resources that a Peak Body be set up to represent the interests of recreational fishers in Victoria.

VRFish is the recognised Peak Body to represent the interests of recreational fishers in Victoria.

The recognition of a Peak Body is specified in section 95 of the *Fisheries Act 1995*:

Recognised peak bodies

(1) The Minister may by notice published in the Government Gazette declare—

- (a) an organisation which the Minister considers represents commercial fishing interests or seafood industry interests; and
- (b) an organisation which the Minister considers represents recreational fishing interests; and
- (c) an organisation which the Minister considers represents aquaculture interests; and
- (d) an organisation which the Minister considers represents conservation interests— to be recognised peak bodies.

(2) The Minister may by notice published in the Government Gazette at any time amend or revoke a declaration under sub-section (1).

VRFISH CHARTER

...is to consult broadly with the recreational fishing community to represent the views of recreational fishers in an accurate and timely manner to Government and their agencies, as well as communicate effectively with the recreational fishers of Victoria.

VRFISH VISION STATEMENT

...is to ensure full access to a diverse and healthy Victorian recreational fishery.

VRFISH MISSION STATEMENT

...is to represent and advocate the interests of the Victorian recreational fishing community.

BOARD

Bob Pearce - Chairman
Geoff Cramer – Deputy Chair
John Corbett
Michael Edwards
Doug Evers-Buckland
Franz Grasser
John Hotchin
Robert Loats

MEMBERSHIP

Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club
Australian Anglers Association Victoria
Australian National Sportfishing Association
Victoria
Australian Trout Foundation
Ballarat & District Anglers Association
Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron
Boating Industry Association of Victoria
Boating Victoria
Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs
Far West Anglers Association
Futurefish Foundation
Game Fishing Association of Victoria
Geelong & District Angling Clubs Association
Gippsland Angling Clubs Association
Goulburn Valley Association of Angling Clubs
Howqua Angling Clubs Fish Protection Association

Metropolitan Anglers Association
Mid Northern Association of Angling Clubs
Midland & North Central Angling Association
Native Fish Australia (Vic)
Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides
Association
South Gippsland Angling Clubs Association
South Western District Association of Angling
Clubs
Unaffiliated Members based in the Regions of Port
Phillip & Western Port, North West, South West
and Gippsland
The Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria
Victorian Piscatorial Council
VRFish North East
Wimmera Anglers Association

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Victorian Recreational Fishers
Government / Minister responsible for Fisheries
Department of Primary Industries / Fisheries
Victoria
Department of Sustainability and Environment
Department of Justice
Tourist Industry
Water Managers
Parks Victoria
Catchment Management Authorities
Environment Protection Authority Victoria
Conservation Groups
Indigenous Groups
Primary Industry Research Victoria
Arthur Rylah Institute
Independent Research Agencies
Seafood Industry Victoria
Victorian National Parks Association
Fisheries Co-Management Council
Australian Fishing Tackle Association / Tackle
Retailers
Clubs & Associations
Media
Charter Operators
Political Parties
Local Governments
Port of Melbourne Corporation
Bait Suppliers
Field & Game Australia
Victorian Game Council
Recfish Australia

Other State Peak Bodies
Murray Darling Basin Commission
Coastal Boards
Life Saving Victoria
Marine Safety Victoria
Victorian Coast Guard

KEY AREAS

1. Proactively managing fisheries by ecosystem based fisheries management (EBFM)
2. Improve and maintain recreational fishing access and infrastructure
3. Environmental sustainability (climate change) water conservation and fish habitat improvement
4. Coordination and communication between key fishing stakeholders (public relations) – educational and promotional programs
5. Security of VRFish funding arrangements

Objective	Key Area	Action	Measure	Committee or Individual(s) Responsible
Assist in the introduction of Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management to Victorian Fisheries	1	Develop requirements for what will constitute a healthy fishery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate availability of fish resources through resource management and stocking programs • Advocate environmental flows of Victoria’s waterways to maintain healthy habitat • Evaluate the impact of diverted water i.e. pipelines, on fish resources • Advocate the use of PIRVic’s ‘angler satisfaction’ measure • Promote that “iconic” fisheries are managed on an EBFM basis (participate in the development of Fishery 	Annual Ongoing Ongoing 2009-10 Ongoing	Secretariat/State Council and also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Resources Committee

		Management Plans)		
Participate in the roll-out of the Government's Recreational Fishing and Boating Policy	2	<p>Work with Government agencies on identified policies, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install fish cleaning tables • Install artificial reefs • Adopt-a-stream program • Establishing new fisheries and fishing opportunities, such as Devilbend Reservoir and Trout Cod • Improving angler access (see Access Policy) • Meeting the demand for boat launching facilities • Develop a classification for Victorian rivers and streams 	Ongoing	<p>Secretariat/State Council and also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access & Infrastructure Committee • Water Resources Committee • Communications Committee
Implement actions defined in the Access for Recreational Fishing Policy Paper	2	<p>Define and action access issues annually, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, re-open and manage specific un-used roads that would provide access to potential or existing recreational fisheries • Work in partnership with local managers and planners to improve information, access and signs to specific priority fisheries 	Ongoing	Access & Infrastructure Committee
Deliver proactive policy directions which improve	3	Develop a broad range of up-to-date recreational fishing		Secretariat/State Council

recreational fishing		<p>policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the review of the Fisheries Act and Fisheries Regulations • Evaluate proposed initiative government/industry etc to respond to climate change and its effects on recreational fishing • Conduct an audit of policies and prepare a renewal program (workshop policy gaps) 	<p>2007-08</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2007-09</p>	
An active well informed membership drawn from diverse experiences	4	<p>Build an increased, active and better informed membership base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote partnerships with kindred organisations and stakeholders • Develop skills of Members (strengthen operation of regional representatives) • Fill all unaffiliated member positions • Introduce and promote the adoption of VRFish's Governance Guidelines • Strengthen relations with fishing associations and clubs 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2007-08</p> <p>2007-08</p> <p>2007-08</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Secretariat/Board
Implement actions identified in Fishery Management Plans	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and encourage responsible recreational 	Within the	Secretariat/State Council

	<p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>fishing behaviour^{1, 2, 3, 5}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the assistance of Fisheries Victoria, engage other agencies to maintain and enhance fish habitats^{1, 2, 3} • Engage other agencies to maintain or improve access to fisheries resources^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5} • Quantify the social and economic benefits of alternative trout fishing regulations within the North East Fishery (see also R&D Plan)⁵ 	<p>timeline of the Fishery Management Plans</p>	
Strengthen operation of Research and Development Committee	<p>4</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Create a Research and Development Plan for recreational fisheries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use analysis and research to support advocacy efforts (establish the true economic value of recreational fishing in Victoria) • Investigate potential changes to fish resources as a result of climate change (including the identification of threatened species in inland, estuarine and marine environments) • Identify suitable saltwater 	<p>2007-08</p> <p>2007-09</p> <p>2010-12</p> <p>2010-12</p>	Research & Development Committee

		& freshwater fish species including mixed species fisheries adaptable to possible climate change		
Implement actions defined in the Communications Plan	4	Define and implement communication projects annually, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of a detailed Annual Report • Improve and update VRFish website with a greater recreational fishing focus 	Ongoing	Communications & Publicity Committee
A well resourced Peak Body capable of service delivery	5	Review funding formulae and diversify funding source <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding for a Project Officer • Secure funding for a Media/Public Relations Capability Undertake a biennial review of the recreational fishing representation model	Ongoing 2007-08 2008-09 2007-08	Finance Committee

1. Anderson Inlet Fisheries Reserve Management Plan
2. Lake Tyers Fisheries Reserve Management Plan
3. Mallacoota Inlet Fisheries Reserve Management Plan
4. Glenelg Hopkins Fishery Management Plan
5. North East Fishery Management Plan