



NEW CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCED!

This week AFMA has seen the departure of outgoing Board Chair, Wendy Craik, and the announcement of her replacement, Tony Rundle. Mr Rundle is a distinguished Australian with a record of community service. He brings with him exceptional business skills and negotiating experience. As Premier of Tasmania, Mr Rundle oversaw the major restructure of the valuable lobster industry, was responsible for the signing of the Regional Forestry Agreement with the Australian Government, implemented an MOU with Duke Energy for undersea gas to the Island State, and established the Basslink Steering Committee. He has also previously chaired the Port of Devonport Authority and was president of the Real Estate Institute of Tasmania.

In announcing the appointment, Minister for Fisheries, Senator Ian Macdonald expressed his confidence in Mr Rundle's Parliamentary and business experience for leading AFMA into the future. "This is a challenging time, both internationally and domestically for the fishing industry, and I know with Tony Rundle at the helm of AFMA it will be capable of making the tough decisions that need to be made," the Minister said. "More than ever, the fishing industry needs the security of knowing resources are well managed and available for future generations. The public also needs confidence that the right balance is being struck between conservation and jobs."

Thank you to Dr Wendy Craik for her efforts in the role in almost four years with AFMA. We wish her well in her new role as CEO of the Murray Darling Basin Commission.

NO CHANGE TO SBT ZONES ON EAST COAST

The take of Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) continues to be managed using core and buffer zones that require minimum SBT quota holdings. The area of the zones was reviewed on 24 August 2004 using all available data and it was determined to leave the zones unchanged. These areas will again be reviewed in the week beginning 6 September 2004. **Less than 60 tonnes of SBT quota remains for the 2003-04 season from a total of 5265 tonnes.** Management arrangements for the longline sector of the SBT fishery on the east coast will be reviewed for the 2004-05 season to reduce the risk of non-quota catch.

ATTENTION SESS FISHERS! GET YOUR SFR APPLICATIONS IN

AFMA has sent out letters requesting applications for boat and quota Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) for the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark (SESS) Fishery, which would come into effect on 1 January 2005. The applications for SFRs need to be returned to Licensing at AFMA by 16 September 2004.

RECENT INCIDENTS OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS FISHERIES OFFICERS

AFMA is aware of the difficult economic circumstances the fishing industry is experiencing in 2004 and the stresses and pressures this can bring. Unfortunately, it appears some of this stress is being taken out on AFMA's Fisheries Officers with recent incidents of officers being subjected to verbal abuse and intimidating behaviour by some fishers.

Fisheries officers play an important role in ensuring the sustainability of Australia's fisheries resources. Like all other workforce employees, they should be afforded the courtesy to perform their duties without being subject to intimidation or verbal or physical abuse. All owners, skippers and crew should be aware that it is an offence under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* to use abusive or threatening language towards a fisheries officer. AFMA deplores such behaviour and is prepared to take action if appropriate. Obviously we would prefer these incidents be avoided in the first place, and therefore ask all operators to ensure that they, or their skippers and crew, do not engage in this type of behaviour. If you have any queries in relation to this issue, please contact John Andersen, AFMA Manager Compliance Operations on 1300 723 621.

OBSERVING THE GILLNET HOOK AND TRAP FISHERY

Over the coming months, AFMA will be approaching operators in the Gillnet, Hook and Trap Fishery to participate in the Observer Program. AFMA is seeking interest from operators to carry an AFMA Observer, which will help in retaining environmental accreditation of the fishery through improved data collection and greater understanding of interactions in this fishery.

DATES SET FOR NPF PRESENTATIONS

In the last few editions we have reported on the Bioeconomic model for maximising the sustainable economic return of the Northern Prawn Fishery. Presentations on the model are now planned for Cairns, Darwin and Brisbane on the 22-24th of September. Information on venues and times has been posted to all SFR holders and is also available on the AFMA website. The deadline for the submission of comments to NORMAC has also been extended to Tuesday the 5th of October. A special NORMAC meeting to decide on a recommendation for the AFMA Board is to be held on Monday the 25th of October 2004, with the Board to consider NORMAC's recommendations late in October or early November. Any queries please contact Wade Whitelaw on 1300 723 621 or wade.whitelaw@afma.gov.au.

FACE TO FACE- AFMA BOARD MEETS WITH SOUTHERN MACs

The AFMA Board met with SETMAC, GHATMAC and GABMAC this week to discuss the current state and future directions of the SESS fisheries. These were part of AFMA's commitment to have annual face-to-face meetings between all Management Advisory Committees and the AFMA Board. The Board has also met with NORMAC, Eastern Tuna MAC and SBTMAC this year. Future meetings between the Board and MACs include SouthMAC, SquidMAC and ScallopMAC in Melbourne in early October and SWTBF MAC in Ulladulla in late November.

MANAGING TOOTHFISH AT MACQUARIE ISLAND

AFMA is currently drafting a plan of management for the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery. The Plan will include provision for grant of Statutory Fishing Rights (SFRs) in the form of Individual Transferable Quotas for Patagonian Toothfish. An Independent Advisory Panel has been appointed to advise the Board on what percentage, if any, above the minimum 50% of SFRs guaranteed under the Fishery's Interim Management Policy should be granted to the current participant in the fishery. Submissions to the panel on this issue should be sent to: Macquarie Island Independent Advisory Panel c/- AFMA Box 7051 Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610 by 14 September 2004.

UP TO DATE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES?

The latest AFMA Environment Update is now available. Environment Update is a quarterly report on AFMA's involvement in current environmental issues, such as strategic assessment of fisheries, marine protected areas, bycatch action plans and threatened species. Copies of the Environment Update are available from AFMA's website at <http://www.afma.gov.au/services/environment/updates/default.php> or by contacting John Adams in AFMA's Environment Policy Section on 1300 723 621.



A MESSAGE FROM ASIC- SAFETY EXPERTISE SOUGHT

The Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC) advises that the National Marine Safety Committee will welcome access to a seafood industry person, with expertise in fire safety issues and an understanding of boat building, to assist in the development of the new National Standard for Commercial Vessels. Any person with knowledge in this area and able to give (limited) time to assist the NMSC would be welcomed. Please direct enquiries to ASIC Chair, Bob Pennington, on 0418 830 241 or the ASIC office on (02) 6281 0383.

AFMA UPDATE FEEDBACK

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