**RFGWG Meeting #43 of 20 May 2020**

**Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group Meeting #43**

**Location: SKYPE Meeting**

**Chairperson's Summary**

This was the 43rd meeting of the Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group.

Key items discussed included:

* 2019 Marsden Jacobs Recreational Fishing Licence Program Report - Review and discussion of implementation options on recommendations on grant structure and reporting processes
* Presentation on trends in Recreational Fishing Licence disbursement
* Funding of Recreational Fishing Licence programs in 2020-21
* Reducing costs associated with the RFL Licence Program
* Findings and patterns in wild catch marine and estuarine recreational fisheries monitoring
* Variation request on the VFA-led Mako/Gummy project and update on completed Yellowtail Kingfish research project.

**2019 Marsden Jacobs Recreational Fishing Licence Program Report - Review and discussion of implementation options on recommendations on grant structure and reporting processes**

The Working Group were informed that several of key recommendations from this report would be implemented by the VFA after consultation with and input from the Working Group and other key recreational fishing stakeholder groups. This includes the development of a new overarching RFL strategic Plan in 2020/21, improved evaluation and performance measurement across all key RFL Trust Account expenditures, and the introduction of a new Intermediate Grants Program available to angling clubs and associations.

**Presentation on trends in Recreational Fishing Licence disbursement**

The Working Group were provided with a presentation which had an analysis of how funds from the RFL Trust Account have been disbursed through the Small, Large and Commissioning Grants Programs since their inception.

**Funding of Recreational Fishing Licence programs in 2020-21**

The Working Group were provided with a graph of how an average of $8.5M (over the last three years) of funds from the RFL Trust Account have been disbursed, and were advised that the provision of funds to key non-grant areas such as fish stocking, education and enforcement, Target One Million, VRFish and Fishcare will be similar again in 2020-21, and that a letter from the Chair on behalf of the Working Group will be drafted to endorse the distribution of funds in this manner.

**Reducing costs associated with the RFL Licence Program**

The VFA Manager of Fisheries Systems and Reform led a discussion with the RFL Working Group on a range of ideas to reduce the administrative costs incurred by the RFL Trust Fund and increase available revenue.

**Findings and patterns in wild catch marine and estuarine recreational fisheries monitoring**

The Working Group were provided with a presentation on how funds from the RFL Trust Account are used by the VFA to monitor the recreational catches and the stock abundance of key species of finfish through the 'Marine and estuarine finfish monitoring' and 'Statewide angler diary' programs.

**Variation request on the VFA-led Mako/Gummy project and update on completed Yellowtail Kingfish research project.**

The Working Group were provided with a presentation on the findings and outcomes of the RFL funded research project aimed at increasing knowledge of Victoria's growing recreational yellowtail kingfish fishery, which was completed and acquitted last year.

The Working Group also approved a Project Variation for the RFL Large Grant funded "Investigate the movement and best practice for catching and releasing shortfin mako and gummy sharks" which will see the gummy shark component removed from the project resulting in a $60,000 saving back to the RFL Trust Account.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday 9 September

David Grisold

Chairperson

Recreational Fishing Grants Working Group