



AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER FEDERATION- SPEARFISHING

1. Message from the National Chair

The AUF has developed a strong working relationship with state chairs and peak recreational fishing bodies and sees great value in working together in the future. It has also been a challenging year with change and political decisions that impact our sport, and important issues requiring extensive consultation.

The key items of interest are discussed below:

2. Membership and benefits

The spearfishing commission is continuing to grow and the latest numbers (from Sue Dockar in March 2008) are 673 spearfishers. Note that WA has 85 spearfisher's so there are some differences we need to reveal.

NSW:	335 Sen + 34 Jun	369
QLD:	185 Sen/Jun	185
WA:	61 Sen + 1 Jun	62
VIC:	41 Sen + 7 Jun	48
SA:	7	
TAS:	2	

One of the main questions I get from people is what does the AUF National body do for me. Each AUF member pays \$10 towards the national body (except Juniors who are free).

1. About 10 volunteer hours week for 52 weeks year (520 hours) of my time working on spearfishing issues and co-ordination. I also pay my own phone calls and most postage. I do charge for some travel and expenses for AGMs. In this time I work primarily with state chairs, members, industry, government, stakeholders and the community to represent your interests on spearfishing to ensure that you have access for the future.
2. Financial - Legendary Skindiving Equipment- *10% discount for members for 2007-8*
3. Financial – *50% discount on Fantastic Fish Calendar*
4. Representation- AUF National spearfishing commission pays our associate membership fee for Recfish Australia (\$550 pa) and I also am on the Board. This group represents all recreational fishers and has full time staff and has contacts with the Federal Minister.
5. Planning- National Strategic Planning template (which I have encouraged states to also use)
6. Planning- Review and update of Competition rules (which I have encouraged states to consider when reviewing their rules)

7. Planning- Bylaws (how we run the National Commission)
8. Communication- MPA Conference (6 AUF members attended and I presented- talk which is on AUF website)
9. Communication- I send several hundred emails and letters and also write regular articles for ISFN and Spearfishing Downunder magazine. Also other important events such as radio and TV appearances and media releases and articles (such as Obituary for Wally Gibbins).
10. People Development - Next Generation of Leaders (first course in Darwin Nov 07)
11. Legal - AAT court case on GNS (and also \$2000 towards costs)
12. Competitions- List of all competitions so as to reduce overlaps. Seed money of \$2000 to help clubs run national competitions (generally returned but loss in SA)
13. International Competitions - Money to support international and world teams
14. Best Practise- Tournament accreditation - NEATFish
15. Sponsors - I have worked with my contacts and Sue to get spearfishing industry to sponsor the back of the AUF cards (Edge in 2005, Adrenalin in 2006, Picasso in 2007). Also I work with other sponsors for national titles or other teams (eg Paspaley).
16. Professional presentation- business cards and t-shirts organised for state executive.

3. Strategic Planning

The National AUF Strategic Plan was updated (below) and several new initiatives were completed or are close to completion.

These include:

- National Competition Rules completed

- Tournament Accreditation NEATFish, Blue Water Classic (**** 4 stars)

- This is a world first for a spearfishing tournament and also the first competition in a MPA and also included media release by *Recfish Australia*

The AUF national body drafted a policy on Marine Protected Areas. The draft policy was presented to the National Seminar on MPA's (copy of powerpoint presentation on AUF website). This policy contained percentages for sanctuaries and was controversial and there were some concerns from some AUF members. The AUF draft policy was not progressed but efforts were redirected into a Recfish Australia policy on MPA's.

The National Spearfishing Commission has worked closely with the AUF and President Graham Henderson on two key issues which we hope will be finalised in 2008- national insurance, on-line membership.

4. People

The people who contribute are what makes the AUF the organisation it is today. A huge thank you to all the volunteers of national, state and club positions. I know it is hard to give up your precious time but if we don't do it that our future is bleak.

The AUF Chair, Dr Adam Smith was voted to the Recfish Board for another term and has taken an active role. In particular Adam has led items on policy, leadership, strategic planning and vision, national fish names, communication and contributed on issues such as grey nurse sharks and marine protected areas.

Several AUF committee members – Adam Smith and David Welch, were finalists in the inaugural Recfish Awards.

Several AUF members were selected to participate in the next generation of leaders program- Dr Matt Koopman (Vic), Craig Shepherd (NSW) and Chad Lunlow (Qld).

5. Communication

The communication between spearfishers has been greater than ever before. The AUF has several websites, specialist publications (*International Freediving and Spearfishing News* and *Spearfishing Downunder*), DVD and video and trade displays and I believe that this has led to a significant increase in knowledge transfer and our membership in the past year.

The AUF spearfishing website -<http://www.auf-spearfishing.com.au> is fantastic (thanks very much to John Featherstone) and contains campaigns, media, contacts, competitions, records and much, much more.

In 2006/7, AUF committee members wrote hundreds of letters and emails and made and received hundreds of telephone calls with the state Chairs, Federal Fisheries Minister, State Fisheries Ministers, fishing and conservation groups and AUF members.

Highlights of particular importance:

- Presentation on spearfishing to Recfish Australia seminar on Marine Protected Areas- November 2007
- TV program on Grey Nurse Sharks
- *Fantastic Fish Calendar (2007)* included AUF logo
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6. Competitions and Records

The 55th Australian Championships were held in November 2006 in Townsville, Queensland waters with 52 competitors and the 56th were held in January 2008 in Wollongong, NSW with 46 competitors. . The events were focussed on spearfishing but also held film fishing and fin swimming events. The next national championships are in WA in February 2009.

A full list of Australian Championship winners over the past 50 years has been updated and is on the website. Several trophies have been repaired and recovered.

31 National records were awarded in 2006-7.

A Blue Marlin of 78kgs taken by Brett Vercoe was the largest fish for the year and winner of the Marlin Trophy

An Australian team attended the Interpacific Competition in NZ in March. Thank you to Gunther Pfrengle and David Welch for managing the team. The boys had a great time, caught some quality fish and made great friends. We were 3rd on the first day and 1st on the 2nd day. Congratulations to NZ who won the event. Next years competition will be in Hawaii and Japan will be invited to attend for the first time. Also the World Championships will be in September/October 2008 in Venesuala and the Australian team will be managed by Tony Heugh

7. Politics and management of fisheries

Spearfishers continue to be under pressures for changes to our activity from Federal and State government and the conservation groups, and there has been major issues associated with marine protected areas, protected species and fisheries management. We need to be more proactive with meetings with politicians, mail outs, media releases

Highlights of particular importance to the AUF

- AAT hearing on Grey Nurse Sharks

- Submission on zoning at Moreton Bay Marine Park

8. Finance and support

AUF is associate member of Recfish (\$550) and also contributed to AAT (\$2200 from national body and \$10,000 from NSW Freedivers). A significant amount of in-kind support such as expertise, contacts, letters and time was also provided

9. The future

I have also worked on a grant proposal for funding a part time EO, DVD, roadshow, monitoring and rewards (wetsuits and some fuel money) for 2007/8. This proposal was funded for \$73,000 by RFCGP and we have appointed a PT Executive Officer Michael Rupnik and have lots of benefits. The project is largely focussed on shark monitoring so we can have some facts and be seen to be involved in care and stewardship of the marine environment. We have produced posters, stickers, wetsuits and much more and done lots of media. As of March 2007 there were over 2900 shark sightings and our first dedicated weekend is the 28-30 March

We undertook a SWOT analysis and brainstorming session at our spearfishing AGM on 7th November 2007.

NOW	Strengths People in admin. Clubs and members Recfish, eg. NEATfish, AAT, voice Sustainability IFSN & SDU History (1948)	Weaknesses Culture Reputation Membership (500/10-20,000) Individuals (eg. Poachers, Cropp) Lack of resources (voluntary)
FUTURE	Opportunities Non-members (social) Newsletter Benefits Recfish grant and EO Accreditation Media Monitoring Business	Threats Reduced access Legal Politics Safety

- a) Brainstorming
 - i) The meeting briefly noted some suggestions for the future:
 - (1) Improving perception
 - (2) Reduced competition score sheets
 - (3) Align with conservation groups
 - (4) TV shows, eg. ET fishing show, a cooking show.

Apparently Andy Hallam (Vic) has been filming a video titled "Spearing a menu".

10. Finances

Finances are largely generated from membership (\$10 from adults, juniors free), 50% profit from two competitions (Australian titles, BWC), sponsorship (Paspaley).

Expenses include international competitions, Grey Nurse Shark legal costs and travel for AUF meetings. Copies of financial statements available for viewing at meeting.

Current account has \$8,422.38



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1. Draft strategic plan for AUF spearfishing in Australia. 2008-2010

AIM	HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES
To increase membership of the AUF by 10% pa.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> All AUF members compulsory join national commission New social category Incentives and rewards 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> National Chairman State Commissioners Club Presidents Dive Shops Website 	700 members by 2009 770 members by 2010	Newsletters to all existing and non-current members One simple membership form Electronic form on www
To improve communication about freediving and spearfishing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletter 4 times pa 2 magazine articles pa 2 newspaper articles pa website conference or talks poster Training video 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> National Chairman State Commissioners, Club Presidents National Chairman Communication Manager Film makers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> & 2. Associated with new information website updated every 6 months 4. 1000 posters 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with dive shop 5. Poster widely distributed 6. 500 copies for sale at \$25 each and profit to AUF for training
To raise the profile of the support by involvement in community activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Donate fish to charity Clean-up Australia Day Initiate or assist scientific research (eg annual fish count, records on database) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> National Chairman State commissioners Executive Officer 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> National and state championships and nominated charities 3. All divers at local boat ramp or dive spot four days each year 	\$73,000 from RFCGP for Great Australian Shark Count
To raise awareness of safety and improve training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> AUF members must pass test (licence?) 5 training courses held Pairs competitions rather than individual 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> NSW State Commissioner to commence trial All state commissioners Chairman 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> ? 1 course in each state 1 Day at national titles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire and booklet Partnerships with key dive shops. New rules and new trophy at national titles
Participate in major competitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> International competitions Australian Championships State Championships Club events 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Team to attend world and Interpacific comps Rotate between NSW, Qld, WA, ?Vic 	2008 NSW 2009 WA 2009 host Interpacific 2010 Vic 2011 SA? 2012 Qld	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of profit from national titles and blue water classic goes to Australian team and 50% by host club(s) 34. Profit retained by state and clubs
Representation and	1. Discount equipment for	1. Supefrog, ?		1. Endorsed dive shops to

<p>develop partnerships with industry and peak groups</p>	<p>AUF members 2. Prizes or money for AUF activities 3. Annual meetings with major decisions makers (politicians, fisheries departments, council) 4. New line of Australian underwater fish clothes, shorts, hats</p>	<p>2. Picasso, Paspaley Pearls, Adrenalin Dive, Extreme Spearfishing, Pelag 3. Each state commissioner to meet with fisheries minister once a year</p>		<p>offer 10% to AUF members. 2. Put out a tender, advertise and write to peak groups in April each year seeking annual contributions 3. 4. Seek EOIs for design and hold discussions with clothing manufacturer (eg Burning Spears, Hot tuna, Mambo)</p>
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Draft structure- for discussion-
 National and State Spearfishing Commissions - October 2007



