

10 October 2005

Fishing Review
NSW Department of Primary Industries
PO Box 21
CRONULLA NSW 2230



FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR MARINE ENVIRONMENT

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Dear Fishing Review Group

Submission - Review of recreational freshwater and saltwater fishing rules

This letter sets out the comments of Ocean Watch Australia Ltd (Ocean Watch) in relation to the Review of recreational freshwater and saltwater fishing rules by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI). Ocean Watch is an environmental, non-government organisation sponsored by the commercial seafood industry to represent the environmental interests of industry with respect to protecting and restoring fish habitats, improving water quality and promoting sustainable fisheries.

Within NSW around 17% of the population participates in recreational fishing each year. The pressure these fishers collectively are placing on fish stocks and the aquatic environment cannot be underestimated or dismissed as trivial. As has occurred for all commercial fisheries, the environmental impacts of recreational fishing must be fully assessed and managed appropriately to ensure the sustainable future of recreational fishing in NSW. A failure to inadequately assess the environmental impacts of the recreational fishing industry on our already depleted fish stocks and declining estuarine ecosystems will be to the detriment of the State's fish resources. To that end, we support any actions that reduce the pressure on fish stocks and protect aquatic ecosystems.

While important and necessary to reduce bag and size limits for recreational fishing, it is also imperative that the compliance effort undertaken by DPI be increased to enforce recreational fishing rules and to reduce the threats of illegal and black market fishing.

We provide a number of comments in relation to the proposed changes to recreational freshwater and saltwater fishing rules in Attachment 1. Please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 9660 2262 should you require further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AL', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Anissa Lawrence
Executive Officer
Ocean Watch Australia Ltd