

# THE DRIFT

Official Newsletter  
NT Guided Fishing Industry Association



SEPTEMBER 2011

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**5<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

To all FTOs

## Government White Paper (GFISMSC)

The Government's white paper reform for our industry has still not reached the stage of any change being implemented.

This process, with a government sponsored paper, was started in November 2008. It is now September 2011 and no recommendations have been implemented.

The NTGFIA sat through a 6 month discussion on all issues raised.

Fisheries staff did a presentation at our October 2010 AGM; the white paper sent out to all FTO, s in December 2010 has been the subject of a number of additional meetings; with final agreement reached in June 2011.

Fisheries are now presenting the Minister with a public comment paper for approval, when that happens it will go out for comment.

**Roz Vulcano Director of Strategic Projects Fisheries has provided the following update.**

As most of you know, Fisheries is preparing a community consultation paper on a proposed framework and management arrangements for the Northern Territory guided fishing tour industry. The content of the community consultation paper is being informed by comments made by FTOs, including the NTGFIA and its members on a proposal

paper that was released late last year by the Guided Fishing Industry Strategic Management Steering Committee.

A release date for the community consultation paper is as yet unknown, but we will keep you informed as news becomes available. To help speed up the process of you getting access to the community consultation paper when it is released Fisheries is requesting that if you have not done so already send your email contact details to Fisheries at [fisheries@nt.gov.au](mailto:fisheries@nt.gov.au). In the meantime if you have queries contact the NTGFIA or Roslyn Vulcano at Fisheries by phoning 8999 2214.

***In a nutshell we do not know when it will be approved and when the public comment period will commence, considering that it will be three months, maybe something will happen by mid-year 2012***

## Blue Mud Bay

Chief Minister Paul Henderson promised that there will be no cost to fish any waters under the Blue Mud Bay Decision. This was an election promise.

Creating an across the board agreement, with all relevant land Councils. Has so far been rejected.

By request The NTGFIA along with AFANT were asked to back the Government's approach.

To date we have complied with this request.

The Tiwi Islands implemented a permit system in 2010; any costs have been compensated to those applicants

These Permits are now going to be increased to \$100.00 per/year as of July 2011.

We have just attended a meeting with the NLC and Government negotiators.

The NLC would like the NTGFIA to provide a map covering NLC waters, areas wishing to be accessed need to be specified,

These areas will be subject to permit conditions. If you wish to nominate any area please email or call the executive direct.

This request does not cover any areas accessed by land which are subject to different negotiations.

It is expected that we provide these details to NLC within 2 weeks.

The NTGFIA and Committee hold the following view.

Individual License holders have the right to negotiate on Land Agreements; currently there are a number of these operating.

Any agreement for access by water, should have parity with permit costs {if any} that all recreational fishers will be subject to, it is important to recognize that under the Fisheries Act we are Commercial Operators, **our clients are not.**

In other words if an operator makes agreement to enter BMB waters then anchoring fees or other fees, by negotiation could apply, the costs of clients on board should be no different to any Rec Fisher paying a permit, i.e. apply on line and paid for.

Where ownership of streambeds occur such as in the Daly River, this is extremely important

We believe that Government should compensate any costs incurred to our clients, this is an election promise.

We will continue to negotiate with all Land councils with these parameters.

You are welcome to call me 0412481592 if you have additional comment to this position.

## INDUSTRY VALUATION

The NTGFIA last April asked for a formal valuation be undertaken on our Industry, we have been advised that the overall value including multipliers is \$52 million

## Proposed North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Plan

Chris Makepeace executive AFANT has stated that negotiations they undertook on behalf of all rec fishers was 90% successful. All areas outlined in the plan do not affect Recreational Fishing. Exception is one area north of Nhulumbuy, and east of the Wessel Islands.

More info on this can be found on

[www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/north/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/north/index.html)

NTGFIA attended a presentation on these proposals and are generally happy with the level of intrusion to operating areas, some clarification on access is still being sort.

## BAROTRAUMA

This issue has created a lot of discussion, especially as it was used to try and justify license limitation/and or specific method in the 1230 zone

Steve Mathews Project Officer at Fisheries has provided the following view

### **Barotrauma“Catch and release” of reef fish can be fatal.**

A fish's stomach protruding from its mouth, bulging eyes, bloated abdomen and intestines hanging out the fish's anus are all key signs of barotrauma, which is an irreversible condition. Barotrauma is caused by expanding gases in a fish's body when it is wound up from depths greater than 10m. The effects are similar to a diver with the "bends" and the impacts are often lethal for the fish. Unfortunately, methods once thought suitable to counteract these injuries, such as piercing the affected fish's swim bladder to deflate it, or lowering the fish back to the bottom on a release weight, have since been found to be less effective and more of an "out of sight - out of mind" measure.

Adding to this dilemma, our reef fish also have biological traits such as predictable schooling behaviour (like black jewfish) and in the case of our tropical snappers, slow growth rates and sexual maturity at an

advanced age, all of which combine to make them particularly vulnerable to localised depletion on specific reefs.

What can you do to help?

Quite simply it comes down to a changing of everyone's attitudes. We need to get it into our heads, and the heads of the punters, that reef fish shouldn't be targeted for "catch and release" fishing. The best approach to this situation is to retain all edible fish caught until you have enough fish for your immediate needs and then move on, either to shallower water less than 10 metres deep (where barotrauma isn't an issue), or go and target different species such as barra or billfish. Do not continue to catch and release reef fish from deep water!

It is acknowledged that some punters may take offence over the vessel moving to a new area prior to them securing their full possession limit of some species such as black jewfish. However if we don't all start accepting some responsibility for the ongoing sustainability of our reef fish stocks, they may face a very uncertain future.

Ensuring the long term sustainability of key reef species in the face of these issues is the most significant emerging challenge confronting Northern Territory fisheries managers and fishers today. Traditional fisheries management tools such as size and possession limits are less than effective in this situation if the majority of fish caught and released are going to die. What it does clearly indicate though, is an urgent requirement for a total rethink of our proud catch and release ethos if we are to maintain healthy reef fish stocks for future generations to enjoy.

## OTHER NEWS

### Trailer Connections

For all Operators utilizing Trailers, the motor registry inspectors want to make the following clear.

Shackles used to connect safety chains have to be rated to Aust. Standards, broadly  
If your trailer and boat weigh 2 tonnes then the shackle has to have a rating of 2 times i.e.  
4 tonnes

### Quail Island Bare Sand area.

AFANT says even though the Ordinance Mitigation program is advertised to run to October, they have indicated that they should be gone by mid-August.

Additionally they have accepted an exclusion zone of 2 kms, not 5 as advertised.

### Code Of Conduct.

The Fisheries Minister has sent a letter to the NTGFIA regarding a couple of complaints against individual operators.

The complaints center on dealings with the general fishing public.

In light of this we have been requested to re-visit our Code of Conduct.

The committee is addressing this and will be sending copies to all FTO's in the near future

## 2011 AGM

The 2011 AGM will be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2011, Commencing at 7pm

All positions will become vacant at that meeting; nominations for any position on the committee will be available from the Executive [info@ntgfia.com.au](mailto:info@ntgfia.com.au) or copied from this newsletter.

Rob Marchant our President has indicated he will be stepping down at the AGM. there is currently one nomination for the President's position. Greg Murdock of Inzane Charters.

The Agenda and location will be notified in our October newsletter.

## NTGFIA MEMBERSHIP

Renewal notices will be sent out soon. The fee for membership is \$20.00 for the 2011/2012 year.

In light of the Blue Mud Bay negotiations, the Association will not support any Recommendations if these reduce our operating areas.

It is extremely important to support the Association; our Industry is earmarked for greater regulation in the future. The Association is constantly negotiating on behalf of its Members.

## **Membership is in your best interest**

### **Current Committee**

<b>President</b>	<b>Rob Marchant</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Greg Trouchet</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Greg Murdock</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Dennis Sten</b>
<b>Committee member</b>	<b>Steve Compain</b>

<b>Executive</b>	<b>Graeme Williams</b>
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## NTGFIA Nomination form

**Name** .....

**Address** .....

**Email** .....

**License number** .....

**Position Nominating** .....

**Seconded One** .....

**Seconded Two** .....

Forward to [info@ntgfia.com.au](mailto:info@ntgfia.com.au)  
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