

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 15TH AUGUST 2010.

In 2003 two frustrated but enthusiastic anglers Neil Morrow and the undersigned began thinking about how Tasmania's unique fishery could better reach its potential through changed management practices and long term planning.

From this mutual frustration and with a single goal Tasmania's Recreational Fishing Tourism Development and Marketing Plan (RFDP) was researched and born with the core aims to:

1. Retain the Inland Fisheries Service (IFS) as an independent Government statutory body.
2. Improve license sales.
3. Whilst the fishery itself was well managed there was a dire need to improve marketing, communication and planning for the future.
4. Design and implement an Anglers Access Programme

To enable this there was a clear need for:

- Acceptance by the angling community
- Acceptance and endorsement at all Government levels through the creation of a Government network to guide change and create partnerships.
- Major changes to IFS management and processes.
- An angler insurance scheme
- Creation of a Tasmanian recreational fishing brand
- Greater communication
- A marketing plan to increase visiting angler participation and license sales.
- Improvements to an outdated licensing process.
- Creation of a peak recreational fishing body

All the above has either been achieved or is in the process of change and perhaps the time taken to implement the ambitious RFDP has faded the memories of some anglers who are still ever ready with their fingers on personally driven destruct buttons.

The above may well have been enough to attract the envy of all other States but indeed there is much more either completed or in the process of implementation:

- A demand side plan for at least the next 5 years and which is now vested in the IFS.
- The RFDP was a catalyst for an IFS supply side plan to answer and to compliment the researched demands.
- A complete angler access programme including insurance and many land owner access contracts. **(With particular mention of and thanks to Neil Morrow)**
- Creation of the "Fishing Tasmania" brand also now vested in the IFS.

"Through the representation of all anglers, ensure the realisation and maintenance of the full potential of the fishery."

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- A junior angling programme now in the IFS's possession.
- A pure Tasmanian fishing annual.
- Filming footage sufficient for up to 3 x 1/2 hour programmes and smaller clips.
- A series of "Fishing Tasmania" fresh water and estuary angling tournaments that will be vested in the IFS following the completion of the current contractual obligations.
- A series of real time web cams which will be gifted to the IFS on completion.
- A marketing programme together with a new licensing system for the IFS's future implementation.
- An established network with partnerships throughout all levels of Government.
- Recognition of recreational fishing as a niche Tasmanian tourism product by Tourism Tasmania.
- Significant input to the Tasmanian irrigation projects and new water catchment management plans which has successfully engendered change to both plans and Government thinking.
- A Didymo awareness programme.
- Creation of the Recreational Lakes Committee.
- Significant changes to water infrastructure on the Huon, Derwent, Mersey, Meander, Macquarie and Leven Rivers, Brumbies Creek, 19 Lagoons, Penstock Lagoon, Bronte Lagoon, Great Lake etc.

To achieve the above and influence the input of some \$1 million of outside resource resulting in excess of \$3 million of work otherwise beyond the IFS's capacity is, I suggest, something of a laudable feat through the efforts of the many positive individuals involved.

Further as overall project manager and AAT Executive Chairman it has required a considerable single mindedness in order to succeed and whilst this may have been condemned by some I suggest that the above would never have occurred without it.

I understand and appreciate that my personal push which has come from over 40 years of business start up experience has met with resistance from some in the diverse fishing community. However, I am prepared to accept this criticism in the knowledge of the progress made, that is not only unequalled in the history of Tasmania's fresh water fishery but also lays out a defining pathway into the immediate future.

Now that the RFDP is complete, AAT is in existence and the IFS is secure and now considering their own governance I have achieved all my personal goals and am therefore stepping down from AAT.

Before this is misconstrued (as much has been over the last 4 years) I do not take personal credit for the magnificent results achieved as these have been through the efforts of all involved.

It had always been my intention to stand down from AAT as soon as my goals were met and the RFDP completed and indeed I would have done so in the scheduled September AGM. In addition to this I believe that AAT will be better placed to attract those who have objected to my somewhat autocratic but nevertheless successful style back into membership led by a new Chairman and a changed committee.

This new AGM date has come about through the resignation from AAT by TGALT thereby threatening AAT's existence through a lack of membership and continuing IFS support. I have attached a paper written to TGALT concerning their objections and this is also pertinent to AAT as a whole.

I applaud the re-joining of TGALT through their new President but am appalled at the personally subversive actions from some of its membership. **This observation is not confined to TGALT alone but true of many others unconnected and outside that association.**

I would have preferred to have left AAT on a more organized footing but unfortunately the shorter time frame and extra pressures due to TGALT's resignation have made this impossible as the support of the IFS to enable AAT to continue has been of paramount importance. Following extensive negotiations the IFS have confirmed that their support will be ongoing subject to satisfactory arrangements being reached with a new committee.

I am immensely proud of the results achieved in the last 4 years and the legacy left behind. This has been a huge job constructively carried out by those that could perceive and understand a larger picture into the future and I thank all those involved.

I particularly thank members of the Executive Committee who have given much of their personal time in running the Alliance and of course my co-originator, researcher and author of the RFDP Neil Morrow.

Neil's position with the IFS would preclude him from commenting on this report but whilst I have not discussed it with him I know that he would agree with its content.

Finally disunity in an organization like AAT is certain death. The very reason for this association's existence is to sort out differences for the ultimate good of the fishing resource itself and not use these differences as destructive weapons. Such attitudes should be deplored by all and AAT unity will allow the IFS and others to disregard those who set out to run geographic, minority or personal agendas to the chagrin of the peak body.

I encourage all to put personal views and differences aside for the ongoing good of Tasmania's recreational fishing resource.

Richard C Dax