

# SCUBA Divers Federation of Victoria, Inc.

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[www.sdfv.org.au](http://www.sdfv.org.au)



## Chair's Report: 2007-2008

The year has come, and gone, again. Yet another year of promoting the interests of recreational SCUBA divers. Suffice to say, the trend of past years continues – lots of demand, little resource, and increasingly time-poor volunteers to do the representation and execute the work-load.

As Chair of the SDFV Executive, I extend thanks on behalf of the entire membership, to all those who put-in, and my personal gratitude in particular to the current Management Cell – SDFV is nothing without such effort and dedication.

In an environment of increasing diver apathy toward the need for peak body representation, and an apparent mood of diminishing interest in the SDFV, I feel compelled to briefly list the extent of activity and influence the SDFV has done just this year:-

- General
  - Conducted a review of SDFV Codes of Practice
  - Conducted presentation to VRFish State Council on SDFV policy *re* recreational Cray pots
  - Conducted Sunken Assets 2007
  - Attended (all but one) HSAC meetings.
  - Attended as 'general recreational sector peak body representative' at deep-diving forum held by Heritage Victoria.
  - Continue to develop good working relationship with Parks Victoria.
  - Keeping a watching brief on the developments with the ex-HMAS Canberra
  - Attended various VRFish activities and workshops associated with community fishing.
- Channel Deepening Project (CDP)
  - Attended regular meetings with Port of Melbourne Dive Industry Liaison Group (DILG)
  - Appointed to the new PoM Community Liaison Group for three years.
  - Negotiated improved access to diving in the Heads during CDP with PoM
  - Released a Code of Practice for diving in the Heads/channels during CDP. Protocol endorsed by PoM.
- Fisheries Victoria
  - Attendance at fishery stock assessments (abalone and rock lobster).
  - Membership (as VRFish proxy as primary stakeholder) in Rock Lobster and Abalone Fisheries Management plan reviews and preparation of new plans. (The purpose is to secure existing bag limit and fishing rights for rock lobster and improve access to abalone).
  - Participated in two workshops conducted by Fisheries Victoria in relation to Consultative Arrangements and stakeholder representation.
  - RIS submission in relation to the Consultative Arrangements with Fisheries Victoria.

### *Risks and issues*

The Chair's Report last year identified risks and issues in relation to the future of the SDFV. Those risks persistent, if not grow in prominence. The key risk – the one related to perceptions of relevance and performance of the SDFV - actually arises from apathy and non-performance of the membership. For those who continually dismiss the need and value of the SDFV, I ask a simple question: Given the above listed activities, what more can the SDFV do to promote and protect the interests of the recreational diver, and what would you, the critic, have the SDFV not participate in?

It has never been more important than now that clubs band together to have a unified voice over matters of common interest. It is in the hands of the dive fraternity. I hope we have the will to prevail.

JMH.

Aug 2008.