

Produced By:



Newsletter September 02

# Lakes and Coorong Commercial Fishery Net Work

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## Best Practice Document Launch

The Lakes & Coorong Fishery has released it's first Best Practice document which describes the solutions fishers have developed to minimise interaction of juvenile mulloway, crabs and birds with fishing gear. It is an education document primarily aimed at new or inexperienced fishers.

The launch followed the Southern Fishermen's Association AGM at Wellington on September 4, 2002.

The document has been a joint project between fishers and the South Australian SeaNet Fisheries Extension Officer, Cherie Heyes.

It is part of an ongoing commitment the fishery has to its Environmental Management Plan, a world first for a fishery, launched in 1998.

Official guests at the launch included Annette Hurley, President of the SA Labor Party, representatives from the Coorong and Alexandrina Councils, Lorraine Rosenberg, General Manger of the South Australian Fishing Industry Council and Representatives of the



*Minister Paul Holloway and SFA President Garry Hera-Singh with the document at the launch.*

Meningie Progress Association. A large number of fishers, their families and employees also were present.

A highlight of the day was the delicious smorgasbord of fish dishes and accompaniments that were prepared and served by the Lakes & Coorong Women's Industry Network members.

The SFA committee thanks all of those who contributed to the day's success.

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*Written, Compiled and*

*Published: Tracy Hill*

*Editor: Garry Hera-Singh*

*All stories are the opinion of the SFA and details deemed correct at the time of publication. Any errors or omissions will be amended in the next issue.*

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## At the Show again!



*Pictured are Margaret Ayres, Christine Hera-Singh and student Tegan Gayford cooking at the school.*

The Coorong Good Food Program invited the SFA to be partners in the Murraylands Regional Development Board display at the Royal Adelaide Show to promote local produce.

Once again several of the industry ladies worked with the Meningie Area School students to prepare pickled Coorong Mullet and make Mullet patties for the tastings.

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## President's Piece

By Garry Hera-Singh



Australia's climate variations are huge. From flood to drought, boom to bust and very little of "normal" in between. Farmers throughout QLD, NSW, Vic and SA have experienced this season's pain and disappointment due to the lack of rain. Failed crops with not even the possibility of retrieving enough grain for seeding, means no income, which is all too common for farmers.

Drought relief through subsidies, freight assistance and low interest loans are necessary for many farmers to survive this debilitating and disheartening cycle in Australia's weather patterns.

They are fortunate to have a lobby group who has a powerful voice which highlights the social and economic impacts experienced by the rural community. This type of influence is vital to provide a lifeline to be able to survive these harsh times.

I cannot find any parallels in the South Australian Fishing Industry. We are a group of individuals sailing into the future with no rudder and with too many captains all vying for power and control. Whilst the "big end" of industry has got itself into a position where they are financially capable of looking after themselves, the poorer cousins (Scalefish) sector, experience a massive open campaign by the fanatical anti-commercial sector.

The misinformation continually served up to politicians by the ill-informed advisors and government agencies, many with their own ulterior motives and hidden agendas, is all too familiar in South Australia.

Given the enormous support the farming industry has from the State and Federal governments, the commercial fishing sector, particularly the Scalefish sector, struggle for any government support or constructive outputs to produce positive outcomes. By this I mean industry development of even simple legislative objectives such as Management Plan for the Lakes & Coorong Fishery.

In 1998, a draft management plan was presented to the Inland Fishery Management Committee (IFMC), an advisory group to the Minister, with most of the relevant stakeholders represented.

In that same year industry was charged an extra \$4,000 through license fees to complete the plan. The end of the year 2002 is fast approaching and still **nothing** has been produced.

In the "real world" if you were a client and I was the service provider, you could have sued me for taking money under false pretences, having serious consequences for attracting future clientele. At the very least you would have the choice to change service providers.

Not so with government monopolies. Our industry has no choice but to pay year after year for lack of choice and a lack of service that has real outcomes to assist industry to move ahead. This has to change.

However, back to the man on the land. The farmers lobby network has aroused the empathy of the city folk to feel for our drought stricken farmers. This support helps governments to unashamedly distribute funds in times of need.

Oh, how this scenario is so very different to our commercial River fishers. They are facing compulsory acquisition of their licenses leaving them without means of future income, and for some, loss of their superannuation policy

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*If you receive this newsletter from us, an affiliate membership would be appreciated to help offset costs to enable us to keep you informed about our fishery.*

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## At the Show Again

On the Sunday Leanne Hera-Singh, Juleen Richards, Fay Blake, Roxanne Farrow and Tracy Hill took the fresh Coorong Mullet fillets, patties and pickled mullet to cook and serve to an eager public. The most common question was "How do you cook it?" followed by "Where can we get some **fresh** Coorong Mullet?" The answer to that was "Come to Meningie and get it from the fishermen!"

Recipe leaflets and a brochure about the Lakes and Coorong Fishery as well as information about the Coorong Good Food Program were available for the show-goers to take home. The fish was so popular that the ladies were concerned that they were going to run out of product in the first hour. Luckily the demand slowed down when the Channel 7 news started as they were in the same pavilion.

On Tuesday it was the students turn. Jenni Lutze and Denise Mason were very pleased with the students' efforts especially when they overcame their shyness to hand around the platters in the crowd.

These initiatives would not be possible without the co-operation with other community groups or the leadership and strong support of the people within the industry.

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*Subs are now due and payable. An application form is on the back of this newsletter*

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## SFA & WIN at Progress Meeting

The recent demise of the River Fishery has caused some concerns amongst local business groups including the Meningie Progress Association.

Business and community leaders understand the importance of the fishing industry to Meningie as there are 27 license holders here. It was good to have an opportunity recently to address a meeting and update the Progress Association of the threats to industry and the strategies the SFA has developed in response to these threats.

Garry Hera-Singh presented some facts and figures relating to the worth of the industry to the

local economy and a summary of the impacts on the social framework should the commercial fishery be removed.

Tracy Hill also spoke about the strategies being implemented by the Women's Industry Network to strengthen the industries local profile and community involvement.

The members present at the meeting unanimously gave the industry their support and offered assistance for the future.

An invitation was also extended to industry to be involved in projects such as an all weather boat mooring by the boat ramp in Lake Albert.

## SFA Office Bearers

The Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, September 4th 2002.

The office bearers for the New Year are:

### Executive Committee:

<b>President</b>	Garry Hera-Singh
<b>Vice President</b>	Adrian Phillips
<b>Secretary</b>	Rod Ayres
<b>Treasurer</b>	Glen Hill

### Area Representatives:

<b>Goolwa</b>	Greg Kessegian
<b>Ocean Beach</b>	Darren Hoad
<b>Coorong</b>	Butch Ritchie
<b>Lakes</b>	Daryl Hera-Singh
<b>Women's Industry Network</b>	Tracy Hill
<b>SAFIC Board Delegate</b>	Henry Jones
<b>Alternate</b>	Adrian Phillips

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*Trainees for the Wildcatch Traineeship are being interviewed now. Contact Charlie on 08 86453033 at Career Employment Group.*

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## Wildcatch Traineeships

Most businesses get to a point when the decision is made to employ some-one to help get the job done. There are many reasons for employing including i.e. a need to expand your operations or alternatively it is time to make it easier on yourself and extend your working life.

Many people are reluctant to make the move to employ but with the Wildcatch Traineeship scheme, the hard work and hassles are removed. The training group advertise, interview and shortlist applicants. They also administer the day to day tasks of salary, superannuation and workcover for you. All you need to do is pay a fortnightly invoice.

Employers have the opportunity to place someone they already have in mind on the scheme. Once a person has been selected, the trainee is signed to the training group with you as the host employer. A trainee could be shared between two employers.

A trainee has a one month probation period and is a 12 month placement. If for some reason you are unable to retain the employee, the training group will find an alternative placement.

They will attend courses at the Australian Fisheries Academy or receive on the job assessment for the modules required to be completed under the Traineeship. Support is given by the Training Group.

## SAFIC Dinner

The SAFIC Annual General Meeting and Dinner was held on Friday 30th August at Tiffins on the Park. The SA WIN AGM and workshop was also held on the same day.

A highlight of the dinner was the induction of life member, David Gill, a marine scale fisher with many years of service to the industry. He was joined by his wife SA WIN President June Gill and his daughters, three of whom are also marine scale fishers.

Guest speaker for the evening was federal Senator Nigel Scullion, also a fisherman. He spoke on a range of issues including a scheme for purchasing indigenous commercial fishing licenses.

## Cockle Stock Assessment

Fishers were asked to respond to the recent draft stock assessment released for comment by SARDI Aquatic Sciences.

Initial impressions were that the report was overtly negative. There were some omissions in the document, especially of the dynamics of the cockle harvest, the environmental factors and behaviour of the fish.

To try and address this Garry Hera-Singh organised a meeting of the key participants including Sean Sloan (PIRSA Fisheries), John Johnson and Ye Quifeng (SARDI).

Eleven cockle fishers, ten from Lakes and Coorong and one Marine Scale fisher, spent 5 hours discussing various aspects of the document. A lot of good work was done over the course of the meeting and industry was able to fill some of the gaps in the knowledge.

There is concern from the managers that the new markets being developed means extra effort will be placed on the stock and they are looking at ways to reduce latent effort.

More research has to be done and this will cost a great deal of money, money that industry does not have at the moment. If our cockle fishery is able develop value added markets, this should generate the extra income required to fund this research .

How this money is collected and directed toward this vital research is yet to be decided.




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*South Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc. has a website. [www.safic.com.au](http://www.safic.com.au)*

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## Putting Money Where the Mouth Is

The Lakes and Coorong fishing industry is ecstatic that the government has recognised that they are responsible for the environmental degradation of the Murray Mouth.

This, in addition to their obligations to a wetland of international significance under the RAMSAR treaty, meant that they had no alternative but to take action.

However all stakeholders are under no illusion that this is a bandaid measure and that the only true long term solution for the future of the estuary system is to ensure responsible water management occurs upstream and that environmental flows are forthcoming.

Meanwhile nature waits while the "consultation process" proceeds.

## MEETINGS IN BRIEF

### Bays and Inlet Fishers

A couple of meetings that have taken place over the past few months include a visit from the Bays and Inlet fishers from Geelong.

The main reason for the visit was to discuss the Marine Stewardship Certification process and look at how we produced our Environmental Management Plan.

### Economic Indicators

For several years the fishery has been paying the costs of the Economic Indicators for SA Inland Waters Fisheries reports compiled by EconSearch.

To date very few fishers have provided financial data to Julian Morrison due to concerns that the data has been leaked by persons unknown, and that the performance

indicators are not relevant to the nature of the fishery and harvest methods.

A recent meeting with Julian proved fruitful and industry looks forward to future discussion and a revised survey.

### Native Title Update

Glen Hill has been representing L&C Fishers at the industry Native Title meetings. The industry heads and the lawyers are happy with the progress to date and it appears that all parties are committed to a mediation process.

If you are interested there is a library of documents available to read on this and many other topics. Contact Garry

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### Fisheries Act Review

*It appears that the review is going to be rushed to gain the financial incentive the federal government has attached to this process.*

*Industry is very concerned about this as there is the opportunity for some positive reforms.*

*Unfortunately all issues will not be looked at and a good outcome is being sacrificed for expedience.*

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**SOUTHERN FISHERMEN'S ASSOC. INC.**

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**SOUTHERN FISHERMEN'S ASSOC. INC.**

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP FINANCIAL YEAR 2002-2003

**A tax invoice will be sent to you upon acceptance of the application.**

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

TELEPHONE:.....

MOBILE: .....

FAX: .....

EMAIL: .....

LICENSE NO: .....

**Please tick applicable box**

FULL MEMBERSHIP (license holders)  
Nominated 2<sup>nd</sup> member

\$220.00 Inc. GST

.....  
Name

.....  
Relationship

I require a copy of the following:

- Southern Fishermen's Association Constitution
- Strategic Plan
- By-Catch Minimisation Best Practice Document
- Other (please state).....

Send to: The Treasurer  
Southern Fishermen's Association  
PO Box 113  
MENINGIE SA 5264