



PFIGA Annual General Meeting

9th November 2021

**President's Report
Secretary's Report
2020-21**

In the President and Secretary's Reports provided at last year's AGM, I remarked that I couldn't recall a more difficult period for professional fishing guides. Looking back on the year just passed, between lockdowns, closed borders, vaccinations, and learning to live with COVID rather than eliminating it, I'd have to say that 2020-21 might have been one of our most challenging yet. That said, I'm pleased to say that most of our members seem to be weathering the pandemic storm that has continued over the past twelve months, and are optimistic about what looks to be – as I write this – a sustainable return to guiding operations.

It's been a largely 'steady as she goes' year for PFIGA. Membership has remained relatively stable across 2020-21; we've welcomed some new members, while a handful of others have advised of their intention to step away from guiding for a range of reasons. The number of inquiries regarding membership through 2020-21 has been fewer than previous years, as might be expected due to the current economic position. PFIGA remains in a relatively healthy financial position.

We had a change to PFIGA's executive representatives during 2020-21, when in May 2021 Harry Davey advised that he needed to step down from the position of Secretary. Harry was a great resource for PFIGA, providing well considered guidance for the executive with a wealth of knowledge of NSW fisheries related issues, while outside of PFIGA making a really strong contribution towards preserving our fisheries and related resources through OzFish.

Nathan Johnston then stepped in to act as Secretary, and brings a long background in leadership roles in recreational fishing based organisations. It's been very encouraging to hear Nathan talk to his vision of the role PFIGA has in representing professional guides, how that can be grown and expanded, and actions that we can take to grow membership. I'm very grateful to both Harry and Nathan for their efforts and contributions across 2020-21.

PFIGA's interaction as a professional representative body for the guiding sector with the differing government entities has been somewhat limited across 2020-21, with governments of all levels seemingly focused primarily on managing and working in the COVID environment. We did observe some wide spread changes across NSW Fisheries in mid and senior level manager roles in areas where PFIGA has previously held strong and respected networks, so this may be an area where PFIGA will need to place some future focus if we're to maintain the positive engagement we've had previously.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge PFIGA Honorary Life Member Steve Williamson. Steve joined PFIGA around 1995-96, was elected PFIGA president in 2008, and he held that position until stepping down 2017. The 2020-21 season has marked the year where Steve has finally retired from guiding after a career spanning over 30 years – well done Steve!

Finally, in stepping back from the role of President, I extend my sincere thanks to all those who have provided their wise counsel, contributed great ideas, and supported me in my journey with PFIGA. I remain certain that PFIGA has an important role going forward representing professional guides across Australia; that the Association is in safe hands; and has a bright future.

Thanks and regards

Brett Richards
President

Nathan Johnston
Secretary