



PFIGA Annual General Meeting

22nd September 2020

**President's Report
Secretary's Report
2019-20**

Overview

2019-20 has been an extraordinary period for Australia, and for all communities around the globe.

After prolonged drought across much of Australia, the 2019-20 bushfire season for south eastern Australia started early and burned with an unprecedented intensity across a massive area of country through to January 2020. Across Victoria and New South Wales, State and National Parks were closed, and travel bans put in place across large areas, and entire communities evacuated.

March brought the COVID-19 pandemic to Australia. The entire country was quickly placed in lock down, with local, state and international travel restrictions in effect. Disruption to daily life has been absolute for most, tourism almost stopped, and the Australian economy in recession. While some states are well ahead of others in terms of managing and containing the spread of COVID-19, it would seem that restrictions to travel and consequent impact on the tourism will remain for some time into the future.

While I can't recall a more difficult period for professional fishing guides, I'm pleased to say that most of our members seem to be weathering the storm that has been 2019-20, and looking like making it though.

Representation to government / stakeholder groups

I believe PFIGA maintained its reputation with the differing government entities as a professional representative body for the guiding sector and valued stakeholder over 2019-20, particularly so in NSW and Victoria.

In NSW, we engaged with the Minister responsible for fisheries and with the Department of Primary Industries across a numbers of areas of interest to PFIGA members, including the introduction of a permit or licensing system for inland and shore based guides, support for the guiding industry through COVID, access for PFIGA members o particular fisheries, and extending DPI's 'Go Charter Fishing in NSW' web page and social media program to support inland and shore based guides. Generally, these engagements have been positive; however, it is evident in correspondence from the Minister that there is no intention to introduce formal licensing arrangements for guides in NSW at the present time.

In August 2020 PFIGA became an 'Affiliated Organisation' member of VRFISH. VRFISH is the peak body representing recreational fishing in Victoria, and this membership will provide PFIGA with opportunities to improve PFIGA's network, communications and relationships with recreational fishing sector bodies across Victoria.

VRFISH have advised that the Victorian Government is starting work on developing a fishing tourism strategy, and have made a request to Vic Government that PFIGA (and the Victorian Charter Boat Association) are involved in the consultation and the research process informing the strategy.

Membership

Although membership remained stable across 2019-20, although PFIGA did welcome our first Queensland based guide, Nathan Johnston.

There was notable increase in the number of inquiries regarding membership through Autumn 2020. Most of those inquiries were not converted to submitted applications due to PFIGA's requirement for presentation of a current First Aid Certificate at the time of membership application, and the current difficulties around the completion of first aid training during COVID restrictions.

The current PFIGA membership fee structure of offering an Annual Membership fee of \$150, with the option of an Annual membership fee for three years of \$250 appears to be working well for most guides, as does the arrangement whereby invoicing for membership is issued on the 1st of July of the financial year, with payment due not later than 31st December of the same year.

There's a future piece of work to be undertaken in adding a membership page to the PFIGA website, along with clear articulation of the benefits of membership.

Branding, Marketing and Social Media

2019-20 saw the release of the new PFIGA website and the introduction of the new PFIGA logo.

All feedback that I've received on both the website and the logo has been very positive; boat / vehicle decals were distributed to those that requested them. I haven't had feedback on those, but they look good on my boat. I didn't hear any feedback from the ad we ran in the dec 2019 issue of Fishing World, so I'm talking that as something we wouldn't immediately try again, although the bushfires certainly had an impact around that time.

At today's date, the website has had approx. 370 unique visitors, 500 visits, and 1,500 page views. Interesting to note that traffic to the website dipped noticeably in December 2019 and April 2020.

Analytics from the PFIGA Facebook page:

- currently has approx. 2370 followers, which is unchanged from the previous period. The reach of individual posts made on the page seems relatively low.
- analytics indicate relatively low traffic to the PFIGA website, and short visits when the site is reached.

Closing

In closing, we'd like to thank Treasurer David Taylor for his continued contribution and support in keeping PFIGA moving forward across 2019-20.

Brett Richards
President

Wayne Cooke
Secretary