Amateur Fishermen’s Association of the NT Inc.

2010 Annual Report
The businesses listed here all have an interest in the recreational fishing industry in the Northern Territory and, as Corporate members, they support the work that AFANT does in promoting and furthering the development of our fishery. They add to AFANT’s voice when we speak on behalf of our industry and they provide valuable input to our organisation. We urge all AFANT members to recognise the support of these businesses by choosing to use their products and services wherever possible.

Corporate Membership of AFANT is open to all businesses with an interest in our industry. Membership is acknowledged on our website and we provide a link to the business’s own website. Corporate members receive copies of our newsletter and window signage identifying them as AFANT supporters. The annual Corporate Membership contribution is just $100 per year (including GST).
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(Cover Photograph courtesy Dennis Smart)

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**AFANT ACKNOWLEDGES & APPRECIATES THE CONTINUING SUPPORT PROVIDED BY NT GOVERNMENT.**

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**WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS,**

- Reidy's Lures
- Darwin International Airport
- NAFA
- Hotkey Internet
2009 — Major Achievements

In our last annual report we indicated that there were a number of major initiatives in recreational fishing that we wanted to see completed during 2009. These were the closure of Bynoe Harbour and the Finniss River to all forms of wild-harvest commercial fishing, a significant reduction in the number of licences in the commercial barramundi fishery, the removal of the recreational barramundi fishing seasonal closures on the Daly and Mary Rivers, implementation of new possession limits for recreational fishers and a recommencement of the process to review the NT Fisheries Act.

I am very pleased to report that NT Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis made the very welcome announcement in December that Bynoe Harbour, the Finniss River and a section of Fog Bay covering the mouths of the Finniss and Little Finniss Rivers would be closed to commercial barramundi fishing. The Minister also announced a rationalisation of the commercial barramundi closure line for Darwin Harbour and Shoal Bay so it extends from Gunn Point to Charles Point and matches the existing closure for the Coastal Net Fishery. The new closure area for Bynoe Harbour is close to that proposed by AFANT and, although we had recommended that the whole of Fog Bay should be closed, we are grateful that the Finniss River and an area of the flats outside the Finniss and Little Finniss River mouths will be net free.

The NT Government’s barramundi licence buy back program was also successful in 2009 and four licences carrying some 2.6 kilometres of gill net entitlements were bought back. A further three full licences are to be bought-back as part of a commitment given by the Government during the 2008 election campaign.

I understand that many recreational fishers have taken the opportunity to let Minister Vatskalis know that his actions on these closures and buy backs are strongly supported and that more of the barramundi resources in the Territory should be reallocated to recreational fishers by more area closures as part of future commercial licence buy back processes. The inherently greater value of barramundi resources allocated to the recreational sector must inform these decisions.

Late in the year the Minister informed us that he would not revoke the seasonal closures for recreational barramundi fishing on the lower Mary and Daly Rivers. He indicated to us that there are’t any sustainability concerns for barramundi in either river but there are some uncertainties about the possible impacts of allowing fishing during the closures. We are disappointed with the decision as the closures are an artificial restriction on fishing access but, given the lack of pertinent research programs in Fisheries, we understand that the Minister has had to make a judgment call on the issue. While we would still prefer to see the closures removed, we accept his decision and we do not intend to continue this campaign at this time.

Everyone should now be well aware that new recreational fishing possession limits and regulations for the Territory came into effect from 1 January 2010. The new limits will help to maintain the sustainability of some of the NT’s world-class recreational fisheries. AFANT and other recreational fishers have been working with the NT Government on these new arrangements for some time now and we believe they are being well supported by the majority of recreational fishers. The process of reviewing the limits and rules governing recreational fishing should be ongoing and we will be discussing further measures during 2010.

For various reasons the review of the NT Fisheries Act was not able to get back underway during the year. We acknowledge that it is difficult to progress the Act review until the Blue Mud Bay issues are dealt with but we still want to see this work get underway as soon as possible.
Another highlight for 2009 was the major progress made on development, improvement and upgrading of our boat ramps and other fishing infrastructure. This has been a battle for AFANT for many years but we are now making considerable progress thanks to a concerted effort by a lot of people in government including Chief Minister Paul Henderson. More details of these activities are contained later in our report.

Also pleasing was the increase during the year in the amount of monitoring and research that is now being conducted on recreational fishing and related issues in the NT by the NT Government, other research bodies and recreational fishers themselves. More effort is required to provide the level of detail we need to make the best management decisions but we do now seem to making progress.

Negotiations between the NT Government and the Northern, Tiwi and Anindilyakwa Land Councils are continuing and we are grateful that the three councils have again agreed to extend the current temporary recreational fishing permit arrangements for the first half of 2010. NT Government officials have reaffirmed to AFANT that they are still working towards a negotiated outcome that will guarantee the capacity for recreational fishers to continue fishing on affected waters without charge or the need for an individual fishing permit. We expect to see some outcomes of the negotiations by June this year.

A document that will be very important for the future development of recreational fishing in the territory should shortly be made available for public comment. The Recreational Fishing Development Plan has been developed by a working group appointed by the Minister with Fisheries staff and recreational fishing representatives from around the Territory. The working group has now completed an initial draft and the plan is expected to be released for public comment early in 2010. I urge all recreational fishers to have a good look at the plan when it is released and to have their say on what the plan contains and how they believe it should be implemented. It is designed to guide the development of recreational fishing in the Territory for the next ten years or so and it is important that everyone has their say about it.

Another important document that should also shortly be released for public comment is the discussion paper proposing special catch and gear controls to help protect and maintain the quality of recreational fishing on the Daly River. This paper was prepared by the same working group set up to work on the development planning process mentioned above. The working group has identified a number of urgent actions it believes should be taken to reduce fishing pressure on both barramundi and cherabin and these are outlined in the paper. AFANT and the working group are urging all interested fishers to provide input to this process when the Minister releases the paper.

Priority Activities for 2010
2010 is shaping as another very busy year for AFANT with a number of issues and activities underway that will be very significant for the future of recreational fishing in the Territory. These will include:

- AFANT’s efforts to get more input from Territory recreational fishers into issues that we and the NT Government are dealing with.
- Making necessary changes to both recreational and commercial fishing in the Daly River area to secure the future of its recreational barramundi fishery and considering changes necessary in the Mary River/Chambers Bay area.
- Completing the NT Recreational Fishing Development Plan 2010-2020 after public consultation and implementing the actions identified in that planning process.
- Preparing a new AFANT Development Plan based on the NT Plan.
- Making necessary changes to jewfish and snapper fishing (both commercial and recreational) in areas close to our major population centres to ensure the future of these fisheries.
- Reviewing recreational possession limits and other regulations to ensure they are best placed to ensure that recreational fishing is sustainable and that we can continue to enjoy quality recreational fishing experiences in the NT.
- Reviewing the Barramundi Management Plan through the NT Barramundi Fishery Management Advisory Committee that will commence work shortly.
- Continuing to urge the NT Government to recommence the process of reviewing the NT Fisheries Act (acknowledging that this is unlikely until matters relating to settlement of the Blue Mud Bay case are resolved).

On top of all that, one really big challenge for recreational fishing in the Territory this year will be the Commonwealth Government and its Marine Bioregional Planning program. We will need to take a very strong stand to make sure that we don’t
end up with unjustified recreational fishing closed areas off our coast. If Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett has his way there will be a number of these no-fishing zones declared off the coast of the Northern Territory by the end of this year.

Territory fishers have long been strong supporters of sensible marine protection measures and we have encouraged the development of multi-use Marine Parks where recreational fishing is allowed. In the past we have also demonstrated our willingness to support various levels of restrictions on recreational fishing including no-go no-take zones where they are fully justified —Cobourg Marine Park is a good example.

Our long-standing policy is that no-fishing zones in productive fishing areas should only be used if it can be clearly demonstrated that no other approaches will provide the level of protection required. Minister Garrett’s one-size-fits-all approach and his insistence that there will be no-fishing zones off our coast without him having any information or assessment of any risk that recreational fishing here may pose are unacceptable to us. Currently, he seems to be doing exactly what the more radical conservation lobby groups are advocating and not effectively listening to what others are saying.

The NT Government has given us a commitment that it will not establish no-fishing zones in waters under its control and Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis has publicly opposed Minister Garrett’s proposal. When AFANT and Minister Vatskalis stated their positions in the media last year, part of Peter Garrett’s response was that these are Commonwealth waters, not Northern Territory waters. Technically they are, but just remember that these waters start as little as three nautical miles from our coast. The implication can only be that he can and will override the wishes of both the NT Government and the people of the NT if he chooses.

We have indicated to Minister Garrett and his Department that we are more than willing to work with them on a sensible approach to marine protection here as long as it does not include mandatory closed areas for recreational fishers without proper risk assessments and justification. However, unless the position changes, we will need Territory recreational fishers to demonstrate the strongest possible opposition to any plans to put restrictions on us.

Remember this, once no-fishing zones are established, it is extremely unlikely that we will ever get the restrictions lifted. Areas locked up in this process will be lost forever! It is therefore very important that we not only consider those places we fish now but that we also look at where we will be fishing in 10 years time, where our kids will be fishing in 20 years time and where our grandkids will be fishing in 50 years time.

I want to finish my report this year by thanking the NT Government for its support for NT recreational fishing in general and for AFANT initiatives in particular during 2009. At a time when government budgets are under pressure, considerable funding has been, and continues to be, provided for commercial licence buy backs, fishing infrastructure and other activities. NT Government support for AFANT has been adjusted to take account of increasing costs and that has provided us with a sound financial basis to continue to represent the interests of recreational fishers in the Territory into the future.

On a much sadder note we must acknowledge the recent passing of AFANT Committee Member Peter Levick. Despite battling cancer for a number of years, Peter continued to enjoy his fishing and was an active contributor to our work. He was a real supporter of recreational fishing in the Territory and he will be missed.

Good fishing in 2010

Warren de With
President
AFANT ACTIVITIES 2009

AFANT’s Development Plan 2006 — 2009 sets out the key strategic areas of our activities and the specific objectives and strategies planned in each of them. This plan was due for review in 2009 but the AFANT Committee agreed to delay any review until the process of developing an overall development plan for recreational fishing in the Territory is completed. That process is now well underway and we expect to see a final plan early in 2010. AFANT will then develop its new plan based on that document. For the past year AFANT has continued to work from its 2006 — 2009 plan the key strategic areas of which are to:

• Represent and advocate for the interests of all recreational fishers in the NT.
• Ensure that the allocation of fishery resources in the NT provides for an adequate share for recreational fishers and allows for the predictable growth in recreational fishing.
• Provide representation and advice to governments and others on recreational fishing issues.
• Promote and further the development of recreational fishing.
• Maintain and where possible increase access to recreational fishing opportunities.
• Participate in the management of recreational and other fisheries and liaise constructively with commercial fishing organisations on matters of mutual interest.
• Promote and be an advocate for ethical, sustainable, safe and legal fishing practices.
• Promote and be an advocate for the protection of the environment as it impacts on recreational fishing.
• Support and participate in fisheries research.

2009 is the final year of our four year development plan and this report covers the progress we have made in each of these key areas during the year.

Future Planning for Recreational Fishing in the Territory

In 2008, at AFANT’s request, the NT Government agreed to work with us and other amateur fishers to produce a comprehensive development plan for the recreational fishing industry. In 2009 a working group was established with representatives from around the Territory to develop the plan. The working group has now completed an initial draft and the plan is expected to be released for public comment early in 2010.

The working group identified a number of principles that should guide the management of the NT’s recreational fisheries. It has also set out a number of core objectives for the plan and identified a series of key strategic issues that will require action if we are to achieve the maximum benefit from our recreational fishing industry.

AFANT encourages all NT recreational fishers to consider the draft plan when it is released and provide their views to the working group. The plan will guide the development of recreational fishing in the Territory for the next ten years so it is important that we have input from as many fishers as possible.

REPRTN AND ADVOCATE FOR THE INTERESTS OF ALL RECREATIONAL FISHERS IN THE NT

In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2009 were:

• to continue to provide effective representation of all recreational fishers in the NT and to be responsive to the wishes and needs of these fishers.
• to provide effective representation in matters of access to fishing areas.

Highlight activities in this key strategic area for AFANT during 2009 were the continuation of negotiations to resolve issues resulting from the High Court’s decision in the Blue Mud Bay Case and dealing with the Commonwealth Government on its proposals to develop a series of Marine protected areas in waters off the Territory coast.

Representing Recreational Fishers in Dealing with Outcomes of the Blue Mud Case

Negotiations to achieve reasonable outcomes for all interested parties resulting from the High Court’s decision in the Blue Mud Bay case continued through 2009. Most people will be aware that the
court found that the NT Fisheries Act continues to apply in the affected waters but that commercial and recreational fishers and others wishing to use waters that overlay Aboriginal land in the NT will require some form of permit or permission to do so. Resolving the issues arising from the decision has taken longer than expected but discussions continue in good faith and the Northern, Tiwi and Anindilyakwa Land Councils have extended current arrangements which allow fishing to continue without any restrictions.

The NT Government has reiterated to AFANT that it is still working towards an outcome that will allow recreational fishing on affected waters to continue without any requirement for individual permits or payments. We understand that the three land councils are currently considering a proposal from government that will achieve this as well as providing significant benefits for traditional owners of water covered by the decision. We are hopeful that agreements will be finalised by mid-2010.

Representing Recreational Fishers Dealing with the Commonwealth Government's Proposals to Establish Marine Protected Areas off the NT Coast

We have been advising AFANT members for a number of years about the Commonwealth Government’s Marine Bioregional Planning process. For a few years now it has been very much a stop-start affair but Environment Minister Peter Garrett accelerated the process in October and is looking to have plans for establishing Marine Protected Areas in Commonwealth waters off our coast finalised by the middle of 2010. At first glance the Commonwealth’s proposal looks reasonable but there is a very significant problem hidden away in the detail. That is the statement that – “While most of each new marine reserve will be zoned to allow many uses and activities to continue, highly protected zones will also be identified within each new marine reserve.” What this really means is that there will be zones in each new reserve where recreational fishing is prohibited.

AFANT is not opposed to the process of establishing multi-use Marine Protected Areas where recreational fishing is permitted and we are even willing to consider areas where various levels of restriction are placed on fishing. However, we believe that such areas should not be established in waters that are actually accessed by recreational fishers unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the impact of fishers in that area is or will be damaging to particular elements of biodiversity and/or features or natural processes that are not represented in other marine areas and that lesser limitations on recreational fishing are unlikely to provide the required level of protection.

No credible scientific evidence has been offered to show why no-fishing zones are necessary in our waters and there has not even been any assessment to determine if recreational fishing poses any real risk to marine biodiversity here. The process completely ignores the success of NT recreational fishers and successive NT governments in implementing fisheries and environmental policies and legislation which has ensured that our fish stocks, marine habitats and marine biodiversity are near to pristine. Ironically, the biggest threats to marine habitats and biodiversity in our waters are oil and gas well blow outs and bottom trawling for prawns and both these activities are under the control of the Commonwealth Government — the same government that wants to lock us out of offshore fishing areas. Perhaps Minister Garrett should be concentrating on making a real difference with these issues which are clear and present threats rather than supporting an illogical lock out of recreational fishers.

Another point that those pushing the no-fishing zones won’t acknowledge is that, for every productive recreational fishing area that is locked away, there will be increased effort in remaining fishing areas with possible consequences for the fish stocks and environment in those areas. AFANT’s policy of maintaining access to the greatest possible area for recreational fishing is firmly based on the principle of minimising localised fishing impacts by spreading effort as widely as possible

In keeping with our long-standing policy on this issue, AFANT will be doing all it can to oppose the introduction of these no-fishing zones.

NT Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis has already publicly indicated that the NT Government is also opposed to the introduction of recreational no-fishing zones in Commonwealth waters and has given us a commitment that they will not be established in waters under the control of the NT Government. We are grateful for the support of the Minister on this very important issue.

Another point to consider is that, once no-fishing zones are established, it is extremely unlikely that
we will ever get the restrictions lifted. Areas locked up in this process will be lost forever! It is therefore very important that, when looking at areas that we need to ensure remain open to recreational fishing, we not only consider those places we fish now but that we also look at where we will be fishing in 10 years time, where our kids will be fishing in 20 years time and where our grandkids will be fishing in 50 years time.

Following strong opposition from AFANT, other recreational fishing bodies and the commercial seafood industry to the Minister’s proposals we received advice that the process would again be delayed to allow for further consultation and risk assessments. We are awaiting details of the new process and proposed timing for it. In the meantime, we invited Minister Garrett to attend our 2010 Annual General Meeting to discuss his position and to hear our concerns. The Minister has indicated he is not able to accept our invitation.

AFANT and its members will need to carefully monitor developments in this process and be ready to do all we can to oppose any unnecessary restrictions on recreational fishing if they arise again in 2010.

Representing Recreational Fishers Dealing with the NT Government’s Proposal to Establish Marine Protected Areas off the NT Coast

Prior to 2009, AFANT was involved with a committee established to advise the NT Government on the development of a Marine Protected Area Strategy for Northern Territory coastal and estuary waters. AFANT did not agree with the directions taken by some Government representatives on this committee as they would not have acknowledged our policy that areas with restricted arrangements or closed to recreational fishing should not be established in waters that are actually accessed by recreational fishers unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the impact of fishers in that area is or will be damaging to particular elements of biodiversity and/or features or natural processes that are not represented in other marine areas and that lesser limitations on recreational fishing are unlikely to provide the required level of protection.

This process also stalled in 2008 but we continued to have concerns about possible unjustified impacts on recreational fishing and it was raised with the Chief Minister and Fisheries Minister at our 2009 Annual General Meeting. At that meeting Minister Vatskalis gave us a very strong commitment that the NT Government would not establish restricted or no-go areas for recreational fishing without a very good reason to do so. The Minister said: “I would like to say yes the government is prepared to close areas but the government is not prepared to have the same issues like in other states. If areas are to be closed, amateur fishermen will go fishing and I will go with them. So no marine protected areas closed off to amateur fishermen. The only intention is to close areas to the commercial sector and, for obvious reasons, for the protection of species.” We thank the NT Government for this assurance and for their sensible approach to this issue.

ENSURE THAT THE ALLOCATION OF FISHERY RESOURCES IN THE NT PROVIDES FOR AN ADEQUATE SHARE FOR RECREATIONAL FISHERS

In this key area the objective we addressed during 2008 was:

- to ensure the allocation of fishery resources in the NT will provide an adequate share for recreational fishers and allow for the predictable growth in recreational fishing.

A highlight for recreational fishers during the year was the buy-back of four commercial barramundi licences and the subsequent closure of the commercial fishery in a significant area close to Darwin. Another important activity was the development of a draft plan to ensure the future of the recreational barramundi fishery in the Daly River.

Buy-back of Commercial Barramundi Fishing Licences and Closure of Bynoe Harbour, the Finniss River and a Part of Fog Bay

The buy-back of the three commercial barramundi licences committed by the NT Government in 2005 has concluded with four individual licences representing 2.6 km of net entitlements bought back. This is part of a voluntary commercial licence buy-back program established by the NT Government to minimise impacts of barramundi resource reallocation on commercial fishers.

Late in 2009 NT Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis made the very welcome announcement that Bynoe Harbour, the Finniss River and a section of Fog Bay would be closed to commercial barramundi fishing. The Minister also announced a rationalisation of the commercial barramundi closure line for Darwin Harbour and Shoal Bay so it extends from Gunn Point to Charles Point and matches the existing
closure for the Coastal Net Fishery. The map above shows the closed areas.

AFANT is very happy with the new closure area for Bynoe Harbour and Darwin Harbour/Shoal Bay and, while we had hoped that the whole of Fog Bay would be closed, we are grateful that the Finniss River and an area adjacent to the Finniss and Little Finniss mouths will be net free.

These licence buy backs and area closures are part of a continuing process to reallocate barramundi resources in the NT from the commercial sector to recreational, tourism and indigenous fishers. They have been implemented recognising the significantly greater economic and lifestyle value of recreational and tourist barramundi fishing in the Territory.

AFANT President Warren de With commented: “The barramundi is a high value fishery resource for the Northern Territory and the Minister is right in working towards maximising that value by allocating a greater share of the fish to recreational fishers in areas close to Darwin. This resource reallocation process in the NT’s barramundi fishery has been the subject of considerable consultation over a long period of time and it needs to continue to ensure the Territory derives maximum value from this important fishery.”

Ensuring the Future of the Daly River Recreational Barramundi Fishery
In 2008 AFANT presented a submission to the NT Government on the future of recreational fishing on the Daly River. This submission generated considerable interest from recreational fishers and others and NT Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis decided to refer the matter to the same committee established to prepare the NT Recreational Fishing Development Plan 2010-2020. The committee has membership from around the Territory including from the Daly River area.
The working group agreed that there is an urgent need for special fishing controls on the Daly River to help protect its barramundi and cherabin stocks. It has drafted a discussion paper which it has now submitted to Minister Vatskalis with the recommendation that it should be released for public comment early in 2010.

The draft paper identifies a number of key issues which should guide the development of revised fishing controls for the Daly. These include recognition that recreational fishing activity on the river has increased significantly in recent years and that there is now considerable fishing pressure on barramundi from recreational fishers in the river itself and commercial fishers working the river mouth and adjacent areas in Anson Bay. There is also recognition that the exploitation of the river’s cherabin for consumption and for use by recreational fishers as bait to target barramundi has greatly increased. There is concern that increasing recreational fishing activity combined with the effectiveness of using cherabin for bait and ongoing commercial exploitation of the same fish stocks could soon impact on fishing quality and sustainability.

The working group has identified a number of urgent actions it believes should be taken to reduce fishing pressure on both barramundi and cherabin and these are outlined in the paper. AFANT and the working group are urging all interested fishers to provide input to this process when the Minister releases the paper.

AFANT’s view is that The Daly River is experiencing significant growth in recreational fishing and the lifestyle and economic value of this activity to the Daly River region in particular and the Northern Territory in general is more than sufficient to justify a reallocation of barramundi resources to the recreational sector in this area.

**Continuing Buy-back of Commercial Barramundi Fishing Licences**

In 2008 the NT Government committed a further $1.8 million to buy back three additional commercial barramundi licences by June 2012. This is in addition to the buy backs associated with the Bynoe/Finniss/Fog Bay closures mentioned earlier.

AFANT believes that these buy backs must be used to increase the allocation of barramundi resources to the growing recreational sector by closing additional areas to commercial barra fishing or otherwise restricting commercial fishing effort in particular areas. We believe that the barramundi resources of Anson Bay, Chambers Bay and that part of Fog Bay currently open to commercial fishing should be priority areas for consideration. The closure of remaining seven inch net commercial fishing zones in a number of our rivers and creeks should also be considered.

**Securing the Future of Jewfish Stocks**

Concerns from recreational fishers about the reduction of jewfish numbers and sizes in areas accessible to Darwin continue to mount and, despite the fact that recreational fishers now have a reduced possession limit of two jewfish, many believe that additional action is urgently needed to prevent the depletion of jewfish stocks in some of the more heavily targeted aggregations. Recent research in the NT has demonstrated that jewfish live in quite distinct groups (or aggregations) and that there is very little movement of fish between these aggregations. That makes these groups of fish particularly vulnerable to overexploitation and evidence from interstate is that it takes a very long time for stocks to recover if they are depleted through overfishing.

One significant problem with jewfish aggregations in proximity to Darwin (and perhaps our other fishing population centres like Nhulunbuy) is that they are targeted by both recreational and commercial line fishers. The commercial Coastal Line Fishery has a small number of active fishers but a very large number of licences that could be fished if people chose to use them. Active commercial line fishers do not usually have large, long-rang boats and the logistics of their operations keep them relatively close to ports.

The Coastal Line Fishery Management Advisory Committee (CLFMAC) has been in place since August 2008 but to date the only real outcome mitigating impact on jewfish stocks has been the reduction in the recreational possession limit from five fish to two. It now appears unlikely to AFANT that the CLFMAC can make any further real progress on this issue — at this stage the MAC isn’t even scheduled to meet before June 2010.

AFANT is not convinced that the current allocation of jewfish resources in aggregations close to Darwin is providing an adequate share for the growing number of recreational fishers in the area — even with the reduced possession limits introduced in January this year. The lifestyle and economic value
of recreational fishing around Darwin justifies the allocation of a greater share of jewfish resources to the recreational sector in this area.

PROVIDE REPRESENTATION AND ADVICE TO GOVERNMENTS AND OTHERS ON RECREATIONAL FISHING ISSUES

In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2008 were:
• to be recognised by governments and other significant groups as the peak recreational fishing representative body in the NT
• to have constructive relationships with major land owner groups in the NT (including indigenous land owners and pastoral leaseholders) to further the interest of recreational fishers.

AFANT is recognised by the NT Government and others as the body representing recreational fishers in the NT. During 2009 we continued to provide representation and advice on a wide range of issues impacting on recreational fishing. We also continued to develop relationships with major landowner groups. An outline of our activities in this key area is set out below.

The Recreational Fishing Access Working Group (RFAWG)
This committee is made up of senior representatives from relevant government agencies with responsibilities in the area of fishing access and/or infrastructure and AFANT. A number of significant infrastructure issues have been addressed during 2009 and these are detailed later in this report under the heading Promote and Further the Development of Recreational Fishing.

The NT Recreational Fishing Development Plan Working Group
The working group was established as a result of a proposal from AFANT that the NT Government work with us and other amateur fishers to produce a comprehensive development plan for the NT’s recreational fishing industry. The group is made up of AFANT representatives and other recreational fishers (including members from Daly River, Nhulunbuy and King Ash Bay), the tackle industry, the guided fishing industry, NT Fisheries and NT Police. The group met three times during the year and it has developed a draft plan which has now been provided to Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis. It is proposed that the plan will shortly be released for public comment.

The plan will play a very important role in the development of recreational fishing in the NT over the next 10 years and the working group is eager to have as much input as possible from recreational fishers and the public before the plan is finalised and implementation begins.

NT Recreational Fishing Survey Steering Committee
This committee was formed in 2008 to oversee the development and implementation of a survey of recreational fishing in the NT to follow on from the National Recreational Fishing Survey in 2001. The survey will provide much-needed data to assist with management of our fisheries and planning for recreational fishing development. The NT Government has provided some $400,000 for this process and the data collection part of the project is nearing completion. We expect to have the results of the survey early in 2011.

Offshore Net and Line (Shark) Fishery Management Advisory Committee
MAC members joined with fishery scientists and others in February 2009 to conduct an Environmental Risk Assessment of this fishery. The assessment concluded that the activities of both commercial and recreational fishers in this fishery were sustainable although a number of management actions were identified that deal mostly with monitoring and research needs.

NT Spanish Mackerel Fishery Management Advisory Committee (SMFMAC)
This MAC met in May 2009 to continue consideration of measures to ensure that the fishery meets sector share and total allowable catch targets. The recreational possession limit for Spanish mackerel has now reduced from five fish to two but there is still no agreement on any changes in the commercial sector despite the fact that a discussion paper on the introduction of quotas was prepared and circulated during the year. It was proposed that the MAC would meet again later in 2009 but that meeting did not take place.

Information from NT Fisheries shows that there has been a reduction in the commercial landings of Spanish mackerel from 2008 indicating that the commercial sector is currently fishing within
its sector share. We will not have results from the NT Recreational Fishing Survey until 2011 and, while we need these to give us a clear picture of recreational harvest, we are confident that the reduction in the possession limit from five fish to two will ensure recreational fishers are not exceeding their sector share.

AFANT continues to be concerned that there is still no agreement on mechanisms to ensure that sector shares and total allowable catch will be maintained and we will expect concrete recommendations to come from the MAC early in 2010.

NT Coastal Line Fishery Management Advisory Committee
This MAC was established in 2008 to advise on management issues in the Coastal Line Fishery. The main targets in this fishery are jewfish and golden snapper and a high proportion of the harvest of these species is taken by recreational fishers. Recent research indicates that both species are prone to barotrauma injuries and overfishing. A two-fish possession limit is now in place to reduce the recreational take of jewfish and consideration will be given to what measures may be necessary to reduce impacts on golden snapper in 2010. Recreational fishers have been advised about barotraumas impacts on black jewfish and will be advised of the research results on golden snapper as soon as they are finalised. One interim measure being considered is the introduction of a minimum size limit for golden snapper.

So far the MAC has failed to reach any agreement on measures that should be taken in regard to commercial fishing impacts, particularly in areas that are also heavily fished by recreational fishers such as those close to Darwin and other population centres. If there is no outcome in relation to commercial fishing impacts by mid-2010, we may need to seek action from the Minister outside the MAC process.

NT Mud Crab Fishery Management Advisory Committee
In 2009, the MAC continued with the development of revised management arrangements in the fishery which will increase penalties for overpotting and failing to sort crabs between lifts while permitting crab licences to be split into two units of 30 pots to allow crabbiers to fish more than 60 pots (in multiples of 30 pots) if they wish. This is designed to allow crabbiers to fish an optimum number of pots without encouraging the use of illegal pots. The formal process to implement these changes has commenced and they are likely to take effect in the next couple of months.

The MAC received advice from NT Fisheries that mud crab stocks, particularly those in the Gulf of Carpentaria, were showing good signs of recovery from the very low levels seen in 2006. The commercial catch has increased from 266 tonnes in 2006 to 412 tonnes in 2008 and all indications were that this trend would continue in 2009. Our information is that recreational crabbiers in areas close to Darwin are also experiencing healthy catches.

NT Fisheries Research Advisory Board
This group provides advice to NT Fisheries and the national Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) on applications for research and development funding that impact on NT fisheries. More than 20 research applications were considered by the FRAB in 2009.

Tiwi Coastal Waters Consultative Committee, Manbuynga Ga Rulapa Consultative Committee and Anandilyakwa Consultative Committee
These consultative committees provide an opportunity for regional indigenous groups to discuss fisheries issues with NT Government representatives and other fisheries stakeholders including AFANT and the NT Seafood Council.

The Daly River Management Advisory Committee (DRMAC)
AFANT continued its membership of DRMAC during 2009. Finalising a water allocation plan for the Tindal Limestone Aquifer in the Katherine area, commencing the water allocation planning process for the Ooloo Aquifer further down the Daly catchment and preparing for the removal of the moratorium on land clearing in the Douglas Daly region were major activities for the committee in 2009.

The NT Water Safety Advisory Council
Boat safety in the NT is an issue of concern for AFANT and that concern is shared by the Council. AFANT met with NT Transport Minister Gerry McCarthy in May and, with his support and that of the Council, the NT Government developed a major boat safety awareness program which was rolled
out in late 2009. The campaign included television, radio and print media advertising as well as general material for boaters and a revised safety manual for pleasure craft operators.

**Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (DHAC)**
During 2009 there were still some concerns about the relationship between this committee and the NT Government but a new Chair has been appointed and the committee has made significant progress on some major issues during the year.

DHAC completed its review of the 2003 Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management and, following formal public consultation, has now finalised a Darwin Harbour Regional Management Strategic Framework that is intended to be a policy framework and guidelines for the management of environmental, social, cultural and economic values and uses of the Darwin Harbour region. The strategy highlights the need for the community, industry and government to work together, to ensure that values of the Darwin Harbour Region are recognised and conserved for current and future generations. Although the committee has completed public consultations and final drafting of the strategy, it has not yet been approved and released by the NT Government. Hopefully this will happen early in 2010.

Another significant achievement for DHAC was the publication of the Darwin Harbour Region Report Cards 2009 which provide a snapshot of water quality and biological health at a range of fresh and saltwater monitoring sites in the harbour and its catchment. The report cards show how the Darwin Harbour system is coping with the growth in population, industry and development in the region. The Report Cards highlighted a significant issue with the impacts of discharge from the Leanyer sewage treatment plant on Buffalo Creek and this has allowed AFANT and others to directly address the problem with Power Water.

The success of the Report Cards has prompted DHAC to propose an integrated monitoring program for Darwin Harbour which could pool the resources of the various government agencies and industries that are (or will soon be) conducting environmental monitoring in the Harbour. A coordinated approach has the capacity to enhance the effectiveness of the overall monitoring program while being cost effective for all the groups involved. The committee already has some indications of support from industry and will be working in 2010 to have the integrated program in place.

**Mt Todd Reference Group**
The Mt Todd Reference Group continues to monitor environmental issues on the Mt Todd mine lease. During 2009 the group received reports on site management issues, plans for a water treatment facility to better manage contaminated water on the site and the status of planning for the long-term rehabilitation of the site.

**Enhancing AFANT’s Relationships with Indigenous Territory Land Owner Groups**
AFANT has continued to work cooperatively with the Tiwi, Northern and Anandilyakwa Land Councils on issues relating to the resolution of issues arising from the Blue Mud Bay case. We are working towards outcomes that will have benefits for traditional owners and recreational fishers. One particular opportunity for this is the prospect of opening up additional land access for recreational fishers on a pay-to-visit basis and we will pursuing this in 2010.

The permit camping system we operate with the Tiwi Land Council continues to be popular with recreational fishers although there are concerns with people using the campsites without permits. The permit system we have in place is simple and inexpensive and there is no excuse for people going on shore on the islands without proper permission.

**Enhancing AFANT’s Relationships with Pastoral Land Owner Groups**
Although AFANT has good relations with the NT Cattlemen’s Association, access to recreational fishing areas on pastoral leases remains an issue of concern. At our 2009 Annual General Meeting NT Chief Minister Paul Henderson offered to broker discussions between AFANT and the NTCA on the access issue. Preliminary meetings have taken place and we will progress discussions further during 2010.

**PROMOTE AND FURTHER THE DEVELOPMENT OF RECREATIONAL FISHING**
In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2009 were:
- to have improved infrastructure and facilities for recreational fishing
- to encourage increased participation of young people and women in recreational fishing
- to seek improved fish stocks for the recreational fishing sector
• to ensure that recreational fishing will continue to be recognised as an important part of Territory lifestyle and an important contributor to the NT economy
• to ensure that the national and international profile of recreational fishing in the NT will be maintained, the local recreational sector will be aware of broader developments and AFANT, on behalf of recreational fishers in the NT, will have input to national and international forums on recreational fishing.

Highlight activities for AFANT during 2009 in this key strategic area were the accelerated progress on the Recreational Fishing Infrastructure Program including completion of the East Arm boat ramp, upgrading work at the Adelaide River, Leaders Creek, Saltwater Arm and Port Roper boat ramps and the completion of plans for a major upgrade of the Palmerston boat ramp. Also significant was the closure of Bynoe Harbour, the Finniss River and a part of Fog bay to commercial barramundi fishing which will increase the recreational share of the barramundi resource in that area. During 2009 recreational fishing in the Territory continued to maintain a high public profile and its importance as a significant contributor to our Territory lifestyle and economy was well acknowledged by both Government and the media.

Improved Recreational Fishing Infrastructure and Facilities
Chief Minister Paul Henderson and Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis have continued to push progress in this area and work has accelerated during 2009.

The new East Arm boat ramp was completed during 2009 and, despite some early teething problems and some design issues, it has proved a big hit with recreational fishers. There is an outstanding problem with the stability of the pontoon in its current exposed location and we are awaiting advice from Government on remedial action.

The pontoon at the Dinah Beach boat ramp has been completed and, although it is similar in design to the problematic East Arm pontoon, it is much more stable due to its more sheltered location. A rock and sand obstruction at the end of the ramp was removed during the construction of the pontoon and this has improved ramp access.

Planning for the $4 million upgrade of the Palmerston boat ramp has been completed, tenders have now been advertised and we expect construction to commence shortly. A planning group involving AFANT, Palmerston Game Fishing Club, Palmerston City Council and the NT Government oversaw the design process and it was subject to public comment before being finalised. The new facility will include a land-based fishing pier, a floating pontoon on the ramp, a disabled access ramp, redesigned parking and vehicle access, a security parking compound, security lighting and other refinements.

In 2008 a review of the condition and usability of all public boat ramps in the Territory was commissioned by the NT government and this has lead to the development of a priority work program by the Recreational Fishing Access Working Group which will result in upgrading and repair work at a number of Territory boat ramps. Some of this work is set out below.

The car park at the Adelaide River boat ramp has now been sealed and a tank has been installed so water is available for washing after launch and retrieves. Part of the arrangement established by the then Department of Planning and Infrastructure was that ramp users would have access to the toilets located in the kiosk of the tourism operation on the site but this arrangement has now been abandoned so a new toilet facility similar to the one at Corroboree will be constructed as soon as possible.

Work to repair the drop off at the toe of the Leaders Creek boat ramp has been completed and this has made it safer to launch there on lower tides.

Some work was done late in 2009 to repair the drop off at the toe of the Port Roper boat ramp and launching there on lower tides should be a lot easier and safer this year.

The Saltwater Arm boat ramp has been resurfaced and, as soon as weather condition allow, the ramp apron and parking area will be filled and raised to provide easier access and hopefully a non-boggy area to park.

Repairs have been undertaken at the toe end of the Corroboree boat ramp removing the big lump there and effectively extending the toe by about four metres. The project started late and the Wet made it impossible to complete the work at the head of the ramp which will include sealing the approach apron. This will be done as early as possible this year but we have asked that it not delay the opening
of the area after the Wet. At the end of last year we became aware that there were problems with servicing the toilet block at Corroboree, particularly maintaining the water supply for flushing the toilets, and we have asked that the service contract be checked out and if necessary modified before the area opens this year.

The drop off at the toe of the King Ash Bay boat ramp was supposed to be repaired last year but work had not been done when AFANT visited in late November. We asked the NT Government to make sure it is done as early as possible in 2010 before the main tourist influx down there and we understand that there has now been some discussion between the contractor and the King Ash Bay Fishing Club.

Work plans identified or under consideration by the Recreational Fishing Access Working Group for 2010 and beyond include:

- sealing the approach apron at the Gove Yacht Club boat ramp.
- sealing the approach apron at the Gove Mud Wharf boat ramp and channeling wash down water away from the ramps.
- extending the toe of the Buffalo Creek boat ramp to eliminate the drop off and removing rock obstructions near the toe of the ramp.
- remarking the car park layout with appropriate signage and repairing cracks and the uneven surface of the Fannie Bay Ski Club boat ramp.
- construct a new compacted earth ramp at Hardies Billabong to the same standard as the Rock Hole ramp.
- sealing the approach apron and the surface of the Southport boat ramp.
- filling the turning area and top of Middle Arm boat ramp, clearing the grass and shrub fire hazard from the parking area and extending the ramp toe to eliminate the drop off.
- extending the toe of the McKenzie Arm 1 (Six Pack Creek) boat ramp to eliminate the drop off.
- repair the approach to the Big Horse Creek boat ramp and extend the toe to eliminate the drop off.
- remove the earth mounds across the approach to the Roper Bar boat ramp and replace them with shallow concrete spoon drains.
- repairing the lower section of the Daly River boat ramp and negotiating an extension of the lease with the Northern Land Council to allow an increased turning area and ramp approach and a significant expansion of car/trailer parking.
- provision of toile facilities at the St Vigeon (Tomato Island) boat ramp.
- consideration of redesign to make the Dundee Beach boat ramp suitable for safe self-use or alternatively seek a new location for a ramp to service the area.

Increasing Participation of Young People and Women in Recreational Fishing

AFANT provided some $6000 from the Fishing Club Grants Program to support fishing clinics for juniors and women in 2009.

Palmerston Game Fishing Club received a grant of $3000 for its very popular and highly successful Junior Fishing Clinic. The total cost of the clinic is approximately $17,000 and more than 100 children take part. It first ran in 2005 and has been supported by the grants program for a number of years.

Nhulunbuy Regional Sport Fishing Club received $3000 for its Junior and Women’s Fishing Clinics. These clinics have a total cost of some $9000 and are very popular and successful annual events for the club. They are usually held in conjunction with other club events such as the Gove Game Classic and Gove Ladies Fishing Tournament and involve more than 100 women and kids each year.

In addition, AFANT provided other forms of assistance during 2009 for the Darwin Flyrodders public fly casting clinics, The Groote Eylandt Game and Sportfishing Club’s junior fishing clinic and the Darwin Game Fishing Club Junior Barra Classic.

2009 Fishing Clubs Small Grants Program

Each year AFANT administers an $11,000 small grants program for fishing clubs on behalf of the NT Government. In 2009 a total of $31,409 in grants was requested and the full $11,000 was allocated. Importantly, the $11,000 in grant funding was used to assist the delivery of more than $37,900 in projects for fishing club members throughout the NT. Funds were allocated in 2009 as follows:

- Dundee Social & Recreation Fishing Club - $500 for VHF Radio.
  The waterproof radio installation (approx total cost $700) will be used by the club as a safety measure for boats using the area. It will be mounted near the existing boat launching area and will be monitored by the person providing launch and retrieve services.
- Palmerston Game Fishing Club - $3000 for Junior Fishing Clinic.
  The clinic (approx total cost $17,000) is a very...
popular and successful annual event for the club with more than 100 children expected to take part. It first ran in 2005 and has been supported by the grants program for a number of years.

- **Darwin Flyrodders** - $541.20 for Printer Supplies. The computer printer supplies (approx total cost $1080) will be used to improve the quality and amount of communication material produced by the club for members and non-members participating in club activities such as its free casting clinics.

- **Nhulunbuy Regional Sport Fishing Club** – $3000 for Junior and Women’s Fishing Clinics. These clinics (approx total cost $9008) are very popular and successful annual events for the club.

- **Tennant Creek Fishing Club** – $529 for an EPIRB. The club will maintain the EPIRB for use by members travelling to fish areas such as King Ash Bay so they will have required safety equipment on board when they fish offshore.

- **King Ash Bay Fishing Club** - $1429.80 for a Radio Repeater Station. The club is upgrading its VHF radio repeater facility located on Vanderlin Island (approx total cost $6620). The facility is maintained as a safety service for boats fishing the Sir Edward Pellew Island and nearby areas.

- **Darwin Game Fishing Club** - $2000 for VHF Base Station Radio. The club is establishing a VHF radio base station (total cost with installation approx $3000) at its base in the Darwin Ski Club for use as a safety measure during club tournaments and outings offshore of Darwin.

### Improving Fish Stocks for the Recreational Fishing Sector

As detailed earlier in this report under the heading “Ensure that the Allocation of Fishery Resources in the NT Provides for an Adequate Share for Recreational Fishers,” the buy back of the three commercial barramundi licences committed by the NT Government in 2005 has concluded and Bynoe Harbour, the Finniss River and a section of Fog Bay have been closed to commercial barramundi fishing. There has also been a rationalisation of the commercial barramundi closure line for Darwin Harbour and Shoal Bay.

These actions have been taken to reallocate a greater share of barramundi resources in the Bynoe/Fog Bay area to recreational, tourism and indigenous fishers. The NT Government has committed to buy back a further three commercial barramundi licences over the next two years and we will be working to ensure that this includes a process to allocate further barramundi resources to recreational fishers.

As mentioned earlier in this report, AFANT is not convinced that the current allocation of jewfish resources in aggregations close to Darwin is providing an adequate share for the growing number of recreational fishers in the area. We now have reduced jewfish possession limits for recreational fishers but, despite working on the issue through the Coastal Line Fishery Management Advisory Committee for more than a year, there is no clear direction in place to reduce commercial catches in these aggregations. The lifestyle and economic value of Recreational fishing around Darwin is considerable and there should be some reallocation of jewfish resources to allow quality fishing to continue. AFANT will continue to work towards this in 2010.

### Public Recognition of Recreational Fishing

Recreational fishing in the Territory continues to have strong public recognition for its lifestyle and economic values. Media interest in recreational fishing is very strong with significant general news coverage in radio, television and print media. In addition there are dedicated fishing-specific local productions such as ABC Radio’s Tales from the Tinny, North Australian Fishing & Outdoors magazine and the regular fishing report which is part of Channel Nine’s nightly television news. In addition, the successful national magazines NAFA and NAFA’s Barra, Bass and Bream Digest continue to be produced in the NT and there is significant coverage of NT recreational fishing in many of the television fishing series now broadcast throughout Australia. Part of ABC Radio’s Tales from the Tinny is now broadcast nationally.

AFANT contributes to and promotes many of these media activities in the NT and is frequently called on for news and current affairs comments on fishing-related issues. We also regularly contribute to national fishing and news media.

### AFANT Involvement at National and International Levels

AFANT continues to work with the national recreation peak body Recfish Australia and
Executive Officer Chris Makepeace continues as a Recfish board member.

In July 2009 Federal Fisheries Minister Tony Burke appointed Chris Makepeace to a panel to nominate members to the board of the national Fisheries Research and Development Corporation.

In November, AFANT provided technical assistance to the government of East Timor on appropriate rules for a major international fishing tournament they were organizing. This included a visit to East Timor by AFANT EO Chris Makepeace.

MAINTAIN AND WHERE POSSIBLE INCREASE ACCESS TO RECREATIONAL FISHING OPPORTUNITIES

In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2007 were:

• to maintain and, wherever possible, increase access to recreational fishing areas throughout the NT
• to ensure that recreational fishing access will be a major consideration in the development of any national parks, marine parks and marine protected areas that are proposed for waters in and around the NT
• to work towards AFANT having effective relationships with Aboriginal land organisations and land owners to maintain cordial relations between them and recreational fishers and to encourage and support them in making areas of their land available for recreational fishing.

Major activities for AFANT during 2009 in this key strategic area were our continuing efforts to ensure that recreational fishers in the NT are not unduly restricted by the various processes to establish marine protected areas and by the settlement of Aboriginal Land claims. The proposed settlement of the Kenbi land claim with little restriction on recreational fishing has been a highlight. On the other hand, a number of threats to recreational fishing access around the Vernon Islands have emerged and will need to be addressed.

Marine Protected Areas and Recreational Fishing Access

In 2009 AFANT continued its efforts to ensure that the establishment of marine protected areas in both NT and Commonwealth waters off our coast does not unjustifiably restrict recreational fishing access. We are not opposed to the development of multi-use Marine Protected Areas and we are willing to consider areas where various levels of restriction are placed on fishing. However, we believe that such restricted areas should not be established in waters that are actually accessed by recreational fishers unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the impact of fishers in that area is or will be damaging to particular elements of biodiversity and/or features or natural processes that are not represented in other marine areas and that lesser limitations on recreational fishing are unlikely to provide the required level of protection.

We have the support of the NT Government but there is still a fair way to go with the Commonwealth to ensure reasonable outcomes from its program.

There is further discussion of this topic earlier in this report under the heading “Represent and Advocate for the Interests of all Recreational Fishers in the NT.”

Settlement of the Kenbi Land Claim

The settlement of the Kenbi Land Claim covering Cox Peninsula and significant areas of shoreline in both Darwin and Bynoe Harbours is in the final stages of settlement. In a landmark agreement between the Kenbi claimants, the Northern Land Council and the NT and Commonwealth Governments it is proposed that public access to most of the claim area will continue without a requirement for a permit. This will including areas of water above the mean low water mark that are now part of the claim as a result of the Blue Mud Bay decision.

If the settlement proposal becomes final there will be very little impact on recreational fishing provided that fishers are prepared to respect designated sacred site areas at a number of places along the coast and on a few islands around Bynoe harbour. AFANT is urging all fishers to do this as we have been given special consideration to ensure virtually no disruption to our activities. (Because the settlement is still to get final approval from the Commonwealth Government we are unable to provide maps or describe particular areas at this time but we will definitely alert recreational fishers as soon as we are able.)

AFANT congratulates all of the parties to this claim including the NLC for their willingness to recognise the importance of the area to recreational fishing and to allow continued access for recreational fishers and others.
Settlement of the Borroloola No 2 Land Claim
This is a long-standing claim involving the handing back of Centre Island in the Sir Edward Pellew’s group of islands as Aboriginal land and also the conversion of a portion of land at Batten Point from land held by the Northern Territory Land Corporation for “tourism, recreation, land rehabilitation and access to the McArthur River” to Aboriginal land. This area is adjacent to land occupied by the King Ash Bay Fishing Club.

AFANT has had difficulty in ascertaining the exact status of the claim and land handover but the latest advice from the NT Government is that the claim has not yet been finally settled and that neither Centre Island nor the area at Batten Point have been handed over as Aboriginal land. This would appear to be contrary to messages and actions coming from the Northern Land Council in Borroloola which has advised recreational fishers that permits are now necessary and has erected signs on Centre Island (including near the old weather station which is a sheltered location from most adverse weather conditions) stating that the island is Aboriginal land and that entry is only allowed with a permit from the NLC.

One of the conditions put in place to allow the settlement of this land claim is that the NLC must negotiate with AFANT “in good faith” to establish recreational fishing camping areas on Centre Island. Despite requests from us to the NLC to deal with the campsites issue, there has been no such negotiation and, aside from a very preliminary meeting involving AFANT, NT Fisheries and the NLC some years ago, we have had no contact from the NLC on the issue.

We have received reports from AFANT members in the area that statements have been made by local NLC officials about informal payments for permits to visit the islands.

We are very concerned that no negotiations have taken place. The McArthur River/Pellew’s Islands area is a very significant recreational fishing location and something like 20% of all recreational fishing which takes place in the Territory is centred on this area. The lack of clear advice on the status of the land claim settlement, the recent actions of local NLC officials and the failure to progress the settlement condition to establish recreational fishing camping areas on Centre Island are combining to create uncertainty and bad relations in the area. These matters will need to be resolved before large numbers of recreational fishers begin to visit the area immediately after this wet season.

We have approached NT Chief Minister Paul Henderson seeking his help to resolve issues impacting on recreational fishers as a result of the process of settling this claim.

Continued Recreational Fishing Access to Waters Around the Vernon Islands
There is little statistical information on recreational fishing activity around the islands as past surveys have not been conducted to a scale which would make it possible to draw specific information but we know many fishers use the area. There are a number of boat ramps that are used to reach the Vernon Islands including those in Darwin Harbour, Nightcliff and Buffalo Creek and we have no statistics for people accessing island waters from these locations. A key access point because of its proximity to the Vernon Islands is the Leaders Creek Fishing Base and in the months of September, October, November and December in both 2006 and 2007 an average of 250 boats per month launched from the boat ramp there. While it is not possible to say that all these boats fished island waters, a large majority would certainly have done so. The Vernon Islands are an important recreational fishing area and their significance is likely to increase as the number of recreational fishers around Darwin grows along with our population.

There are a number of processes underway at this time that could impact on recreational fishing access to the Vernon Islands.

An Aboriginal land claim (the Vernon Islands [Larrakeyah] Land Claim No.9) is currently being dealt with by the Aboriginal Land Commissioner. Prior to March 2007 we had no interest in this claim as the land areas of the Vernon Islands are not accessible to recreational fishers and all fishing in the area is boat based. It was our belief then that a claim granted over these islands would have no detriment to recreational fishers. However, the 2008 decision of the High Court of Australia in the Blue Mud Bay case changed that as, effectively, recreational fishers now have neither a public nor a statutory right to fish in waters above Aboriginal land and we understand that it is normal practice to make grants of Aboriginal land to the mean low water mark.

Considerable areas of water around the Vernon Islands which are used by recreational fishers lie
between the high and mean low water marks so a grant of land which includes the intertidal zone could have impacts on boat-based recreational fishing in the area. With this in mind, AFANT has requested that the Aboriginal Land Commissioner considers the possibility of detriment to recreational fishers when preparing his report on this claim.

A company called Tenex Energy has lodged a Notice of Intent to establish a major tidal electricity generation facility around the Vernons to take advantage of the rapid tidal flows there. The proposed facility will cover 1689 hectares in Clarence Strait and will consist of 456 tidal generators placed on the sea floor at various locations. A 5.8 kilometre cable corridor will link the generators to what was formerly proposed to be the Glyde Point infrastructure corridor. The proposal would also require a facility on shore in the Glyde Point Area. Each of the generators will be supported by a steel and concrete base 14 m by 21 m and approximately 3 m high. The bases will be held in place by gravity.

AFANT has grave concerns that a facility of this type and scale will have significant impacts on recreational fishing in the Vernon Islands and we want the NT Government to make this an important and explicit aspect of any approvals process for the proposal.

As a result of its agreement with Gerry Wood, Independent MLA for Nelson, the NT Government has now agreed to reopen consideration of Glyde Point as a major industry centre. Proposed development of this area was a particular concern for AFANT and many others back in 2007. It had major implications for the environments of important estuary and coastal areas in the vicinity of Gunn Point, Leaders Creek, the Adelaide River and the Vernon Islands. It would also have required huge public investment to establish basic services such as a road/rail service corridor, a residential ‘suburb’ and a deep-water port in one of the more difficult areas around the Territory coast to navigate large vessels.

AFANT’s view was that, since we already had gas coming on shore in the East Arm of Darwin Harbour, we should be considering expanding the capacity of that area to service gas-related industries using modern approaches to environmental management to ensure they are compatible with other uses of Darwin Harbour including recreational fishing. Our view was shared by a number of groups apparently including the NT Government which announced in October 2007 that it was abandoning plans for developing Glyde Point. It subsequently rezoned the area as public open space and conservation land and commenced planning for industry expansion on the Middle Arm Peninsula which is now the location of the proposed Inpex facility.

The NT Government has committed to gas industry development at East Arm and it has rightly protected the Glyde Point/Vernon Islands area from major development by rezoning land there to public open space and conservation. Many people and groups like AFANT have accepted development at East Arm because of the decision to protect Glyde Point and it would be unacceptable if the NT Government now reneged on that arrangement.

**Lifting Seasonal Recreational Fishing Closures on the Mary and Daly Rivers to Increase Fishing Access**

For many years AFANT and other recreational fishers have campaigned for the removal of the recreational fishing seasonal closures on the lower Mary and Daly Rivers which run from 1 October to 1 February. For some time Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis would not make a decision on the issue advising us that he wanted further scientific advice from the NT Fisheries. That advice must have at last been forthcoming as the Minister has now formally advised us that the closures will be retained.

In his decision the Minister indicates that there are not any sustainability concerns for barramundi in either river but there are some uncertainties about the possible impact on large spawning females caught and released by recreational fishers. He also cites concerns about post-release mortality during the warmer wet season. He concludes “Removing the seasonal closures would represent a number of risks and uncertainties that I am not prepared to accept.”

Given the lack of pertinent research programs in Fisheries we understand that the Minister has had to make a judgment call on the issue and, while we would still prefer to see the closures removed, we accept his decision and we do not intend to continue this campaign at this time.

**Increasing Access for Recreational Fishers on Aboriginal Land.**

AFANT continues to see the resolution of the Blue Mud Bay issue as a real opportunity to provide development opportunities for indigenous groups
who want to benefit from recreational fishers accessing their lands. We already have a clear example of this approach in our arrangement with the Tiwi Land Council for permit camping for recreational fishers on the Tiwi Islands and we want to encourage similar land access arrangements in other locations.

**PARTICIPATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF RECREATIONAL AND OTHER FISHERIES**

In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2008 were:

- AFANT will continue to be represented on all appropriate fisheries management advisory committees and other working groups making decisions on or providing advice on the management of the NT’s fisheries
- AFANT will continue to maintain an effective working relationship with the NT Seafood Council and other representative commercial fishing bodies
- AFANT will develop and maintain an effective working relationship with the Fishing Tour Operators Association of the NT.

Highlight activities for AFANT during 2009 in this key strategic area were our continued membership of the full range of advisory and other appropriate committees involved in fisheries management in the NT. A particular highlight was the development of a draft Recreational Fishing Development Plan through the NT Recreational Fishing Development Plan Working Group.

**Development of a Draft Recreational Fishing Development Plan**

In 2009, at AFANT’s request, a working group was established with representatives from around the Territory to develop a comprehensive recreational fishing industry development plan. The working group completed a draft of the plan in December. It is now with the Fisheries Minister for consideration prior to being released for public comment early in 2010.

**The NT Seafood Council and the NT Guided Fishing Industry Association**

During 2009 we continued to work cooperatively with both these bodies on issues that impact across the different sectors of our fisheries. Particular issues of mutual concern during the year were the continued negotiations on settlement of the Blue Mud Bay matter and dealing with the Commonwealth Government on the establishment of marine protected areas in our waters.

**Fisheries Management**

AFANT continues to represent the views of recreational fishers on a range of fisheries management advisory committees and other working groups dealing with fisheries management issues in the Territory. In 2009 these were:

- The Recreational Fishing Access Working Group
- The Offshore Net and Line (Shark) Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- The NT Spanish Mackerel Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- The NT Mud Crab Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- The NT Coastal Line Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- The NT Fisheries Research Advisory Board
- The Tiwi Coastal Waters Consultative Committee, Manbuynga Ga Rulapa Consultative Committee
- The NT Recreational Fishing Development Plan Working Group
- Working Group to conduct an Environmental Assessment of the NT Offshore Net and Line (Shark) Fishery

The activities of these committees and working groups are set out elsewhere in this report.

**PROMOTE AND BE AN ADVOCATE FOR ETHICAL, SUSTAINABLE, SAFE AND LEGAL FISHING PRACTICES**

In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2009 were:

- to ensure that recreational fishing practices in the NT will be consistent with maintaining sustainable fisheries
- to encourage recreational fishers in the NT to effectively record and report any instances of illegal and unsafe fishing activity to appropriate authorities
- to encourage recreational fishers to comply with boat safety and other marine regulations to maintain safety on fishing waters

The introduction of revised recreational possession limits and other regulations and the implementation of a recreational boat safety awareness program were highlights for AFANT in this key strategic area.
Meeting these objectives continues as an important activity for AFANT.

New Recreational Possession Limits and Other Regulations
The NT Government has introduced new recreational fishing possession limits and regulations for the Territory from 1 January 2010. The new limits will help to maintain the sustainability of some of the NT’s world-class recreational fisheries.

AFANT and other recreational fishers have been working with the NT Government on these new arrangements for some time now and we believe they are being well supported by the majority of recreational fishers who have had plenty of opportunities to have their say on the changes.

The new regulations are:

- Personal possession limit of two Black Jewfish (reducing from five)
- Personal possession limit of two Spanish mackerel (reducing from five)
- Personal possession limit of 30 cherabin and/or red claw (currently no limit)
- Personal possession limit of 3 sharks of any species with a prohibition on the taking of any sawfish, speartooth sharks and northern river sharks
- Requirement to use turtle excluder rings in freshwater pots
- Boat limit of 10 freshwater pots per vessel (when two or more people are on board)
- A prohibition on the recreational taking of giant clams.

AFANT is particularly pleased at the reduction in the black jewfish possession limit from five fish to two as we believe that stocks, particularly in areas close to Darwin, are under pressure from a combination of recreational and commercial fishing. Changes to commercial fishing for jewfish in areas where they aggregate close to Darwin such as Charles Point, Chambers Bay and Channel Point should now also be considered.

The new possession limits and pot regulations for cherabin are also significant as they are heavily fished in some locations and we know little about the impact of this on important recreational fish such as barramundi.

Reducing recreational fishing impacts on sharks and banning the taking of all sawfish, speartooth and northern river sharks is another sound initiative and it is in line with national recognition of the need for more conservative approaches to various shark species.

At times the process of getting agreement to put these changes in place has been difficult and AFANT has congratulated Minister Vatskalis for seeing them through.

Fishery Minister’s Use of Emergency Powers for Temporary Closure of Fog Bay to Commercial Barramundi Fishing
In March 2009 AFANT received reports, photographs and video of a commercial barramundi fisher working in the Finniss and Little Finniss Rivers area of Fog Bay catching large numbers of juvenile sawfish in his gill nets. Photographs appeared to show that these fish were being killed by having their necks broken after they had been removed from the net. Further photographs showed dozens of dead sawfish on a mud bank at the mouth of the Little Finniss River.

There was media coverage of these incidents and AFANT indicated to the NT Government that steps had to be taken to protect these fish, particularly as we have been calling for there to be strict no take regulations for recreational fishers on all species of sawfish. Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis shared our concerns and, when it was evident that these fish were continuing to be killed, he used his powers to take fast and decisive action to implement a closure of the commercial barramundi fishery in Fog Bay inside a line from Point Blaze to Point Patterson. The closure was put in place for 90 days.

The decisive action by the Minister on this issue was very welcome. His actions were unpopular with commercial fishers but they hopefully send a very clear message to all fishers — both commercial and recreational — that the ethical treatment and safe release of all bycatch species is essential.

This closure also demonstrated that it is worthwhile for recreational fishers to effectively record and report any instances of illegal and unethical fishing activity to appropriate authorities.

Boat Safety Awareness
Boat safety in the NT is an issue of concern for many recreational fishers and AFANT, along with the NT Water Safety Council, has been urging the NT Government to develop a strong media-based boat safety awareness program to get appropriate safety messages out to boaters. AFANT met with
NT Transport Minister Gerry McCarthy in May and he supported our proposal. AFANT joined Minister McCarthy in October to launch the campaign which included television, radio and print media advertising as well as general material for boaters and a revised safety manual for pleasure craft operators.

PROMOTE AND BE AN ADVOCATE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AS IT IMPACTS ON RECREATIONAL FISHING

In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2008 were:

• to ensure that the environmental and access requirements of recreational fishing will be taken into account in all land use, mining and industrial developments in the NT
• to encourage fishers to make sure that recreational fishing in the NT will not be contributing to the introduction or spread of weeds and introduced pests
• to make clear that fishing activities, including competitions, where it is proven that they will be damaging to fish stocks and or the environment will not be supported in the NT.

A healthy environment is the keystone of a healthy recreational fishery and AFANT continues to put significant effort into this key strategic area. Highlight activities during 2009 were our continued monitoring of river diversion works at the McArthur River Mine, work with the Daly River Management Advisory Committee and our input on a number of preliminary industry development proposals around the Territory.

McArthur River Mine River Diversion

AFANT continues to monitor activities at the mine that could impact on recreational fishing. Committee and members visited the mine site twice during 2009 to inspect work associated with the McArthur River diversion channel and, later in the year, other issues identified in the 2009 report of the mine’s independent environmental monitor. We noted that revegetation of the main river channel was delayed as a result of the mine shut down during the legal action relating to the original Commonwealth approval for the mine taken by the Northern Land Council. In our annual report last year we expressed concern that “this work continues regardless of the outcome of the current situation where the issue of environmental approval for the mine has to be revisited and regardless of whether the mine remains in production.” Because of the legal situation the mine was not able to carry out revegetation work as planned but has informed us that this work will be accelerated as ground conditions permit during this wet season.

We also noted some minor seepage from the tailings dam into Surprise Creek and we were briefed on the mine’s proposals to rectify this issue. Similarly, the mine briefed us on proposals to mitigate dredge spoil impacts on vegetation at Bing Bong port.

In November we assisted MRM and the King Ash Bay Fishing Club with their individual barramundi monitoring programs tagging some 55 barramundi at locations above and below the mine site on the McArthur River.

Managing the Mount Todd Mine Site

During 2009 AFANT continues to monitor this site through visits to the mine and via our membership of the Mount Todd Reference Group. Although there are still significant issues with water management on the site, the lease holder, Vista Gold, has established a water treatment facility that is providing more effective dewatering of the mine pit and some retention ponds. Water is being treated to a standard that allows it to be pumped to the tailings dam where it may help to bring tailings water to a standard suitable for release from the site.

Planning for the long-term rehabilitation of the mine site is continuing but this will be a very costly process and a better solution would be for mining to recommence on the site with effective environmental management and rehabilitation planning in place. Obviously this is the preferred solution but currently the site is so contaminated that we can’t afford to wait too much longer before permanent rehabilitation action will need to be taken.

Proposed Development of Inpex Gas Processing Facility

Planning by Inpex for a major gas processing facility on Blayden Point in the East Arm of Darwin Harbour has been delayed by some 12 months and there is little more to report since Inpex Regional Manager Sean Kildare spoke at our Annual General Meeting in 2009. We are still concerned that one of the options under consideration by Inpex would involve the loss of our access to the Catalina Creeks and we have made our opposition to this option clear to both Inpex and the NT Government.
The Daly River Management Advisory Committee (DRMAC)
AFANT continued its membership of DRMAC during 2009. Finalising a water allocation plan for the Tindal Limestone Aquifer in the Katherine area, commencing the water allocation planning process for the Ooloo Aquifer further down the Daly catchment and preparing for the removal of the moratorium on land clearing in the Douglass Daly region were major activities for the committee in 2009.

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee (DHAC)
The Committee completed its review of the 2003 Darwin Harbour Regional Plan of Management and has finalised a Darwin Harbour Regional Management Strategic Framework that is awaiting release by the NT Government. DHAC also published the Darwin Harbour Region Report Cards 2009 with information on water quality at various sites around the harbour and its catchment. The Report Cards showed that there were significant impacts with sewage discharge into Buffalo Creek. AFANT and others have taken up this issue directly with Power Water.

BHP Billiton’s Proposal to Ship Copper and Uranium Concentrates from its Olympic Dam Mine in South Australia Through Darwin Port
In July 2009 BHP Billiton released an Environmental Impact Assessment on its proposal to transport copper and uranium concentrates through the Northern Territory via rail from its Olympic Dam mine in South Australia and ship it from Darwin Port. The copper concentrate has sufficient uranium content for it to be classified as radioactive and thus requiring specific handling.

AFANT provided formal comment on the Environmental Impact Assessment. We indicated that there are four significant issues which were of concern to us. These were:
- The difficulty of assessing the possible impacts of and from port and loading facilities in Darwin when so little detail is available and when plans for the actual development of the port facilities are not yet in place.
- The lack of risk assessments on the possible impacts of concentrate entering the land, aquatic and marine environments of the Northern Territory.
- The lack of detail and absence of an assessment of the availability and readiness of emergency response systems to deal with spills of concentrate in land, aquatic and marine environments in the Northern Territory.
- The relatively high water use requirements of the Darwin port loading facilities and consideration of the source of that water.

We requested that the proposal should include a proper risk assessment of the possible impacts of concentrate spills along the rail corridor, around the loading facility and along the shipping lanes including:
- The consequences of concentrate spreading on dry land.
- The consequences of concentrate being ingested or breathed in by humans and animals.
- The consequences of concentrated spreading in fresh water environments (including possible impacts on fish and other organisms).
- The consequences of concentrate spreading in the marine environment (including possible impacts on fish, other marine life and marine flora).

BHP Billiton has not yet released a supplementary environmental report so we do not know if the issues we have raised have been addressed.

Other Development and Environmental Issues
During 2009 AFANT was involved with a wide range of other development proposals and environmental issues that may impact on recreational fishing. These included:
- Tenex Energy’s proposal to establish a major tidal electricity generation facility around the Vernon Islands.
- The reopening of consideration of Glyde Point as a major industry centre.
- A workshop to advise on development of marine pest monitoring in the Territory.
- The Environment Centre NT’s Tropical Rivers Forum
- A number of workshops held by the Environment Protection Authority to advise on ecologically sustainable development in the NT and proposals to review environmental assessment processes in the NT
- Providing advice to the Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce on agricultural development in the Top End.

SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN FISHERIES RESEARCH
In this key area the objectives we addressed during 2008 were:
- to encourage and support continued effective
research into NT fisheries, in particular, where they impact on recreational fishing
• to encourage the implementation of an effective process for monitoring and reporting on all aspects of recreational fishing in the NT to provide a sound basis for management and resource allocation decision-making.

A highlight for AFANT during 2009 was the increase in the amount of monitoring and research that is now being conducted on recreational fishing and related issues in the NT. More is needed to provide the level of detail we should have to make the best management decisions but we do now seem to making progress.

**NT Recreational Fishing Survey 2009/2010**
The data collection phase of the NT Government’s $400,000 plus Recreational Fishing Survey 2009/2010 is nearing completion and the project will move to its data entry and analysis phase in 2010. We are anxiously awaiting the results of the survey which are due to be released in early 2011 as these will provide extremely important information on recreational fishing catch and effort throughout the Territory — information that is badly needed to provide a sound basis for managing our fisheries. AFANT has been involved with the design and implementation of the survey through the survey project steering committee.

**Longtail Tuna Research**
In 2009, AFANT, the Australian National Sport Fishing Association (ANSA) and some other state and national recreational fishing organisations allocated funding to assist the research project *Biology, fisheries and status of longtail tuna* (Thunnus tonggol), *with special reference to recreational fisheries in Australian waters*. The project has a total budget of some $64,000 and is being conducted by CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research. The purpose of the project is to collate available information on the biology, movements and commercial and recreational catches of longtail tuna, particularly in Australia. It is intended to provide valuable information to support the management of longtail tuna — currently the only recreational-only pelagic fish species in Australia.

We are already seeing outcomes from the project including a recently-published research paper entitled *Age and growth of longtail tuna* (Thunnus tonggol) *in tropical and temperate waters of the central Indo-Pacific* (Shane P. Griffiths, Gary C. Fry, Fiona J. Manson, and Dong C. Lou). The findings of this research suggest that longtail tuna grow more slowly and live longer than other tuna species of similar size. This may make them vulnerable to overexploitation and indicates that a precautionary approach to managing the harvest of these tuna is desirable. We will be taking these findings into account when we consider further changes to recreational possession limits and other regulations during 2010.

**AFANT’s Involvement in Fish Tagging and Monitoring Programs in 2009**
AFANT continues to monitor barramundi in the Roper and Victoria Rivers through our Billy Taylor Barrawatch program. In 2009 approximately 580 barra were recorded in the project and 475 of these were released. Since it commenced in 2000, 6445 barramundi captures have been recorded in the Billy Taylor program and 5274 of these fish were released. 36 tagged fish were recaptured in 2009, the most since the program commenced. This brings the total number of Billy Taylor tagged fish recaptured to 154. The chart opposite shows Billy Taylor Barrawatch activity in the Victoria and Roper Rivers since 2000.

NT Fisheries has now commenced a review of our monitoring and tagging programs and we expect advice from them early in 2010 on how recreational fishers can best contribute to the NT’s fishery research and monitoring programs.

**NT Fisheries Research Advisory Board**
The NTFRAB continued to provide advice to NT Fisheries and the national Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) on proposals for research and development funding that have implications for NT fisheries. AFANT continues to represent recreational fishers on the FRAB.

**Daly River Fish Flows Project Steering Committee**
This project is being conducted under the umbrella of the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRACK) Project. It is providing data on the potential impacts of changed water flow rates in the Daly River catchment and indications are that fish populations in the Daly will be quite sensitive to changed flow conditions. This has particular
implications for planning the use of surface and groundwater resources in the area.

King Ash Bay Recreational Fishing monitoring project
AFANT has provided advice and assistance to the King Ash Bay Fishing Club for its project to monitor barramundi stocks in the McArthur River through a recreational fisher tagging and trip reporting project funded by the McArthur River Mine Community Benefits Trust. The river sustains considerable recreational fishing effort and the club is to be commended for getting this project in place. A group from AFANT tagged and released some 50 barramundi in the McArthur in November.

AFANT Involvement with Other Research Activities
In addition to the activities listed above AFANT has been involved in a number of other research programs during the year. These included:
- Providing advice to NT Fisheries on the NT Recreational Fishing Survey.
- Advice to scientific groups on possible impacts of climate change in Kakadu.
- Assisted the NT Environment Centre with its NT Tropical Rivers Forum.
- Advice to CSIRO on social research in recreational fishing in the NT.
- Advice to CSIRO and other researchers on water allocation planning for various areas of the NT including the Howard River area.
- Advice to researchers from the national Fisheries Research and Development Corporation on the research needs of recreational fishing in NT.
INDEX

1. Statement by Members of the Committee
2. Income and Expenditure Statement
3. Detailed Balance Sheet
4. Balance Sheet
5. Depreciation Schedule
6. Notes to the Financial Statements
7. Independent Audit Report
Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc
ABN 47 665 738 318
Statement by Members of the Committee
For the year ended 31 December 2009

The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee the Income and Expenditure Statement, Statement of Financial Position, and Notes to the Financial Statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc as at 31 December 2009 and its performance for the year ended on that date.

2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

[Signature]
Treasurer - Dennis Smart

[Signature]
Vice President - Geoff Bird
## Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants - DBIRD</td>
<td>190,000.00</td>
<td>160,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants - DBIRD Small Grants Program</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants - Dept Primary Industries</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership fees</td>
<td>10,327.08</td>
<td>9,346.14</td>
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<td>Fish Smart Project</td>
<td>13,454.55</td>
<td>49,688.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Island camping permits</td>
<td>2,547.73</td>
<td>2,811.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reimbursements - travel &amp; other expenses</td>
<td>4,535.82</td>
<td>5,552.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>4,629.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raffles</td>
<td>364.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of promotional items</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>13.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sundry income</td>
<td>918.18</td>
<td>272.72</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>236,512.91</td>
<td>247,656.42</td>
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## Expenses

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
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<td>1,554.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>1,250.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and promotion</td>
<td>780.36</td>
<td>652.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Airfares &amp; other travel</td>
<td>173.51</td>
<td>1,362.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audit fees</td>
<td>640.00</td>
<td>1,327.86</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank fees and charges</td>
<td>452.89</td>
<td>710.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Expenses</td>
<td>3,302.35</td>
<td>4,358.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation - plant</td>
<td>594.00</td>
<td>638.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing Clubs Small Grants Program</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FishSmart Project</td>
<td>13,612.52</td>
<td>49,688.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>General expenses</td>
<td>709.58</td>
<td>253.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>3,106.76</td>
<td>2,878.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest - Australia</td>
<td>728.49</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting expenses</td>
<td>1,269.76</td>
<td>2,605.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>M/V - depreciation</td>
<td>11,794.00</td>
<td>11,794.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>M/V - operating costs</td>
<td>7,147.49</td>
<td>9,425.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office equipment &amp; consumables</td>
<td>62.74</td>
<td>507.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>1,703.66</td>
<td>1,106.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These financial statements are unaudited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.
### Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 31 December 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Printing &amp; stationery</td>
<td>1,714.86</td>
<td>1,529.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotional items - key rings, etc</td>
<td>2,100.00</td>
<td>4,999.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research &amp; development</td>
<td>1,254.55</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research tagging</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,968.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries - ordinary</td>
<td>124,426.52</td>
<td>107,269.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superannuation</td>
<td>11,198.38</td>
<td>16,745.31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>4,590.96</td>
<td>4,118.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiwi Island camping permits</td>
<td>2,331.81</td>
<td>2,863.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; accommodation</td>
<td>5,189.77</td>
<td>4,364.57</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td>211,277.83</td>
<td>245,403.86</td>
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**Profit from ordinary activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>25,235.08</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,252.56</strong></td>
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Opening retained profits  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>163,543.56</td>
<td>161,291.00</td>
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Net profit attributable to the association

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>25,235.08</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,252.56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Closing retained profits**

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>188,778.64</strong></td>
<td><strong>163,543.56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These financial statements are unaudited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.
Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc ABN 47 665 738 318  
Detailed Balance Sheet As At 31 December 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Current Assets**

**Cash Assets**

- Cash at Bank - Cheque Account: $22,048.80, $28,801.12
- Cash at Bank - Cash Management Account: $213,980.46, $154,636.94
- Cash at Bank - Research & Development Ac: $22,868.69, $24,238.86
- Cash at Bank - Government Grants: $525.48
- Cash Float - Office: $200.00, $200.00

**Total Current Assets:** $259,097.95, $208,402.40

**Receivables**

- Debtor - FishSmart Project Grant: $3,500.00

**Current Tax Assets**

- GST clearing: $88.55, $(798.51)

**Other**

- Accrual - FishSmart Project Grant: $8,606.44

**Total Current Assets:** $259,186.50, $219,710.33

**Non-Current Assets**

**Property, Plant and Equipment**

- Office furniture & equipment: $6,649.00, $6,649.00
- Less: Accumulated depreciation: $5,783.00, $5,189.00
- Motor vehicles - at cost: $47,178.00, $47,178.00
- Less: Accumulated depreciation: $37,514.00, $(25,720.00)

**Total Non-Current Assets:** $10,530.00, $22,918.00

These financial statements are unaudited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.
**Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc ABN 47 665 738 318**  
**Detailed Balance Sheet As At 31 December 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>2009 $</th>
<th>2008 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Assets</td>
<td>269,716.50</td>
<td>242,628.33</td>
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**Current Liabilities**

**Payables**

**Unsecured:**

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<th>Description</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superannuation Payable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiwi Island camping permits accrual</td>
<td>1,350.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Payables Unsecured</strong></td>
<td>5,662.38</td>
<td>691.77</td>
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**Current Tax Liabilities**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amounts withheld from salary and wages</td>
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<td>6,498.00</td>
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**Total Current Liabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>7,189.77</td>
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**Net Assets**

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<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>260,673.64</td>
<td>235,438.56</td>
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**Members' Funds**

**Reserves**

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<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General reserve</td>
<td>71,895.00</td>
<td>71,895.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accumulated surplus (deficit)</td>
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<td>163,543.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Members' Funds</strong></td>
<td>260,673.64</td>
<td>235,438.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These financial statements are unaudited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.
Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc ABN 47 665 738 318  
Balance Sheet As At 31 December 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash assets</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>259,097.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current tax assets</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>88.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,606.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>259,186.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10,530.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Non-Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,530.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>269,716.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payables</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,662.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current tax liabilities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3,380.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,042.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,042.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>260,673.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members' Funds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td></td>
<td>71,895.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained profits</td>
<td></td>
<td>188,778.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Members' Funds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>260,673.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These financial statements are unaudited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.
Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 112: Income Taxes
AASB 1031: Materiality
AASB 110: Events after the Balance Sheet Date
AASB 117: Leases

No other Australian Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report:

(a) Fixed Assets

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

(b) Leases

Leases of fixed assets, where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset, but not the legal ownership, are transferred to the entity, are classified as finance leases.

Finance leases are capitalised recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amounts equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual values. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the interest expense for that period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight line basis over the shorter of their estimated useful or over the term of the lease.

These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.
### Note 2: Cash assets

Bank accounts:
- Cash at Bank - Cheque Account  
  2009: 22,048.80  
  2008: 28,801.12
- Cash at Bank - Cash Management Account  
  2009: 213,980.46  
  2008: 154,636.94
- Cash at Bank - Research and Development  
  2009: 22,868.69  
  2008: 24,238.86
- Cash at Bank - Government Grants Account  
  2009: 525.48

Other cash items:
- Cash Float - Office  
  2009: 200.00  
  2008: 200.00

**Total Cash Assets:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>259,097.95</td>
<td>208,402.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note 3: Current Tax Assets

- GST clearing  
  2009: 88.55  
  2008: (798.51)

**Total Current Tax Assets:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88.55</td>
<td>(798.51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note 4: Property, Plant and Equipment

**Office furniture & equipment**
- At cost  
  2009: 6,649.00  
  2008: 6,649.00
- Less: Accumulated depreciation  
  2009: (5,783.00)  
  2008: (5,189.00)

**Total Office Furniture & Equipment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>866.00</td>
<td>1,460.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Motor vehicles:**
- At cost  
  2009: 47,178.00  
  2008: 47,178.00
- Less: Accumulated depreciation  
  2009: (37,514.00)  
  2008: (25,720.00)

**Total Motor Vehicles:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9,664.00</td>
<td>21,458.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,530.00</td>
<td>22,918.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.
### Note 5: Payables

Unsecured:

- Superannuation payable  
  \[\text{4,312.38}\]  
- Tiwi Islands camping permits accrual  
  \[\text{1,350.00}\]  
  \[\text{5,662.38}\]

### Note 6: Current Tax Liabilities

Amounts withheld from salary and wages  
\[\text{3,380.48}\]  
\[\text{6,498.00}\]  
\[\text{3,380.48}\]  
\[\text{6,498.00}\]

These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.
Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc ABN 47 665 738 318
Independent Audit Report to the Members

Scope

We have audited the attached financial report, being a special purpose financial report comprising the Statement by Members of the Committee, Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Financial Position, and Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2009 of Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc. The Committee is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act Northern Territory and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial statements have been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Northern Territory. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the association's financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows. These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, the financial position of Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT Inc as at 31 December 2009 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

Signed on 22 February, 2010:

[Signature]

Trevor A Angus, FCA,
Angus Accountants
1/40 Parap Road, PARAP, NT, 0820