

Bulletin – Fisheries members update September 2019

On 12 September 2019 the PSA/FOVB met with the Department. Below is a summary of some of the matters discussed:

Rock Fishing Safety Compliance duties by Fisheries Officers

As members are aware a ban was placed by the PSA on this activity. At this meeting management advised the following:

- » Whilst Machinery of Government changes moved the main responsibilities of dealing with Rock Fishing under the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Fisheries Officers remain authorised under the Act.
- » Future meetings will be arranged with OEM to fully establish the roles of parties.
- » The PSA and FOVB will be consulted on any changes.
- » Fisheries management have drafted a work instruction to address the period between now and when meetings with OEM have fully established responsibilities.
- » This work instruction has been provided to the PSA today and the delegates and the PSA will review it.
- » We are advised that the work instruction recognises that the Fisheries role continues to be educational but with enforcement capability.
- » Other than coordinated operations with the Police the work instruction will not expect FOs to actively pursue Rock Fishing activities.

- » Prior to taking on any activities there will be appropriate training.
- » We understand that the interim work instruction will go out this week. That does not mean the PSA has lifted bans.
- » Until the PSA advises members in writing the ban remains in place.

Batons and Handcuffs

The ban put in place relating to participating in activities where it is unclear in regard to the legality of using batons or handcuffs is still in place.

The previous notice with the direction to members is attached to this bulletin [HERE](#).

Management of incidents where Fisheries Officers have been assaulted, threatened or abused

The importance of good communication, including broadcasts where appropriate, was recognised, where threats to staff have occurred. Management advised of processes to deal with repeated, vexatious, and unreasonable complaints. Strategies and resources were obtained from the Ombudsman.

We further sought strategies to prevent aggressive and abusive behaviours, including through the use of sanctions. We were advised that DPI has a peak group that includes other roles in the organisation with regulatory functions. Issues such as the above are raised at these meetings.

The management of incidents of threats and abusive behaviour should and will be in ongoing discussion and we welcome strategies from the



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membership. Members are reminded to put in incident reports every time such an issue occurs.

Training and assessment of FYFOS, clarification of current program

The PSA raised concerns that the previous comprehensive training package has diminished over the years. Management advises that they have developed a First Year Taskbook which is about to go out. This will work in conjunction with obtaining a Certificate 4 and the Performance Development Plan (PDP) process.

Discussion also centred around a form of assessment process such as a formal examination. Whilst recognising the importance of ensuring Fisheries Officers can perform their duties effectively and safely the PSA would not like to see increments impacted or delayed where requirements of the role have not been progressed through no blame of the FO.

Fisheries Award negotiation

The PSA advised management of our intention to put forward changes, we seek in relation to the Award. It is our view that the award does not represent the changes that have occurred in the organisation over the years or fairly address the work performed.

Management reiterates previous advice that under the current government Wages Policy any employee-related cost increases have to be paid for by trade off, to existing conditions.

The PSA will not let this impact in putting forward what is essentially a log of claims.

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