



Chair's Report: 2011-2012

This report refers to the operation of the SDFV for the period November 2011-November 2012. It is tabled on behalf of the 2011-2012 Management Cell to satisfy the Annual Report as required by Clause 9.9 of the SDFV Rules of Incorporation.

The past year has been a relatively quiet one for the SDFV. The Ex-HMAS Canberra has quietly sat there and started falling over and apart nicely without much fuss and with continued access, while a few other minor issues have been resolved relatively easily. We have seen two past member clubs rejoin our ranks (Melbourne Uni and PHUC) and it was great to see Melbourne Uni at the Prom last month for the first time in quite a few years handling the challenging launching conditions very well. There are also several potential new clubs on the radar.

Highlighting the year would have to be the annual Cup Day weekend gathering of SDFV clubs at Tidal River and some of the best boating and diving conditions than we have ever experienced. This access may not have happened so soon or possibly ever without the involvement of the SDFV in a constructive but persistent dialogue with Parks Victoria, and also the work of PHUC/MADD and LVSC. The amazing diving conditions may not have been conducive to socialising on shore, but the annual barbeque did the job, with Monash doing a reasonable job (I hope!) in the end, once everyone found where they were. Lesson learned: there are no BBQs in the traditional spot on BBQ road. A visit and talk with the head ranger Helen Dixon helped maintain the relationship.

Another of the main issues the SDFV played a significant role in was the removal of a clause singling out recreational dive club vessels as commercial vessels in the implementation of the regulations in the new marine act. Nobody know how it got in, but we were able to find and liase quietly with the right internal people to help get it taken out with a minimum of fuss. This exercise was interesting in that it created some ties between recreational dive club representatives from most states of Australia, which could be the foundation for a national peak body if the need arises (either in the form of one of the previous ones, or a new one all together).

The SDFV continued to perform as a peak-body should, and represented the interests of recreational SCUBA divers to government and decision-makers. Key activities include:

- Supporting the community project of putting anodes on the J5 submarine
- Opportunity for members to buy "Dive Australia" latest edition as a fundraiser and at a good price
- Key stakeholder (thanks to our nominee, John Hawkins) in the VEAC Marine National Parks review
- Continued dialog about recreational harvesting of crays and abalone (with special thanks to John Hawkins, who has dedicated several days of his own time to attend workshops)
- Holding a position on VRFish (thanks to Priya, who has also dedicated a lot of her own time to this)
- The Ex-HMAS Canberra – the SDFV remains the Parks Vic contact for the recreational mooring.

SCUBA Divers Federation of Victoria, Inc.

GPO Box 1705 Melbourne 3001

www.sdfv.org.au



In a sense, the SDFV was not very active considering an entire year has passed, but this is merely due to the lack of things that we needed to react to. With members being volunteers and time-poor, resources are primarily concentrated on issues as they occur, rather than seeking out causes and trying to change the status quo. This is the reason for any perceived “inactivity”. As always, the SDFV is a tool that can be used by anyone that is prepared to put in some effort – a club or individual will have a lot more influence if they are trying to do something under the SDFV name.

In summary, the SDFV is in good shape financially and as a recognised peak-body with relevant decision-making bodies. So as Chair, I thank member clubs and delegates, and members of the Management Cell for their time and input into the SDFV in the past year and hope that they continue to do so.

Stephen Fordyce

Chair,

SDFV, Inc. 3 December 2012.