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# *Casting Around the Internet with Recfishwest*

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## **2009, Representing many new challenges and opportunities**

2009 will be the year when WA recreational fishing receives the profile and prominence it deserves. However, with that comes additional responsibility and a need to ensure that recreational fishers act responsibly about the sustainability of the fishing resource. Recreational fisher and community expectation is increasing for better servicing of the recreational fishing sector, which will all cost much more in times of reduced funding.

<http://www.recfishwest.org.au/ChallengesFor2009.htm>

## **Fisheries Minister 'disgusted' by shark slaughter, licences revoked and charges laid**

Photos showing the mutilated remains of sharks dumped illegally across 80 Mile Beach after being caught in nets and having their fins sliced off for the shark fin market were sent to the Dept of Fisheries 10 months ago but decision was made not to release them, fearing a backlash against the local fishing industry. The remains of 120 sharks were found near one camp and remains of 300 sharks and a number of totally protected sawfish near a second camp. Government favours tougher penalties for illegal fishing and black market operations.

<http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/Results.aspx?ItemID=131125>

[www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=77&ContentID=115936](http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=77&ContentID=115936) and [www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/media/index.php?0000&mr=604](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/media/index.php?0000&mr=604)

## **Bring in laws to breath-test boat skippers**

Fishing groups want the State Government to introduce laws to give authorities the power to randomly breath test boat skippers. In 2006, the previous government promised to bring in legislation restricting skippers to the same blood alcohol level as motorists. Currently, police cannot breath-test skippers and people responsible for boats, but can lay charges relating to alcohol consumption and possession. Police have also called for the laws to allow them to breath-test boat skippers to avoid alcohol-related boating incidents.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/12/30/2456535.htm> and

<http://www.news.com.au/perthnow/story/0,21598,24861888-2761,00.html>

## **Dive flags for snorkelers and breath hold fishermen**

The death of a diver at Shark Bay reinforces that breath-hold fishers and snorkelers may be at greater risk of a collision with a vessel than an air-assisted diver because of their need to come to the surface regularly. Following an incident at a FAD off Rottnest in which a spear fishing diver was injured by a boat, Recfishwest wrote to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure requesting amendments to the Regulations. Use of a dive flag is mandatory for air assisted diving but is a personal choice for others.

<http://www.recfishwest.org.au/SubSnorkelerDiveFlag.htm> and

<http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=77&ContentID=115518>

## **Women cast in the pink after cancer**

From messy piles of fly line falling into splashy heaps on the water at their feet along the Point Walter sand spit, suddenly there were tight loops sailing back and forth in the almost hypnotic rhythm of well-executed fly casting as women colourfully dressed in pink Shimano fishing shirts got casting tips from their tutors.

<http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=157&ContentID=116258>

## **Recreational fishers reminded of new fishing rules**

The rule changes to protect highly vulnerable finfish species on the West Coast, previously announced by the Fisheries Minister, came into force on 1 January 2009. These include reduced daily bag limits plus new boat limits for Category 1 fish, and increased minimum size limits for pink snapper south of Lancelin. The new rules are an interim step, designed to protect high-risk species while an independent review is conducted to determine the most appropriate long-term management strategies for the recreational fishery.

<http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/media/index.php?0000&mr=603> and

[http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/pub/WestLimits/westcoast\\_rules\\_2008.pdf](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/pub/WestLimits/westcoast_rules_2008.pdf)

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