

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday June 9, 2014

New equipment to improve rock fishing safety in Esperance

Local fishers today met with the Fisheries Minister Ken Baston and representatives from Recfishwest in Esperance to discuss rock fishing safety initiatives in an effort to prevent further fatalities.

The Minister announced 28 rock anchor points, 10 angel rings and various safety signs are about to be installed along the south coast.

The locations for the safety equipment were selected by South East Coast Recreational Fishing Council and Recfishwest’s local rock fishing safety community champion Graham Cooper.

Mr Cooper said new safety equipment soon to be installed on the south coast was an important step in preventing fatalities, of which there have been at least 22 since 2002 in Western Australia.

“The installation of angel rings and rock bolts in Esperance is the next step in our state-wide rock fishing safety strategy and follows our successful life jacket loan scheme, where free life jackets can be loaned out from local tackle stores” Mr Cooper said.

“Recfishwest is also pleased to see that fishing licence funds have been allocated to the Esperance Volunteer Sea Search and Rescue, as part of Recfishwest’s Small Community Grants scheme. This will allow for the purchase of two pairs of night vision binoculars for use when searching at night for people missing from rocks or capsized vessels.”

Recfishwest Chief Executive Officer Dr Andrew Rowland said fishing licensing money would also assist the Esperance Deep Sea and Angling Club to hold a family fishing and education day to promote fishing education, safety and sustainable fishing.

Recfishwest is reminding fishers to always stay safe. Here are a few safety tips to follow:

- Tell someone where you are going and never fish alone
- Know the area, know the conditions
- Wear the right clothing and a life jacket
- Observe first, fish later
- Plan your escape
- Use appropriate public safety equipment
- Stay alert

Life jackets are available on free loan from the following tackle stores:

- Tateys Bait n Tackle – 39 Norseman Rd, Esperance



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- Southern Sports and Tackle - Shop 16 The Boulevard, Esperance
- Esperance Diving and Fishing - 72 The Esplanade, Esperance
- Dempster Sporting and Tackle - 65 Dempster St, Esperance

Recfishwest is working with Department of Sport and Recreation, Department of Fisheries, Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Parks and Wildlife as well as Surf Lifesaving WA and Royal Lifesaving WA on the safety strategy and advocates for sustainable fishing resources and policies that ensure long term benefits to all recreational fishers.

It values established regional and local partnerships with the Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe and the community.

For more information on Recfishwest visit www.recfishwest.org.au or phone 9246 3366. For more details on new recreational fishing rules visit www.fish.wa.gov.au.

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