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MEDIA RELEASE

Major boost for underwater safety

The Australian Underwater Federation (AUF) is responsible for "Bringing sport, conservation and awareness to the underwater world" and we are delighted with a recent grant from the Queensland Government to increase the safety of spearfishers, skindivers and snorkellors in Queensland waters.

The total grant is for \$27377.00 and comprises three components

- Printing and Distribute Safe Spearfishing DVD \$8200.00
- Review and rewrite training modules. \$18,000
- Print and distribute safety brochures \$1177.00

Luke Randall is Queensland Chair of the AUF Spearfishing Commission and has survived a serious accident of being run-over by a boat while spearfishing at the Gold Coast in 2006. "I am fortunate to have survived a nasty accident and pleased that this grant will improve safety for other spearfishers and snorkellors as this grant will make a huge difference to improving safety training and communication" said Mr Randall.

A national "Spear Safe" committee has been set up to increase safety of spearfishing and freediving and the focus of this committee includes regular meetings, articles, DVD, website, risk assessment, stickers. "I am pleased that the Queensland AUF will work closely with our national, NSW, Vic, SA and WA volunteers to make a positive difference" said Mr Randall.

"I delighted that the Queensland Government has recognised the importance role of the AUF Queensland and our vision and commitment to improve safety for all participants. The review of training modules will focus on spearfishing and snorkelling but will also include other underwater sports played in swimming pools such as Underwater hockey" said Judy Breeze, Executive Director, AUF Queensland.

Simple safety tips for safe diving

1. **Tow a diver (blue and white) flag and float to increase visibility**
2. **Knife to prevent entanglement**
3. **Weight belt with quick release buckle**
4. **Never load speargun out of water and cover speartip**
5. **Tell someone where you are going**
6. **Dive with a buddy**
7. **Do a risk assessment of conditions (weather, visibility, boat traffic, marine life)**
8. **Never hyperventilate and dive within your limits**

The Queensland Government established the Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) in 1994 to provide funding to community groups in Queensland. The GCBF receives money from taxes on Golden Casket lotteries, wagering, keno and gaming machines. It distributes these funds to community projects on a quarterly basis. The GCBF is just one way the Government returns taxes received from gambling activities. In redistributing gambling taxes through its grants program, the GCBF plays an important role in ensuring, on balance, the whole State benefits from gambling in Queensland.

More information: www.auf.com.au

Excellent photos available on request

The Australian Underwater Federation (AUF) is the national governing body for underwater sports such as underwater hockey, SCUBA, snorkel coaching and training, fin swimming, and spearfishing (a small but selective type of recreational fishing). The AUF is a member of Recfish Australia and is committed to working strategically together with all recreational fishers. The mission of the AUF is-

Bring sport, conservation and awareness to the underwater world

Media enquires Judy Breeze (Executive Director) 0418754644; Luke Randall (Qld Chair- Spearfishing): 0411468523

www.auf.com.au