

## **HOW TO CLAIM AN AUSTRALIAN SPEARFISHING RECORD**

An application for an Australian Spearfishing Record will be considered by the Australian Underwater Federation (AUF), for any fish caught in accordance with its rules and regulations, provided it conforms with the following requirements. The AUF Records Officer is the person who will determine matters relating to record claims.

1. The Applicant must be a member of the AUF if resident in Australia, or a member of the relevant national organization if resident in another country.
2. The application must be made on the AUF Spearfishing Record Application Form. These forms may be obtained online from the AUF website or directly from a state or national records officer.
3. The Australian record application fee of \$10.00 must be deposited into the account nominated on the form and proof of this transfer provided: transfer receipt number or screenshot. A separate state record fee may also be required for the corresponding state record.
4. Where possible the record application should be submitted through the relevant state records officer. Most Australian Records will also be relevant State Records.
5. The national record form can be used to apply for state records.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Species of the sub-class Actinopterygii (ray-finned fishes) are eligible with the following exceptions:

1. Order Syngnathiformes - Pipefish and allies, excluding the Families Aulostomidae (Trumpetfishes) and Fistulariidae (Flutemouths)
2. Order Tetraodontiformes - Toadfish, Boxfish, Sunfish and allies, excluding the Families Monacanthidae (Leatherjackets) and Balistidae (Triggerfishes).

### **INELIGIBLE SPECIES**

Fish that have been speared while restricted by nets, traps or lines are not eligible for a National Spearfishing Record. Fish that are protected under State or Federal Government regulations at the location where captured are not eligible for a National Spearfishing Record.

### **TIME LIMIT ON CLAIMS**

A claim for a National Spearfishing Record must be made within twelve months of the date of the capture. Any claim received by the national records officer greater than twelve months from the date of capture will only be considered if the records officer is satisfied that extenuating circumstances exist.

### **INCOMPLETE RECORD CLAIMS**

If a record claim is not complete when submitted it must be accompanied by an explanation of why certain portions are incomplete. A record claim will only be considered if the following conditions are met:

1. All missing data supplied within a reasonable period from time of application considering the prevailing circumstances.
2. Any missing data must be due to circumstances beyond the control of the person making the record claim and acceptance will be determined at the sole discretion of the AUF Records Officer.
3. If the applicant is unable to supply the missing data a statutory declaration is submitted attesting to the validity of the claim and the circumstances relating to the missing data.
4. The applicant must supply the location of the capture, i.e. Rock Cod Shoal.

## **MINIMUM WEIGHT**

To be eligible for a National Spearfishing Record a fish must have a minimum weight of 500 grams. Historical records weighing less than 500grams have been retained for the sake of completeness. Victorian state records use a minimum weight of 400grams.

## **WEIGHTS NEEDED TO EXCEED EXISTING RECORDS**

To be recognised as a new National Spearfishing Record, the following applies;

A fish between 500 grams and 2 kilograms in weight must exceed the existing record by at least 50 grams. A fish exceeding the existing record by less than this amount will be considered an equal record. To be recognised as a new National Spearfishing Record a fish exceeding 2 kilograms in weight must exceed the existing record by at least 100grams. A fish exceeding the existing record by less than this amount will be considered an equal record.

## **WEIGHING OF FISH**

Fish shall be weighed whole ie. gut and gills intact. Mutilated fish (due to predator attack) will be considered on a case by case basis. Fish may be weighed gutted, but no allowance may be added to compensate for this. If a rope or sling is used to keep the mouth closed or suspend the fish for weighing the weight of these must be subtracted from the total weight.

All record fish should be weighed on scales that are **certified** for public trade use by a government department or other accredited organization. As per the applicable government regulations and limitations scales must be regularly **calibrated**, ensuring accuracy (typically annually).

Scales should be **CERTIFIED** and have a current **CALIBRATION** certificate. Scales that do not meet this requirement should be avoided and will only be accepted at the discretion of the records officer. Photos often are the simplest way to record sticker and certificates for the scales used

**Note:** Be aware some scales may have a calibration certificate but are not certified for public trade use.

-Certified scales with no current calibration, must be obtain a calibration certificate as soon as possible.  
-Non-certified scales with a current calibration certificate will be considered but are not guaranteed to be accepted. The make, model and specifications will come under consideration and the records officer may request a new calibration certificate be obtained.

The weigh master shall not be the record applicant. The weight of the record fish must be witnessed by a person who is independent of the record applicant ie. not related.

Use scales of an appropriate size for the fish being weighed. i.e Using 100kg scales for a 2kg fish is **NOT APPROPRIATE**

## **MEASURING OF FISH**

While the spearfishing records are determined by weight, the **length** and **girth** measurements must be taken for all record fish. To measure the length of a fish it should be laid flat and measured horizontally from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail. To measure the girth of a fish, run a tape around the largest circumference of the body. This is the girth measurement.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS OF FISH**

All record applications must be accompanied by clear photographs which permit the identification of the species by the AUF Records Officer. They should show the full length and depth of the fish. As the species identification must be able to be confirmed from the photographs, care should be taken to ensure the best possible photographs.

When photographing the fish it is advisable to lay it on a flat smooth surface with all fins extended. If possible choose a background colour that makes the fish stand out. A ruler, tape measure or standard size object should be placed alongside the fish if possible. Avoid any shadows or objects that might obscure the fish. Photographs should be taken from directly above the fish. Photographs should be taken as soon as possible after capture. Do not gut and gill the fish before photographing. If the fish is rare or difficult to separate from other species it is advisable to take additional close-up photos of the head and any identifying features such as dorsal ray or gill raker counts.

As the identification must be proved to the satisfaction of the AUF Records Officer, photographs or statements by "experts" may not be sufficient, so it is advisable to freeze the fish whole until the claim has been passed.

## **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING RULES WILL DISQUALIFY THE CATCH**

- 1) All fish must be taken by spear by the applicant, without any assistance.
- 2) No breathing aid other than a snorkel is permitted.
- 3) The use of explosives, poisons or electricity is forbidden (but a Shark Shield may be worn.)
- 4) Weapons fired by the discharge of explosives or compressed gases are forbidden.
- 5) The applicant must be immersed in water at the time of spearing the fish.
- 6) The fish must be speared in areas where spearfishing is permitted by law in each state.
- 7) The fish must be a legal capture under any government regulations which apply to the species i.e. Fishery Regulations and State Regulations.
- 8) Fish captured while restricted by nets, traps or lines are ineligible.
- 9) The capture must not be "assisted" by another diver as defined by the *A Section Rules of Competition*- while not exhaustive, some common examples are given below:

### **ACCEPTABLE ACTION BY A SECOND DIVER**

- Handing an unloaded gun to the other diver for a second shot
- Assist with placing the fish into a boat or float following it being subdued by the first diver
- Handing a float to the diver
- Assist with managing sharks

### **LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE RENDERING A RECORD CLAIM INVALID**

- Placing a second shot into the other diver's fish
- Handing a loaded gun to the other attached diver
- Hold or help pull up the other attached diver's floatline/rigline
- Handling the fish, equipment or floatline while the fish has not been subdued in any manner that may be deemed to have aided in the capture

## **THE FOLLOWING MAY RENDER THE CATCH INVALID**

- 1) Failure to correctly identify the fish – identification source, and reference should be clearly indicated.
- 2) Failure to complete the claim form in a satisfactory manner.
- 3) Any misleading or incorrect statement in this declaration.

Applications may take up to 3 months to process from time received.

**The AUF Records Officer must be satisfied with the identification of the fish. At no time is it the responsibility of the National Records Officer to prove the identity of any fish.**

### **STATE RECORDS OFFICERS**

Record applications can alternately be submitted through the appropriate state's records officer to also apply for the relevant state record

#### **QLD**

Mick McDade  
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