

THE NT FTO FISHERY (NTFTOF) MANAGEMENT PLAN DISCUSSION PAPER

This paper is based on the outcomes of industry working group and management committee discussions over the period October 2006 to June 2007. The paper analyses problem areas within the FTO Fishery, with a view to finding mutually acceptable solutions aimed at nullifying and/or circumventing the deleterious effects of some of the more out-dated provisions of the Fisheries Act and Regulations.

The FTO Fishery is currently administered by a combination of the following legislative provisions and processes:

- (i) The Fisheries Regulations (Part 11, Division 3, Regs 192 to 198 and Part 5 Reg 46)
- (ii) The Fisheries Act (Sections 10 to 14)
- (iii) Prerequisites for, and Conditions of, the FTO Licence

Enforcement is effected under the general provisions of Part IV of the Act. Fishing Tour operations are subject to the controls applied to Recreational Fishing – principally Amateur Fishing Regulations 46 to 46BA. At this juncture the industry is not seeking any FTO specific changes to the amateur fishing regulations.

Government interpretations of the above legislative provisions and their various interactions have, in some instances, resulted in administrative policies which from an FTO perspective appear to be unnecessarily bureaucratic and antagonistic to the practicalities of running (and growing) a successful fishing tour business.

Many of the issues discussed below have already been brought to the Government's attention as part of the recent Fisheries Act Review. However, in view of the lengthy time scale associated with legislative change and the imminent introduction of licence fees, the declaration of an FTO Managed Fishery is seen by the Association as the most expeditious way to create a regulatory environment which will maximize business profitability without compromising either resource sustainability or the Government's "duty of care" obligations.

ISSUES AND PROBLEM AREAS

- Applicability of the Nominations Policy
- Utilization of Assistant Fishermen
- Reg 192: One Platform One Licence
- Transferability of FTO Licences
- Introduction of a "Business Licence"
- Introduction of a Levy to enable the NTGFIA to obtain independent legal and professional advice.
- Disbursement of FTO Licence Fee Revenue
- Establishment of an Entry/Career path within the industry for school leavers and prospective investors/stakeholders.
- Implementation of Licensing Protocols detailing:
 - (i) insurance prerequisites

- (ii) entry criteria for entities established under the “Business Name” legislation.
- (iii) boat registration/identification
- (iv) criteria for and availability of the surrogate licensee options (temporary transfers, short term operators etc)
- Introduction of a Code of Conduct and the means whereby to enforce its provisions.
- Digitization of Catch Return Data
- Limitation/Restriction of FTO Licences

APPLICABILITY OF THE NOMINATIONS POLICY (Refer Nominations Policy Circular dated 31/01/2000)

This policy was introduced circa May 2004 following complaints from the Police about the practice of allowing multiple nominees to operate concurrently under a single FTO Licence.

The nominations policy was designed to prevent de facto licence transfer in a licence limited fishery and should not have been applied to a fishery which has unrestricted entry. Deleterious effects of its implementation in the FTO Fishery included a refusal to grant nominations to corporate licensee sub-contractors, and the requirement to produce employees’ tax file numbers as a mandatory prerequisite to nomination approval – a clear breach of the Privacy Act.

Withdrawal of the nominations policy was discussed at an ad hoc Government/Industry meeting in August 2005. It is the Association’s understanding that the policy is no longer applied to the FTO Fishery but its withdrawal has never been formally ratified by the Department.

UTILIZATION OF ASSISTANT FISHERMEN

The Assistant Fisherman is established as an operational entity

- (i) by definition under S.4 of the Act
- (ii) as a *commercial* fishery operative under Regulation 69
- (iii) as an FTO fishery operative (?) under Regs 195, 196.

Despite the fact that, in the barramundi fishery, it is a regular and seemingly legitimate practice for an assistant fisherman to operate unsupervised at distances of up to several kilometers from the principal vessel/mother ship, similar operations by FTO assistants have not been permitted by Fisheries administrators – an anomaly which has never been adequately explained or justified to industry but which presumably is based on the interaction of factors such as public liability/duty of care considerations, S13 supervision/direct control requirements, and the current “one platform one licence” policy (Reg192).

REG 192 – ONE PLATFORM ONE LICENCE

It is the Association's contention that Reg 192 – the requirement to hold a separate licence for each operational platform - is unnecessarily restrictive and antagonistic to modern business practices; and that adequate public liability coverage is available under the provisions of some marine hull insurances, which, in the case of multiple platforms operating under a single licence, will satisfy both duty of care obligations and (with complementary action under the existing head powers of the Act)) the supervisory requirements of S.13.

Strict adherence to a "one platform one licence" policy coupled with the operation of S.14, which precludes multiple concurrent nominations per licence, has adverse commercial ramifications in the FTO fishery where substitution of nominees for corporate licencees is regularly required to cover sickness, holidays etc. After July 1, 2007, the current remedy, which is to obtain additional licences, will no longer be cost free – an additional burden on industry, which is seen as an example of needless and inflexible bureaucracy.

One of the original justifications for the one platform one licence policy was the need to obtain accurate catch and effort data for the fishery. It was thought that the best way to achieve this was to put the onus (in the form of licence conditions) on individual fishermen rather than on company officials or other persons divorced from the actual scene of operations. Current and widespread practices within the industry would suggest that the "one platform one licence" requirement has minimal positive impact on the accuracy of catch and effort data. In other jurisdictions, log book data accuracy has been directly linked to stakeholders' sense of resource stewardship and their perceptions of the long term economic viability of their business operations - both of which would be significantly enhanced in the NT's FTO fishery by the introduction of a limited or restricted licensing regime.

TRANSFERABILITY OF FTO LICENCES

Business profitability is further compromised by the application of Reg 194 (No Transfer of Licence), which denies FTOs the temporary transfer option. Staff absences (sick leave rec leave etc) are currently actioned by using nominees and obtaining extra licences, a process which from July 2007 will add significantly and, from an industry viewpoint, needlessly to operational costs..

It is inequitable that only one of the three main surrogate instruments (assistant fishermen, temporary transferees, nominees) available to facilitate commercial fishing operations is available to FTOs.

The anomaly can be rectified by revoking or otherwise negating Reg 194 such that the temporary transfer option is freely available to FTOs.

INTERPRETRATION OF S14(4)

Alternatively the Department could review its current interpretation of S.14(4), which provides for multiple nominations for licences which have more than one operational

location. Under current policy guidelines the application of this provision is restricted to Aquaculture, Fish Traders, Retailers, and Net Makers. This may well have been the original intent of S14(4) but the actual wording of the clause does not preclude its application to other licence categories – including FTOs.

With the prospect of escalating licence fees, industry has become more vocal and is demanding increased parity with commercials – particularly in the area of availability of surrogate licencees.

INTRODUCTION OF A “BUSINESS LICENCE”.

In 1996, following extensive consultation with industry, the Department introduced a proposal to restructure the FTO Licensing system to make it more responsive to the day to day operational dynamics of the fishery (refer Attachment 1). The model proposed (but never implemented) was a hierarchical system which created a principal licensee who was to be responsible for the actions of two subordinate levels of operators and fishing guides. Amendments to the Act since that time make it difficult to assess the feasibility of the proposal and the reasons for its abandonment.

Industry remains convinced that the hierarchical model is still the most appropriate licensing system for the FTO fishery and, at the Association’s second Special General Meeting, adopted as a major policy objective, the concept of a Multi-Tier Business Licence - a single licence for businesses operating more than one boat or vehicle (refer Attachment 2).

Implicit in the proposed Business Licence is the need to provide adequate third party liability cover for clients. Industry was (and is) fully aware of the fact that the extent of liability cover required by a tiered system might initially require specialist insurance and/or legal advice. To this end the Association recently sought to initiate a discussion with the Department about current and future insurance protocols but has thus far met with little success. The limited dialogue which did eventuate seemed to indicate that existing insurance prerequisites have, in some instances been implemented on the basis of inadequate understanding of the extent and permutations of coverage currently on offer by the various insurance companies.

INTRODUCTION OF AN FTO LEVY

The Seafood Council is funded in part by a levy established under Reg 207. This provides the Council with a guaranteed revenue source which is independent of the Grants System, and which can (subject to normal internal controls) be used for any purpose the Council wishes.

The need to provide such a revenue source for the NTGFIA was highlighted during recent consultations over the Blue Mud Bay Decision, when the Association was advised to seek its own legal advice as to the status of its members and FTOs generally. With a total 2007/8 funding package of only \$40,000, the Association is in no position to seek specialist legal or professional advice.

DISBURSEMENT OF FTO LICENCE REVENUE

In January 2007, the Association wrote to the Department's Chief Executive about (amongst other things) the direct link between FTO licence fees and Association funding. The Association was concerned that the link, which had been previously confirmed at both Ministerial and Department level, seemed in danger of becoming attenuated to such an extent that there would be no reconciliation or follow up procedure to account for shortfalls or surpluses between the amount of the NTGFIA grant and the amount of FTO licence revenue received. The matter was not addressed in the Chief Executive's reply.

Resolution of this issue can be achieved by the implementation of a procedure or the signing of a memorandum of understanding which addresses the discrepancies between grant and revenue and the methods by which such differences will be equitably resolved.

THE INDUSTRY AS A CAREER

The fishery management plan should be structured to provide career opportunities for school leavers and entry paths for prospective stakeholders in the various licence categories. For school leavers this might involve some sort of apprenticeship or VET training associated with on-the-job experience. For prospective stakeholders it could include accreditation levels and perhaps minimal plant and equipment standards (over and above survey requirements) for new licence categories such as eco-tourism.

LICENSING PROTOCOLS

Problems have been caused in the past by the lack of specific information on licensing criteria and prerequisites. The Association believes that the management plan should include protocols which clearly state all such requirements.

The main areas of concern are:

- (i) insurance prerequisites: Applicants need to know the types of insurances which satisfy the Government's duty of care obligations across the full range of licence categories.
- (ii) entry criteria for "Business Name" entities: Applicants need to be forewarned of the ramifications of decisions to register a business name rather than to establish a partnership or a proprietary company..
- (iii) boat/platform identification: Enforcement and the maintenance of industry code-of-conduct standards require the development of a uniform code of platform marking – an industry logo perhaps on which the operators licence number is clearly visible.
- (iv) criteria for, and availability of, the surrogate licensee options: Licensees need to know in advance the extent to which these instruments are available to them and can be used to facilitate their day to day operations.

ENFORCEMENT OF AN INDUSTRY CODE OF CONDUCT

The need to increase professional standards within the industry has long been evident. Previous attempts (in the 1990s) to address the issue by means of a voluntary code of conduct were unsuccessful. To be effective a Code of Conduct needs legislative backing.

One way to do this would be to include the more critical elements of the code of conduct as licence conditions. Alternatively the Act might be amended to provide the Director with more specific powers to assess an applicant's bona fides prior to granting or renewing a licence. If such a power was implemented it would be necessary to amend S11A (Review by Director) to provide for an independent review process.

A copy of the industry's proposed Code of Conduct is attached.

DIGITIZATION OF CATCH RETURNS

With the increasing emphasis on prosecution for non-submission (or non-receipt) of FTO catch returns, the Association believes it is time to reassess the effectiveness and utility of the present system, which is now more than 10 years old, and which is still reliant on post-office mail.

From an FTO perspective perceived deficiencies include:-

- Non-acknowledgement of receipt of mailed returns
- Documents returned (by registered mail) to sender for correction of trivial mistakes/omissions
- Unnecessary repetition/reiteration of an individual's established operational routines
- Relevance of such subjective data as client's fishing experience.
- Large and non-specific location/area grids

The Department has agreed in principle to digitizing return documentation but maintains (unofficially) that it needs to be applied across the entire range of NT fisheries. In the meantime, the Association recommends an immediate on-line trial for the FTO fishery using a digitized version of the existing return form.

LICENCE LIMITATION/RESTRICTION

Licence Limitation was first mooted (by industry) during Government/Industry negotiations in June 2003, and was subsequently the subject of a Department of Justice advising, the exact details of which are (for some unspecified reason) unavailable to the Association. In November 2003 industry was informed that the Fisheries Group was not prepared to support FTO Licence Limitation for the following reasons:-

- that there were, at the time, no resource based concerns which could justify its introduction (ie the resource was not under threat of over exploitation)
- that it would be tantamount to unjustly privatizing access to a natural resource and to restricting fair and equitable trading opportunities, thus exposing the Department to the threat of possible legal action under the dictates of the National Competition Policy (NCP).

Since that time licence limitation has been implemented in the FTO Fisheries in Western Australia and South Australia for reasons other than (specifically identified) resource based concerns and without any drastic NCP ramifications.

In supporting FTO licence limitation (in a submission to the body which assesses compliance with the NCP) Western Australia listed the following justifications:-

- There was a need to constrain fishing effort until scientific data was such that more informed judgements could be made in respect to the level of access and other relevant management measures.
- Entry to the fishery was restricted rather than limited; additional licences would be issued (a) if the proposed tour operation was to be undertaken in an area which was not currently serviced, and/or (b) for a fish stock which was considered to be at low risk of over-exploitation.
- Restricted entry would weed out the “fly by night” operator thus enhancing the professional status of the industry.
- Restricted entry would contribute significantly to business viability, and the growth and provision of service quality. Overcapitalization was less likely to affect business health and aquatic environment; and industry would be more amenable to playing a resource stewardship role.

South Australia gives its rationale for limiting its Charter Boat Fishery licences as:-

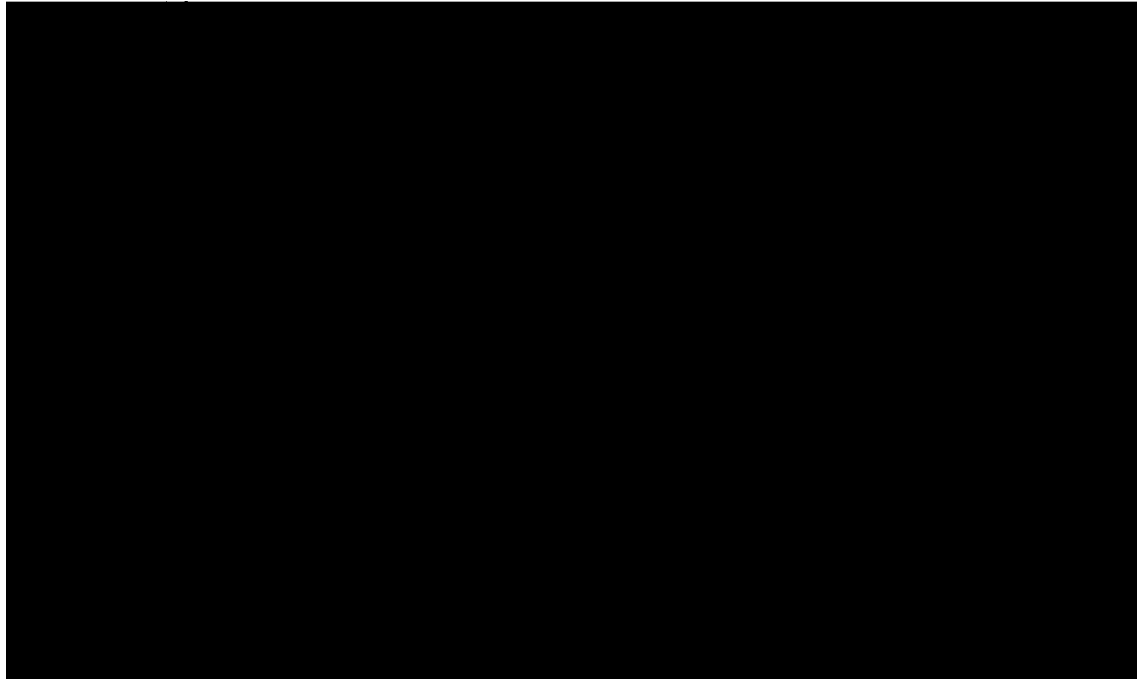
- Ensuring the orderly and economically sustainable development of the industry such that operators have long-term viability and are willing to invest and promote resource stewardship and best practice for the industry.
- Ensuring the reduction of potential conflict with the recreational, indigenous and commercial fishing sectors through localized depletion of fish stocks and over-crowding of fishing locations.
- Ensuring the provision of authentic data for fisheries management planning.
- Ensuring that the full management and research costs incurred in the orderly and sustainable development of the industry are borne by the principal beneficiaries of the limited entry regime.

The Association believes the Territory’s recreational fishery could profit significantly by following the lead set by these two States. If, under a restricted (rather than fully limited) FTO management regime, the free trading of existing stakeholders’ licences was permitted; and if the Government retained as its prerogative the release and sale, at the going market rate, of additional licences, (as and when justifiable under the fishery management criteria), a revenue source would be established, which could then be applied to recreational fishery research and/or recreational fishing infrastructure projects.

L.F.S Browne
Executive Officer
NTGFIA

22 June 2007

ATTACHMENT 1



CHAIRMAN: Dr Rex Pyne Assistant Director Policy & Administration
Department of Primary Industry and
Fisheries (DPIF)

PRESENT: Captain Mike Bowman Nautical Superintendent

Department of Transport and Works
(Marine Branch)

Phillip Hall Recreational Fishing
Officer Fisheries Division,
DPIF

Loretta Orlando Returns Officer Fisheries
Division, DPIF

Steve Wilmore Senior Licensing Officer
Fisheries Division, DPIF

Les Holden


Territory Insurance Office

Ben Wheaton

Motor Vehicle Registry

Please note that comments must be directed through the Chair and it is requested that you state your name and company prior to comments, for the record.

Northern Territory Fishing Tour Operators - Draft Agenda (flo.age)



INTRODUCTION

It has taken less than a decade for the Territory's fishing tourism industry to expand from the one fishing lodge, one or two offshore charter vessels, and a handful of self-employed barramundi fishing guides, to where it is today.

There are now in excess of one hundred and twenty licensed fishing tour operators scattered across the Territory servicing a diverse range of specific recreational angling requirements. The types of operation engaged in range from part-time freelance guiding to a full-time company/business; lodges which provide a range of services including guided fishing tours; inter-and in-tea-state bus tour operators; and to offshore mothership operators servicing smaller charter boats.

What once was essentially a part-time occupation for a few people, has now become the basis for full-time professional business ventures for a number of Territorians, which in turn is contributing significantly to our overall economic growth.

Outlined below is options which address the restructuring of the licensing system and the establishment of minimal requirements for the future issue and renewal of Fishing Tour Operator licences.

What Is the Problem?

Industry members suggested at the meeting on 4 December 1995. that there was a need to:

- i. Restructure the present system for issue of Fishing Tour Operators' licences in order to assist those operators who employ fishing guides, whilst at the same time enhancing the lodgement of accurate and punctual monthly returns.
- ii. Introduce some form of mandatory accreditation as a prerequisite to Fishing Tour Operator licence issue/renewal.

What is the Mechanism for Fixing the Problem?

Any resolution will very likely necessitate amendments being made to the Regulations under the *Fisheries Act 1995*.

It is anticipated that there will be a need to amend the Regulations in the first half of 1996, thus any changes agreed to as a consequence of this discussion paper, could be in place before the commencement of the 1996/97 licensing year.

Consideration may need to be given to a phase-in period during 1996/97.

Proposal to Restructure the Licensing System

it is proposed that at the beginning of the 1996/97 licensing year, which commences 1 July 1996, Fishing Tour Operator licensees would only be issued/re-issued to a registered business or company in the name of the Director(s).

As the licensee, the Director(s) could, if they so wished, then nominate a person to be responsible for the fishing tour operation.

Whoever is directly responsible for the fishing tour operation ie, the Director(s) or nominee, would then be able to employ any number of fishing guides as and when they are required at the Director(s)/nominees discretion.

In assuming this new responsibility, the Director(s)/nominees would be responsible for submitting the appropriate appointment papers within 24 hours to

the Fisheries Division. They would also become responsible for ensuring that the employee-guide's logbooks are completed accurately and returns submitted on time.

This change would have no impact on single operators with a registered business or company.

Fishing Tour Operator Licence Categories and Licence Issue/Renewal Prerequisites

In support of the diverse range of fishing tour services now being provided by the industry in the Northern Territory, it would seem appropriate that new licence categories be created, each with their own specific licence issue/renewal prerequisites, which reflect the type of fishing tour operation being conducted. It is proposed that five Fishing Tour Operator licence categories be established as follows, each with their own specific licence issue/renewal prerequisites.

- i. Vehicle and Boat Operators
 - Accreditation issued or approved by the NT Motor Vehicle Registry •
Appropriate vessel survey certification
 - Appropriate skipper's qualifications

 - Appropriate third party liability insurance
- ii. Boat Only Operators
 - Appropriate vessel survey certification •
Appropriate skipper's qualifications
 - Appropriate third party liability insurance
- iii. Lodges and Accommodations
 - Appropriate vessel survey certification •
Appropriate skipper's qualifications
 - Appropriate third party liability insurance
- iv. Bus Tour Operators
 - Accreditation issued or approved by the NT Motor Vehicle Registry •
Appropriate third party liability insurance
- v. Mothership Operators

- Appropriate vessel survey certification •
- Appropriate skipper's qualifications
- Appropriate third party liability insurance

What About Guides?

i. Guide With Own Boat

- Appropriate vessel survey certification •
- Appropriate skipper's qualifications
- Appropriate third party liability insurance

ii. Guide Usina Company Boat

- Appropriate skipper's qualifications

Licence Application Forms

These would need to be amended to reflect the above proposed changes. Copies of the licence issue/renewal prerequisites would need to be attached to and sighted by the Licensing Officer, prior to licence issue/renewal.

What Benefits will Accrue from the Proposed Changes?

- i. The licensing categories better reflect the type of fishing tour operation being conducted, thus raising their profile and longer-term beneficial prospects.
- ii. Raising overall industry standards and profile.
- iii. Enabling Fishing Tour Operators to set their own standards/protocols for the operation and conduct of guides under their control.
- iv. Fishing Tour Operators can employ guides at short notice.
- v. Better protection for clients.
- vi. Improved accuracy and punctuality of logbook returns.
- vii. Transfer of responsibility from Government to the Fishing Tour Operators.

viii. Fisheries Division

Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries 16
January, 1996

FISHING TOUR OPERATOR

The following is a basic structure for the FTO licence A

COMPANY OR BUSINESS LICENCE

NOMINEE

S11(3A)

S11(3B)

OPERATOR

OPERATOR

S14(1)

Guides

Guides

(NEW REG)

Responsibilities

A.

1. The Guides are responsible to the Operator for the conduct of their tour. 2. The Operator is responsible to the Nominee for the conduct of the tours. 3. The Nominee is responsible to the Licensee for the conduct of all tours.

4. The Licensee of a Company or Business has the overall responsibility for the licence.

5. If there is a break in the structure of the operation of a licence, the responsibility passes on. 6.

eg: if there is no Nominee or Operator, the guides are responsible to the Licensee for the conduct of their tours.

FISHING TOUR OPERATOR The following is a basic structure for the FTO
licence

INDIVIDUAL LICENCEE

S11

OPERATOR OPERATOR

S14(1)

Guides

Guides

(NEW REG)

Responsibilities

1. The Guides are responsible to the Operator for the conduct of their tour.
2. The Operator is responsible to the Licensee for the conduct of the tours.
3. The Licensee (individual) has overall responsibility for the licence.
4. If there is a break in the structure of the operation of a licence, the responsibility passes on.
eg: if there is no Nominee the guides are responsible to the Licensee for the conduct of their tours.

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ATTACHMENT 2

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE NTGFIA GENERAL MEETING
HELD THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2006**

INTRODUCTION OF A (Multi-Tier) “FISHING TOUR OPERATIONS LICENCE”

Graeme outlined the Association’s concept of a single licence for those businesses which currently operate with more than one FTO licence. The basic principle the Association was trying to promote was a devolution of responsibility to industry in those areas currently controlled by Government, which relate

- (i) to the hiring of suitably qualified operational staff and
- (ii) to the requirement to conform to the various marine and insurance legislative prerequisites.

Graeme stressed that a Multi-Tier FTO Licence could not be implement under the current Act. The intention in discussing it at the present meeting was to obtain NTGFIA endorsement for representations to the Minister during the public comment phase of the Fisheries Act revision.

The question of an appropriate licence fee for a “**(Multi-Tier) FISHING TOUR OPERATIONS LICENCE**” was then debated. In an attempt to frame a motion, discussion commenced with the suggestion that the fee for a “**(Multi-Tier) OPERATIONS LICENCE**” should be a multiple of the single operators fee - ie a business which currently has 5 FTO licences should pay five times the single operator’s licence fee. The proposal was opposed by Dan Bergamo (and others) who promoted the concept of a “**Business Licence**” – a licence which incurred the same fee irrespective of how many FTO operations the business was conducting.

After considerable discussion with many divergent and dissenting opinions being aired, the following three option motion was framed and formally proposed by Grant Hatcher. Seconded Greg Trouchet:

Option 1: That a Business Licence be introduced and that all Business Licences incur the same fee irrespective of whether they are single-tier licence/operational businesses or multi-tier licence/operational businesses.

Option 2: That a Business Licence be introduced with fees for a Multi Tier Operation calculated on a sliding scale . With the scale set at, say, 50%, and the fee for a single tier operation set at \$200, a three tier licence would incur a total fee of \$400 (\$200 + \$100 + \$100). Using the same settings a five tier licence would incur a fee of \$600 and so on.

Option 3: That the fee for a Multi Tier Business Licence be a direct multiple of the fee for a single tier licence, ie a five tier licence would cost five times as much as a single tier licence.

Having put the various options comprising the motion to the vote, **Option 2 was adopted** by a majority of 12 votes to 6.

ATTACHMENT 3

NTGFIA
CODE OF CONDUCT
(Draft #1 October 2006)

1 Introduction:

- 1.1 As a prerequisite to membership of the NTGFIA the applicant agrees to be bound by this Code of Conduct
- 1.2 This Code exists to enforce the highest standards of sportfishing ethics, general conduct and safety in the conduct of guided fishing tour operations by NTGFIA members.
- 1.3 This Code is to be read in conjunction with the NTGFIA constitution.

2 Sportfishing Ethics

- 2.1 A member shall practice "catch and release" sportfishing subject always to applicable bag limits.
- 2.2 A member shall encourage where possible and appropriate the use of barbless hooks on lures and flies.
- 2.3 A member shall not engage in false or misleading advertising, promotion or marketing.
- 2.4 A member shall always be proactive in the preservation of marine and terrestrial environments in which he or she operates, including but not limited to:
 - (i) preventing damage to fauna and flora
 - (ii) removing all rubbish from areas of operation to authorised rubbish disposal points
 - (iii) conduct threatening or causing death or damage to wildlife
 - (iv) leaving camp sites clean and tidy
- 2.5 A member shall always have proper respect and consideration for the wishes and requirements of land owners and for the wishes and lifestyle, culture, ceremonies, customs, traditions and sites of significance to aboriginal people, whether conducting operations on aboriginal land or otherwise.
- 2.6 Members shall at all times comply with all laws and other valid legal requirements of Government, Statutory Authorities, corporations, associations: and with the provision of any licence, or permit authorising the conducting of guided fishing tours.
- 2.7 Members are encouraged to participate in all fish tagging scheme or programmes, all statistical and data gathering programmes of relevant fisheries authorities and provide all necessary and required fishing returns.
- 2.8 Members shall not engage in any conduct detrimental to the reputation and integrity of the NTGFIA or of the guided fishing industry in general.
- 2.9 Members shall always conduct their operations to the highest possible standards in maintenance and safety and shall comply with all relevant legislation governing the operations of the guided fishing industry.

3 Consumer Relations

- 3.1 Members shall, where possible, inform their customers of pertinent facts concerning tours, transportation, accommodation and other services offered in the course of their business operations..
- 3.2 Members shall be factual and accurate when called upon to provide information to the customer
- 3.3 Members shall inform their employees of any alteration to services,

- 3.4 Members will endeavour to eliminate any practices which could be damaging to the consumer or to the dignity and integrity of the guided fishing industry.
- 3.5 Members shall avoid misleading and doubtful superlatives in their advertising.
- 3.6 Members should advise customers about cancellation policies and service charges prior to the receipt of any initial booking fee.

4 Relations with Other Service Providers

- 4.1 Members shall follow the best traditions of salesmanship and fair dealings by according fair, objective and impartial representation of other service providers whom they may from time to time represent
- 4.2 Members should share with other members, those aspects of their experience and study which will improve the professionalism, competence and service of all participants in the guided fishing industry.
- 4.4 Members should attempt to conduct their businesses such as to preclude conflict with fellow members and FTOs generally
- 4.5 If an opinion is sought about a competitor, members shall render it in a professional and impartial manner.
- 4.8 Members should encourage and promote membership of the Association.
- 4.9 Where members desire to sub-contract or refer work to other fishing tour operators, preference should be given to other members, subject to competence and availability.