

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



Wednesday, 2 February 2022

LIFEJACKET TRIAL TO MAKE ROCK FISHING SAFER FOR KEEN ANGLERS

The Andrews Labor Government is making it safer for anglers to cast a line with lifejackets to become a requirement for recreational rock fishing at high-risk locations from 1 March 2022.

The requirement is part of a two-year trial and will be rolled out at 10 locations across the state, following consultation by the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) with members of the public, angling clubs, FutureFish and VRFish.

An increasingly popular form of fishing, rock fishing has also proven to be dangerous following the tragic deaths of several rock fishers swept off rock shelves and reefs in recent years.

Already proven to save lives during emergencies, the trial aims to reduce the chance of drowning with a properly fitted and well-maintained lifejacket, should a rock fisher end up in the water.

As a result of the consultation process, the VFA has established Victoria's most dangerous rock fishing spots, with the trial to be enforced at Cape Bridgewater (near the blowholes car park), Artillery Rocks (west of Lorne), Sheoak Falls (south of Lorne), Sorrento Back Beach rocks, Rye back beach number 16, Cape Schanck lighthouse rocks, Bushrangers Bay rocks (east of Cape Schanck), Pyramid Rocks (Phillip Island), San Remo (southern end of Potters Hill Road) and Punchbowl Rocks (near San Remo).

Lifejackets will need to comply with Australian Standards and be a Type 3 or greater for adults. Children under 12 must wear a lifejacket at the 10 sites even if they are not fishing, and they must be a Type 1 or greater model.

The trial will also see the VFA working with key recreational fishing groups and partner agencies on an improved safety and education program.

For more information, including maps outlining the 10 high-risk locations and details of compliant lifejackets, visit vfa.vic.gov.au/rockfishing.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne

"Rock fishing is an increasingly popular pastime for recreational anglers. However, we know that it can also be deadly if precautions to stay safe are not taken."

"Life jackets save lives, and for rock fishers, they can drastically reduce the risk of drowning should the worst happen."

"We want everyone to get home safely at the end of the day, which is why we are rolling out this trial at 10 high-risk locations across Victoria."