

SDFSFA Bulletin February 2008

This bulletin is provided as a service to members of the
SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA
Working to develop the sport of Scuba diving in SA
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We are the peak body in South Australia, representing all recreational scuba divers.
We act as a voice for all divers and other associations on all diving related matters.

We are publishing this electronic bulletin as a separate publication to our normal monthly SDF News Sheet. Future issues of this "SDFSFA Bulletin" will include lengthy articles about matters of interest to recreational divers. We welcome contributions from our readers.

We trust that everyone enjoyed the Australia Day holiday long weekend. The next Public Holidays are in March. The Adelaide Cup public holiday is being held on Monday 10th March. Easter is being held from Friday 21st to Monday 24th March. These two holiday long weekends ensure more time for diving.

If you don't have the time to read through everything in this bulletin, take advantage of the following table of contents (which contains **most** of the headings). Click on any item of interest to proceed straight to that section.

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PSEUDOMONAS IN EWENS PONDS

As reported in our February news sheet, DEH are finally concerned and have been testing the water quality at Ewens Ponds. It seems that a pathogen has contaminated the water and is causing skin lesions on anyone who swims there. Wetsuits may offer reasonable protection and drysuits would be even better. It may soon be the case that the ponds will be closed to divers for a while. According to the web page found at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/02/05/2154874.htm> , "The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has taken water samples from Ewens Ponds to investigate reports of an algae outbreak. Local diver Craig Smith reported developing sore skin and eyes after diving at Ewens, in south-east South Australia, on Sunday (3/2). While he said there was no obvious signs of algae, previously blue-green algae has presented in the area during summer. District ranger Ross Anderson* says it is unclear what is causing the symptoms. "Certainly we did have some problems with algae two summers ago, we got that checked and got advice from the Department

of Health to say it's okay," he said. "I'm not an expert on bugs and things that live in water and cause people to be itchy. I suppose it could be an algae, I'm just not sure."

* Ross Anderson featured in the 7th February issue of the "The Border Watch" newspaper. He said that there may be *Pseudomonas* in Ewens Ponds. Regular visitor to the ponds, Neville Skinner told us about the problem at our February General Meeting, he himself having been affected by the 'algae'. "*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is its full name," he said. "Of course there is *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* in Ewens Ponds - it lives all around us in water and soil, and it is part of plant life!!" According to the web page found at <http://www.pseudomonas.com/>, "*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is a Gram-negative bacterium that is noted for its environmental versatility, ability to cause disease in particular susceptible individuals, and its resistance to antibiotics. The most serious complication of cystic fibrosis is respiratory tract infection by the ubiquitous bacterium *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Cancer and burn patients also commonly suffer serious infections by this organism, as do certain other individuals with immune systems deficiencies. Unlike many environmental bacteria, *P. aeruginosa* has a remarkable capacity to cause disease in susceptible hosts. It has the ability to adapt to and thrive in many ecological niches, from water and soil to plant and animal tissues. The bacterium is capable of utilizing a wide range of organic compounds as food sources, thus giving it an exceptional ability to colonize ecological niches where nutrients are limited. *P. aeruginosa* can produce a number of toxic proteins which not only cause extensive tissue damage, but also interfere with the human immune system's defense mechanisms. These proteins range from potent toxins that enter and kill host cells at or near the site of colonization to degradative enzymes that permanently disrupt the cell membranes and connective tissues in various organs. This bacterium is also noted for its resistance to many antibiotics. *P. aeruginosa* is widely studied by scientists who are interested in not only its ability to cause disease and resist antibiotics, but also its metabolic capability and environmental versatility. Analysis of its genome sequence has identified genes involved in locomotion, attachment, transport and utilization of nutrients, antibiotic efflux, and systems involved in sensing and responding to environmental changes. A major interest of pharmaceutical companies, such as Chiron*, is to learn more about the genes of *P. aeruginosa* and other disease-causing bacteria in order to better understand the physiology of these organisms. These insights will be used to develop new antibacterial drugs to successfully treat infections by bacteria like *P. aeruginosa* that are resistant to many of today's antibiotics." Visit <http://www.textbookofbacteriology.net/pseudomonas.html> for more details.

SA FISH AND SHARK 'E-BOOK'

The first chapters of Janine Baker's SA fish and shark 'e-book' (Status of Marine Species at Risk in South Australia*) can now be viewed on the Reef Watch web site. The URL of the home page for the 'e-book' is <http://www.reefwatch.asn.au/pages/bin/view/Publications/SamsccHome>. You can save the chapters as pdf files, which should be up to date, regardless of when you download them, because the programming allows for changes to be made to the documents when new information comes to light. This e-book will assist marine fish education, conservation and threat management in SA, and possibly other parts of southern Australia. The list for the chapters on Bony Fishes that have so far been uploaded onto the web is at <http://www.reefwatch.asn.au/pages/bin/view/Publications/SamsccBonyFamilies>, with hot links to the individual chapters. Clicking on the underlined chapter links in dark grey brings you to the family summary, plus the list of synopses, and you can click on each synopsis. There should be at least 30 chapters on-line, which link to about 70 species synopses. The chapter links in green

font are being updated with data / information to 2006-07 where possible, plus other minor updates, and these chapters will be on-line at various times throughout February. The bibliography (> 3,500 refs) will be downloadable as a separate document, and kept up to date. Although the links are not yet available globally through a Google search, etc., they soon will be. Bony fish chapters with many species (e.g. leatherjackets, morwongs, etc..), or lots of fisheries data (whittings, snapper, mulloway), will be completed later, as will the shark, ray and skate chapters. Janine's aim is to keep these synopses updated with as much recent information as possible over the next few years (within reasonable limits of voluntary effort).

* (Full citation: "Baker, J.L. (2008) Status of Marine Species at Risk in South Australia: Technical Report - Bony and Cartilaginous Fish. Report for the South Australian Working Group for Marine Species of Conservation Concern. J. Baker (consultant); Science and Conservation Division, and Coast and Marine Conservation branches of S.A. Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH); Marine and Coastal Community Network of S.A. (MCCN), and Threatened Species Network (TSN). Web version published by Reef Watch, South Australia.")

HARLEQUIN FISH & BLUE GROPER UPDATE

As reported in our February news sheet, the January '08 issue of "Go Fishing" magazine features a Harlequin Fish on the front cover. The cover picture, which is in relation to an article on charter fishing at Wedge Island, can be seen at http://www.isubscribe.com.au/title_info.cfm?prodID=19702 . The Wedge Island article shows photos of captured Harlequin Fish, Blue Groper, King George Whiting, Southern Blue Morwong and many other fish species. Janine Baker points out that Harlequin Fish are of conservation concern in SA, and part of Reef Watch's 'In Peril' list. Janine goes on to say that "these (Wedge Island) fishing charters are taking the largest individuals of King George Whiting (the very important spawning stock); also School Shark (recognised at all levels as a threatened species, and definitely of conservation concern in SA); Southern Blue Morwong (also a large, site-associated, relatively long lived reef fish, of conservation concern), and various other reef-associated species with vulnerable population characteristics." She says that "It is painful to see charter fishing continue to take depleted and threatened species in SA (including the regular take of very large blue groper (more than the legal 1m maximum size limit) at numerous offshore islands in SA, including the Gambier Islands, and also the Investigator Group islands in eastern GAB, and various offshore islands at the bottom of Eyre Peninsula. Given the size, physiology and depths of the large blue groper, one would have to question the sense of catch and release." Of Harlequin Fish, she adds, "I am aware of the Charter Boat Regulations and management plan produced in 2004-5, but Harlequin Fish were not included. When I asked PIRSA about this a few years ago, I was told, "we didn't think about it". I'm not trying to point a finger at any organisation, but there's no doubt in my mind that Harlequin Fish are far less common in SA than in WA (the main part of the range), and they have all the population characteristics of other vulnerable serranids (same life history and behaviour as the tropical serranids that are depleted on a global scale), and fishing should be prohibited." Of Blue Groper, she adds, "As for Blue Groper, we know enough about them to know that, after years of lobbying, what continues to happen in both the commercial and recreational fishing sectors is shameful." Of MPA's, she says that, "Some researchers, myself included, have long advocated the Gambier Islands group and the Investigator Group as MPAs. What is so frustrating is the very slow pace of declarations around the State, and the continuing years of ongoing research investigations (N.B. South Australia signed on the NRSMPA in 1992, and committed to develop

a representative system of MPAs in each bioregion, yet information is still being gathered to justify MPAs in SA and where they should be placed, after two major reports on it and nearly 20 years of studies).”

Janine also says “This is the (web page for the) current brochure of size, bag and boat limits for charters:

http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/13104/size_bag_boat_limits_charter_fishery.pdf.” According to the brochure on that web page, “Taking of blue groper is prohibited in gulf waters, Investigator Strait and Backstairs Passage. (In) all other waters, min. (size) 60cm, max. (size) 100cm. Individual passenger catch limit, up to 3 passengers (*# fish per person per day*) = 2. Charter boat limit, up to 6 passengers (*# fish per boat per day*) = 6. Individual passenger catch limit, more than 6 passengers (*# fish per person per day*) = 1. (The bag limit for Western Blue Groper in WA is just 1.)

Rory McEwen, Minister for Agriculture, Food & Fisheries, tells us that the recent implementation of the Fisheries Management Act 2007 has created an opportunity for the State Government to review the regulations associated with the capture and retention of a number of key recreational species, including Western Blue Groper and Harlequin Fish. A review of recreational fishery management arrangements will commence in the first quarter of 2008. Our recommendations regarding the management of these two species will be considered by the Director of Fisheries in that review. The Minister suggests that a recent SARDI Aquatic Sciences report (title unknown), which shows that 63 Western Blue Groper were ‘caught & retained’ by passengers on recreational charter boats between September 2005 and June 2007, “indicates that the species is not being targeted by this sector”. It can be assumed that those that were retained were of legal size (60-100cm). More (than 63) fish may have been caught but not all of them would have been ‘retained’. Any fish caught outside of the legal size (60-100cm) would not be retained. Most (if not all) of those caught and released may have died as a result of their capture. It is assumed that “between September 2005 and June 2007” includes those two months (September & June). That being the case, at least 63 fish were caught (& retained), meaning that almost three legal-size fish were being killed every month. According to the web page found at http://www.denr.sa.gov.au/coasts/marineparks/pdfs/mpa_report/part_3.pdf, “There are charter boat fishing trips to Nuyts Archipelago and St Francis Isles and reefs of the Far West Coast, which reportedly attract local, national and international visitors. Regional tourism promotion materials and fish charter operators state that charter boats to the Far West Coast offshore locations catch reef fish (Snapper, Blue Morwong, sweep, red fish, Blue Groper, Harlequin Fish).” Then there is commercial fishing, recreational fishing and spearfishing to consider. At <http://www.environment.gov.au/media/dept-mr/cc02dec402.html>, Valerie Taylor says that “In South Australia, the Western Blue Groper is often caught as bycatch in finfish and shark fisheries. Western Blue Gropers are very curious about divers and boats making them easy prey for many anglers and spearfishers. Unfortunately this ‘personality’ trait is leading to their demise. We encourage all anglers to do what they can to avoid catching Western Blue Gropers, and to help ensure the continued survival of this species in southern Australian waters. The related species Eastern Blue Groper, found in Victoria, NSW and Queensland, is a protected species in New South Wales.”

According to “FRDC - Post-Release Survival Reef Species” found at http://www.escapewithet.com/Archives/series9/FRDC_release.asp, “When deep swimming reef fish are yanked up to the boat quickly, they often suffer barotrauma – it’s a bit like ‘the bends’. Symptoms of barotrauma include a gas expanding in the swim bladder and bulging eyes.

Queensland fisheries consultant, Bill Sawynok, is one of the country's leading experts when it comes to studying how well fish survive after they've been released." I told Bill that we are trying to protect Western Blue Groper and Harlequin Fish from fishers and that we suspect that they may suffer from barotrauma and that their survival rates would be very low. Bill told me that he has no first hand knowledge of these two species and does not have any data on them. He suspects, however, that like other related species, they probably suffer badly from barotrauma even at very shallow depths (5-10m) and that their survival rates from deeper water would be very low.

SEARCH FOR CASUARINA'S LOST ANCHOR

During the Nicolas Baudin expedition's exploration of the South Australian coastline in 1803, an anchor was lost by the *Casuarina*, which was under the command of Louis de Freycinet.

Archaeologists from the Department for Environment and Heritage have made two attempts (2003 & 2007) to locate the missing anchor. Below is a report from "Fuman 2007", the Flinders University Maritime Archaeology Newsletter: -

"In 1803, a French expedition was sent to explore the southern and western coasts of Kangaroo Island, which had not been recorded by the previous expedition of 1802. At Kangaroo Island, Captain Nicolas Baudin rendezvoused with the schooner *Casuarina* and decided to again separate the fleet. He dispatched *Casuarina's* crew to explore and map the coastlines of St. Vincent's Gulf, Spencer Gulf, and what would later become Port Lincoln. On board was expedition chief geographer Charles-Pierre Boullanger who was to be the first to officially map this unexplored section of coastline. According to the journals of both *Casuarina's* Captain Louis de Freycinet and Boullanger, on January 18th 1803, *Casuarina* sailed past Sturt Bay and was caught in a strong inbound tide. At 11:15, Freycinet ordered the starboard anchor to be dropped to prevent being blown onshore. Once the tide had subsided, the crew began to retrieve the anchor, but the line severed and the anchor was lost in 10 fathoms of water. Despite soundings revealing a sandy bottom, the captain assumed it had been a rock that caused the separation and it was never recovered. In 2003, archaeologists and volunteers from the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) investigated a section of Sturt Bay to determine whether historical research could be validated using local knowledge and information, water depth, seabed type and historically mentioned landmarks. Using this methodology it was determined that though it was possible, the sheer size of the bay meant that a magnetometer survey was necessary. This led to a second exploration attempt in October 2007, which was coordinated by DEH. Project staff included Heritage Branch staff members Rick James, Sarah Laurence and Jason Raupp; DEH Coast and Marine staff member Guy Williams; Geophysicist Ian Moffat; and MMA student Kenny Keeping. A range of research methods were utilized including archival research, hydrographic survey, marine remote sensing and diver-based testing. Initially the landforms spotted by *Casuarina* were located as a way to determine the possible course of the vessel and what would be the speculated search area. Once the perimeter of the area had been defined, a magnetometer survey was conducted and resulted in several anomalies. Seven of these were chosen as targets for diving inspections. All targets were tested using circle searches and an underwater metal detector. On the seventh target and last day of the project a strong response came from the metal detector which indicated a buried ferrous metallic object covering an area of approximately two meters in diameter. A GPS point of the location was recorded for future investigations. Future research into anomaly number seven might determine the target's true identity, and help distinguish the lost anchor from that of another metallic object.

Investigators should be prepared to conduct a systematic subsurface survey of this target. Although the anchor remains elusive, through well-recorded systematic surveys the search area is continually refined which makes its discovery a greater possibility.”

Kenny Keeping, MMA Student

Source:

http://ehlt.flinders.edu.au/archaeology/department/publications/FUMAN/FUMAN_2007.pdf

PORT PHILLIP BAY CHANNEL-DEEPENING PROJECT UPDATE DIVE SHOP OWNER TO SUE PORT OF MELBOURNE CORPORATION

The Secretary of the Dive Industry of Victoria Association, Peter Kafrouni (of Dive and Dive at Braeside), says that the two-year Port Phillip Bay channel-deepening project would decimate the local diving industry. He said turbidity would slash underwater visibility, normally between 20 and 22 metres, to zero. He also expects dredging to destroy or drive away diver drawcards such as rock walls, sponge beds and marine life, including dolphins, and for no-dive zones to also reduce business. With dredging due to begin this week (1/2/08), Peter has found business is already starting to decline. “Divers feel nothing worthwhile will stay in the bay and are already planning dives elsewhere,” he said. Peter is planning legal action against the Port of Melbourne Corporation because the channel-deepening project will destroy his 15-year-old business. A Federal Court decision dismissing the anti-dredging group Blue Wedges' application to halt the project was made on 15th January. Blue Wedges is planning to appeal the decision on the grounds that it has new evidence that the Federal Government's approval of the \$1b project is unlawful. The PoMC's Supplementary Environmental Effects Statement into the project stated commercial diving would be disrupted by turbidity and no-dive zones around dredging equipment.

Source: http://www.mordiallocchelsealeader.com.au/article/2008/01/28/28427_mcv_news.html

DREDGER ENTERS BAY AMIDST PROTESTS

“The *Queen of the Netherlands* giant dredging ship has passed through the heads of Port Phillip Bay to begin work on the controversial channel deepening project. The *Queen of the Netherlands* entered the bay (on 29th January) about 7.55am (AEDT) and was expected to dock at about 10.30am. The huge dredging ship left Singapore on January 18 on its journey to Melbourne. Anti-dredging group, the Blue Wedges Coalition, greeted the ship in a flotilla on the bay, making their presence felt as they continue to fight the project. The Blue Wedges has launched a last-ditch bid in the Federal Court to overturn commonwealth approval for the project. Dutch company, Royal Boksalis Westminster, said it will earn \$500 million from the project to deepen Melbourne's shipping channels, which starts on Friday, Fairfax newspapers reported today. It will involve the removal of 23 million cubic metres of sand, rock and toxic sediment from the bay to enable larger, super container ships to dock. The Brumby Government and the Port of Melbourne Corporation refused to say how much Royal Boksalis Westminster would be paid for its part, citing commercial-in-confidence restrictions. The PoMC and the Victorian Government claim the project will bring \$2 billion in economic spin-offs. Blue Wedges Coalition member John Lawler said there were 25 protest boats, all carrying passengers to capacity. “It was not an aggressive protest, it was a peaceful protest and there was strong police presence, which was good, making sure everything went smoothly,” Mr Lawler, who is skipper of the boat Miles Ahead, said. Mr Lawler said Dive Victoria had three chartered boats and there were several smaller, private boats that joined the flotilla as part of the protest.”

Source: <http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,23125310-5007060,00.html>

COURT CHALLENGE RE BAY DREDGING

A court challenge to the Federal Government's approval of channel deepening in Melbourne's Port Phillip Bay is set to go ahead next month, a delay the proponents say will cost them \$5 million. The Port of Melbourne Corporation has already commissioned ships and equipment for the dredging, at a cost of \$250,000 a day. Corporation chief executive Stephen Bradford says dredging was expected to start on Friday, but the Commonwealth is yet to approve an environmental management plan for the billion dollar project. "I think it's unlikely we'll start on Friday but like most Victorians we await the Federal Minister's decision on the environmental management plan and when we receive that we will consider our next steps," he said. Dredging opponent Jenny Wharfe says the delay will strengthen opposition to the project. "I think it has given everybody time to think again about this," she said. The court hearing will begin on February 20."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/01/30/2150279.htm?section=justin>

The January 2008 issue of the M&CCN's VIC E-News included the following items (lots of them) regarding the Port Phillip Bay channel-deepening project: -

“ACF CALLS FOR REFORM OF AUSTRALIA’S ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT

The Federal Court’s rejection of community legal action against the Port Phillip Bay channel deepening project highlights the failure of Australia’s lawmakers to protect the nation’s ocean life, said the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF). ACF’s Marine Campaign Coordinator, Chris Smyth says a healthy Port Phillip Bay is essential to the social and economic well-being of Victorians. “State and federal environment and planning laws have proven they won’t save the bay from the enormous environmental impacts of channel deepening. Current environment laws are weak and ineffective and, as a result, the Federal Court’s options are also limited...There is an urgent need to reform Australia’s Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, and for governments to develop new national oceans legislation that will protect Australia’s threatened ocean life,” said Mr Smyth.

DREDGERS MUST GIVE ENVIRONMENTALISTS 24HRS NOTICE

The Federal Court has ruled that those behind the dredging of Melbourne's Port Phillip must give the environmental group Blue Wedges 24 hours notice before it begins. Blue Wedges is challenging Environment Minister Peter Garrett's decision to approve the project and a further court hearing will be held in three weeks. The billion-dollar channel deepening project was due to start on 1st February. But Port of Melbourne Corporation chief executive Stephen Bradford says the Commonwealth is yet to approve an environmental management plan for the billion dollar project. "I think it's unlikely we'll start on Friday but like most Victorians we await the Federal Minister's decision on the environmental management plan and when we receive that we will consider our next steps," he said.

GARRETT TO FACE FRESH DREDGE CASE

Anti-dredging group Blue Wedges Coalition will take Environment Minister Peter Garrett back to court in a last-ditch bid to stop channel deepening in Port Phillip Bay, arguing it has new evidence his approval of the \$1 billion project was unlawful. The challenge will be based on legal advice that Mr Garrett failed to address several key issues when spelling out his justification for allowing the channel project. Mr Garrett signed off on the project on December 20, but did not release his legal reasoning until Tuesday. In the meantime, the Federal Court dismissed a Blue Wedges application arguing he had erred in his approval. In the new

application, Blue Wedges' lawyer Michael Morehead will address five alleged holes in Mr Garrett's reasons, including that he failed to properly consider:

- The impact on social issues such as recreational fishing and swimming.
- The impact on threatened and migratory species and internationally recognised wetlands.
- The Port of Melbourne's failure to stop work during trial dredging as required when rocks at the Heads fell below 20 metres onto coral beds.

SCIENTISTS QUERY ECO-SAFETY OF CHANNEL DEEPENING

Senior scientists have questioned the environmental safety of the \$1 billion channel deepening project, arguing that the testing of the impact of dredging toxic sediment from the mouth of the Yarra River has been inadequate. Despite the project being endorsed by the CSIRO, the senior scientists claim the Port of Melbourne Corporation has failed to answer key questions about the potential effects of shifting sediment containing 150 years of heavy metal and pesticide pollution to a disposal zone in the middle of Port Phillip Bay. Leading environmental and ecological scientists have repeated concerns raised in written submissions to last year's inquiry into the environmental impact of channel deepening, saying they have not been addressed with less than two weeks before dredging is due to start.

DREDGE SHIP UNLOADS IN BAY

The first shipment of major equipment to be used in the channel deepening is being offloaded at the bay. The four transport barges arrived in the bay on board the Black Marlin ship yesterday. The transport ship was partially submerged to release the barges, which will have to go through quarantine. The Chief Executive of the Port of Melbourne Corporation Stephen Bradford says they'll be an important part of the project. "The barges carry material to and from the dredges and particularly assist the work in the Yarra where we have to place protective covering over the pipelines underneath the surface of the current surface of the Yarra," Chief Executive of the Port of Melbourne Corporation Stephen Bradford said.

DREDGE TO RAISE BAY LEVEL: GARRETT

Federal environment minister Peter Garrett has admitted that the \$1 billion Port Phillip Bay channel deepening project that he approved last month will cause a permanent rise in water levels.

CHANNEL DEEPENING DELAY TO AFFECT BAY BEACHES

Beaches in Port Phillip Bay will be affected by the \$1 billion plan to deepen Melbourne's shipping channels until at least the summer of 2010, under a revised completion date for the controversial project. The Port of Melbourne Corporation has stretched its original completion date for the project from mid-2009 to December 31 next year. With the project already delayed a month on the Port of Melbourne Corporation's most recent timetable, there is little chance the project will be completed before 2010."

According to The Advertiser of 9th February, the *Queen of the Netherlands* commenced dredging operations in Port Phillip Bay on 8th February. Protestors were present in all manner of vessels. Up to 1 million cubic metres can be dredged to a maximum depth of 15.8m. The port is required to keep the public informed of its progress. Restricted dredging was proceeding under a Federal Court order. Dredging was planned to start in the northern end of Port Phillip Bay first, and building the containment dumping area for toxic silt, but the dredging had to start at the southern end of the bay instead. The matter will be heard by the Federal Court on 20th February, with protest group Blue Wedges attempting to have federal approval of the project overturned. The SDFV has reminded divers not to go too near the *Queen of the Netherlands* dredge in Port Phillip Bay. They (the SDFV) have directed their members to the following link: -

<http://www.marinesafety.vic.gov.au/Web1/msvhome.nsf/AllDocs/4FD015227E714380CA2572DC0001D437?OpenDocument> . They also advise us that daily activity updates outlining locations of dredge activities are now available at www.channelproject.com. They even sent us the following: -

“Victoria Government Gazette, No. S 32 Thursday 7 February 2008, Marine Act 1988

SECTION 15 NOTICE

. . . from 12.01 am on 8 February 2008 until 12.01 am on 21 February 2008 within State waters, the waters of the Port of Port Phillip and the Port of Melbourne:

1. bathing, diving and the operation (including anchoring, mooring or allowing a vessel or craft to lie) of vessels and craft, are prohibited within 200 metres of the Queen of the Netherlands whilst that vessel is underway (excluding vessels associated with the safe operation of the Queen of the Netherlands and vessels approved by the Port of Melbourne Harbour Master);
2. bathing, diving and the operation (including anchoring, mooring or allowing a vessel or craft to lie) of vessels and craft, are prohibited within 50 metres of the Queen of the Netherlands whilst that vessel is anchored, moored or berthed (excluding vessels associated with the safe operation of the Queen of the Netherlands and vessels approved by the Port of Melbourne Harbour Master).

Reference No. 307/2008, Dated 7 February 2008, BRIAN RICHES, Director of Marine Safety”

On 13th February, the Blue Wedges (through the SDFV) sent us the following details: -

“OPPOSITION GROWS WITH THE SIZE OF PLUME - JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Rally: Sunday 17th February 2008, 1 pm ROSEBUD Foreshore, South of Rosebud Pier

Press conference at 12.30 pm with speakers.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO STOP THE DREDGE!

With the *Queen of the Netherlands* dredging between Rosebud and Blairgowrie, the effects are already being seen and felt. Local residents and businesses are monitoring visibility, one of the immediate impacts of dredging and diminishing water quality. Swimmers are reporting reduced visibility, as are fishermen and recreational scallop divers, along with reduced catch. “The plume of discontent from businesses and residents is growing every day the dredge is in our neighbourhood and the energy to stop this project is growing fast. This rally has been organised by a number of groups who all share a desire to stop this project and Save the Bay from the actions of the Port of Melbourne Corporation and their dredging partner Royal Boskalis. We are expecting hundreds of people to come along to voice their opposition to the Channel Deepening Project”, says Jenny Warfe, Blue Wedges spokesperson. Speakers will include Judy Muir from Polperro Dolphin Swims, one of many businesses that will be affected if this project continues, and Marc Godfrey, one of the protestors on the water the morning dredging began. Marc will give the real account of what happened on the water. Carey Priest, spokesperson for Operation Quarantine, the lead group for water based actions will also speak. Gwen Bates, mother of Kay Stanley who died tragically in a Tyabb level crossing accident on January 28th will also deliver her powerful message to the Brumby and Rudd governments.”

THE RAISING OF A JUNKERS PLANE NEAR THE ISLAND OF LEROS

The following information from Ross Anderson from the Department of Maritime Archaeology at the Western Australian Museum about the 2006 raising of a Junkers plane found underwater near the island of Leros came to us via the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA). Ross said that, “The whole plane (German Junkers troop transport/ carrier ditched during Battle of Leros 1943) was recovered from 41m almost completely intact with a crew

member's remains inside the aircraft fuselage.” He found the information on the Hellenic Air Force website at <http://www.haf.gr/en/history/museum/junkers.asp>: -

“JUNKERS-52/3m underwater recovery near Leros island

On October 3rd, 2006, members of the Hellenic Air Force (HAF) Underwater Operations Team (KOSYTHE) helped recover a historic Ju(nkers)-52/3m carrier aircraft from the sea near the island of Leros. The aircraft had been shot down on November 13th 1943, during the second day of operations of the Battle of Leros. The previous day 400 German paratroopers had landed on the island, during a dangerous operation in a very narrow area between the Bays of Alinta and Gourná. Despite suffering extended losses, the Germans managed to create a bridgehead, in order to conquest the island’s middle part, essentially cutting it in two. The HAF decided in favour of the aircraft’s recovery, due to its high value as a museum item. After on site research and videotaping of the aircraft, all the necessary data was collected by the HAF Public Relations Directorate in order to plan every detail of the operation. Valuable assistants in this task were: -

1. The HAF Air Support Command, whose underwater operations team (KOSYTHE) was responsible for the aircraft recovery
2. The HAF Air Training Command and the HAF Museum, along with the State Aircraft Factory, who helped with the restoration and transportation of the aircraft to the HAF Museum
3. The Ministry of Merchant Marine and the Hellenic Coast Guard, who were patrolling the area of operations
4. The Hellenic Navy, which offered its Maintenance Base and all its available facilities for the dismantling and initial stages of maintenance of the aircraft

The Municipality of Leros and all the local authorities.

The HAF Air Support Command and KOSYTHE produced an elaborate underwater operation plan, taking into account all the elements that could affect it, namely the depth of 41m, the necessary decompressions, the aircraft dimensions and the duration of the whole process. All the safety precautions were taken, according to the US NAVY DIVING MANUAL, while a doctor was always present during the whole operation. Additionally, the HAF Museum obtained all the necessary tools for the initial stages of the aircraft’s restoration. The operation started by videotaping the wreck, in order to find the best possible way for its safe recovery. Amongst many possible solutions, it was decided to use wire ropes and belts that would be placed on the strongest parts of the aircraft’s structure. A floating crane was also utilised. Each of the diving performed on a daily basis from the pre-arranged points lasted between 10 and 12 minutes, as was initially planned, also making auxiliary use of the Dive Computer. Overall seventy diving cycles took place, whose total duration was 22 hours. In cases when the underwater operations at the depth of 41m lasted long, the ROV underwater vehicle played an important role in minimising the effects of the divers’ disease. Moreover, the Dive Master had the advantage of a real-time view of the situation on the site. The use of a full-face mask and the utilisation of an intercom system by the members of the underwater operations team and the Dive Master, were also extremely helpful in cases when the need for very precise movements occurred. Special parachutes were also utilised for finding the best possible way to make use of the wire ropes and belts, in order to ensure the safe attachment of the fuselage to the floating crane. During the day of the aircraft recovery and taking into account the fact that the central engine was partly broken apart from the fuselage and anchored to the bottom of the sea, all the necessary measures were taken in order to ensure that the safe geometry of the recovery would remain unaffected, even if the engine remained at the bottom of the sea. In any other case, the forces would not be correctly

balanced and the aircraft could be destroyed. For that case, the ROV remained constantly underwater in front of the central engine, observing the whole operation, while constantly maintaining contact with the members of the underwater operations team (KOSYTHE). Indeed, during the hauling up it became obvious immediately through the ROV that the central engine was strongly attached to the bottom. As a consequence, it was broken apart from the fuselage, to which it had deliberately been connected with a low strength belt and was recovered at a later stage. Due to its coverage with sand, many parts of the engine had remained in an excellent condition, an example being a part of the engine propeller, where the colour and even the date of the last check were still apparent. After the aircraft had been securely tied to the crane, on the rear of the fuselage the remains of one of the crew members were found and later collected under the supervision of the team's doctor. The next day the aircraft was moved to the Hellenic Navy Maintenance Base, where experts from both the State Aircraft Factory and the Hellenic Air Force undertook the difficult task of its maintenance. The aircraft was dismantled on the island of Leros and later moved to the Museum, where the final stages of its maintenance and restoration will take place."

DIVERS UNITE TO FIGHT SOUTH KOREA'S WORST OIL SPILL

Project AWARE Foundation

"South Korea's worst oil spill in history has kept divers busy above the water this new year. Dedicated divers from 7 dive centres volunteered their time to help clean up the coastal area where a 20km slick threatens wildlife and valuable sea farms. Veterans of cleaning up, the divers have been involved in numerous underwater cleanups for environmental non profit organisation Project AWARE. But for this environmental disaster some of the concerned divers traveled over 5 hours with their families to help more than 7000 volunteers fight the oil slick. The tidal flats near the county of Taean, about 150 kilometers southwest of Seoul, are home to rich wildlife, oyster and fish farms, and a national park. Each year, millions of tourists flock there to bathe in the summer or watch winter migrating birds stopping to feed in the muddy flats teeming with clams. Freezing conditions and high seas made the fight to contain the 10,000-ton spill difficult. The shoreline cleanup involved scrubbing boulders coated with oil and scooping up sand soaked with oil. PADI Regional Manager Boo Kyung Kim said "At this stage, the oil is stuck on the surface of rocks on the beach and shoreline and it is very hard to cleanup, there are also a lot of places that can't yet be reached such as small rocky islands and remote areas on the western coastline. The divers will keep visiting these areas for voluntary work to help restore the coastal environment. " Officials estimate the environmental disaster will take at least 2 months to cleanup but it is impossible to predict how long it will take for the damaged marine ecosystems to recover. Special thanks to the following dive centres who helped with the cleanup operation. Go Diving, Best Dive Masan, Top Sports, Blue Divers, Aqua Marine, Divenuts, Paranbada and Mr. Won Gi Kang owner of Peace Underwater."

Source: http://www.ecovoice.com.au/enews/enews-48/SPH_AWARE.php

ONLY U-BOAT IN U.K. TO BE SPLIT IN TO FOUR PIECES

The World War II German U-Boat U-534 will be split into four pieces to turn it into a new tourist attraction in the UK. There are only four full-sized WWII German U-Boats in existence throughout the world. According to the web page found at <http://www.ww2f.com/wwii-today/21889-engineers-breaking-up-wwii-u-boat.html> , "Engineers have started a month-long operation to break up the only World War II German U-Boat in the

UK to turn it into a new tourist attraction. U-534, which is being moved to Mersey Ferries' Woodside ferry terminal in Birkenhead, will be split into four pieces using a diamond wire cutter. The sections, each weighing up to 240 tonnes, will each take a day to move. Visitors will be able to walk through sections of the U-boat when the exhibition opens in July. The submarine currently stands at Mortar Mill Quay, near Birkenhead, where it formed part of the Historic Warships Museum, which closed last year. Merseytravel, which owns and operates Mersey Ferries, bought the vessel to turn into a tourist attraction at its terminal. The first of the four sections to be removed is a 23m (75.4 ft) length of the bow, which will be moved by floating crane across the water. Neil Scales, chief executive and director general of Merseytravel, said: "There are only four U-Boats left. One here, two in Germany and a sister boat of the U-534 in Chicago. "It's a really important piece of history which we want to preserve. "It's the latest in a series of developments we are undertaking to ensure Mersey Ferries maintains and enhances its position as the most popular paid-for attraction in our region. "More people than ever before will be able to view the sub in its new location." The Imperial War Museum confirmed there are only four full-size WWII German U-Boats in existence, and that U-534 is the only one in the UK. The submarine, launched on 23 September 1942, was used as a training vessel in the Baltic, according to the museum. U-534 was sunk on 5 May 1945, in the Kattegat, north-west of Helsingor, Denmark, by depth charges dropped by an RAF Liberator. The boat was salvaged in 1993 and brought to the UK in May 1996, before becoming a popular tourist attraction in Seacombe. The warships museum was closed down after nearby warehouses were redeveloped and the land was needed for parking space. The new exhibition at Woodside, which includes artefacts from the submarine and an enigma machine, is due to open in July."

The Scuba Divers Federation of SA is a member of the following: -

Rapid Bay Jetty Design Group

SARFAC (SA Recreational Fishing Advisory Council)

Fleurieu Reef Advisory Group (Ex-HMAS *Hobart*)

TRAIL COMMITTEES - SA Trails Coordinating Committee (Office of Recreation & Sport) and Port Noarlunga Reef Underwater Trail South Australian Trails

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