



Australian Fishing Trade Association

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www.afta.net.au

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP

Premier

Victoria

c.c.

The Hon. Mellisa Horne MP

Minister for Fishing and Boating

Minister for Ports and Freight,

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

The Hon. Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Small Business,

Minister for Employment, Minister for Innovation,

Medical Research & the Digital Economy,

AFTA National Board

Dear Premier & Ministers,

In light of your announcement made on Sunday 18th of October 2020 regarding people's movement in Metropolitan Melbourne, the Australian Fishing Trade Association formally request on behalf of our members an exemption for stand-alone retail stores to open and service the recreational fishing sector.

The Australian Fishing Trade Association (AFTA) is the peak Recreational Fishing Industry body representing the Manufacturing, Wholesale, Retail & Media businesses of the recreational fishing industry and therefore through face to face engagement, all RecFishers throughout Victoria.

Directly affected AFTA members number approximately 90 Melbourne metropolitan retailers from both the independent network, as well as National chain stores. In addition our national wholesaler members who service these stores are impacted by the current lockdown. We outline key considerations below:

- The overwhelming majority of our stores are stand-alone retail premises, not reliant on larger shopping centre facilities. It is therefore reasonable for these stores to open with a COVID-safe plan.



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- Due to uncertainty, perishable bait and related products are not able to be ordered online, or via click and collect. In order for anglers to engage in fishing, it is critical for our members to be able to service these needs.
- The Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) have long been advocating for 1 million anglers in the state of Victoria, which provides enormous economic return to the State and many related businesses. Moreover fishing as a sport and pastime is proven to both support and mitigate mental health issues, an area other States in Australia have recognised as an essential area of concern.
- Such is the seasonal nature of the fishing sector in Victoria, and most importantly for a fishing retailer, October to December is the critical retail period, more so than other States. Many of our members experience up to 70% of their annual turnover during this period. Many species, in particular snapper, for which Melbourne is famed, only have a small window of opportunity to target. Right now is the time to support the survival of these stores.

We note other workplaces such as hairdressers and dog grooming have been granted allowances and in addition such outdoor activities as golf, tennis and lawn bowls have been included.

The recreational fishing industry in Victoria relies on this time, right now. Your own government department, the VFA support the science and our position.

Based on the aforementioned facts we respectfully request an immediate exemption for our Melbourne metropolitan members to trade now and show them support at this crucial time.

Yours sincerely

Bob

The Hon. Bob Baldwin

Chair

The Australian Fishing Trade Association (AFTA)

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