



Chief Executive Office  
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A.B.N. 95 337 637 697

15 July 2011

Coroner Heather Spooner  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
Level 1, 436 Lonsdale Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Coroner Spooner,

Please find attached Parks Victoria's response to the Coroner's recommendations,  
**Court Reference 3741/09- Inquest into the death of Theam Heng Chheng**  
**Court Reference 6036/09- Inquest into the death of Liangwei Wang**  
**Court Reference 5959/09- Inquest into the death of Shida Li**

Should you require further advice on this matter please contact Kylie Trott on 8843 7709.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Jackson".

Dr Bill Jackson  
Chief Executive

Parks Victoria provides the following response to Coroner's recommendations  
**Court Reference 6036/09- Investigation into the death of Liangwei Wang**

**Coroner's Recommendation:**

*Pursuant to sections 67(3) and 72(2) of the Coroners Act 2009, I make the following Comments and Recommendations:*

- 1. "The three deaths of rock fishers in 2009 were entirely preventable. They have once again highlighted the particular vulnerability of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, who are grossly over represented in rock fisher fatalities.*
- 2. Appropriate signage is essential and the revised Safety Management Plan for Rock Fishing has highlighted several key safety factors for all those rock fishers who wish to participate in this extremely high risk sport. Foremost among them is the wearing of personal floatation devices (PFD), educating CALD communities, overcoming difficulties and delays in communicating with emergency services and locating and responding to rock fishing emergencies that occur in regional and / or remote locations.*
- 3. I recommend that the Safety Management Plan for Rock Fishing be adopted by those agencies who participated in the safety management process including: Parks Victoria, Fisheries Victoria, Life Saving Victoria (LSV), VRFish, Australian National Sportfishing Association Limited (ANSA) and the Bass Coast Shire Council."*

**Parks Victoria's response**

Parks Victoria is unable to comment on the circumstances of this incident as the incident did not occur on land managed by Parks Victoria.

Parks Victoria is currently unable to adopt the Safety Management Plan for Rock Fishing in full as we have been unable to obtain sufficient information from Life Saving Victoria regarding the Emergency Response Alarm Pilot Project.

Parks Victoria is concerned that we have not yet been consulted regarding this proposal, particularly as one of the proposed locations for installation of the pilot alarm / cameras is at the Punchbowl; land managed in part by Parks Victoria. Parks Victoria does have initial reservations about the project however welcomes the opportunity to be fully briefed by Life Saving Victoria, review and comment on this proposal at a later date.

Parks Victoria supports all other elements of the Safety Management Plan for Rock Fishing and provides the following response to the Coroner:

- Parks Victoria is pleased that the use of **Personal Flotation Devices** (PFD's) has been highlighted as a priority in the comments and recommendations, and the Safety Management Plan. Parks Victoria continues to strongly support the use of PFD's by all rock fishers as an effective strategy to reduce rock fishing fatalities.
- Parks Victoria is very supportive of the focus on the need to better engage with **CALD communities** as a safety priority. Educating CALD communities of the dangers of rock fishing, prior to their visit, will contribute to their ability to make informed decisions about personal safety. Parks Victoria believes that these education activities should be led by Life Saving Victoria (LSV), and that a program of

education and engagement activities scheduled for CALD communities should be tabled by LSV at future Rock Fishing Safety Meetings. LSV could also report on the attendance and success of these programs so their effectiveness can be measured.

- Parks Victoria recognises and supports the use of **ESTA markers** as an effective method in 'open space' of assisting emergency services to obtain the location of an incident. Parks Victoria entered into an agreement with ESTA in February 2010 agreeing to install and maintain emergency markers as deemed appropriate and within Parks Victorias available funding.

Parks Victoria believes that focus should also be given to other methods for emergency services to locate incidents. Ensuring that identifiable locations regularly used by Rock Fishers (such as 'Punchbowl') are registered as verifiable place names in the CAD system so the dispatchers can quickly deploy emergency assistance will be more effective than a reliance on fishers recognising and quoting a marker reference.

- Parks Victoria continues to recognise and support the use of appropriate **signage** to inform visitors of the hazards at coastal locations. Signage is placed at entrance points in accordance with Parks Victorias signage guidelines (based on *National Aquatic and Recreational Signage Style Manual* third edition). Parks Victoria will continue to review communication strategies to ensure that the messages contained within signs and other previsit information is effective. This review will include the potential to install the effective photograph "Gone Fishing" sign incorporating rock fishing safety messages at other rock fishing locations. It should be recognised however that signage at rock fishing locations is a final safety factor and will not replace the need to inform and educate rock fishers prior to them setting out on a fishing trip.
- Parks Victoria will work with Life Saving Victoria and Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA) to formally review and conclude the **angel ring trial** for angel rings installed on land managed by Parks Victoria. A review of the trial is critical to understand the effectiveness of the angel rings at high risk rock fishing locations. If the trial is deemed successful, Parks Victoria will work with ANSA to formalise an agreement allowing ANSA ongoing permission to install and maintain angel rings on Parks Victoria managed land.

Parks Victoria believes that a stronger emphasis should be placed on preventative safety messaging, education and personal safety (PFD's) as the most effective method of reducing preventable rock fishing deaths. Measures such as Angel Rings, Emergency Markers and the proposed alarm / camera trial are reactive responses only used if and when a rock fisher is swept from the rocks. All attempts should be made to prevent such incidents occurring.

Parks Victoria continues to support the Rock Fishing Safety Management Meetings and will work in collaboration with the Coroners Prevention Unit and other represented agencies as they strive to reduce the number of preventable deaths of Rock Fishers.



Dr Bill Jackson  
Chief Executive  
Parks Victoria

15 July 2011

Parks Victoria provides the following response to Coroner's recommendations

**Court Reference 5959/09- Investigation into the death of Shida Li**

**Coroner's Recommendation:**

*Pursuant to sections 67(3) and 72(2) of the Coroners Act 2009, I make the following Comments and Recommendations:*

- 1. "The three deaths of rock fishers in 2009 were entirely preventable. They have once again highlighted the particular vulnerability of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, who are grossly over represented in rock fisher fatalities. Appropriate signage is essential and the revised Safety Management Plan for Rock Fishing has highlighted several key safety factors for all those rock fishers who wish to participate in this extremely high risk sport.*
- 2. Foremost among them is the wearing of personal floatation devices (PFD), educating CALD communities, overcoming difficulties and delays in communicating with emergency services and locating and responding to rock fishing emergencies that occur in regional and / or remote locations.*
- 3. I recommend that the Safety Management Plan for Rock Fishing be adopted by those agencies who participated in the safety management process including: Parks Victoria, Fisheries Victoria, Life Saving Victoria (LSV), VRFish, Australian National Sportfishing Association Limited (ANSA) and the Bass Coast Shire Council."*

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future Rock Fishing Safety Meetings. LSV could also report on the attendance and success of these programs so their effectiveness can be measured.

- Parks Victoria recognises and supports the use of **ESTA markers** as an effective method in 'open space' of assisting emergency services to obtain the location of an incident. Parks Victoria entered into an agreement with ESTA in February 2010 agreeing to install and maintain emergency markers as deemed appropriate and within Parks Victorias available funding.

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**Court Reference 3741/09- Investigation into the death of Theam Heng Chheng**

**Coroner's Recommendation:**

*Pursuant to sections 67(3) and 72(2) of the Coroners Act 2009, I make the following Comments and Recommendations:*

- 1. "The three deaths of rock fishers in 2009 were entirely preventable. They have once again highlighted the particular vulnerability of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, who are grossly over represented in rock fisher fatalities.*
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