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Cc: Sonja.Hempel@mpi.govt.nz
Fisheries Analyst - NRLMG

26 February 2020

Re: Request for recreational representatives for the National Rock Lobster Management Group.

Thank you for the 28 January 2020 invitation to participate in the selection of two recreational representatives for the NRLMG. It is gratefully received and seen as an acknowledgement of the NZ Underwater Association's (NZUA) status as representing the largest stakeholder group of rock lobster fishers.

As directed by you, the four addressees of the 28 January 2020 letter met, engaging in constructive discussion on how recreational fishers are represented best in the NRLMG.

It is recognised that the recreational sector is diverse with each organisation playing a significant role in representing its stakeholders. For example, the NZUA is the only organisation with a focus on serving all New Zealand underwater fishers.

To that end, and in recognition of this diversity, NZUA is supporting positions for three recreational representatives on the NRLMG:

- Keith Ingram - NZ Recreational Fishing Council
- Josh Barclay - NZ Sport Fishing Council
- Andy Stewart – NZUA

In supporting the NZUA's nomination to the NRLMG through its representative Andy Stewart, the Association highlights its fit to your requirements for an organisation as set out in the invitation letter.

Nomination for NZUA / Andy Stewart as a representative of recreational fishers on the NRLMG

Mandate: The NZUA was formed in 1953 as a representative body of underwater clubs, at the time predominantly Spearfishing Clubs.

Today NZUA represents 43 clubs nationally who represent a cohort of approx. 160,000 scuba divers, snorkelers and spearfisherman.

The NZUA is the country's leading not-for-profit organisation advocating for all New Zealander's rights to access safe and enjoyable underwater activities in a protected marine environment. As such, it is likely to represent the country's largest single group of rock lobster fishers. Therefore, the NZUA's mandate for a seat on the NRLMG must be acknowledged.

The NZUA's position of authority in the recreational diving industry is recognised by Government, conducting nationwide safety campaigns in partnership with Water Safety New Zealand and Maritime New Zealand. The NZUA holds a seat on the Safer Boating Forum and is a consistent advocate for all New Zealand recreational diving interests. The NZUA is also recognised as a membership body by WorkSafe NZ. Additionally, a current application with Sport NZ, to be acknowledged as both a Sports Organisation and Recreational Organisation, should be noted.

“Focus on the wellbeing of rock lobster stocks: NZUA stakeholders have made their concern for rock lobster stocks clear. An MPI invited and participating member of the 2018 CRA-2 consultation rounds, NZUA has submitted and been a party to submissions to Fisheries NZ on Rock Lobster management issues.

The NZUA's committed to the issue is further evidenced by its support and promotion of a voluntary bag limit reduction in CRA2 from six to three, prior to the expected recreational limit change for the management area.

“Can engage constructively. Good communication and listening skills:

The NZUA boasts a long history of communication and collaboration with various sector stakeholders on multiple initiatives from safety and environmental matters to growth and participation.

Andy Stewart is a prominent, capable and respected voice for the recreational diving sector. Andy carries well-established mana within the NZUA.

Additionally, NZUA offers robust networks of communication to a significant audience online, on social media, through a database of newsletter subscribers and via customers of its commercial entity which services the dive sector.

“Commit to participation: If given the invitation to join the NRLMG, the NZUA and its representative Andy Stewart, are 100% committed to participating and representing its stakeholders’ interests.

A key NZUA’s mission statement is “Lobbying government organisations on behalf of all New Zealanders, protecting and advocating for their interests in matters of safety, and the protection of the marine environment”.

In all cases, an alternate will attend any meetings in Andy Stewart’s absence.

“Knowledge of fisheries management and experience fishing: The NZUA’s participation in various fisheries management matters is long and documented.

Andy Stewart is an experienced diver and rock lobster fisher with nationwide connections of more than 30 years. He is a co-opted member of the NZSFC Fisheries Management Standing Committee.

Supporting members of the NZUA operational team bring career-long professional experience with the fisheries sector.

Yours faithfully,

Tristan Reynard
President
New Zealand Underwater Association