



National Angel Ring Project

National Rollout of Life Saving Buoys for Rockfishers

Stan Konstantaras

April 2018

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In submitting this report, the researcher has agreed to FRDC publishing this material in its edited form.

Foreword

Angel Rings are lifesaving buoys placed at popular rockfishing spots to aid rockfishers, tourists and the members of the public who slip or get washed in to the water. Angel rings are designed to keep them afloat until a rescue can be organised or as a buoyancy aid to assist them to get to a safer spot to exit the water.

The Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA) in partnership with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation commenced a trial of “Angel Rings” around Australia

The Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RFAC) identified the national roll-out of the Angel Rings program as a key project as part of the Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy (RFIDS). There was unanimous agreement that the NSW project had a demonstrated track record in saving lives at various NSW coastal rock platform locations and should be expanded nationally where there was a risk of lives being lost.

States like Western Australia and Victoria where historically lives had been lost off coastal rock platforms were the ultimate target for Angel Rings and to a lesser extent South Australia, Tasmania and Queensland also qualified for the investigation of installing Angel Rings.

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Executive Summary

The FRDC National Angel Ring Project ("Project") set out to deliver a complete package of rock fishing safety equipment to all the State Branches of ANSA that had experienced rock fishing incidents and fatalities and as a way of updating the branches on current practices and alerting the branches to some of the rock fishing safety initiatives underway in the other states. Its secondary focus was a roll out of education material and messages into the community via the ANSA network.

The package was to include angel rings, to aid in the event of a rescue of an angler washed in off the rocks. It was to also contain resource material for copy and distribution within the relevant State.

The project was primarily focused on helping the state branches of ANSA raise the level of awareness amongst rock fishing anglers on how to participate in the sport safely and how they could get involved in some of the initiatives being implemented around Australia.

The Project achieved some great inroads in establishing Angel Rings in some states like Western Australia and has led to relationships in other states that has seen ANSA share and develop rockfishing safety awareness and education campaigns in a cohesive and consistent matter.

Whilst these milestones have been achieved ANSA also understand that FRDC has extended ANSA many liberties in keeping the Project open under their guidance beyond the agreed and schedule milestones. Notwithstanding this the Project progressed at a staggered pace and ANSA and each State or Territory has progressed according to their abilities to allocate resources to deal with location selection, approvals, installations and finally on going management.

The staggered nature that each state has progressed has ultimately meant that ANSA has been unable to deliver all the agreed milestones even though one of the biggest beneficiaries of Angel Rings, Western Australia has agreed to sign off and ultimately devolve the project and take over management of the Project in WA were it has been a great success. In all fairness to the other states WA was and continues to deal with the very same issues surrounding rock fishing safety that NSW has previously dealt with.

ANSA acknowledges that this situation is not ideal or what has been agreed upon with FRDC but as the project has evolved this has been the best scenario we have been able to operate under.

Apart from the staggered nature of the roll-out one of the biggest impediments for ANSA has been the changes in the configuration of the GPS Tracker units from our supplier. The entire project was founded around the ability for the states and government agencies agreeing to install Angel Rings on the basis that remote access would also be provided from GPS trackers located and embedded within the Angel rings and could be checked remotely from a computer console anywhere in the world. This alleviated the need for physical checks.

ANSA had already committed to and had rings operational in WA with GPS trackers when it had to essentially shut the remote monitoring down due to the lack of suitability and availability of GPS trackers to continue the project. Thankfully WA had a very supporting Government that

committed extra fund to assist in monitoring of the Angel Rings and Peak Body groups like RECFISH WEST, who were involved in working with ANSA had an extensive network of anglers all over WA who would handle the physical checking of the rings and handle replacing any missing ones.

From very early on in the Project's foundation these changes to the tracking system made the option of installing GPS trackers cost prohibitive and the need to increase on site checking of remote assemblies extremely costly and ultimately less palatable to the states and agencies they were dealing with and who ultimately assume responsibility for them.

The Project has been running well and some great inroads have been achieved but we also understand that FRDC has extended ANSA many liberties in keeping the Project open under their guidance beyond the agreed and schedule milestones.

ANSA acknowledges that this situation is not ideal or what has been agreed upon with FRDC but as the project has evolved this has been the best scenario we have been able to operate under. ANSA has been in discussion with FRDC to try and better understand how similar projects might be delivered, especially when dealing with volunteer organisations. The better understanding gained with this project could benefit how groups like ANSA operate into the future considering all of the time and effort is volunteer based.

Introduction

Angel Rings are lifesaving buoys placed at popular rockfishing spots to aid rockfishers, tourists and the members of the public who slip or get washed in to the water. Angel rings are designed to keep them afloat until a rescue can be organised or as a buoyancy aid to assist them to get to a safer spot to exit the water.

The history of the Angel Ring Project derives from within NSW when in the early 1990's NSW Rock fishing was considered one of the most dangerous pastimes in NSW, accounting for more than 74 fatalities in the nine-year period between 1992 and 2000. In 1993 the NSW Coroner stated "Rock fishing has the highest fatality rate of any sport in NSW". Annually, fishers and rock user's lives are lost off the ocean rocks along the coastline of NSW, through a combination of ignorance and carelessness. The estimated cost to the taxpayer in NSW for every life lost off the NSW Coastline is \$300,000 per injured or deceased person. The total lifetime cost of all drowning incidents that occurred in 1998 – 1999 in NSW is estimated at \$72 million (Potter-Forbes, M and Aisbett, C. Report into the Cost of Injury in NSW 1998-1999, NSW Injury Risk Management Research Centre, 2003).

In 1992 an Inter Departmental Committee of Water Safety formed a Rock Fishing subcommittee. The recommendation of this committee was the Guardian Angel Ring Project. In 1993 the Rock Fishing Sub Committee recommended to the IDCWS that through NSW registered fishing clubs, angel rings were to be installed at known rock fishing black spots. In 1994 the Department of Sport and Recreation announced funding for \$30,000.00. To date ANSA NSW has managed the project on behalf of the NSW Government. The increasing amount of tragedies and injuries occurring from the ocean rocks on the NSW coastline has motivated the ANSA NSW membership to voluntarily install these Angel Rings at known dangerous and popular locations on the NSW coast over the last 25 years.

The Angel Ring project was a mission originally undertaken by the Australian National Sportfishing Associations NSW Branch (ANSA NSW) with the approval of the Department of Sport and Recreation, NSW Sporting Injuries Insurance, National Parks and Wildlife Service and NSW Fisheries and has so far saved over 70 lives in NSW. ANSA NSW has successfully installed 131 assemblies to date.

Having been provided with the initial funding back in 1994, the process of installing the Angel Rings began. Up until 2000, when ANSA NSW won the NSW Sports Safety Award at the NSW Sporting Injuries Insurance Presentation, no ongoing funding was available and the project was run on donations. The \$5,000 prize allowed ANSA NSW to purchase spare assemblies and spare life buoys, which allowed ANSA NSW to replace existing angel rings. ANSA NSW has successfully been applying for funding from the NSW Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Fund from 2002 and still enjoys the support of the Trust in 2017.

The current project originated when the Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee (RFAC) identified the national roll-out of the Angel Rings program as a key project as part of the Recreational Fishing Industry Development Strategy (RFIDS). There was unanimous agreement that the NSW project had a demonstrated track record in saving lives at various NSW coastal rock platform locations and should be expanded nationally where there was a risk of lives being lost.

The Australian National Sportfishing Association (ANSA) in partnership with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation commenced a trial of "Angel Rings" around Australia in states that had a history of rockfishing or fishing related fatalities.

Method

Very early on in the Project support was sought from the other ANSA Branches around Australia and social media was used to compile a short list of suitable locations. These were then sent out to all the relevant Branches for comment.

Initial email correspondence below;

8 July 2012

ANSA State Branches – Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria

The Australian National Sportfishing Association in partnership with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and the Department of Fisheries and Forestry is commencing a trial of "Angel Rings" around Australia. Angel Rings are lifesaving buoys placed at popular rockfishing spots to aid rockfishers, tourists and the members of the public who slip or get washed in to the water.

Angel rings are designed to keep them afloat until a rescue can be organised or as a buoyancy aid to assist them to get to a safer spot to exit the water.

Stan Konstantaras from ANSA wants to know where anglers around Australia would like us to locate some of these new life rings and goes on to say "We are looking for popular rockfishing spots that could be dangerous to local, visiting and inexperienced anglers in adverse conditions. Iconic spots that are well known and often written about in the media will also be considered" The plan is to set up pilot projects around Australia and then get the assistance of local anglers, fishing clubs and community groups to look after them and expand the project. With 116 rings in NSW already and 47 confirmed rescues under the NSW Branch belt, the project is worthwhile and saves lives. The roll out of the project will also encompass an education campaign to raise the safety awareness of anglers who fish the rocks and make them a bit more experienced in reading the conditions. Angel Rings are just a small part of the rockfishing safety spectrum

Drop Stan Konstantaras a line and let him know where you think a ring is needed.

Below is list of suggested locations from canvassing opinions on fishing forums around Australia over the past few weeks, if you state ANSA Branch has any other to add or even edit the listing below drop Stan Konstantaras a line at pastelli@netspace.net.au and let him know where you think a ring is needed.

Suggested Locations identified through consultation:

NSW

Winnie Bay, Gosford

Cape Byron, Byron Bay

Green Cape, Sth of Eden x 2

Pretty Beach, Batemans Bay

Avoca, Gosford

Tweed River Nth and Sth walls

QLD

Noosa Headland – Hells Gate

Noosa Headland - Nth Point

1770

Nth Breakwall – Southport

Sth Breakwall - Southport

Point Lookout Moreton Is

Nth Point Moreton Is

Caloundra

Pt Cartwright -Mooloolaba

Indian Head Fraser Island

Waddy Pt Head Fraser Island

Double Island Point

WA

Kalbarri

Steep Point

Quobba x 2

Salmon Holes –Albany

Long Point - Albany

Cable Beach - Broome

Port Hedland x 2

Esperance

Carnarvon

Exmouth

ACT

Booderee NP x 3 (Jervis Bay)

VIC

Cape Shanck - southern most point of Mornington Peninsular

Blow Hole between Cape Schanck and Flinders -

Sorrento Back beach

Portsea Back Beach

Phillip Is x 2

Artillery Rocks - near Lorne

SA

Talia Beach x 2

Vivione

Point Ellen Kangaroo Island

Remarkable Rocks Kangaroo Island

TAS

Once the Branches had been contacted and the list reviewed ANSA offered support to the Branches to start the approvals process.

ANSA adopted the NSW model for approvals that had been in operation for over 15 years and perhaps wrongly assumed that the support that ANSA NSW had acquired over the years would be easily transferred across to the Project.

As part of the approval process ANSA advised the Branches that they follow the NSW model below;

INSTALLATION:

Prior to any angel ring being installed ANSA NSW will contact the relevant authority or agency to discuss the proposed installation date and locations.

The NSW Branch of ANSA has installed 115 rings and has 47 documented rescues with the rings across NSW. The project's success depended upon the Department of Lands and National Parks and Wildlife waiving the need for ANSA and its state branches to indemnify them against any claims that may arise from public liability, either from and not limited to loss, vandalism and misuse of the rings.

ANSA NSW and ANSA National accept no liability for the installation of the rings. The project has blanket approval from the NSW Department of Lands and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Each application would be assessed individually and approval granted by the relevant authority for ANSA NSW to install Angel Rings at each individual location nominated.

ANSA NSW and ANSA National agrees install and maintain Angel Rings installed as part of this Project.

In the case where a site was on a Crown reserve under Council / Trust control or a National Park, written consent from the relevant authority supporting the proposed installations would be sought

As part of the project consultation process, ANSA completed the following:

- 1. Supplied photographs and GPS coordinates which clearly identify the sites where the rings were to be installed*
- 2. In circumstances where access to the ring might require the crossing of adjoining lands, contacting the owner of adjoining land prior to the ring installation*
- 3. Completion of a report which lists contact names, details and addresses of ANSA affiliated community / fishing clubs, ring assembly dimensions and installation details, the date of intended installation, description of how ANSA members would access the site, details of ANSA signage, arrangements for ongoing management and maintenance and a timeframe for renewal/replacement of rings*
- 4. A review of environmental factors*
- 5. An OHS assessment of the installation of the rings*

Upon receiving final approval for the installation, ANSA would coordinate an installation team from within the ANSA membership to install the rings. Before the rings were installed, the relevant authority or agency would be notified.

The Angel Ring Team would install the nominated assemblies in line with the OHS requirements summarised in Attachment X.

Local media outlets would be informed and a community education strategy would be enacted to extend work ANSA and the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW has implemented within NSW to reduce the number of fatalities at these high risk locations.

ANSA NSW and ANSA National would then liaise with their local and national media contacts to promote the installation of the rings and link these installations with their relative websites and member associations to better inform the community of safe rockfishing practices.

MANAGEMENT:

ANSA NSW would maintain contact with the local clubs, NSW Government agencies and individuals who installed or agreed to manage angel rings and continue communication to ensure that management targets were met.

As a minimum ANSA NSW must complete a visual check at least every 2 months to determine the rings status.

ANSA NSW would maintain a register of contacts pertaining to the specific device, that would include;

- (a) The club, agency or individuals details that agreed to visually check the installations.*
- (b) Inspection dates*
- (c) Status of the installation*

ANSA NSW would supply any information when requested and at a minimum report annually.

Spare rings would be left with the local fishing club and or contacts. Information sheets would be placed in the local tackle shops informing local anglers that these rings had been installed and if missing, to contact ANSA NSW via its toll free number.

ANSA NSW would be responsible for the replacement for any missing rings or posts

ANSA NSW would maintain records for each location and a register of replacements.

ANSA NSW would retain spare rings and components in storage, able to be quickly freighted to site if needed.

If installations were judged to be redundant, ANSA NSW would remove all associated equipment used in the installation.

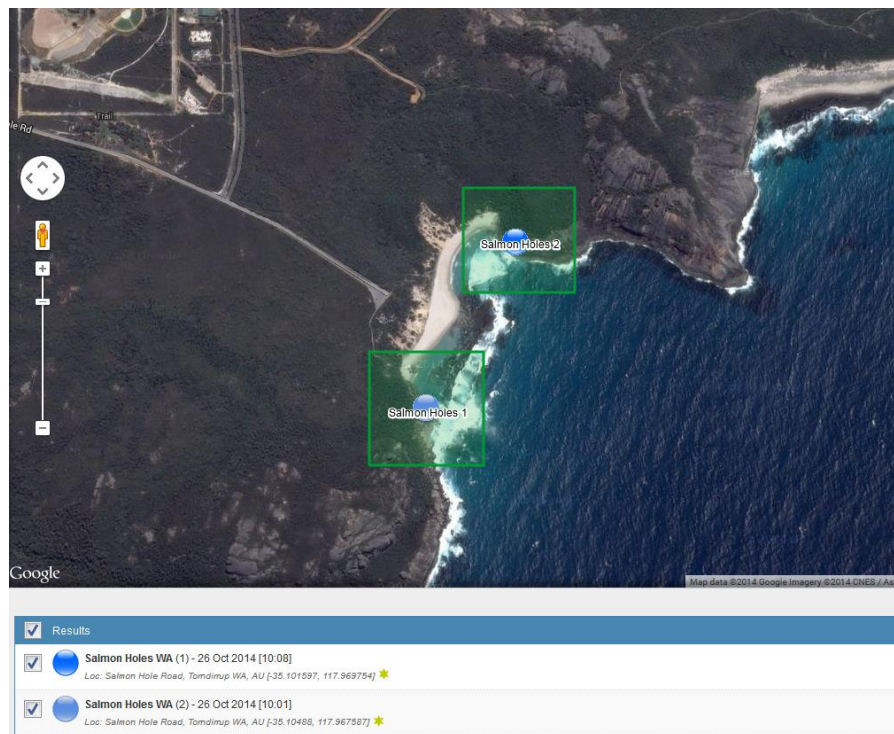
The installation and maintenance of the rings by ANSA NSW would be conducted under the same OHS strategy that ANSA NSW has supplied.

FRDC Funding had been allocated to travel to the states to discuss the Project and provide seed funding for the initial allotment of Angel rings and spares. Given initial momentum that Recfish West provided efforts were initially focussed on commencing activities in WA. A meeting was held in the WA Offices of Recfish West and ANSA met with Department of Environment representatives to enable commencement WA's Albany region. Recfish West was able to overcome most challenges associated with the approval process, and this was largely due to the fact that the state peak body was able to dedicate a person over in WA to progress each application and ensure all the requirements were met.

Recfish West installed 2 rings at the popular Salmon Holes near Albany and had 7 pending installation at Shark Bay and 9 in Esperance. All these rings had been approved under the

guidance of Recfish West and the expectation is that all of these 18 rings would be all up and running and trackable before July 2015.

The image below shows the 2 initial trackable rings at Albany checked remotely from Sydney. They self-reported every day at 10am to say they were in place and if moved at any time outside the green box or “geofence” an alarm would be raised.



Results

A total of 25 new rings were installed under the project and factoring in the additional work that Recfishwest undertook the total number of rings installed under the Project is 55 and increasing every month as ANSA continues to support the states under the Project. It has been extremely satisfying to also have 3 lives saved in WA as a direct result of the project and the awareness around rockfishing safety that an installed angel ring generates on the rocks is vital in better educating anglers around fishing safely.

Apart from the staggered nature of the roll-out one of the biggest impediments for ANSA was changes in GPS Tracker units from the project's service supplier Infinity One. The GPS unit initially used, for which 50 angel rings had been pre-made to accommodate had been discontinued and the new units (Spot On) were a different size profile, rendering pre-made angel rings obsolete. The other major challenge was that the MMT had a single use 7-year lithium ion battery that was moulded in and left in situ for 7 years; the new Spot On unit has a 2-year replaceable battery life that means we needed to re tool the rings to allow for tracker removal and battery replacement. This proved challenging considering we had 18 rings in use in WA with the MMT trackers installed and had 31 already made to accept the MMT unit and with no provision to be able to remove and replace batteries in the Spot On units. ANSA has been in contact with the manufacturers for a few years looking for alternatives but none have presented themselves and with the cost of tracking mounting it was decided to turn off the WA trackers and work towards a system of manual inspections.

Some great successes have occurred in places like Western Australia where 20 new Angel Rings have been installed under this Project and the Project devolved to see Recfish West heading towards 60 Angel Rings Statewide.

An update of all State initiatives follows;

WA Angel Rings

Australian National Sports Fishing Association (ANSA) provided Recfishwest with Angel Rings and education and awareness material throughout 2013, 2014 and 2015 to help establish a rock fishing safety strategy in Western Australia in an attempt to ensure all fishers return home safe after a day's fishing.

ANSA initially supplied Recfishwest with approximately 20 Angel rings to be installed at Steep Point (Shark Bay), Albany and Esperance – all high risk rock fishing locations in Western Australia.

ANSA also helped Recfishwest set up a satellite tracking initiative where the Angel Rings supplied contained tracking devices. These devices had a limited year life span and were used to notify authorities when an Angel Ring was either deployed in an emergency or if the ring was stolen or lost.

ANSA's rock fishing safety campaign 'Don't Put Your Life on the Line' was a huge success in Western Australia and allowed Recfishwest to drive consistent rock fishing safety messages throughout the community to engage people, both fishers and non-fishers, to incite behaviour change around the dangers of rock fishing

Since the initial aid provided by ANSA, Recfishwest has expanded the Rock Fishing Safety Strategy state wide and now see:

- 50 Angel Rings installed at high risk rock fishing locations
- 150 free life jacket loan locations
- Development and implementation of the new 'Fish and Survive' campaign
- Developed new educational and awareness material, including multi-lingual fliers
- Held safety workshops and on sight education days at high risk rock fishing locations
- Engaged local fishing clubs to install Angel Rings in their regional towns

ANSA and Recfishwest also sourced locally made SOLAS approved life rings to overcome the transportation costs of replacements and ANSA also agreed to supply Recfishwest with the schematics and engineering drawing so any additional posts that may be required could be made locally.



WA Press Release

Milestone for rock fishing safety as 50th Angel ring installed

Wednesday, 3 May 2017

50 Angel rings have now been installed at high-risk locations across the State

- *There have been 26 rock fishing fatalities in Western Australia since 2002*

Fisheries Minister Dave Kelly has praised the efforts of Recfishwest and land managers across the State for installing 50 Angel rings at some of the State's most popular and dangerous rock fishing locations.

Angel rings, also known as life rings, are a buoy designed to be thrown to a person in the water and provide them buoyancy until they can be pulled to safety.

The 50th Angel ring was installed in the Capes region in the State's South-West last month, and follows on from installations in Esperance, Albany, Kalbarri, Steep Point and Dirk Hartog Island.

The installation of the safety devices has been facilitated by Recfishwest as part of a contractual arrangement with the Department of Fisheries to lead the fishing safety program 'Fish and Survive'.

Recfishwest have worked with land managers around WA, including the Department of Parks and Wildlife, local governments and station owners, to install the Angel rings across the State.

For more information about rock fishing safety, visit <http://recfishwest.org.au/rock-fishing-safety/>

Comments attributed to Fisheries Minister Dave Kelly:

"The McGowan Labor Government has committed \$140,000 per year over the next three years for the 'Fish and Survive' program in a bid to reduce fishing-related drownings and incidents in WA.

"Rock fishing is a very dangerous pastime, with 26 fatalities recorded since 2002, and so it is important safety measures are put in place to mitigate the risks.

"It is also essential for stakeholders and land managers to work together to establish better safety measures, including to raise awareness around the dangers of rock fishing and provide more Angel rings for high-risk areas around the State.

"I'd like to thank all those involved in getting to this important safety milestone for the fishing community in our State."

Minister's office - 6552 6100

New South Wales

ANSA NSW had obtained approvals and was able to install one of its two allotted rings at Cape Byron, the most eastern point of Australia. In combination with rings installed in Shark Bay, this now means that rings are installed in eastern and western extremities of Australia. ANSA NSW is working with National Parks to finalise the other location for its allotted installation under the Project at Green Cape on the NSW / Vic border however this has not occurred to date. ANSA NSW will continue to pursue this installation.

Queensland

ANSA along with Redcliff Council in QLD have installed 2 new Angel Rings in the Stradbroke Island area under the Project.

With a new ANSA QLD Branch committee taking the helm in 2016, ANSA will continue to work with ANSA QLD to continue to pursue the installation of Angel Rings beyond the Project and will focus on these locations beyond in 2017 with support from ANSA

- 2 Proposed Angel Rings at 1770
- 1 Proposed Angel Ring at Waddy Point – Fraser Is
- 1 Proposed Angel Ring Indian Head – Fraser Is
- 1 Proposed Angel Ring Double Is Point – Rainbow Beach

South Australia

South Australia has finalised its locations and has requested 7 angel rings after extensive public consultation conducted by RecfishSA. ANSA has these in storage as approvals are still being sought and ANSA has committed to installing these in 2017.

2 Angel Rings were installed under an initiative driven by the City of Victor Harbour.

The SA breakup is as follows

- 2 Angel Rings Installed at Victor Harbour / Petral Cove

- 1 proposed Angel Ring at Blowhole Point
- 1 proposed Angel Ring Brown Beach
- 1 proposed Angel Ring Millers Hole at Pt Lincoln National Park
- 1 proposed Angel Ring at the Murray Mouth
- 1 proposed Angel Ring at Port Elliot Rocks

Letters seeking approval have been sent to the relevant authorities and ANSA SA has provided all the contact details of the relevant authorities and the process for approvals is underway and will continue in 2017 with support from ANSA.



Northern Territory

After initial contact with Surf Life Saving NT and a request for rings it seems that SLSNT is not willing to progress rings in the NT. ANSA is keen to reopen negotiations with AFANT to see if we can get some consensus in the NT about where the Project would be beneficial.

Tasmania

Tasmania is looking to finalise its 2 locations at St Helens and contact has been made with the local volunteer marine rescue bases to assist with monitoring. ANSA envisages no problems with these 2 installations and the only issue will be the additional transport costs to Tasmania.

ANSA has these in storage as approvals are still being sought and ANSA has committed to installing these in 2017.

Victoria

Victoria has requested 3 new locations as follows;

- 1 proposed Angel Ring at Pyramid Rock
- 1 proposed Angel Ring at Cape Wollomia
- 1 proposed Angel Ring at Phillip Island

It was always planned that the existing 8 rings installed in Victoria under the joint Lifesaving Victoria / ANSA NSW Project would also be upgraded to tracker rings as follows under this FRDC Project;

- 2 Angel Rings at The Punchbowl, San Remo
- 2 Angel Rings at The Arches, Kilcunda
- 2 Angel Rings at Half Moon Bay, San Remo
- 2 Angel Rings at Squeaky Beach

ANSA will continue to work with ANSA Vic to look at alternatives to monitoring these Angel Rings which are in very remote locations and work with ANSA Vic to continue to investigate the 3 new locations in 2017.

Discussion

The Project has achieved some great inroads but ANSA also understand that FRDC has extended them many liberties in keeping the Project open under their guidance beyond the agreed and schedule milestones.

The Project has progressed at a slower pace than expected and each State or Territory has progressed according to their abilities to allocate resources to deal with location selection, approvals, installations and finally on going management.

The staggered nature that each state has progressed has ultimately meant that ANSA has been unable to deliver all the agreed milestones even though one of the biggest beneficiaries of Angel Rings, Western Australia has agreed to sign off and ultimately devolve the project and take over management of the Project in WA.

ANSA acknowledges that this situation is not ideal or what has been agreed upon with FRDC but as the project has evolved this has been the best scenario we have been able to operate under. ANSA has been in discussion with FRDC to try and better understand how similar projects might be delivered, especially when dealing with volunteer organisations. The better understanding gained with this project could benefit how groups like ANSA operate into the future considering all of the time and effort is volunteer based.

We have learned that it is critical to have the support of the relevant government agencies in each state along with a willingness to provide further funding to further allow the expansion of pilots projects such as this. A major part of the Project is negotiating the approvals to install the Angel Rings, which are almost always installed on public land managed through various government agencies and various layers of approvals. The areas we are talking about are often vast expanses of coastline that sometimes will see suitable locations many kilometres apart, and in places like WA, often thousands.

The approval process was the biggest obstacles presented to the Project for the other States that lacked full time personal and resources to manage the approval and installation process

What was achieved in WA in a very short 3 year period of time was a direct result of relying on its paid and dedicated full time staff took volunteers in NSW close to 15 years to reach a similar milestone.

States with well organised peak bodies and governments supported of fishing safety, like WA kicked a huge goal in getting over 50 rings installed that are saving lives, with news just in that a new ring in Esperance saved 3 anglers who had been washed into the water.

Conclusion

The most significant insight learnt was the fact that relying on volunteers was a long drawn out process as opposed to a well-funded and supported peak body or similar. NSW has installed 130 rings that have saved over 70 lives since 1994 and even today struggles to deal with changes of Governments and agency consolidation and essentially has to restart every election cycle, WA achieved 50 rings and 3 lives saved in 4 years with a well-paid persons at the helm to drive this project.

Implications

The list of safe locations has grown around Australia under the Project and will continue to grow in states like WA. Lives will continue to be saved and ANSA has made a commitment to continue working with the other states to maintain a level of interest in the Angel Ring Project and assist its volunteer branch members in continuing their efforts for approval and seed funding.

Recommendations

ANSA acknowledges the efforts of all those involved but must consider the benefits of working with peak bodies and paid personnel as a way of fast tracking project deliverables in any future dealings arising from this Project.

Extension and Adoption

ANSA will continue to work with all involved to help promote these Angel Rings within each state and in conjunction with the organisations involved.

Project coverage

Wednesday 3 May 2017

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Minister's office: 6552 6100

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Angel Ring Saves Lives in Esperance

October 7, 2016



The recent investment in rock fishing safety initiatives is starting to make a real difference in WA and lives are being saved as a result. Initiatives such as Angel Rings (life rings) are proving

genuine life savers, as was the case recently at Esperance.

A father of two was fishing from the rocks at Hellfire Bay while his children, aged 11 and 15, swam from the nearby beach. While he was fishing he saw his children being swept out to sea by a strong rip current. His quick

thinking had him grab the near by Angel Ring and he attempted to get it in the water as quickly as possible. Unfortunately he was hit by a large wave and swept in himself, placing all three of them in danger in what could have been a major tragedy. Fortunately he kept hold of the Angel Ring and was able to use it to support all three of them while they swam back to shore. The alarm was raised by others, but the trio made it safely back to dry land without assistance.

This is the first time it has been confirmed an Angel Ring has been used to save lives along the south coast of WA, although we believe it has happened on other occasions from local reports including Quobba and Albany. There is no doubt the immediate availability of the Angel Ring played a huge part in the positive outcome, potentially saving three lives. This story highlights the importance of continuing to invest in safety initiatives across the state.

Recfishwest CEO Andrew Rowland said the work done by community partners in Esperance to ensure Angel Rings were installed shouldn't be forgotten.

"The Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Shire of Esperance and the South East Coast Recreational Fishing Council all played huge roles in installing Angel Rings in and around Esperance and the recent incident and the positive outcome is a testament to their work to keep the community safe," Andrew said.

"This incident is a reminder of the importance of on ground safety equipment installations supported by local expertise and the need for the government to continue financial support for this initiative."

Although Angel Rings are installed at many of the popular rock fishing destinations around WA, we still highly recommend the use of a life jacket while fishing, especially the new era of compact, self-inflating life jackets available which can be worn rock, boat or kayak fishing. Check out how popular these jackets are [here](#).

Recfishwest wants you and your family to return home safe after a day of fishing, and because of that we are proud to work with our community partners, government and the public to make that a reality through safety initiatives around WA.



ANSA National shared Recfishwest's post.

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Published by Stan Konstantaras

May 4, 2017 at 7:45pm · 🌐

It really makes us proud at ANSA , ANSA NSW and the RFA of NSW to see milestones like this one. Hats off to the WA Government and Recfishwest for pushing this forward. Hats off to ANSA and FRDC for getting the pilot up and running. The fishing community at its best, working together to get these projects up!



mediastatements.wa.gov.au

Media Statements - Milestone for rock fishing safety as 50th Angel ring installed



Recfishwest

May 3, 2017 at 5:13pm · 🌐

****Big News - WA's 50th Angel Ring has recently been installed - all to make fishing safer!**

Huge efforts by land managers and community's around WA to help get all these rings installed at high risk fishing... [More](#)

