

24 May 2007

Mr Keith Douglas  
President  
Marine Recreation Association  
PO Box 22  
MAIN BEACH QLD 4217

Dear Keith

**RE: Artificial Reefs on the Gold Coast**

As discussed with you earlier this week, it is simply a statement of fact to say that development of essential infrastructure and private assets has resulted in the loss of habitat along the coast. An example of this loss is the burial of Kirra Reef under sand since the commencement of the Tweed River permanent sand by-pass program.

The creation of artificial reefs is one means by which we are able to redress this loss of natural habitat.

Agencies such as the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries are increasingly recognising the ecological (and fisheries) benefits that man-made habitat offers, and provide well considered guidelines for the design and construction of a range of structures. The potential negative impacts of artificial reefs (for example increasing the vulnerability of some fish species to capture) may be addressed through the use of existing regulatory provisions (such as area or seasonal closures, gear restrictions, etc.).



Our knowledge of design and construction issues relating to artificial reefs is informed by several decades of international experience: from an ecological perspective the development of an artificial reef within the Gold Coast region would be a relatively low risk exercise, with a likelihood of significant ecological benefits.

Keith, as you are able to further develop your concepts for an artificial reef on the Gold Coast, please don't hesitate to contact me again.

Yours sincerely

Dr John Thorogood, *FAIBiol.*, *FEIANZ*,  
Managing Principal