



# The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

## Minister for Primary Industries

## Minister for Small Business

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Friday, 14 October 2011

#### **NSW GOVERNMENT LURES AND LAUNCHES SYDNEY'S FIRST OFFSHORE ARTIFICIAL REEF**

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, today welcomed the State's first offshore artificial reef to its new underwater home.

Katrina Hodgkinson said the reef, which has been deployed off the coast of Vacluse, is expected to vastly improve recreational fishing opportunities for the State's avid anglers.

"Fish species such as snapper and yellowtail kingfish should soon be calling this reef home which is great news for fishers looking to drop a line offshore over the spring/summer season," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"Funds from the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust have been used to construct the offshore artificial reef and this is a great example of how recreational licence fees are being invested back into the State's fishing community."

The steel artificial reef unit, which stands 12 metres high and weighs approximately 42 tonnes, was lowered into the ocean at a water depth of 38 metres. It is located approximately 1.2 kilometres off The Gap at Vacluse and 1.9 kilometres off South Head and is the first and largest Australian designed artificial reef structure constructed in Australia.

Bruce Schumacher, Chair of the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing, said the reef is a big win for the State's million-plus fishers.

"This project was a high priority for the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing and will be great for anglers with plans for more reefs along the coast," Mr Schumacher said.

Katrina Hodgkinson said the reef is the first of the three offshore artificial reefs planned for NSW over the next five years.

"This structure has travelled all the way from Scone to White Bay and through Sydney Harbour to its new home for the benefit of the State's anglers.

"The reef structure has undergone thorough environmental assessments and will be monitored by NSW DPI scientists for three years using diver surveys and advanced underwater video technology to assess the impacts and effectiveness of the reef. The artificial reef will have a lifespan of more than 30 years," Ms Hodgkinson said.