

Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Mineral Resources
Minister for State Development



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Fishing the new FAD

As the weather warms up, the fish are biting, and to help anglers find that big one, popular fish attracting devices are being reinstalled for the season in coastal waters off NSW, Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald said today.

Mr Macdonald said the devices are like magnets for attracting mahi-mahi or dolphin fish and even marlin.

“These devices are very popular amongst fishers and are used to enhance fishing opportunities for recreational fishers,” Minister Macdonald said.

“We have 25 Fish Attracting Devices – or FAD’s - being reinstalled following annual winter maintenance, including two new FADs which have been approved for Tweed Heads and Crowdy Head.

“The devices are already back in the water off Ballina, Evans Head, Wooli, Coffs Harbour, South West Rocks, Laurieton and Port Macquarie.

“And this week areas at Forster, Port Stephens, Swansea and Terrigal will be back up and running - weather permitting.”

FAD’s are deployed from north to south coinciding with the movement of the East Australian Current, with the remainder of the devices to be installed in the State’s south by mid to late December.

FADs are yellow buoys, marked with a cross and navigation light on top, that are moored to the ocean floor.

They are installed between 6 and 32 kilometres offshore from October to June.

The location of a FAD may fluctuate slightly depending on wind, swell and current direction. Industry & Investment NSW relies on anglers to report missing FADs.

“The FAD program is just one of many initiatives funded by the Recreational Fishing Trust,” Minister Macdonald said.

“Funds raised from the recreational fishing licence fee are placed into two trusts, one for saltwater and one for freshwater, and can only be spent on projects to improve recreational fishing in NSW.

“This is another great example of fishers licence fees being put back into the water to improve recreational fishing in NSW.”

People who use the FADs are asked to abide by a code of conduct that can also be found on the Department’s website.

Tying boats to FADs is prohibited as it may cause damage to the mooring line, causing the device to break free and become lost. Fines of up to \$5,500 apply for this offence.

GPS locations for the FADs will be posted on the Industry & Investment NSW web site when they are returned to the water.

Fishers can also receive the most up to date information on FADs locations and deployments via the I&I NSW email service.

For more information visit www.industry.nsw.gov.au

Media note: Photos are available.
