

# DOWN UNDER WITH THE B.R.U.D.G.

May 2026



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## EDITORS BLURB

With reasonably good and calm weather continuing into May it looks like loads of mid-week dives are taking place and with divers continuing to find large crays. As the abalone season is over and the cray season about to close it's not too late to get wet for those that can tolerate the colder water.

The crew from Raja Ampat (Indonesia) are back with tales from warm tropical waters. I've included some pictures and some stories so take a look.

Craigs applications for AED's have been successful and these units can be distributed to more boats. In addition, we have some oxygen monitors gifted to the club and oxygen cylinders are being tested and returned to owners to make oxygen kits on board our boats more common.

The purchase and use of the Nautilus Marine Rescue GPS is gaining popularity and Alan has put together a handy You Tube guide in setting it up via your mobile phone and boats radio. Worth seeing.

Once again, there are several WhatsApp dive reports which are included here if you missed them. A few notes from divers that the water temperature is dropping and at the moment the visibility is patchy.

Enjoy the read, and as always, we welcome your stories, Lens Fish Information, photos, recipes, dive sites and feedback for the next addition.

Safe and Happy Diving and look forward to seeing you at the next club meeting. Peter Altis.

Magazine Editor

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS & ROLES



President  
**Darren Bell**

### **President – Darren Bell**

Leads the committee, oversees club operations, and represents the group in official matters.

### **Vice President – Craig Norrish**

Supports the President, steps in when needed, and assists with strategic planning.



Vice President  
**Craig Norrish**

### **Treasurer & Public Officer – Mike McCarthy**

Handles finances, budgeting, and ensures compliance with legal requirements.

### **New Membership Liaison and SDFV Rep – Julian Tagell**

Acts as liaison with the Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria and speaks to potential new members.



Treasurer  
**Mike McCarthy**

### **Equipment Officer – Alan Conley**

Maintains club equipment, oversees repairs, and manages gear inventory.

### **Safety Officer – Tom Dryer**

Promotes safety standards, conducts briefings, and ensures compliance with safety protocols.

### **Secretary – Leanne Gradey**

Manages meeting minutes, correspondence, and maintains club records.



Club Liaison / New Member Officer  
**Julian Tagell**

### **Dive Coordinator – Cameron Grant**

Organizes weekly dives and advises on the conditions. Single point of contact for dives.

### **Magazine Editor – Peter Altis**

Produces the club newsletter.



## MEMBERSHIP

### New Members Management

The committee continues to prioritize the effective management and integration of new members. Recent discussions and actions include:

- **Enquiry Handling:** Allan and Julian, are managing new member enquiries and conducting phone briefings.
- **Documentation:** All new members receive a comprehensive pack, including waiver, code of conduct, code of practice, and application forms.
- **Digital Engagement:** Website and social media channels are actively used for new member outreach.
- **Check-out Dives:** Arrangements are made to ensure new members complete a check-out dive.
- **Club Growth:** Strategies are being developed to manage club size and increase female participation.
- **Resource Updates:** The new member pack is under review for updates and will be circulated soon.
- **Inclusivity:** Skippers are encouraged to leave space for new members on dives to foster integration.



President  
**Darren Bell**

## PRESIDENTS REPORT

Hi all members,

As you would all be aware, the club has secured a couple of grants to help purchase more AED's to be placed on members boats. Great work done by Craig.

The group of club members that went to Raja Ampat had a safe return, thanks to Doc Roger for keeping everyone on the trip healthy.

There is a club trip organised for Komodo early next year, still places up for grabs if anyone is interested contact Craig Norrish direct to secure a spot.

For those that are still diving through winter, the weather is starting to turn a little so there will probably be less diving in the coming months.

We are looking for volunteers to help with Lifesaving Vic June championships 14<sup>th</sup> June @ Caulfield Grammar, we have 5 people already and they would like 4 divers in the water so room for others if interested.

The committee has confirmed that the AGM will be held at the July General Meeting. All committee positions will be open for nomination, with particular focus on the Secretary and Safety Officer roles.

If you're interested in contributing to the running of the club, we strongly encourage you to put your hand up and attend our next committee meeting to get a feel for how things operate and where you might like to be involved.

I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to **our newest members** — **Steven Doyle, James Hallows, Francis Haden and Chris O'Connor** — who have all completed their checkout dives and been accepted by the committee. Please make yourselves known to them, share your diving experiences, and help them feel part of the BRUDG family.

I'm genuinely chuffed with what the committee has achieved in such a short time. We've made significant progress on compressor operations, filling procedures, document control, and equipment upgrades and purchases.

None of this happens without people stepping up and doing their bit. A big thank you to Leanne, Tom, Allan, Craig, Mike, Cameron, Peter and Julian for your ongoing work and commitment.

It's also great to see members still getting out for dives at this time of year — and the catches have certainly been rewarding.

Wishing everyone happy and safe diving!

BRUDG President Darren Bell

## TREASURERS REPORT – APRIL 2026



Treasurer

**Mike McCarthy**

### April 2026

#### Bank Account:

**Opening Balance:** **\$7,417.38**

#### Deposits:

Raja Ampat Receipts 2,777.00

AED Subsidy 1,750.00

Interest Received 1.19

**Total Deposits:** **\$4,528.19**

#### Payments:

Supagas Oxygen 117.45

Raja Ampat T-shirts 431.20

Joe Jacka plaque 67.75

Wilson's Prom 928.80

Catch Bags 240.00

Oxy Viva Bottle tests 650.00

Trailer Registration 68.66

Raja Ampat Tip Reimbursement 3,361.80

**Total Payments:** **\$5,865.66**

**Closing Bank Balance:** **\$6,079.91**

#### Prepayments & Accounts Payable:

\$Nil

#### Monies owed to BRUDG:

\$Nil

**Net Balance after prepayments/debts/debtors:** **\$6,079.91**

## SAFETY REPORT AND EQUIPMENT INFO - APRIL, MAY

Thanks, Tom, for this summary.

Overall, the club has made very good progress in the controls around compressors and dive tanks. After some minor teething problems, the web base procedures and logs are accessible by clicking on the link or using the QR code. With one exception – there has been very good compliance in recordkeeping.

The club has implemented significant additional controls to reduce risk to the club and to members. Some key controls include:

- Tank registration
- Compressor procedures
- Awareness training for older divers. This includes the purchase and use of the Nautilus Marine Rescue GPS
- Upgrades to Oxygen therapy equipment and training

Proposed Next Steps

- Set up a small working group to revisit the risk register to review all current risks and the associated risk ranking

**Nitrox** fills and tank collection is working really well. It is considered that there is now an appropriate level of record keeping to demonstrate control over the supply of Nitrox to club members. A spare O2 analyzer is now located at Graham L house at Rosebud for use by club members.

Proposed Next Steps

- Set up formal competency assessment for Nitrox compressor operation and assess all current fillers.
- Consider switching the bigger 4-cylinder compressor currently at Allan C home onto Nitrox service to reduce the time load on the 3 x fillers

**Tank registration** progressed well and most members have been cooperative in assisting in getting the register up to date. About 25 active members now have key details up to date. Some “Maximum fill Pressure” details are still missing. Some members who do not use the club compressors have not registered tanks – which is seen as acceptable.

The tank register is now able to be accessed via the link/QR code presented at all compressors

Proposed Next Steps:

- Chase up missing tank details

### Oxy News

“In test” O2 tanks and updated instructions have been issued to all but 2 club boat owners.

Formal training O2 course planned for late April was not held due to a lack of sufficient participants. The course will be offered again in early spring 2026.

## Proposed Next Steps

- Complete the rollout of “In test” O2 tanks and updated instructions to last two boat owners (subject to these boat owners attending the in house training)

## Compressor Operation

Filing instructions have been put in place for all club compressors and are available on line.

Tank filling logs are in place at all compressors as hard copy and on line via link and QR code

Next steps:

- Look at formalising the compressor maintenance/filter change out.
- Develop and implement competency assessment for all compressors users

## General

- Raja Ampat trip: A great success, with NO safety issues/incidents to report!! Live aboard supplied 32-34% Nitrox which was used by all BRUDG divers who were doing up to 4 dives each day.
- Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) developed for Lifesaving Victoria ahead of BRUDG assisting at the lifesaving championships in June 2026. This JHA has been accepted.
- **May Update:** A quiet month, informal incident reported by Mike McCarthy regarding his recent lung injury.

Tom Dreyer - Safety Officer

## OTHER INTERESTING STUFF

This section is included to allow for a variety of topics which come up from time to time. Read it or skip to dive reports and pictures of impossibly BIG crays 😊

**From Craig: The Marine Parks draft 2024**, show the submissions and how many different groups there are. <https://consult.dcceew.gov.au/se-marine-parks-network-mgt-plan/new-survey/list>

**From Len: Reporting Cray Catch, Na - Yea:** This post is to provide a brief summary of the history of the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) Southern Rock Lobster (SRL) tagging program and why I believe it is essential that we rec fishers report accurately on our catch for our OWN BENEFIT to avoid possible significant restrictions on our activities.

## Recommendations

As the analysis below is quite long, I will start with why I am saying we should report accurately.

The analysis below shows;

1. that recreational fishers may not be accurately reporting,

2. that there has been a proposal to cap our catch and
3. that there has been a proposal to make us report before leaving the place of landing,
4. that there has been a (short lived) proposal to limit the bag to one SRL/day
5. that the EZ fishery is at risk and as a result the VFA may finally obtain agreement to implement points 2 and 3. If this happened then it could seriously affect rec SRL fishers. VFA could say that as the rec catch has been around 2 tones then the catch cap should be as little as 2 tones.

So, I, **strongly, suggest that we should all report our catches accurately** and encourage others to do the same. I think it would be very beneficial to us that when fishers are visited by enforcement officers, we are able to show that we have registered for the season, and we have a history of reporting.

**From Craig: Know what's going on in Fisheries** here's a Link to the FRDC newsletters new format...

<https://www.frdc.com.au/news/sector-based-newsletters?cldee=mBVM9IH6bLVgdKOEpyNnDoBigdzJlv82RS8tpK20rfCXrnbq9o1eHg2lBBhYMzKE&rcipientid=contact-ff8fbce61938ef11b4c8002248148e6c-fa377acea071489d8cad3c23c2569c8c&esid=b55b7534-de23-f111-b4f6-002248148e6c>

**Too old to dive, too young to die? Read on. From Dr Roger, ABC Article 02/05/2026 - Older Divers**

[https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-02/queensland-octogenarian-still-hooked-on-scuba-diving/106368302?utm\\_source=abc\\_news\\_app&utm\\_medium=content\\_shared&utm\\_campaign=abc\\_news\\_app&utm\\_content=mail](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-05-02/queensland-octogenarian-still-hooked-on-scuba-diving/106368302?utm_source=abc_news_app&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_campaign=abc_news_app&utm_content=mail)

**Ever wondered how to get an unconscious diver aboard:** Attached are two YouTube videos published by SSI. The first is if there are two people available to pull the diver in and the second is if there is only one, which is obviously the hardest situation. Firstly, remove their BCD and weights - clip onto a tie if readily available otherwise let them go - the priority is the diver.

The techniques are then the same which are essentially *using the buoyancy of the wet suit to gather some momentum via an up and down motion and then on the last up motion a heave to get them in utilising this momentum.*

> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3WqY69Q8JQ>

> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkg3kc3AALw>

Depending on the boat layout, if available there may be a flat rear deck that they can be pulled onto easier or a side door, so it's also a matter of assessing the situation for the best option.

## DIVE REPORTS...and a few Pics

Dive report for SS Balmer 13/5/2026 by Glen. The boat crew:- Yanni T, Gary W, Glen B. Captain Alan B

The day started with the boat and crew meeting at Tooradin and then making their way to Newhaven with a plan to dive Cape Woolamai/Pyramid rock.

The weather at Tooradin looked fab and Western port bay was flat calm.

On the journey to Newhaven the fog set in and got thicker as we headed for the launching site where upon arrival it was so thick that it was hard to see the end of the launching ramp jetty.

The foggy conditions didn't put us off as we could see signs of the sun trying to break through the fog.

We got the boat set up and into the water and used the boats electronic navigation aids to find our way through the fog and out past Cape woolamai, we couldn't see the head land through the fog.

Once we rounded the Cape the decision was made to push onto Pyramid rock, the sun was making a real effort to break through the fog and by the time we reached Pyramid rock the fog had cleared and the sun was out and quite warm and the sea was calm so we found our first dive site and put the first pair of divers in the water.

It wasn't long before we were saying hello to a couple of good looking Crayfish.

We moved to another dive site and the second pair of divers went over the side. The conditions were still good, the second dive site wasn't great and the visibility was down to approx 3 - 5 metres at best.

There was plenty of rock structure and weed and kelp but no good ledges, holes or crevices so unfortunately no crayfish were caught or even seen. The first dives were quite deep at 25 to 22 metres and I notice that after about 30 minutes into the dive the cold started creeping in and it seemed to me that the fog had moved from the surface to below the surface forming an underwater mist impairing the visibility.

Once the second pair of divers were retrieved and safely back on the boat it was time for lunch and the surface interval between diving operations.

After lunch we headed off and found another couple of dive sites to the west of Pyramid rock, the weather and conditions were still very good and getting better. We put the first pair of divers over the side and the sea was calm enough to follow their bubbles, after approx 50 minutes they reappeared with the spoils of a very lucrative dive. ( the pressure was on for the second pair of divers to come up with the goods ). The next dive site was located and over the side we went into 17 metres of water.

The visibility was much improved with no underwater fog so we could see approx 8-10 metres, the terrain was quite impressive with walls and swim through, holes and ledges covered in weed kelp and soft corals with plenty of fish swimming around and the odd crayfish which soon found itself inside a bag, again the cold started to creep in after about 30 minutes into the dive and it was nice to get back up to the surface and see the sun again.

The second pair of divers were retrieved safely and once back on board the bags were emptied and the spoils emptied out.

It didn't take long to realise that the day had been very lucrative with all the crew going home with 2 crayfish each.

The boat was squared away and made shipshape and we set off on our return to the ramp with a very happy crew on board.

It was an easy journey back to the ramp with calm seas and no fog.

Even if it had been a rough ride home I don't think anyone would have cared.



## **Dive report. Date 13 May 2026. Boat SS Bell**

Boat Driver. Dave McCallum. Friend of Darren. *Stephen Snow (reporter)*

### **Report:**

Met at Darren's at 7.30. A very foggy drive down from the city.

Dave is a very experienced boatie and fisherman and offered to drive the boat for the day. A still day, flat seas promised, so after having a confirming look at the back beach at Hughes Road, launched the boat at Sorrento close to 8.30.

Was still foggy but could easily see the ocean at Hughes Road and promise of a good day's diving was in the air. Tootled around through the heads, life preservers on, and around the corner

**Dive 1** Diamond Bay. Viz was maybe 5-6 meters. Very pleasant on surface. No wind Depth touched 21 meters. Water temperature was measured at plus 15.2 degrees but felt to me like minus 15. It was cold, very cold. Beautiful, scenic country but not many crays. One was liberated.

**Dive 2** . Sorrento Back beach. Close to dive 1. After one -hour surface interval. 15-meter depth. Darren was up for a second dive. Stephen bailed as water was too cold for him. Several nice sweep were caught. No wind to speak of. Could hear the ferry foghorn in the distance

The fog had cleared around at the back beach but thickened as we approached the heads. Visibility was down to maybe 50 meters. Darren was driving on instruments for most of the way back. Very few boats on the water. A successful retrieval (i.e. no feet wet) at around 2.30 and back to Darren's place to destuff the boat. A very interesting and enjoyable day on the water.

Dave is very good company and very experienced with all things boating.

PS A whistle is a good safety item to carry always, but especially on foggy days



**Raja Armpat. From Craig**

Dear Members – Please find attached the link to the fantastic Youtube Video that Peter Taylor put together. Thank’s Pete for a great video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQnolfwnb-A>

**A few Happy Snaps from Dives in May.**



**Sunny, and smiles. Even the dog is happy!!**



One of our new members Steve, **ON HIS FIRST DAY OUT!!!!**

### **SS Balmer Dive report.**

Launched from Sorrento with Alan B, Glen B, Janni T and Tom D as crew, with Captain B Lye in command.

We did our diving about half way between the heads and Cape Schanck with 5 to 7m of viz.

Great country, 15 deg C water and 18m depth.

We saw and captured a good bag of crays.



One monster remains to fight another day.

Terrible traffic back to Melbourne. Imagine the pain of 2 hour plus drive in the company one AB. 😞

**Report by Tom.**

Len has the last word. His Cray was THIS BIG. (No, he's not falling out the back of the boat)



**The End**

**“I can’t delete this BI\*\*\*dy Page!!!”**