



# Reef Check Foundation

## A Global Network:

Reef Check is the United Nations official community coral reef monitoring program.





# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## Workshop Schedule

Townsville ~ 25/1/07  
Airlie Beach ~ 12/2/07  
Port Douglas ~ 15/2/07  
Cairns ~ 19/2/07

## Attendees

Adrenalin / ProDive, Sunferries, Reef Safari, Pleasure Divers.  
Fantasea, Reef Safari, Infinite Productions & Daydream Resort.  
Poseidon, Haba, Quicksilver, Wavelength & Calypso  
Undersea Explorer, Reef Magic, Dive the Reef, Compass Cruises & Tusa

## Workshop Objectives

1. To **gain operator feedback** on RCA activities to date and discuss future priorities.
2. To **review** the current Reef Check **monitoring sites** in light of operator knowledge.
3. To outline the **Reef Check “EcoAction” program** of ecotourism products and courses.
4. To discuss Reef Check support in light of **Ecotourism accreditation**.
5. To develop an **MOU between RCA and each Operator**.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## Workshop Objectives

1. To **gain operator feedback** on RCA activities to date and discuss future priorities.

Overview of Reef Check's global program, Reef Check Australia activities and how Reef Check data is incorporated into local and global knowledge on Reef Health eg GBRMPA programs, MTSRF ~ Status and Trends & Status of Coral Reefs of the World reports. Feedback on RCA activities and consensus support for the ongoing program.

## Feedback

- Townsville:** Consensus operator support for RCA activities and future priorities.
- Airlie Beach:** Consensus operator support for RCA activities and future priorities.  
Feedback re: permit challenges, issues regarding marker and mooring buoys.
- Port Douglas:** Consensus operator support for RCA activities and future priorities.
- Cairns:** Consensus operator support for RCA activities and future priorities.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## Workshop Objectives

2. To review the current Reef Check monitoring sites in light of operator knowledge.

Consensus across operators that RCA site selection was effective. Several revisions were made based upon change to operator visitation to individual dive sites. Agreement for future alignment of Reef Check and operator dive site maps where possible over 2007/08.

## Feedback

**Townsville:** Reviewed, revised and agreed sites for each supporting operator.

**Airlie Beach:** Reviewed, revised and agreed sites for each supporting operator.

**Port Douglas:** Reviewed, revised and agreed sites for each supporting operator.

**Cairns:** Reviewed, revised and agreed sites for each supporting operator.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## Workshop Objectives

3. To outline the Reef Check “EcoAction” program of ecotourism products and courses.

Discussed the Global EcoAction program, modular components and objectives for ecotourism.

## Feedback

**Townsville:** Support for the EcoAction program and four operators will promote it.

**Airlie Beach:** Support for the EcoAction program and two operators will promote it.

**Port Douglas:** Support for the EcoAction program and three operators will promote it.

**Cairns:** Support for the EcoAction program and three operators agreed to promote it.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## Workshop Objectives

4. To discuss Reef Check support in light of **Ecotourism accreditation**.

Highlighted the benefits of community involvement in monitoring and how support for Reef Check addresses some of the Ecotourism accreditation requirements.

## Feedback

**Townsville:** Two operators have cited Reef Check in their Ecotourism accreditation.

**Airlie Beach:** Two operators have cited Reef Check in their Ecotourism accreditation.

**Port Douglas:** Three operators have cited Reef Check in their Ecotourism accreditation.

**Cairns:** Operators agreed that this was valuable. No information on the number that have already cited Reef Check in their Ecotourism accreditation.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## Workshop Objectives

### 5. To develop an **MOU between RCA and each Operator.**

Consensus agreement to have MoU between Reef Check and each supporting operator to define FOCs, dive logistics and operator requirements. A base MoU is currently being reviewed by Reef Check with the understanding that this will be sent to operators for review in Q3 2007. The differences between each separate dive tourism operation means that the MoU's will require extensive customisation for each supporting operator.

## Feedback

**Townsville:** Support for the MoU proposal. Provisional MoU contact with two operators.

**Airlie Beach:** Support for the MoU proposal. Provisional MoU contact with one operators.

**Port Douglas:** Support for the MoU proposal. Provisional MoU contact with three operators.

**Cairns:** Support for the MoU proposal. Provisional MoU contact with two operators.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## General Feedback:

1. Several dive operators cited the **cyclical nature of instructor and marine biology staff turnover** as a significant barrier to in house RCA training of their staff.
2. There was **universal support to continue the provision of free of charge spaces for Reef Check volunteers to survey the dive sites** because this was seen as a simple way to support the Reef Check monitoring program whilst minimising the impact upon the dive staff time whilst they were engaged with their customers at the reef sites.
3. Considerable interest was expressed in take part in additional data collection activities provided this did not hinder customer service provision: **Collaboration with the GBRMPA Eye on Reef, CRC reef (MTSRF) research & Bleachwatch programs** was cited.
4. There was **general uncertainty and a lack of awareness of several key data sources** that dive operators could access for support and information eg the LMAC's (Airlie Beach), Eyes and ears program (compliance).
5. **Consensus support for an MoU** between Reef Check and the supporting operators however the development process for the MoU requires extensive consultation and hence completion is not anticipated until Q4 2007.



# Reef Check Australia Workshop Feedback



## General Feedback:

6. Operators requested additional information / **consensus statement on Climate Change from GBRMPA** to contextualise coral reef health data, and to field questions from customers regarding the status of coral reefs in Australia.
7. Consensus support from the Dive industry to survey 2\* per year to **study temporal changes** provided this fits within Reef Check Australia logistics re: trained teams and FOC space availability during dive tourism high season.
8. Agreement to add **Reef Check data link** to individual operators websites once the Reef futures database is live.
9. Request for **Reef Check to produce interpretive materials**: Poster / Display book / Flipchart for operators to complement their current marine biology presentations.
10. Agreement to add **Reef Check link and program information to operator webpages** that will be similar to the Undersea Explorer pages: <http://www.undersea.com.au/reefcheck.htm>