



SPORT FISHING  
INSTITUTE  
*of British Columbia*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

Sport Fishing Institute of British Columbia  
go2 – BC's Tourism Industry Human Resource Association

For Immediate Release  
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### **DIRTY HARRY STARS IN NEW PROGRAM FOR BC SPORT FISHING GUIDES**

Sport fishing guides on the North Island are feeling lucky today now that Harry MacDonald, aka "Dirty Harry", is around to help them achieve the new provincial Tidal Angling Guide (TAG) Certification.

MacDonald, who has seen it all during his more than two decades on the water, was one of the first sport fishing guides in BC to receive his professional TAG Certification. He recently completed additional training to become a TAG Assessor, one of 10 in the province qualified to certify others who want to validate their expertise in the sport fishing industry.

"I wish TAG had been around 20 years ago when I first started guiding," said MacDonald, who is the owner/operator of Mid Island Fishing Charters and the Chair of the Campbell River Guides Association.

MacDonald is quick to point out that there are guides working today who may know how to fish, but aren't expert at the intricacies of guiding. He has also seen instances in which some employers have allowed guides to operate unsafely.

"TAG will hopefully change all that," he added.

The TAG program is unique in North America, said Arlene Keis, CEO of go2, which is responsible for managing certification and assessment for BC's tourism, hospitality and foodservices industries.

"It sets the BC sport fishing industry apart from other destinations and is a major marketing advantage for our guides and fishing lodges," said Keis.

TAG Certification is voluntary and is open to sport fishing guides who have at least 750 hours of guiding experience. Candidates write an exam and undergo a comprehensive interview with the assessor to demonstrate their professional knowledge and competency.

In order to be assessed before the spring guiding season, applications must be in by March 31. Fall assessment will begin in late-September. More information and details on applying are available at [www.sportfishing.bc.ca](http://www.sportfishing.bc.ca) or [www.go2hr.ca](http://www.go2hr.ca).

Apart from fostering best standards, there are other reasons why experienced guides should obtain TAG certification, according to Owen Bird, director of best standards and practices with the Sport Fishing Institute (SFI). "For example, sport fishing businesses with as few as one certified guide will be eligible to receive medical and dental coverage and acquire liability insurance at preferential rates."

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Bird adds that one of the biggest benefits for established professionals is that TAG certification provides formal recognition for all their acquired expertise. "It's a good promotional tool that lends a certain prestige."

TAG Certification is recognized and supported provincially by the Industry Training Authority. The program was developed by the Sport Fishing Institute of BC and go2, working closely with sport fishing industry representatives, federal and provincial agencies, and First Nations.

### **About the Sport Fishing Institute**

The Sport Fishing Institute of British Columbia (SFI) is a registered, not-for-profit association representing the province's recreational fishing industry. The SFI works with governments, industry and stakeholder groups to protect fish stocks and ensure predictable, sustainable recreational fishing opportunities for all recreational anglers. [www.sportfishing.bc.com](http://www.sportfishing.bc.com)

### **About go2**

go2 is BC's tourism and hospitality human resource association responsible for coordinating the industry's Workforce Development Action Plan, a key component of the industry's growth strategy. In 2007, go2 was granted responsibility by the Industry Training Authority to manage trades training standards for the tourism, hospitality and foodservices sector. go2 is responsible for the Professional Cook, Tidal Angling Guide, Baker and Meatcutter trades and works with tourism and educational partners to assess the need for new industry certifications. [www.go2hr.ca](http://www.go2hr.ca).

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