

FINAL OUTCOMES from the LOBMAC meeting held on 30 March 2009.

Agenda Item	Outcome
1(a). Welcome and apologies	<p>The Chairperson welcomed the Committee members and observers to the meeting.</p> <p><u>Attendance:</u> Alan Dodds (Chairperson), Danny Stewart, Noel Gogerly, Scott Westley, Ron Firkin, Lee Monin, Adrian Wayne, Arthur Dye, Darryl Sullings.</p> <p>Kate Montgomery (Secretariat).</p> <p><u>Observers:</u> Tony Chen, Geoff Liggins, Nathan McNamara, Rob Peever, Peter Brown and Darryl Sykes.</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Oliver Wady, Recreational Representative.</p>
1(b). Agreement on agenda	LobMAC agreed on the agenda.
1(c). Confirmation of Draft Minutes	The LobMAC confirmed the Final Draft minutes (Appendix A) from the previous meeting as being a true and accurate record of the 27 February 2008 LobMAC meeting.
2. Correspondence received and sent	Correspondence received and sent by LobMAC was noted. It was requested that copies of significant pieces of correspondence be circulated with future LobMAC agenda papers.
3. Business arising from the previous meeting	<p>LobMAC noted the current status of action items with the following comments: LobMAC discussed ways of providing information on lobster shareholders' quota allocations (not quota remaining) as a way of facilitating trading between shareholders. NSW DPI advised that consideration must be given to legality, costs and benefits of such a proposal.</p> <p>Action: NSW DPI to investigate the establishment of a public register of shareholders' quota allocations, including any legal, logistics and costing issues that might arise in making such information public, and advise LobMAC of its position as soon as possible.</p>

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	<p>Industry noted a decline in the number of large cargo vessels interacting with their gear but still consider this as a major issue.</p> <p>Action: LobMAC will ask the Minister to advise his colleague, the Minister for Ports and Waterways, of the continued impacts of large cargo vessels on lobster trapping operations and request advice on an appropriate consultation process. Industry members to pursue a meeting with their local Ports Authority to discuss the pathways of large cargo vessels entering their port.</p> <p>Industry again noted the issue of Marine Parks and expressed concern at the continued reluctance of DECC officers to attend a LobMAC meeting and brief the industry on how these proposals will impact it in future years.</p> <p>Action: LobMAC Chairperson to write to DECC regarding specific LobMAC concerns with Marine Parks.</p> <p>It was noted that completed action items would be removed from the list.</p>
4. Update on TACC 2008/09	<p>The LobMAC was provided with an overview of the information that is to be submitted to the TAC Committee from DPI Management, Research and Compliance, for their deliberation on the 2009/10 TACC.</p> <p>The LobMAC provided the following comments: <i>Management Report Presentation</i> Industry noted the reduced level of economic analysis provided to the TAC Committee.</p> <p><i>Lobster Resource Assessment Presentation</i> The LobMAC noted that the expected decline in inshore catch rates for the 2008/09 fishing period (predicted from puerulus settlement surveys and fishery dependent information up to 2007/08) had come to fruition. It was noted however that catch rates in this part of the fishery may substantially increase in the 2009/10 season.</p> <p>LobMAC also noted the model's prediction of an increase in the spawning stock.</p>

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	<p>The possibility of amending research priorities to address other research needs was discussed. This included any potential to reduce the Fishery Independent Survey to a biennial program as a way of enabling Lobster Research to address other priorities.</p> <p>Action: NSW DPI Research to provide LobMAC with options for alternate research programs (including estimated costs) as soon as possible.</p> <p><i>Compliance Report Presentation</i> Industry noted the issue of late returns and its impact on compliance rates.</p> <p>Industry expressed concerns about basing commercial lobster compliance rates on the number of offences and expressed the view that it would be more appropriate to focus on the number of fishers associated with these incidents.</p> <p>Action: NSW DPI Compliance to amend the graphical representation of compliance data to include the actual number of fishers involved in offences.</p> <p>LobMAC raised concerns in regard to the estimates of annual recreational lobster catch. It was noted that other jurisdictions use management arrangements to improve estimates of recreational catch, including tagging systems and a specific lobster recreational fishing licence.</p> <p>LobMAC unanimously supported raising this issue with ACoRF.</p> <p>Action: NSW DPI to approach ACoRF on behalf of the LobMAC to consider alternate recreational management arrangements that will enhance the estimates of recreational lobster catch. ACoRF responses to be discussed at the next LobMAC meeting with a view to adopting revised procedures.</p>

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<p>5. Recommendations from the 2008/09 TAC Committee Determination</p>	<p>The LobMAC provided comments to the following issues:</p> <p><i>(a) Minimum Shareholding</i> Action: NSW DPI to provide a background paper on the ‘exemption to the minimum shareholding (55) for an endorsement’ at the next LobMAC meeting.</p> <p><i>(b) Fishery Economics</i> Action: LobMAC to request direction from the TAC Committee on the information necessary for effective economic assessment.</p> <p><i>(c) Trapping and Penning Issues</i> The Committee noted that following catch record reforms (to be implemented in July 2009); the weight of lobsters placed in pens will be validated, not estimated, as per the current Regulations.</p> <p><i>(d) Mapping exercise</i> Industry representatives on the Committee again raised the apparent environmental and gear conflict issues posed by commercial trawling activities. Industry representatives advised that they intend to work with the NCC to address this issue. NSW DPI reiterated the importance of industry pursuing regionally based solutions.</p> <p><i>(e) Update on Recreational Fishing Survey</i> Noted by the LobMAC.</p> <p><i>(f) Spatial profiling/characterising</i> LobMAC noted that this recommendation from the TAC Committee related to the development of management measures that acknowledge the spatial structure of the NSW Rock Lobster Fishery, including the potential to harvest the spawning stock in the North of the state. It was noted that the reduction in maximum size limit (200mmCL to 180mmCL), the current quota trading price and the shift in shareholders/fishers from the northern sector of the state has significantly reduced the targeting of lobsters in this area.</p>

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6. Trap Operations	<p><i>i) Trap marking and identification</i> The Committee generally supported the idea of using a plastic tag attached to the float of their lobster traps. It was noted that floats must be maintained so that the figures are clearly legible.</p> <p>Action: NSW DPI Compliance to consider the proposal for the use of a tag as an alternative trap marking arrangement and provide update at the next Committee meeting.</p> <p><i>ii) Taking of lobsters in traps</i> Noted by LobMAC.</p> <p>LobMAC noted its commitment to not exceed quota limits</p> <p><i>iii) Ocean Trap and Line issue</i> Noted by LobMAC.</p>
7. Tag update	<p>LobMAC was provided with sample tags for the 2009/10 fishing period. Committee members trialled and supported the proposed changes to these tags, including “eco labelling” on the reverse side.</p> <p>Action: Lobster Management to pursue “eco” labelled tags for second order of 2009/10 season.</p>
8. Updates	<p>a) Research The research update was provided in agenda item 4.</p> <p>b) Management LobMAC noted the proposed management projects and milestones.</p> <p>c) Compliance The compliance update was provided in agenda item 4.</p>

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	<p>d) Catch Reforms Project update NSW DPI provided an update to LobMAC on the catch reforms project. Industry noted the current status of the pilot program and the intent to implement the project by July 2009.</p> <p>Industry representatives were extremely concerned with the proposal to require lobster fishers to report individual lobster and tag numbers for those lobsters stored in, and subsequently transferred from, onshore tanks. Industry advised that this proposal will increase paperwork and non-compliance in the fishery.</p> <p>Action: NSW DPI to urgently review the issue raised by LobMAC industry representatives regarding the monitoring of onshore stored lobsters.</p>
9. Lobster Management Budget	LobMAC gave in principle endorsement of the proposed level of resources in the 2009/10 draft budget. NSW DPI noted Industry's dissatisfaction with the increase in the management charge and the current policy on cost recovery.
10. Other Business	<p><i>Unlicensed Crew</i> LobMAC industry representatives raised the issue of the discrepancies between licensed and unlicensed crew provisions across NSW commercial fisheries.</p> <p>LobMAC supported the development of a consistent approach across fisheries to assist with compliance operations and administration processes. It was agreed that the LOBMAC representative on SIAC would take the issue to SIAC.</p>
11. Chairperson's summary	<p>The Chair thanked LobMAC members and observers for the attendance and contribution to the meeting, particularly for a number of issues that required lengthy and earnest discussion.</p> <p>Meeting Closed at 5:30pm.</p>