

Draft OUTCOMES from NSW Lobster Fishery Working Group meeting held on 18 June 2013

Agenda Item	Outcome
1. Welcome, apologies and introductory remarks	<p>Meeting started at 9am</p> <p><u>Attendance:</u> Belinda Lucas (Facilitator), Noel Gogerly, Lee Monin, Peter Offner, Daniel Stewart, Scott Westley, Oliver Wady Geoff Liggins, Tony Chen.</p> <p><u>Non attendance:</u> NCC Representative</p>
2. Correspondence received and sent	<p>The correspondence received and sent by the group was noted. For future meetings, due to lack of use of this agenda item – it will be removed from both the agenda and the outcomes.</p> <p>Outcome: Noted.</p>
3. Confirmation of final minutes from the LIWG meeting held on	<p>The NSW Lobster Fishery Working Group members confirmed the Final Draft minutes from the Lobster Industry Working Group meeting held on 26 June 2012 as being a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>
4. Business arising from previous meetings	<p>The WG noted the current status of action items.</p> <p>Action items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Representatives of the WG have formed an independent body, the NSW Rocklobster Association Inc., to assist in running the upcoming Rocklobster Congress held in Sydney in September 2013. This association has also opened a bank account as part of this process. This bank account may continue after the congress has been finalised to provide a voluntary stream of revenue in order to facilitate independent lobster specialists attending industry meetings in the future. 3. Compliance will be reviewing the monetary value and industry awareness of the reward system for fishers who report illegal fishing activity. The reward is dependant on successful prosecution which means that distribution of the reward can take some time. Options will also be considered of how to raise public awareness of this reward ie: promote on departmental Twitter site and media pages and advertising on Bag and Size limit signage. Compliance will provide an update at the next meeting. 4. Previously industry has raised concerns about the potential factors that will affect their ability to comply with 'Fishonline'. The pre-landing report is scheduled to go ahead and DPI continues to work with industry on the best way forward. An industry member advised that there was a mobile application called 'Deckhand' that was already in use in SA and there would be an update of how the application works when at sea at the upcoming Sydney Lobster Congress in September 2013.

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	5. Compliance continues to monitor fishing activity at game fishing tournaments, particularly in the Port Stephens area. Informational packs are supplied by the recreational sector advising entrants of relevant considerations and legislation.
5. Update on the Total Allowable Catch setting and Review Committee (TAC Committee) program for 2013/14	<p>At the Lobster TACC meeting held on the 17.6.2013, both the WG and TAC Committee members were provided with an overview of the information submitted from DPI Management, Compliance, and Science and Research for the TAC Committee members deliberations on the 2013/14 TACC.</p> <p>At the WG meeting held on the 18.6.2013, industry representatives were asked if there were any questions relating to the departmental reports.</p> <p>Outcome: Industry did not require any clarification, however it was requested that the TAC meeting would not be scheduled on a Monday in future and also advance warnings of the meeting date was required from the TAC Committee members.</p>
6. Management Charges for the Lobster Fishery	<p>NSW DPI Management provided an update on the current management charges for 2013/14. The management charge for 2013/14 is \$51.57 per share. This is an increase \$2.25 per share from the previous fishing period, attributable to an 2.5% CPI increase and a change in the proportion of monies recovered from administration fees for lobster quota transfers, which also occurs in the Abalone budget.</p> <p>Outcome: Industry supported the change, however commented that the lobster fishery had vast differences to the Abalone fishery and that they should not continue to be grouped together just because they were both quota fisheries.</p>
7. Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)	<p>An industry representative requested discussion about the implementation of compulsory VMS on all offshore boats in the Lobster fishery, which would be used by compliance to monitor location of lobster fishing vessels on waterways. VMS enables compliance to track the activity of commercial fishing vessels. This means that illegal fishing activity, such as incursions into protected waters, can be promptly identified - a significant deterrent to would-be cheats. VMS is available via onboard equipment or a mobile phone application such as vessel tracker.</p> <p>Outcome: Although it was noted that legislative changes would be required before VMS could be implemented, industry and compliance discussed the options of utilising the existing Commonwealth infrastructure to lower costs. The option of making VMS mandatory when stakeholders have been convicted of illegal fishing activity was also discussed.</p> <p>Action Item: Compliance would investigate costs of VMS with the Commonwealth in order to provide information back to industry.</p>
8. Validating Lobster weights while at sea	<p>Lobster fisher, Gavin Shankland provided a document for discussion at the meeting, claiming that the current rules to record validated weight while in rough sea conditions are affecting his ability to accurately record the correct weights, and in effect makes him non-compliant.</p> <p>Outcome: The department and industry thanked Mr Shankland for the opportunity to provide feedback. Industry representatives made the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was each fishers responsibility to ensure that they record validated weight accurately and if this was difficult then individual fishing operations need to be changed • If penning at sea was a problem, then there is the option of buying a second hand tank to store landed lobsters from

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	other fishers in the industry or alternatively explore more preferable locations on the water to pen.
9. Submission to change lobster season to run from 1 December to 30 November annually	<p>Wayne Bramble has submitted a proposal to amend the lobster season to run from 1 December to 30 November annually To implement such a suggested change of season –the first year of implementation will see the season run from 1st August 2013 – 1st December 2014.</p> <p>Outcome: The department and industry thanked Mr Bramble for the opportunity to provide feedback. Industry representatives advised that they had spoken to various lobster fishers about the proposal and at this stage there was no wide spread support across the fishery.</p> <p>Management advised that a consultation paper would be sent out in the second half of 2013/14 lobster season to review and seek feedback on the season start change from July to August which commenced in 2011/12. Stakeholders should respond as to whether they wished to keep the August start or revert back to July. This is also the appropriate forum to raise any other options regarding season changes to benefit the majority of the Lobster fishery.</p>
10. 8 th Trans Tasman Rock Lobster Congress – Sydney, 1-3 September 2013	<p>The 8th Trans Tasman Rock Lobster Congress is scheduled to be held in Sydney in September. In an effort to further promote the Eastern Rock Lobster and to provide delegates with a small sample of lobster, industry representatives have requested that specific shareholder/s are permitted to catch lobsters for consumption at the congress. The lobsters would be required to have a compliance tag attached and not be debited from any individual lobster fishers quota balance. Expected amount in kilos is dependant on attendees at congress, approximately 100-150kgs.</p> <p>Outcome: The department supported in-principle the taking of lobsters for consumption at the congress with compliance tags attached and recommended that industry pursue this fishing activity under a Section 37 permit application.</p>
11. Other business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Geoff Liggins, Supervisor, Scientific Services presented a brief overview of the Expression of Interest (EOI) lodged with FRDC titled "Direct age determination with validation for commercially important Australian lobster and crab species (western, eastern, southern and ornate rock lobster, and crystal, Tasmanian giant and mud crab)". <p>Outcome: The working group recognised the potential benefits of a validated method for the direct ageing of Eastern rocklobsters and given the potential benefits for stock assessment and management of the NSW fishery, the working group resolved to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. support the involvement of NSW DPI research personnel in the project; b. provide an up-front \$10,000 contribution to the project (subject to successfully gaining FRDC funding; this money to come from the industry funds provided to the NSW DPI rock lobster research budget). <p>A letter of endorsement will be forwarded to FRDC from Belinda Lucas, Lobster Manager on behalf of industry representatives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <u>Lobster tags for the 2013/14 fishing period</u> – An initial order of 150,000 tags have been placed with Mega Fortris Australia Pty Ltd at a price of \$177 + GST per thousand which is an increase of \$2 per thousand due to delivery to regional Coffs Harbour. This is a total of \$26,550 excluding GST. The tags will be yellow with bold black text and

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	<p>yellow inserts.</p> <p>Outcome: Noted</p> <p>3. Tony Chen, Special Operations, Compliance discussed with industry options to tighten up the validating process, in particular the 2 hour window in which fishers have to validate catch. Various ideas were discussed and industry was going to think about options that could suit both industry and compliance and report back at the next meeting and compliance would continue to monitor the situation and inspect fishers where appropriate.</p> <p>Outcome: For discussion at next meeting.</p> <p>4. Finclipping –Finclipping was discussed as a means to prevent black marketing of high value species such as Eastern rocklobster. Both industry representatives and departmental staff did not consider that this was an option worth pursuing as all lobsters commercially caught in NSW are required to have tags attached and any commercial fishers who sell lobsters are required to keep prescribed records of the sale.</p> <p>Outcome: Noted</p> <p>5. Letter from Rob Oakshott sent to the PFA and referred to Lobster management via Daniel Gogerly regarding prospective artificial reef at Old Bar beach.</p> <p>Outcome: Noted</p>
16. Meeting Close	The department thanked all participants for attending the meeting and closed the meeting at 3pm.