

Agenda Item	Outcome
Welcome and Apologies	Members and observers were welcomed.
Agreement on Agenda	Agenda agreed.
Confirmation of Draft Minutes	Outcomes from previous meeting confirmed.
Correspondence sent and received	Correspondence received and sent noted.
Business arising from previous minutes	<p>List of actions noted, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate reporting of value of product and re-valuing of fisheries is an industry wide issue that EPTMAC and DPI are keen to progress subject to FMS & DPI priorities and resourcing requirements. • The River Keeper program in the Hawkesbury River has not been initiated. • Maritime and Safety Training NSW conducts training programs for the commercial fishing industry. <p>Action - Discussion on the research on 'riddling' to be included on the Agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>Action - DPI to mail to all Hawkesbury and Hunter EPT fishers permit applications for square-mesh codends.</p> <p>Action - DPI to review pricing and valuation methodologies in the EPT fishery when resources are available.</p>
Updates	<p>The Committee noted the updates provided, in particular the status of the beam trawl trial in the Clarence River and that beam trawls may have positive benefits in terms of reduced fuel consumption and reduced bycatch.</p> <p>Action - DPI to develop policy regarding industry initiated trials / research on gear related initiatives.</p> <p>Action - Hawkesbury EPT representative to arrange with the local DFO the appropriate time to meet with constituents to form a joint DPI/Industry working group and agree on approach for responding to small prawns or high levels of bycatch under the 'prawn count' and 'incidental catch ratio' program, noting the success experienced</p>

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	<p>in the Clarence River.</p> <p>Action – Hunter EPT representative to liaise with local DFO on concept of continuing to respond to small prawns or high levels of bycatch under the ‘prawn count’ and ‘incidental catch ratio’ program as they have in the past, noting that the fishing closure requires the DFO to consult a local working group before instigating closures.</p>
Marine Pests	<p>The Committee noted that DPI Aquatic Biosecurity is working with the fishing industry, other federal, state and territory agencies and the wider community to develop voluntary best practice guidelines to help prevent the invasion of marine pests in NSW. Industry was advised to report any sightings of marine pests to DPI.</p>
Share Management Plans and Stage 2 Regulation Reform	<p>The Committee supported the proposed amendments to the <i>Fisheries Management (General) Regulation 2002</i> and the movement of provisions from the General Regulation into the <i>Fisheries Management (Estuary Prawn Trawl Share Management Plan) Regulation 2006</i>.</p>
Square-mesh Codends	<p>DPI advised that the minimum mesh size of 27 mm recommended by Science and Research for square-mesh codends in the EPT fishery is subject to Ministerial approval and that all fishers will be informed of codend specifications through a DPI proposed industry wide information paper early 2008. The Committee noted that permits issued under section 37 of the Act authorising the use of square-mesh codends provide for a codend circumference up to 2.3 m.</p> <p>The Committee noted Industry concern regarding the measurement of the mesh size of square-mesh codends. DPI advised that at this stage it is intended that the provisions of the General Regulation that describe the measuring device, and the method of measuring mesh size will continue to be used to determine the mesh size of square-mesh codends.</p> <p>Action – DPI to consider the MAC’s suggestion that a small working group of relevant DPI and industry experts be formed to review the efficacy of the current method of measuring mesh size in respect of square-mesh codends.</p>
BRD’s in the EPT	<p>The Committee supported the removal of the Quality Clarence Panel and Diamond BRDs from the list of approved</p>

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Fishery	BRDs for use in all estuaries of the EPT fishery.
New size limits for flounder and sole species	<p>The Committee noted Industry concern regarding (i) the new size limits imposed on flounder, sole and silver trevally, and (ii) the potential for misinterpretation by fishers in relation to the interaction between clause 38 of the General Regulation relating to taking fish subject to size limits and species lists in the EPT share management plan.</p> <p>The Committee supported the proposed amendment to the legislation that removes the prohibition on retaining a prohibited size class of fish and to allow the use of an otter trawl net (prawns) to take the 'target' and 'byproduct' species that are listed in the EPT share management plan.</p> <p>The Committee noted that silver trevally is not a 'byproduct' species in the EPTSMP or EPTFMS and DPI's advice that it is an offence to retain flounder, sole and silver trevally.</p> <p>Action – Industry representatives to include in the next agenda a list of species that they wish to be added to the 'byproduct' lists in the EPTSMP.</p> <p>Action - DPI to investigate a potential moratorium on the prohibition on the retention of flounder and sole by Hawkesbury EPT fishers and provide advice to Industry as soon as practicable.</p>
Opening and closing time Hunter River EPT	<p>The Committee noted the proposals tabled by the Hunter River representative and the importance of fishers reaching consensus regarding arrangements in their fishery and supported a review of the opening and closing arrangements of the Hunter River EPT fishery for the 2009/10 season following the establishment of the most appropriate gear for use in the fishery.</p> <p>Action – Hunter MAC representative to consult with fishers regarding a review of the seasonal arrangements for the Hunter River EPT fishery for the 2009/10 season.</p>
Brooklyn Sewage Treatment Plant	The Committee noted the update provided by the Hawkesbury River representative on the Brooklyn Sewerage Treatment Plant and supported that representative writing to the NSW Food Authority to seek clarification on

Agenda Item	Outcome
	matters regarding the prawn 'no cook – no cool' zone.
Hawkesbury EPT Issues Paper	<p>The Committee commended Mary Howard on her presentation and diligent work that outlined the deleterious catchment management practices that affect fisheries productivity in the Hawkesbury River.</p> <p>The Committee supported providing advice to the Minister regarding a potential sub-committee of SIAC and ACoRF (including relevant experts) to initiate the development of a strategy that identifies (i) the key water quality parameters necessary for sustainable fisheries, and (ii) establishes a mechanism to maintain and improve the environmental conditions required for sustainable fisheries production. The Committee noted that the strategy could be similar to the NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy and would be of benefit to all fisheries.</p> <p>Action - Chairperson to write to the Minister regarding the potential development of the above strategy.</p> <p>Action - SIAC and ACoRF representatives to raise this issue at next SIAC and ACoRF meetings.</p>
Other Business	<p>The Committee noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report on Aquatic Weeds Management in the Hawkesbury-Nepean River has not been released by the NSW Government • The report on Structural Adjustment in NSW Commercial Fisheries has been submitted to the Minister • DPI is in the process of reviewing the catch reporting system to improve the accuracy, efficiency and compliance of catch reporting <p>Action - DPI to table a draft EPTFMS performance assessment at next meeting.</p> <p>Action - DPI to distribute updated EPTMAC contact details to all members as soon as possible (members approval was granted).</p> <p>Action - DPI to update committee on any DPI submission made to the RTA regarding Pacific Highway upgrades over the Hunter River at the next meeting.</p>

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Next meeting	The Chairperson thanked all members and observers for attending the meeting and advised the date for the next meeting would be determined out of session following the release of the report on Structural Adjustment in NSW Commercial Fisheries, noting that a meeting should be held prior to June 2008.