



Chair's summary report to Minister

24 & 25 November 2022 (Meeting 25)

Dear Minister

CommFish NSW held a regional meeting at Merimbula NSW on the 24 and 25 November and preceded the meeting with an informal get-together with local industry members. The get-together was very successful in that some of the issues raised by industry were able to be dealt with whilst in attendance or by DPI the following day.

Members welcomed the opportunity to engage with the Program Manager for the pilot Stay Afloat program that has been funded by the Australian Government. With many factors contributing to the mental health of the NSW fishing sector and their families, it gave insight into how this important program will be rolled out and the benefits to the industry.

The workshop conducted by Dr Ian Knuckey on harvest strategies was well received. It was noted that his layman approach would benefit future harvest strategy working groups to gain a better understanding of the process and the presentation should be part of their induction.

A presentation from Parks Australia was provided on the funding and implementation of the vessel monitoring system (VMS) for commercial fishing vessels entering Australian Marine Parks.

CommFish was pleased to hear that the Business Efficiency Program is progressing and look forward to further changes in the future.

The MFAC Commercial fishing representative gave a comprehensive update on the programs/work he has completed over the term of his appointment. In anticipation of the expression of interest to fill the forthcoming vacant positions on MFAC, CommFish and RFNSW, the Council agreed unanimously to support the current member to reapply for his position on MFAC.

Council was also provided with an update on the Southern Trawl Fishery with confirmation that the Federal Government will be going ahead with their proposed restructure/buyback in the South East Trawl fishery with a timeline set for it to be completed by the beginning of the quota year on 1 May 2023. If or how NSW can participate is still to be determined.

The meeting also received presentations and were able to ask questions on:

- The Aboriginal Harvest Strategy Framework project
- The Shark Program and the SharkSmart App
- An update on the Recreational Fishing Environmental Assessment
- An update from the Program Leader, Commercial Fisheries
- An update from the Deputy Director General
- Shellfish Committee and the concern with water quality for production
- The Aboriginal Cultural Fishing Local Management Plan update
- The shape cultural change in the NSW Northern Fish Trawl sector project
- An update on the FishOnline Modernisation Project
- An update from the Program Leader, Resource Management and in particular a further update on both the Mulloway and Spanner crab Harvest Strategies

A date for the next CommFish meeting will be considered once all member positions have been filled via the expression of interest process.

All CommFish members have made a great contribution to fisheries management in NSW, and I would like to especially acknowledge the work of the retiring members whose tenures ceased on 30 November 2022.

Regards



Stuart Richey AM, Chairman
CommFish NSW