

**FINAL MEETING OUTCOMES**

Our Ref: OUT22/12009

MEETING	<b>Charter Fishing NSW Working Group – CFNSW</b>
DATE / TIME	3 August 2022 010:00 – 12:30 hours
LOCATION	Virtual Meeting via MS Teams
ATTENDEES	John Paton (Chair) Andrew Trappel (Region 2) Scott Thorrington (Region 3) John Lee (Region 4 North), Roland Persson (Region 4 South) Ann Garard (Region 5) Vic Levett (RFNSW)
APOLOGIES	Kyle Cush (Region 1), Peter Dugan (Region 6), Bill Deveril (Region 7),

**1. Introduction by the Chair**

The Chair welcomed members to the second CFNSW meeting in 2022 and provided an acknowledgement of Country. The meeting opened at 10:05 am.

**2. Register of Interests**

The Chair requested that members declare any conflicts of interests on the register of interest's form (Appendix A to the agenda). No new interests since the last meeting were declared.

**Action item:** Members to respond to email request from DPI and return register of interest form sent via email to charter.fishing@dpi.nsw.gov.au

**3. Agreement on the outcomes from the previous meeting**

The outcomes from the previous meeting held on 15 March 2022 were tabled (provided in Appendix B to the agenda). The outcomes were unanimously supported by present members as being a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**4. Correspondence sent and received**

The correspondence list was noted by the Working Group.

**5. Action List**

Items in the action list were discussed. It was noted that the completed items will be removed from the Action list.

**6. Updates**

**a) Management update**

DPI provided a management update to the Working Group, which included an update on the easing of COVID restrictions, industry promotion, catch reporting statistics, FADS, Artificial reef deployment and fish stocking programs.

COVID – It was noted that the mandatory NSW restrictions previously applicable to charter operations have been removed. Charter fishing operators are encouraged to continue to operate under COVID safe plans to minimise the spread of COVID.

Licence renewal process – The 2022-23 charter licence renewal applications were sent in June. Approximately 90% licence renewal application have been received to date, with new licence cards being issued. DPI will contact remaining licence holders who have not yet returned their renewal applications.

Industry promotion – an update was given on the current industry promotion strategy, with a continued preferred approach to promote the industry through social media. It was noted that the Dine and Discover program ended on the 30 June 2022. Members were advised that the NSW Government 'Parents NSW' \$50 voucher for accommodation and entertainment (arts, tourism and recreational activities) remains open until 9 October 2022.

It was suggested by the Chair that the charter fishing promotional pamphlet be updated, which was supported by the members. The use of short industry promotional video (including the benefits of the use of FADs to charter operators) will be further investigated.

**Action Item:** DPI to pursue opportunities to develop and use short duration videos, including any value adding that may be achievable through the 'Fish for Life' initiative. DPI to revise and produce a promotional pamphlet for use by industry and tourism outlets.

Catch Reporting - DPI provided an update on catch records reporting rates which was trending in the 95-percentile range following previous management and compliance action but has subsequently declined. The Working Group was advised that targeted client support will be utilised in the first instance, with follow up compliance action to be undertaken as necessary. It was noted by the Working Group that catch reporting is an integral component to the stock assessment process for individual species.

**Action item:** DPI to undertake targeted client support to assist operators in completing their catch records. Non-compliant operators will be referred to Fisheries Compliance. DPI to continue to investigate avenues of advising operators of overdue records more promptly.

Changes to NSW recreational fishing rules – DPI provided an update on recent changes to bag, size and possession limits for Dusky Flathead and Lobster species. The working Group was supportive of these changes noting the change in size limits for Dusky Flathead as a positive approach to species sustainability.

**Action item:** DPI undertake targeted communication to charter operators via 'Charter Chatter' newsletter advising of the relevant changes.

FADs, Artificial reefs and Fish Stocking programs – DPI provided an update on the FADs, Artificial Reef deployment and Fish Stocking programs. All FADs have been retrieved for the 2021/22 season with deployment for the 2022/23 season to commence shortly. The

CFNSW members advised that there had been some interaction issues over the use of specific regional FAD locations by commercial fishers.

**Action item:** DPI to investigate the interaction issues reported by CFNSW members and to report back to the Working Group.

It was noted that the next offshore artificial reef location was announced for the Central Coast.

The Working group was pleased with the recent stocking of Mulloway and Dusky flathead fingerlings into recreational fishing havens and noted that further fishing stocking planned later this year.

Compliance update – DPI provided an update from Fisheries Compliance on recent actions on illegal charter operations and regulatory infringement. It was reiterated that current regulatory amendments would help to strengthen fisheries compliance activities regarding illegal operators advertising.

#### **b) Research**

DPI provided an update on the Monitoring of Recreational Fishing in NSW and results of the 2019/20 state-wide Survey. It was noted that the NSW Charter Fishing Monitoring program including the logbook data is an essential data source for species stock assessments including stock performance and economic indicators.

#### **c) CFNSW members updates**

Industry members provided an update for their respective regions.

It was generally noted that the recent poor weather has had significant short-term impacts on operators, with businesses being forced to cancel some trips. Despite challenging weather conditions, members were optimistic about the future of the industry with good catches of fish in offshore areas weather permitting. The Region 4 North member presented findings of recent Kingfish tagging research.

### **7. Other business**

SMART Drumlines and Shark Listening stations - DPI gave a short update on the real time monitoring (GPS) capabilities of smart drumlines and listening stations.

**Action item:** DPI to forward members copies of the fact sheets for SMART Drumlines and Shark Listening stations.

### **8. Chairperson summary and proposed meeting date for next CFNSW meeting**

The Chairperson provided a summary of the meeting and thanked the members for their contributions to the Working Group and ongoing resilience and courage during the COVID pandemic, highlighting the need to responsibly move forward.

The next meeting was proposed to be scheduled in November 2022 and be held in person if possible.

**Meeting Closed at 12:30pm**