

Agenda Item	Outcome
Welcome and Apologies	<p>The Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed all members and observers to the meeting. The Chair welcomed Mr Kristain Holz, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Director General, Fisheries Compliance and Regional Relations and thanked him for his attendance.</p> <p>Attendance Chairperson Neil Ward</p> <p>Management Advisory Committee Representatives Mr Shane Castle Mr Gordon Farrell Mr Darren Ward Mr Murray Ham Mr Richard Bagnato Mr Paul Bagnato Mr Peter Plunkett Mr Ben Birt Ms Fiona Hill</p> <p>Observers Mr Kristain Holz Mr Peter Turnell Mr Keith Kerr Mrs Dianna Kerr Mr Hans Heipern Mr Graeme Byrnes Mr Jim Drinkwater Mr Don Johnson Mr Tony Puglisi</p>

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	<p>Dr Doug Ferrell Mr Darren Hale Mr Darryl Sullings Mr Darren Reynolds Ms Carly Goddard Mr Glenn Staples Dr Steve Montgomery Mr Malcolm Poole Mr John Harrison</p> <p>Apologies Mr George Davey Dr Kevin Rowling</p> <p>Meeting commenced: 10:00AM</p>
Agreement on agenda	Agenda agreed.
Confirmation of draft minutes	<p>The outcomes from previous meeting were approved.</p> <p>Action – DPI to replace the draft outcomes on the DPI website with the final outcomes.</p>
Correspondence sent and received	The correspondence received and sent was noted.
Business arising from previous minutes	<p>List of actions noted and updated.</p> <p>Industry representatives were reminded that maps for school whiting grounds (fish trawl only) are needed before June 30 2009.</p> <p>Action – DPI and metropolitan, south coast industry representatives to contact Greenwell Point fishers regarding southern trawl grounds.</p>

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	<p>Action – DPI to re-send Bouddi National Park extension details to MAC members.</p> <p>Metropolitan and south coast representatives advised the Committee that another research project relating to sweeps in the deepwater prawn trawl fishery would be undertaken by AFMA this year.</p> <p>Industry members advised that a proposal to amend the dimensions of the Ballina Juvenile King Prawn closure was being developed and that the Region 1 representative would work with DPI on progressing it.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the minimum size limit for trevally and industry members advised that they had unsuccessfully tried using different size mesh in an attempt to reduce discarding of undersize trevally. Industry advised that a minimum size limit of 27 cm would reduce discarding. The Committee was reminded that a full review of NSW bag & size limits is due in approximately 2 ½ years time.</p> <p>Industry noted the large numbers of ocean jacket in NSW waters. The Conservation representative informed the MAC that leatherjackets had been recently added to the “Nice Choice” program administered by the New South Wales Nature Conservation Council (NCC).</p>
Updates	<p>The Committee noted the updates provided by industry representatives, DPI Management, Research and Compliance.</p> <p>Industry members indicated that they were encountering difficulties in finding employees with appropriate deckhand and skipper qualifications.</p> <p>Action – DPI to invite NSW Maritime to the next MAC meeting to discuss the industry proposal for a deckhand trial period.</p> <p>DPI provided an update on the Share Appeals Process and noted the delay in finalising the process.</p> <p>The committee was advised that the transitional minimum shareholding arrangements for OT cease to have effect on 5 August 2009. After this time all shareholders will need to meet the minimum shareholding requirements to be eligible for an endorsement.</p> <p>The Committee noted that DPI Aquatic Biosecurity is working with the fishing industry, other federal, state and territory</p>

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	<p>agencies and the wider community to help prevent the invasion of marine pests in NSW. Committee members were provided with marine pest information cards.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the NCC 'Nice choice' project and the Sydney Fish Market – 'Aussie Seafood—Brought to you by our fishermen' Industry promotion initiative.</p> <p>Action – DPI to provide Committee members with a link to the NCC 'Nice Choice' page.</p> <p>DPI advised the Committee about concerns being raised by the Bureau of Rural Science and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) regarding the status of dogfish/gulper sharks. DPI also advised that the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts would be reviewing applications for several species to be listed on the National Threatened Species list.</p> <p>Industry Committee members expressed their belief that dogfish stocks are sustainable and that any changes in catches over recent years may be associated with reduced effort targeting royal red prawns due their low market value and high fuel costs.</p> <p>Action – DPI to provide the MAC with information regarding any dogfish/gulper shark assessments being undertaken.</p> <p>A research update information paper, by Dr Kevin Rowling, was provided to the Committee.</p> <p>Dr Steve Montgomery, DPI Research, provided an update on the outcomes of the FRDC research project 'Studies of the growth and mortality of school prawns'. The research is intended to estimate parameters needed to model the growth and rates of fishing mortality for school prawns. Preliminary results were presented to the Committee and the final report is expected to be submitted to FRDC in June 09.</p> <p>An update was also given on research being undertaken to determine the age compositions of commercially important octopus species.</p> <p>DPI Compliance provided a presentation and the Committee noted the good compliance rate. DPI Compliance emphasised the requirement for fishers to have their licence and fishing business cards in possession during fishing operations.</p>

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<p>Structural Adjustment and future direction for the OT Fishery</p>	<p>The following package of reforms (also known as the “Pyrmont Pact”), developed by SIAC and its working group in consultation with DPI, was presented as a way of enhancing the long-term sustainability and viability of commercial fisheries.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a suite of tools to provide for tradeable input and output controls 2. Provide for initial restructuring with minimum shareholdings and exit grants 3. Comprehensive review of regulatory requirements and streamlining DPI administrative systems 4. Review cost recovery 5. Comprehensive review of fishing closures 6. Move focus toward risk-based resource management 7. Initiate an industry development program 8. Enhanced industry voice to government <p>The Committee acknowledged DPI’s commitment to work with industry on structural reform and gave in principle support for the reform package.</p> <p>Industry members strongly supported presenting this reform package to the broader industry through a road show.</p> <p>Action – DPI to provide Industry MAC members with a summary of the structural adjustment presentation.</p> <p>Action – Industry members to further review the package for reform within their regions and provide comment to DPI as soon as possible.</p>
<p>Catch record reform project</p>	<p>DPI provided an update on the progress of the Catch Record Reform Project. The Committee was advised that the new catch reporting system is due to commence in July 2009.</p> <p>Industry recognised the need for finer scale temporal and spatial reporting however raised concerns with privacy and access to the data.</p>

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	<p>Industry suggested that 'catch return' boxes be set up at some of the larger co-ops and Sydney Fish Markets.</p> <p>DPI advised the Committee of a new project being developed to provide for online Fishing Business transactions through a secure website. The potential benefits of an online bulletin board for advertising fishing authorities were noted by the Committee.</p>
License splitting policy	<p>The Committee was provided with a presentation explaining the Review into the Displacement of Fishing Effort (following the Federal Government's <i>Securing Our Fishing Future</i> business exit scheme) and, a new risk based approach to determining actions to take in response to licence splitting (or future proposal to licence split).</p> <p>Metropolitan and south coast industry representatives raised concerns with the methodology (particularly that used in determining the 'benchmark') and the potential impacts on the supply of local fish to the public of NSW.</p> <p>Committee members were advised that affected parties should exercise their rights through the 'show cause' process.</p>
Effort unit Transfer policy	<p>Advice was sought from the Committee regarding reinstatement of a policy restricting trading of Queensland Trawl Effort Units. There was general discussion regarding the licence splitting methodology and how that would interact with this policy.</p> <p>Action – To be placed on agenda at the next MAC meeting. Background information to include advice on the number of OT businesses with QLD trawl entitlements and an assessment of the associated risks.</p>
Regulatory Reform	<p>The Committee noted DPI's proposed amendments to the Ocean Trawl Share Management Plan.</p> <p>Some specific proposals were discussed;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Modifications to the registration requirements for nets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment supported 2) Carriage of stowed commercial fishing gear through closed waters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment supported

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	3) The South West Rocks juvenile king prawn closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action – DPI to discuss the changes that were previously agreed with the Region 3 MAC representative. 4) Clarifying boat capacity provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already in place & supported
Code of Practice	The Committee supported the drafting of an OT Code of Practice (CoP). Action – DPI to send Committee members guidelines for CoP's and an example from another fishery. Action – Committee members to draft an OT CoP and provide to DPI to review.
Species Recovery Planning Process	The Committee noted the planning process and DPI advised that it is proposed that initial consultation will occur with the Resource Assessment Review Committee. General discussion regarding the terminology for species exploitation status, particularly the negative connotation that may be implied by the term 'growth overfished'. The Conservation representative suggested that DPI clearly define specific terminology used in relevant publications.
Bycatch Reduction Devices	The Committee discussed the gazetted BRD's and the following outcomes were agreed; Deepwater Square-mesh Panel Although the specifications for the Deepwater Square-mesh Panel BRD has, for the past 9 years, required the BRD to be placed within 40 meshes of the drawstring, Industry representatives advised that there is significant loss of product in the case of large single rig trawlers at this position. Industry suggested an amendment to the current specification so that the base of panel is within 100 meshes of the codend drawstring. Action – DPI to review earlier research undertaken by AFMA and provide comment at next meeting.

Radial Escape Panel

General discussion regarding the effectiveness of the Radial Escape Panel BRD was held. Industry advised that as the square-mesh material covers the full circumference of the net the distance from the drawstring to the opening panel needed to be greater than 1.2 metres to reduce potential loss of saleable product.

Committee recommendation: Amend the current specification to provide for a maximum distance from the drawstring to the rear of the square-mesh panel opening of 1.6 metres.

Ocean Square-mesh Panel

The Committee discussed proposed specifications for the Ocean Square-mesh Panel BRD.

Committee Recommendation:

Amend the current specifications by deleting specification 1 and inserted the following under Panel A:

- Maximum distance of 1.5 metres from the drawstring (stretched measurement when not in use);
- Also amend the current circumference of the codend to 3.2 metres.

Big Eye

The Committee discussed a proposal to amend the current specification for the Big Eye BRD to be placed at a maximum distance from drawstring to opening (floats) of 1.5 metres. Industry suggested that 1.6 metres was more appropriate to ensure the taper (which runs back ~1 metre) does not end in the square-mesh component of a codend.

Committee recommendation: Amend the current specification to provide for a maximum distance from the drawstring to the opening (floats) of 1.6 metres.

Nordmore Grid

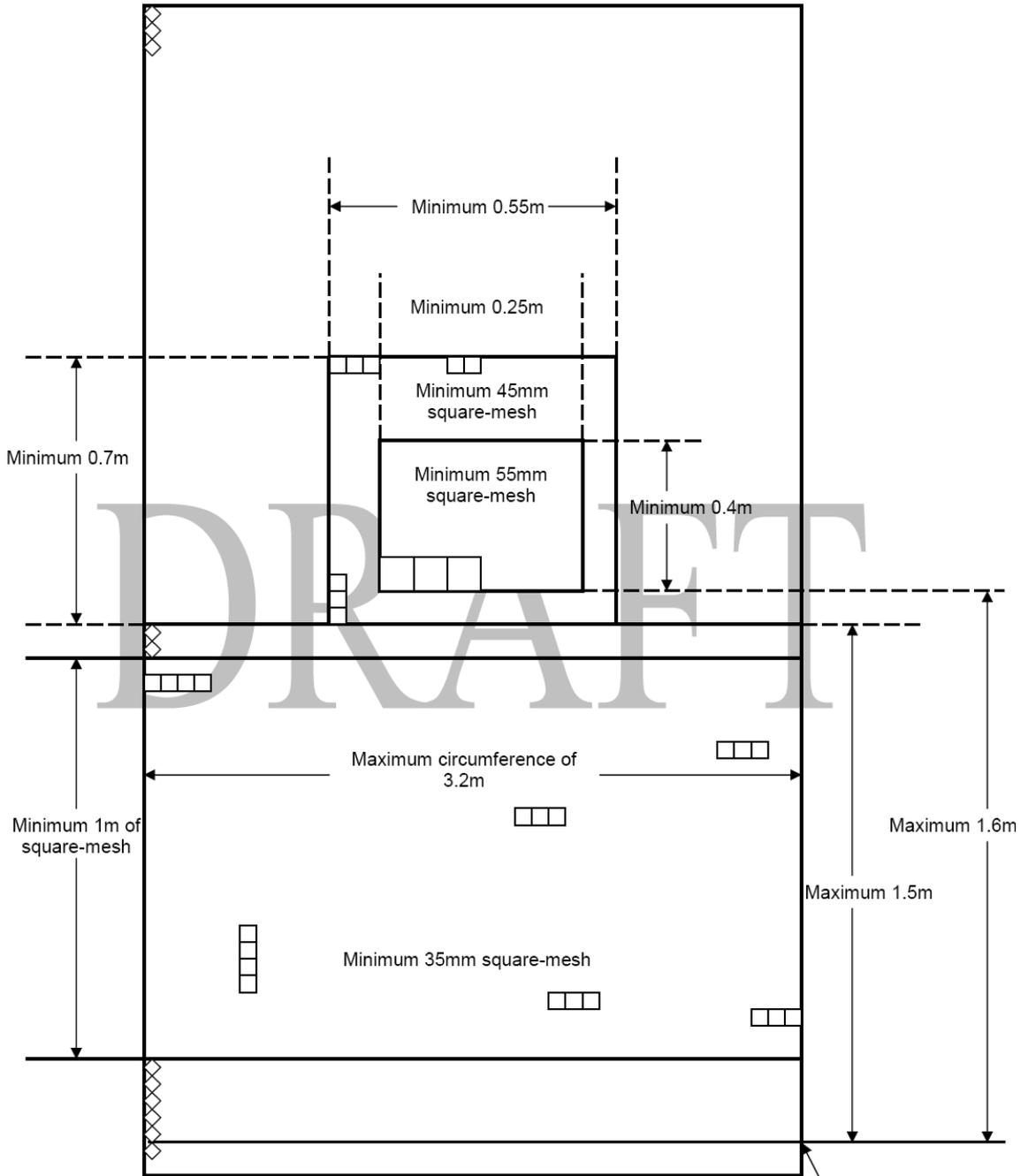
No changes required. It was noted that there is no need for a distance from codend specification as it is a mechanical BRD.

The Committee noted that fishers are able to apply for a permit to trial bigger Nordmore grids in the King Prawn fishery (similar to the grids in Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) used in QLD).

<p>Square-mesh codends</p>	<p>The Committee discussed the proposed square-mesh codend specifications. The MAC noted information from the Region 2 industry representative on his recent trials of square-mesh codends. Industry members discussed issues of small king prawns being taken in estuarine fisheries, loss of small whiting from 35mm square-mesh codends and meshing of fish. Industry members expressed a desire to reduce the minimum mesh size for square-mesh codends to 33mm. The Committee was reminded that research indicates 35mm square-mesh is an appropriate size for use in the fishery, although the operational issues and Industry's concerns were noted.</p> <p>The Committee noted Industry's concerns with growth overfishing of king prawns in other sectors and the perceived inequity in minimum mesh sizes between sectors.</p> <p>It was agreed that the square-mesh codend specifications should be refined as far as possible to address operational issues and that DPI would work with industry to firm up a process for evaluating the effectiveness of any industry preferred alternatives. After discussion the MAC supported the specifications for square-mesh codends contained in Attachment 1.</p> <p>Industry members tabled the following diamond-mesh codend as the alternative to square-mesh codends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The body of the net to have a minimum diamond-mesh size of 45 mm, • The codend of the net to have a minimum diamond-mesh size of 43 mm. • The BRD will be located a maximum of 1.5 metres from the drawstring with the larger (inside) section of the BRD starting at 1.6 metres from the drawstring. • The codend of the net have a maximum circumference of 150 meshes. <p>It was noted that this proposal was similar to the diamond-mesh codends already tested. DPI committed to working with Industry to assess the effectiveness of alternatives prior to the 1 November 2009 implementation date.</p>
<p>Other business</p>	<p>A number of the issues raised by the Committee in other business were addressed in previous agenda items.</p> <p>It was noted that DPI has not yet reviewed the nomination process as previously requested by the MAC (refer Action status list). DPI re-iterated previous advice that the action is low priority however may be reviewed as part of proposed</p>

	<p>IT reforms (online log books, share trading etc).</p> <p>The Committee discussed effort controls in the OPT – Industry representatives proposed that boat length and net size requirements stay the same, however open up hull units & horsepower. DPI advised the Committee that they may like to address this out of session and create a list of proposals that could be included in the structural reform process.</p> <p>The Committee discussed prawn counts for king prawns and noted Industry’s concern that other sectors are harvesting king prawns below optimum size. DPI advised the MAC that prawn count closures are due for renewal over the next year and a half.</p> <p>Proposals that the minimum shareholding requirements for OT should be increased again were discussed. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the next MAC meeting and addressed through the structural reform process.</p> <p>There was also discussion about introducing a cap the number of nights worked by any OT fishing business at 180 (monitored through logbooks). It was agreed that a proposal for a cap on nights could be included in the structural reform process.</p> <p>Action: Minimum shareholding requirements for OT to be an agenda item at the next MAC meeting.</p>
<p>Chairperson summary and next meeting date</p>	<p>The Chairperson thanked all members and observers for their attendance and contributions to discussions during the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee especially thanked the Region 2 representative Mr Gordon Farrell for his efforts and noted that this is his last OTMAC meeting. The Chair acknowledged the efforts of NSW DPI representative Mr Darren Hale and noted the change in his roles within NSW DPI.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the next meeting be held 28 &/or 29 October 2009.</p>

NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY

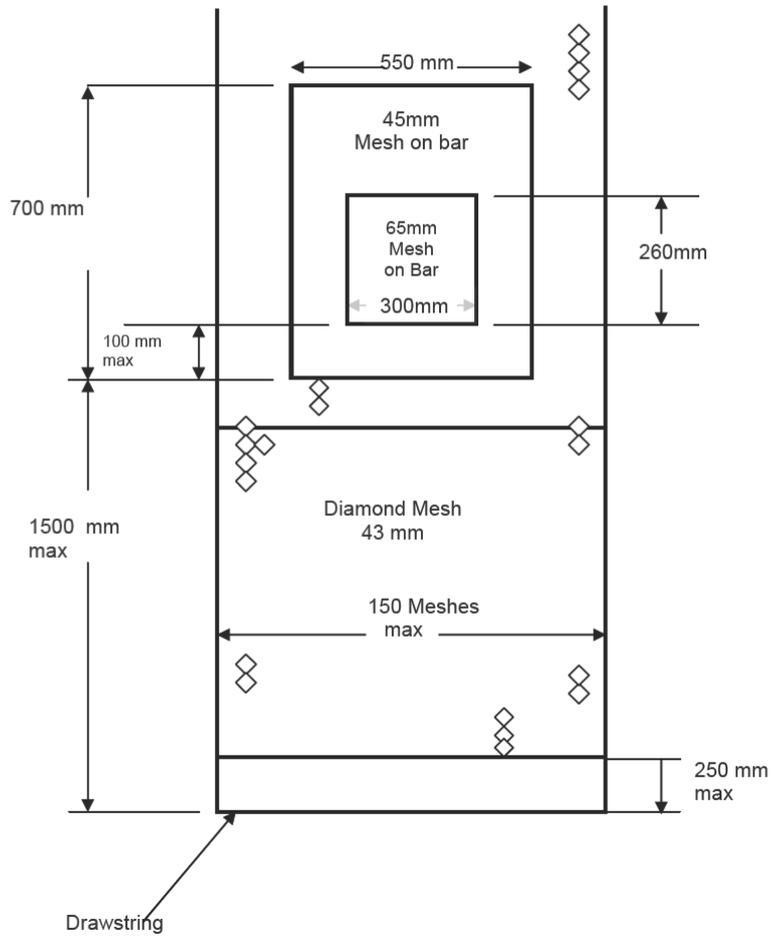


Note: The square-mesh codend can be between 1 and 3 metres in length.

Drawstring: Noting there are several options with respect to where and how the drawstring may be inserted.

Attachment 2 for May 2009 OPT MAC meeting outcomes

**Industry Preferred Diamond Mesh Codend with
Modified Composite Square Mesh Panel (All Waters)**



Note: All Dimensions are minimum unless specified