



Chair's summary report to Minister (Meeting 18)

15 March 2021

Dear Minister

CommFish NSW met in Newcastle on the 23rd and 24th of February for meeting number 18, This was the first full face to face meeting possible since early last year and had a very full agenda.

Prior to further discussion on the Business Efficiency Program (BEP) the members recommended that in order to have full transparency, all future submissions made on any fisheries consultation process should be made public unless it was specifically requested to withhold sensitive or confidential information.

The meeting dealt with a further 33 proposals from a number of fisheries for the BEP and made recommendations on whether to pursue the proposal through the joint CommFish/Recfish Working Group, to send the proposal to DPI Fisheries for further action or to not pursue the proposal.

CommFish NSW also discussed the high cost of obtaining a Fish Receiver Permit and were of the view that this is a major deterrent in enabling fishers to sell directly to restaurants or the public and it's removal would greatly improve marketing opportunities, in particular for lesser known species. The meeting requested that DPI Fisheries examine all means of reducing the cost of the Fish Receiver Permit as a matter of urgency.

CommFish received a presentation on the Commercial Fishing System Modernisation and also a progress report from BDO on their economic review of the NSW fishing industry. Although they support the economic review, industry members are concerned that the proposed questionnaire is far to complex in its current form and offered to work with BDO and the Department to make the questionnaire more user friendly before it goes out to the wider industry.

The meeting again discussed the black marketing of seafood products as this is such a big issue for the ongoing viability of commercial fishers. Industry members are keen to meet with the compliance team to discuss "re-engineering" the compliance program to achieve a more effective outcome.

Black marketing of seafood and fish receiver permits were also discussed in the joint CommFish/Recfish meeting and you will receive a report of that meeting in the near future.

A date or meeting place has not yet been set for the next meeting of CommFish NSW.

Regards

Stuart Richey
Chairman
CommFish NSW