

**FINAL MEETING OUTCOMES**

Our Ref: OUT23/13204

MEETING	<b>Charter Fishing NSW Working Group (CFNSW)</b>
DATE / TIME	16 August 2023 010:00 – 13:00 hours
LOCATION	Virtual Meeting via MS Teams
ATTENDEES	John Paton (Chair) Kyle Cush (Region 1) Andrew Trappel (Region 2) Scott Thorrington (Region 3) Ann Garard (Region 5) Peter Dugan (Region 6) Observer: Christian Worth (Region 4 South)
APOLOGIES	John Lee (Region 4 North)

**1. Introduction by the Chair**

The Chair welcomed members to the second CFNSW meeting in 2023 and provided an acknowledgement of Country. The meeting opened at 10:00 am.

**2. CFNSW Working Group administration update**

The Working Group was informed that the expression of interest process for Region 4 South and Region had closed which will be followed by the assessment and appointment process.

**Action item:** The CFNSW supported that a letter from the Chair be sent to the recently resigning members: Roland Persson, Bill Deveril and Vic Levett, thanking them for their contribution to the CFNSW and the broader NSW Charter fishing industry.

**3. 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.

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

The outcomes from the previous meeting held on 1 March 2023 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 (Moved: Ann Garard).

**5. Correspondence sent and received**

The correspondence list was noted by the CFNSW.

**6. Action List**

Items in the action list were discussed. Concerns were raised about long-term expired licences and the process surrounding their removal.

**Action item:** Charter management to investigate the removal of expired licences following the implementation of the recent regulation amendments.

## 7. Management Update

**a) New administration process** – Noted by the CFNSW.

**b) Catch Reporting** – The CFNSW noted a decline in catch reporting over recent months. It was also noted online catch reporting is increasingly being utilised by Charter fishing operators, with over 50% of all reports now submitted online. The CFNSW were informed that a 'Fisheries Systems and Service Modernisation Project' has commenced, to improve digital development and simplify reporting for users. Key outcomes for the project impacting the Charter boat industry are the removal of plastic cards and paper logbooks.

**Action item:** Charter management to send out a targeted letter to Charter FBs owners with outstanding catch records.

**Action item:** DPI Fisheries Systems and Service Modernisation Project manager to provide an update at the next meeting.

**c) Industry promotion update** – Noted by the CFNSW, which continues to support the industry promotion strategy.

**d) Mulloway interim arrangements** – DPI provided an update on the Mulloway recovery program and development of a harvest strategy for the species. Recovering Mulloway stocks in NSW is a key priority for DPI Fisheries. Despite a range of fishing arrangements being implemented in the past, given the reported data, DPI Fisheries managers and scientists have not yet detected measurable improvement in the stock. However, it is noted that recent unprecedented flooding events may assist in improving future recruitment to the fishable biomass. CFNSW noted the development of a forward-looking Harvest Strategy for Mulloway which will provide a strategic framework and decision rules to promote stock recovery and equitably manage catch amongst user groups in the longer term. In the short to medium term, DPI is proposing interim management arrangements, which are required to support the recovery of Mulloway. This included a Charter fishing boat limit of 3. The Region 6 representative noted that whilst this proposed arrangement seems reasonable, generally this arrangement may set a precedence for future charter fishing boat limits to be implemented.

## 8. Offshore Renewable Energy Project Update

Representatives from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) provided an overview of the consultation process surrounding the proposed Hunter and Illawarra region Renewable Energy Zones. Members raised concerns with regards to potential loss of fishing grounds and income loss.

**Action Item:** The CFNSW working group supported a letter be sent to the DCCEEW via the consultation process to express concern about the proposed project, including the

potential access impact for local charter fishing businesses resulting from potential loss of fishing grounds and potential loss of clientele.

### **9. Research update**

DPI provided an update on the Charter Fishery Monitoring Report and results of the 2020/21 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.

### **10. Compliance update**

DPI Fisheries Compliance provided an update on recent illegal charter operations and regulatory infringements. It was reiterated that recent regulatory amendments would help to strengthen Fisheries compliance activities regarding illegal operators advertising. CFNSW members were also reminded about the importance of submitting catch records and that further action will be taken to prompt licence holders to submit overdue records.

**Action item:** DPI to provide a reminder to operators about the need for Marine Park Permits when operating in a Marine Park via Charter Chatter newsletter.

### **11. CFNSW WG Members update**

It was noted by many members that there had been a recent downturn in bookings, likely attributed to recent rises in the cost of living. Members were optimistic that with warmer weather approaching and bookings would increase in the near future.

The Region 2 representative raised concerns with regards to the Fish Rock rules and any potential inconsistencies with the rules between commercial and recreational fishing methods.

**Action item:** DPI to list CFNSW members in next Charter chatter, giving operators the opportunity to approach their representative to discuss regional matters.

### **12. Other business**

Correspondence received from the Region 4 (North) representative was tabled, being that Kingfish are an iconic recreationally targeted species in the Sydney area and that bag and size limit arrangements need to be reviewed to ease fishing pressure. The CFNSW noted the concerns and recommended further discussion at the next meeting, including an update on the development of the Line and Trap Harvest Strategy (commencing with Snapper and Kingfish).

**Action item:** DPI to provide an update on the Line and Trap Harvest Strategy at the next meeting.

### **13. 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.

The next meeting was proposed to be scheduled in November 2023.

**Meeting Closed at 13:00pm**