

MEETING OUTCOMES

Our Ref: OUT24/18811

MEETING	Charter Fishing NSW Working Group (CFNSW)
DATE / TIME	27 November 2024 15:00 – 17:00hours
LOCATION	Virtual Meeting via MS Teams
ATTENDEES	John Paton (Chair) Crystal Browning (Region 1) Andrew Trappel (Region 2) Scott Thorrington (Region 3) Christian Worth (Region 4 South) Ann Garard (Region 5) Josh Badenoch (Region 6) Christine Cattnach (Region 7) Peter Dugan (RFNSW) Paul Lennon (Observer) Patrick Linehan (Observer)
APOLOGIES	Stuart Reid (Region 4 North)

1. Introduction by the Chair

The Chair welcomed members to the third CFNSW meeting in 2024 and provided an acknowledgement of Country. Meeting open 3:00pm

2. CFNSW Working Group administration update

The Working Group was informed that the expression of interest process for expiring memberships has now been completed. Three new members being Crystal Browning (Region 1), Stuart Reid (Region 4 North), and Josh Badenoch (Region 6) have been successfully appointed to the working group and were welcomed. Departing members Kyle Cush and Jong (John) Lee were thanked for their service.

3. Register of Interests

The Chair requested that members declare any conflicts of interest on the register of interest form (Appendix A to the agenda).

4. Agreement on the outcomes from the previous meeting

The outcomes from the previous meeting held on 31st July 2024 were tabled (provided in Appendix B to the agenda). It was noted that no comments were received from members and the outcomes were unanimously supported by present members as being a true and accurate record of the meeting (Moved: Scott Thorrington, seconded Peter Dugan).

5. Correspondence sent and received

The correspondence list was noted by the CFNSW.

6. Action List

Items in the action list were discussed. Reference was made to many of the completed items.

7. Shore-based fishing guides

DPIRD provided an update on discussions held at the recent Recreational Fishing NSW Advisory Council meeting regarding a perceived increase in shore-based guides activity in NSW. The Group was advised that 21 coastal shore-based fishing guides had been identified through an online search and their level of activity (social media posts) was tabled to CFNSW. The marine shore-based fishing guide industry is a small niche sector primarily fishing off ocean beaches and rocky headlands and is currently regulated through existing recreational fishing rules. The Group noted RFNSW had requested that DPIRD compile further information on this issue and to prepare a background paper for further review and discussion by Council. CFNSW requested this paper also be referred to the Working Group at the next meeting and include information on freshwater guides and charter operators.

Action item: DPIRD staff to monitor the level of activity from the shore-based guide sector over the upcoming summer period.

8. Management Update

a) Industry performance and catch reporting update

Broad statistics on the NSW Charter Fishery was provided by DPIRD, noting that data from the 2023/24 financial year was incomplete. The importance of timely and accurate catch reporting data from industry was noted. It was shown that after a recent targeted mailout to operators with outstanding catch returns and follow-up Compliance action, the reporting rates had significantly improved. A breakdown of trip data was also provided showing that the average days fished, charter fishing events and clientele numbers had remained steady.

b) Industry promotion update

Statistics from recent social media posts was presented to the Working Group. It was shown that recent posts on social media platforms had again been well received by potential clientele. An update on the industry promotional video was provided to members, where members were shown the completed videos including the industry-wide (30 sec) video and the three fishery specific videos (15 sec).

Action item: DPIRD to send the completed video files to members.

c) Fisheries Systems and Service Modernisation Project

The Working Group were advised that stakeholder testing had commenced with the new environment and that some members had registered for testing but had not yet obtained access.

9. Compliance update

DPIRD Compliance provided an update on recent compliance actions including a breakdown of compliance rates and actions for industry over the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years. It was noted that vessel marking and fin clipping infringements were still being detected.

10. Research update

The DPIRD research update was postponed to the next meeting.

11. Members updates

It was noted by many members that recent trips had provided good fishing opportunities for clientele and there was general positivity for the upcoming festive season.

The Region 2 representative reported that some interactions with commercial fishers had been experienced on local FADs. The issue had been reported to DPIRD for follow-up action. The member also raised some inequity concerns regarding different fishing arrangements for commercial fishers at the Grey Nurse Shark Critical Habitat Site at Fish Rock (South West Rocks) compared to charter operators. Currently bait fishing by commercial fishers was permitted while charter fishers were restricted to using lures in the same zone. It was noted that this matter had recently been discussed with RFNSW.

Action item: CFNSW to write to DPIRD to express support for charter operators to operate under the same provisions as commercial operators at Fish Rock.

The Region 3 representative queried if Port Meetings or Regional CFNSW meetings could be held as the industry appears to have bounced back after recent Covid downturns.

Action item: DPIRD to investigate the possibility of conducting Port Meetings or Regional CFNSW meetings over the current member term.

12. Other business

No other items of business were offered for discussion.

13. Chairperson summary and proposed meeting date for the next CFNSW meeting

The Chairperson provided a summary of the meeting. He thanked the members for their time and contributions to the Working Group and wished all a safe and merry festive season.

The next meeting was proposed to be scheduled in March 2025.

Meeting closed 5:15pm