

FINAL OUTCOMES

Our Ref: OUT20/10404

MEETING	Charter Fishing NSW Working Group – CFNSW
MEETING NO.	4
DATE	26 August 2020; 10:00 – 12:15 hours
LOCATION	Video Conference
ATTENDEES	John Paton (Chair), Kyle Cush (Region 1), Scott Thorrington (Region 3), Roland Persson (Region 4), Ann Garard (Region 5), Bill Deverill (Region 7), Vic Levett
ABSENTEES	Mark Flanagan

1. Introduction by the Chair (10:00)

The Chair welcomed members to the second CFNSW meeting in 2020. In his opening remarks, the Chair highlighted the ongoing difficulties facing the Charter Fishing Industry as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the importance of continuing communication between this Working Group and DPI.

2. Register of Interests

The Chair requested that members declare any changes of interests on the register of interested (Appendix A to the agenda). No changes were declared.

3. Agreement on the outcomes from the previous meeting

The outcomes from the previous meeting held on the 6 May 2020 were tabled (provided in Appendix B to the agenda). The outcomes were unanimously supported as being a true and accurate record of the meeting. Moved by Ann Garard, Seconded by Vic Levett.

4. Action list

The ongoing action list was tabled in Appendix C to the agenda, with items individually discussed. The completed items will be removed from the action list. It was requested that the Merimbula Bar dredging item remain on the list for an update at the next meeting.

5. Updates

a) Management

DPI provided an update to the Working Group. It was noted that it has been a difficult few months with unprecedented changes to the working environment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A key government initiative included industry licence fee waivers for 12 months as a support measure. The Group was also updated on NSW Government COVID business grants, licence renewal applications, and progress on legislation amendments and the expired licence holders.

b) Research

An update on the Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program was provided to the Working Group. It was noted that the charter fishing observer program has recommenced, with observers operating under strict COVID safety protocols. This program continues to primarily focus on the Nearshore Bottom and Sportfishing charter fishing sector

DPI noted the importance of submitting accurate and timely Charter catch and effort records. This data feeds into the species stock assessment process and the DPI 'Performance, development and Insights', an annual publication highlighting fishery and socio-economic output of each primary industry sector.

Action Item: DPI to forward an electronic copy of the 2017/18 Recreational Fisheries Monitoring Program reports to the Working Group once publicly available.

Action Item: DPI to send 'Performance, Development and Insights' publication links to the Working Group.

c) Compliance Update

A Compliance update was provided to the Working Group. DPI acknowledges the ongoing industry intelligence provided regarding illegal operators. It was highlighted that reliable, quality intelligence provides the basis for targeted operations.

d) CFNSW members updates

Industry members discussed COVID operating rules impacting their business. It was noted that Charter operators continue to remain exempt from the 4m2 social distancing rule, however must operate under a COVID safety plan, which includes client contact traceability.

e) Communications Plan and Industry Promotion update

DPI gave an update to the Working Group on the Industry promotional campaign. It was noted that industry uptake with the "Go Charter Fishing in NSW" website has been positive, with the majority of active operators now participating.

In the past 6 weeks over 2,000 potential clientele have visited the site. Significant increases in visitation followed targeted Charter fishing promotional campaigns on Facebook and the DPI "Newscast" newsletter.

Action Item. Working group to provide potential options for promotional campaigns, including suitable quality photos.

Action Item. DPI to continue to update/upgrade the website and continue to promote industry through suitable media sources, as per the communications plan.

6. Other Business

a) Region 6 representation

Action item. DPI to conduct an EOI process for vacant regional positions.

b) Other business

Roland Persson and John Paton raised concerns regarding the lack of a specific charter fishing position on RFSTEC. It was noted that Ann Garard is currently appointed as a regional member on this Committee.

Vic Levett recommended that that CFNSW consider promotion of industry to use release weights when fishing for key demersal fish species. NSW DPI research indicates that release weights maximise the survival of these released fish species. Industry

participation of this practise will also promote 'social licence' for the Charter fishing industry. It was noted that many other jurisdictions in Australia require the mandatory use of release weights when fishing for demersal fish species.

Action Item. DPI to scope costings and potential funding sources of release weights for industry wide coverage.

7. Chairperson summary and proposed meeting date for next CFNSW meeting

The Chairperson provided a summary of the meeting and thanked the members for dedicating their time during this difficult time facing all business.

The next meeting be scheduled in late 2020.

Meeting Closed at 12:20