



9 January 2017

Dear members of the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 into commercial fishing,

**Clarification / Additional Information in Drivers of Poor Mental Health in Fishing Industry.**

During the hearing on Wednesday 14 December 2016 for the inquiry, I was asked a question in relation to what could be done in order to lessen the negative impact on fisher mental health brought about as a result of industry restructuring. I did not answer that question as clearly as I'd have liked. Please let me answer it, again, here.

The inability to plan for one's future is a demonstrated contributor to poor mental health outcomes. The link between poor mental health among those in the fishing industry, and processes of industry restructuring, relates to the LIVELIHOOD INSECURITY experienced by fishers (and others in the industry) in the face of repeated changes to management (typically coinciding with election cycles).

Therefore, in order to address one of the key drivers of poor mental health in the fishing industry, governing bodies are advised to offer industry SECURITY and CERTAINTY in terms of governance strategies and decisions. Stable management principles of at least ten years should be targeted.

In cases where changes are unavoidable (i.e. due to concerns made evident by peer-reviewed environmental science), the PROCESS of management change should be TRANSPARENT and meet fisher expectations of FAIRNESS.

(Note, that 'fairness' is not the same as 'equality', but relates more to the perception of a fair and transparent PROCESS, than to relative gains/losses by individuals. This point is based on the extensive literature on 'procedural justice' – I can provide more information if required, but a simple Google Scholar search will give you the relevant idea).

Thanks for your time.

Dr. Tanya King.

Senior Lecturer of Anthropology