



New South Wales
Council of
Freshwater Anglers

Fostering a sustainable
freshwater fishery

Inquiry into recreational fishing

In response to the additional questions asked by the Members I submit the following.

1. Obviously there will be some advantage, some cost saving and operational efficiency if the Marine Parks Authority, Department of Fisheries and NSW Waterways were merged. One large authority would benefit from rationalisation of things like administration, IT services, office space. However I do not think that pure cost savings and efficiency are really relevant. In NSW we recently witnessed the formation of “super departments” and while cost savings might be achieved often service and a focus on customers and core business deteriorates. This would be the case if the above merger was to take place – there would be cultural headaches trying to merge and eventually omne philosophy from one organisation would emerge and that would be disastrous for anglers if it was to be the marine Park Authority culture.

Some efficiencies could be achieved however if all three departments could operate under each others legislation. At present I believe there is some sharing between Fisheries and the MPA. If this was extended to allow each organisation to work to the legislation of the other two then this would go some way to spreading the load, particularly of compliance.

At this time I am not in favour of amalgamation as I fear that the MPA would eventually become the lead culture and that agency has demonstrated that it is very anti – angler.

2. Yes I truly believe that the present Government and its Departments decisions reflect an under-valuing of the recreational fishing economy. As I mentioned in my submission anglers wanted Government help to set up the Recreational Fishing Haven concept, but we were forced to borrow money and re-pay with interest to get it to happen. At the last election we saw the Labor Government rush through the Batemans Bay park to shore up preferences – anglers could never get such a deal. The Government has contributed over \$33 million to marine parks, but its contribution to fishing has declined over the last 15 years.

At the Reece Mini Budget we saw the Department of Primary Industries advise the Minister to close Gaden hatchery. The Minister complied. Trouble was that none of this was discussed with anglers or ACoRF. I realise that budgets are not discussed, but the closing of Gaden in the under-handed way it was signified that neither the Department nor the Minister had any respect for anglers.

Earlier this year I asked the new Minister, Steve Whan, to reverse this stupid and irrational decision, but he has refused saying that he likes to see anglers pay, so the disrespect continues.

While Gaden is only one decision it is an important one, also consider:

- The lack of democratic angler representation on ACoRF when other groups get a say in who represents them,
- The removal of Conservation Manager positions within I&I,
- Refusal to continue the Brining Back the Fish program,
- Last year Government finally admitted it had been taking anglers funds from ACoRF for compliance positions when it (the Government) had not filled the compliance positions it was responsible for – this only became apparent after anglers outside of ACoRF recognised the deceit and called the Minister to account.
- Unwillingness by the NSW National Parks to work constructively with anglers, and
- The continued increase in funding of the MPA with an agenda of expanding Sanctuary Zones while at the same time presiding over a diminishing Fisheries Department.

3. I do not agree that the Government is continuing work on improving and opening waterways. Since the demise of the Brining Back the Fish (BBF) program I have not seen one new waterway opened. If it is happening then the Government does not bother to communicate that to anglers – maybe this lack of communication should have been placed as a point in 2 above.

With the BBF program we were constantly appraised of what was happening – NSW CFA was proud to sponsor and support many of the projects – since closure of BBF we have had no communication on any new or expanded program.

I hope these answers will be helpful to the Members

Yours sincerely



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NSW Council of Freshwater Anglers
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