

**Submission
No 64**

**INQUIRY INTO CLOSURE OF THE CRONULLA
FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**

Organisation: Australian Marine Science Association - New South Wales Branch
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AMSA NSW submission to NSW Legislative Council Inquiry on Cronulla Fisheries Centre Closure

be made available and any flow-on to local economies. These benefits will have been delivered at a substantial cost.

f) the loss of the scientific expertise held by the staff who cannot relocate from Cronulla and the implications for sustainable fisheries management,

While the final numbers are not yet known, it is clear that many of the scientists have, or will resign as their families are unable to transfer to other sites. Many of these individuals are experts in their respective fields and replacing this will not be a simple task. In addition, many of these scientists have provided the intellectual support for the competitively awarded research grants through collaborations with the 6 universities in the Sydney-Wollongong area. Thus in losing these individuals, these collaborative links are stretched to breaking point. University links have enabled scientists at the Centre to conduct research where on-site expertise was not available or funding was limited to support the work that needs to be done. The loss of these scientists and extended networks will clearly be detrimental to work being done in the greater Sydney region (shark meshing and movement, recreational fisheries, Fish Market surveys to name a few). AMSA is equally concerned about the effect this may have on marine research capacity for the state as many of these scientists supported projects outside of Sydney.

g) the impacts of the decision on service delivery to stakeholders

As indicated in c) above, the financial costs of this action will certainly result in less science upon which to base management decisions about marine resources in NSW. This is a very unfortunate outcome given the need for evidence-based management of marine resources that is currently recognized by all stakeholders as necessary for the long-term success of any policy measures. Outside of these broader impacts there will certainly be a reduction in the scientific input to fisheries issues pertinent to the greater Sydney region in particular such as recreational fisheries and shark movement patterns.

In summary, to date there has been little concrete evidence to support any of the justifications for the closure of the Centre. It is imperative going forward that the transition plan be clearly defined with ample opportunity for stakeholder input. This process must be transparent. From the perspective of marine sciences in NSW, the transition plan should highlight the current capacity of the Centre, from where this capacity comes (Centre individuals, Centre infrastructure, or external collaborations), how this capacity is used in management, and most importantly, how it will be maintained through the next 5-10 years at least.

AMSA would be happy to help in this process by providing scientific input on broad or specific issues. We thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this inquiry. Please contact us if you require clarification of any of the points we have made.

Regards,

Will Figueira ✓
President, NSW AMSA