

Submission
No 107

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

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Partially Confidential

cronullafisheries - Cronulla Fisheries Ex-staff Submission

To: <cronullafisheries@parliament.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 9/21/2012 1:15 PM
Subject: Cronulla Fisheries Ex-staff Submission

Dear Committee,

I would like to make a submission in response to the statements made by the minister at the public hearing on the 10th of September.

Her statements indicated that a factor in the governments refusal to consider reversing the decision to close Cronulla Fisheries was because it would be disruptive to staff.

I completely disagree with this statement and strongly feel that the decision should be reversed and there will not come a time when it is 'too late'. There are a large number of staff still on site and many that have relocated or left the organisation would probably return if given the option. Regardless of this, the centre should be preserved as the facilities there are unique are extremely important and any damage that has already been cause by this decision can be fixed over time. However if the centre is closed then we will lose those facilities forever!

My individual situation is a bit unusual compared to the majority of staff, I was and am still employed at Cronulla Fisheries on a casual basis. Up until July this year I worked 35 hours a week as a laboratory technician and often did overtime on weekends in the aquarium facility. As such I was not offered the option to relocate and even if I had been given the option I could not leave Sydney due to my personal family situation. I took a permanent position at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science in July but I still work casually at Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre on weekends.

My current contract ends in mid October and because of my involvement in the campaign to save Cronulla Fisheries 2 employment contract extensions have so far been rejected by the Geoff Allan (ED of Fisheries) and a 3rd is currently being processed but I don't hold much hope.

The reason why my supervisors and I want to continue my employment is because there is still important work that I want to finish for Cronulla Fisheries, firstly I look after the aquarium facilities on weekends which is important as otherwise the current Aquarium manager would have to work 7 days a week and secondly I am assisting my supervisor in the lab process some fish gonads samples which involves working with chemicals such as formaldehyde which I don't want my supervisor to be anywhere near as she is pregnant!

No one else that isn't already employed in a different role at Cronulla Fisheries has the skills and expertise to look after the Aquarium facility or perform the lab work which is why it is important that my employment is continued. If I hadn't taken my new position I would still be working 35 hours a week at Cronulla Fisheries.

I am extremely happy in my new position and would not return to my old role at Cronulla Fisheries if the decision to close it was reversed especially considering that my contract is near completion and does not look like the ED will approve an extension. However I would absolutely welcome the reversal of the decision and if given the opportunity I would continue my casual employment assisting with any future projects that I could lend my expertise to.

Regards...