

**Submission
No 41**

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

Name: Mr Karl Becker

Date received: 27/07/2012

Reverend Fred Nile,

I write to express my concern at the proposed closure of the Cronulla fisheries. This has been prompted by my visit to the fisheries two days ago to renew my fishing licence. When seeing about this I casually remarked how I had had the good fortune some years back to observe snapper being fed pellets vs fishstock in two large tanks as part of scientific investigation. The friendly officer asked me if I would like to have another look if he could arrange it. He then called Mr Dave B. who said he had a half hour before a meeting to show me some of the research projects. I was delighted and amazed at the sheer variety of projects being undertaken with all kinds of Marine life. Particularly interesting was the sight of these huge snapper which Dave said were probably some of the ones I previously saw about twenty years ago as juveniles. As a recently retired science teacher and keen fisherman for all of my life I have always had an interest in the work of the fisheries.

But I am writing this because I believe that thousands of Shire residents would have had an association with the fisheries. I distinctly remember, as a seven year old first moving to a residence on Gunnamatta Bay, finding a plastic bag marked return to fisheries. This I did and remember the same friendly welcome and a brief explanation of the research into the deposition of material by tides. Whenever we caught a tagged fish or caught a fish we could not identify or found something strange in the water it was always off to the fisheries. This was the same with our mates. The Cronulla fisheries for us were a Cronulla icon. Everyone knew about the fisheries -where they were located and what they were about. We felt that our beautiful Port Hacking was being looked after by a scientific body, not steeped in secrecy but open and friendly to anyone who approached its staff.

I, like so many in the Shire whose lives are in different ways interconnected with the fisheries and their research, would be devastated to see the Cronulla fisheries closed. I know nothing of substance of the politics or economic considerations involved in making a decision re the Cronulla fisheries. All I know from personal experience is that sometimes an institution can have far more impact on the lives of people even slightly connected with it than is immediately apparent. Such is the case for the Cronulla fisheries.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Karl Becker