

**Submission
No 26**

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

Name: Mr Tom Barker

Date received: 26/07/2012

Revd the Hon Fred Nile MLC
Committee Chairman
Select Committee on Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre Closure
Legislative Council
Parliament House Macquarie St
Sydney

Dear Sir,

I disclose my prejudice in this matter, in that my son has been employed at the Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre for many years and is responsible for much of the design and construction of the excellent infrastructure which this facility possesses today.

I am writing to you to express my dismay and outrage at the proposed closure of the Cronulla Fisheries Research Facility and relocation of the Scientific Staff and their support staff employed there to regional facilities at Nowra, Port Stephens and Coffs Harbour. This decision has been made without any consideration of the enormous impact it will have on the invaluable work which is being done at this world-class research facility and the cost in lost investment and brain power (to say nothing of world-renowned reputation) which will be experienced by our State and, indeed the Australian Nation.

The Cronulla Research Centre is the oldest scientific facility engaged in marine research in the entire southern hemisphere. Established in 1910 on a parcel of land, which is uniquely suited to this purpose, near the mouth of the Hacking River, the scientists at this wonderful establishment have earned recognition throughout the world community of marine scientists as a Centre of Excellence in this field.

These remarkable people have been told that they must relocate to these regional centres, which are totally unequipped to undertake this important work and could not be so equipped without years of work and many millions of dollars in expenditure (which is not planned or intended).

The tragic consequence of this will be the complete loss of these valuable scientists to other research facilities, in other states or overseas.

I cannot enumerate the extent of the infrastructure and specialised marine facilities which will be left to rot if this proposal is implemented, as the site cannot be used for any other purpose, being designated (I believe) as an aboriginal reserve. These facilities could not be replicated at any other location, regardless of expense.

In the case of my son, as with many others, family ties make it impossible for him to relocate and so the experience and skills which such people have accrued, over many years and at NSW Government expense, will be lost to this State and possibly to Australia..

I earnestly implore you to ensure that this matter is debated in the State Parliament so that the mindless stupidity of this decision can be exposed to public ridicule and reversed, which it deserves.

Yours faithfully
T.H. Barker (B Com NSW)