

## INQUIRY INTO COMMERCIAL FISHING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Partially  
Confidential

## Submission

Im not a member of a political party

My back ground , i the chairman of the Commercial Fishing Advisory Council before Minister Martin disbanded it in 1996. I chaired the organisation during the 1996 upper house inquiry. There were quite a few committees I was a member of. Im no longer a commercial fishermen. I'm a Marine biologist.

I come from Narooma a small coastal town in the south of the State.

It grew out of the efforts of agriculture, forestry and fishing before the changing character of the town out grew the fishing component.

Now, fishing (commercial) is seen by some as a distraction and to some rec fishers as the ideal excuse of why they didn't catch a fish –male ego- blame the commercials??

In the town presently there are still several long term fishing families.

One family has three young members -really having go. They are the talk of the coast. Three under 30s having a 90 foot 3 million boat built in SA, Australian Aluminium and Australian Built. The other family also has 3 kids all were in the industry now only 1 is fishing. He drives an old Toyota and lives in rented housing.

One family is in a the Commonwealth Managed fishery, Managed with long term out put controls. There security cant be , taken or undermined. The other family is the input controlled NSW State fisheries, day by day "ad hock" management.

Input controls capital that goes into a business and numerous regulations controlling gear ,number of days you work and so on. Output controls is what you catch.

But the sad thing is the NSW fishers were promised "long term Torrens Tile like security... you could go to a bank and borrow against." Causley said when the 1994 came into place. The over whelming majority of commercial fishers voted and pushed for this kind of management.

## THE KEY TO THE 1994 Act WAS HOW THE SHARES WERE CREATED

Input control or output control.

In an input control fishery every fisher will complain about latent effort. Unused licences.

Its natural, the less competitors the more for me.

If you go down the input control model then all the catch history of the so called latent effort will be lost.

This catch history is important for if it lost then the commercial sectors total catch of product will be decreased if output controls are introduced.

Fishermen will away find away to increase effort in an input controlled fishery. Just look at technology and changes. Output controls limit the catch to historical levels. That were set in the catch validation period of share management.

Numbers of Fishers are essential to maintain infrastructure, Co/Op, freight links indeed reliability of being able to get a truck to take catch to the markets .

The same fishers who complain about latent effort would complain bitterly if licences and the associated catch history were surrendered if they had to acquire catch history in a Quota fishery or the true share managed.

The beauty of the true share managed fisheries was that the community could buy up to 10% of fishery. The community could then rent there shares back to industry when their shares ran out. Part ownership solves a lot of problems.

The way the fisheries are current "managed" is not in the spirit of the Act.

All fisheries were to share managed. A couple of fisheries that could prove to be under threat were to be Quota managed- Ablone and Lobster.

New emerging fisheries that evolved and didn't fit into a share managed fisheries could come into existence under the Restricted Fisheries section of the Act. Then they could be evaluated and if sustainable they could be declared sharemanaged.

The most important thing about share management was the way that shares were decided. And they were issued based on catch history.

The only ones that benefit from the kayos of input control fisheries is the Department.

Not one Minister since Ian Causley has come anywhere near the method industry accepted

Recreational impact

Im now a very keen recreation fisherman as is my wife. in two years we caught 1234 flathead most over 50 cm, 400 bream along with salmon and a few jewfish. My wife alone caught 248kg of prawns in one season Don't tell me rec fishing has got an impact.

But its funny when we travel to fish we go drive 1800kms long to get to spot in the Gulf where there is no commercial fishing.

In 2002 Recreational Fishing Havens (RFH) were established. Large areas of commercially fished waters were closed to commercial fishing. This was good for rec fishing for about 7 or 8 years. At one stage it was a daily and well reported event that flathead over a meter were being taken in the Tuross River ,a RFH. This event now would only happen a few times a year like wise in the Wagonga River. These large fish were being released but when a large flathead with a belly full is pulled out of the water for a reluctant photo her membrane surrounding the gut and holding the nerves and blood supply is stretched and you guess the rest.

The call from the recreational sector fishing Tuross is to now close the adjacent commercially fished waters.

The 80% of tourism not relying on fishing deserve local product and indeed expect it.

Respectfully

Ron Snape

Sorry Im dyslectic hope you can make something of this