

**Submission
No 43**

**INQUIRY INTO COMMERCIAL FISHING IN NEW SOUTH
WALES**

Name: Mr Jarrod Wynn

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Dear Committee i am writing this submission as a commercial fisherman whom is lucky enough to be the 5th generation actively participating in the industry. I am also writing this submission as someone whom strongly believes that the commercial fishing sector provides not only fresh seafood to the local community, the state, the nation and internationally but also provides employment for a number of small businesses within the local communities we serve. I will deal with each point of the terms of reference in my attached submission, but I firstly acknowledge the committees need to look into the current reforms sweeping the industry and the sheer panic and distress it has caused a number of commercial fisherman. I commercially fished lake Macquarie before we were unceremoniously bought out by the then labor government, all in the name of the introduction of recreational fishing licenses, this was the jewel to be provided to the recreational fishing lobby for the support of introducing recreational licenses. I bought back into the industry in 2010 for \$45k, the license I now hold as of the latest NSW DPI fishonline notice board would go for about \$250k. Now I put to the committee that jump in price is due to panic market reactions in relation to an introduced set of demand and supply issues that have been created by this reform. \$250k is not a sustainable price for a business where the average earning in estuary general would be around the \$50-75k mark, especially with running costs, gear, registrations and the new fees proposed. I again thank the committee for the opportunity to provide a submission and look forward to the report. Regards Jarrod

Submission – Commercial Fishing enquiry – Legislative council NSW.

Terms of reference

Point a)

I am a 5th generation commercial fisherman, whom commenced work on Lake Macquarie with my father and my pop as soon as I was old enough, I have fond memories of hauling mullet with my pop in the summer holidays and prawning with my dad.

I try to explain to people that fishing is very similar to farming, if you are born on the land you always seem to have an affinity with it. I too have that same affinity but it is with the estuary I grew up on and fished until the government bought us out of lake Macquarie. That affinity never goes away and that is why I bought back into the industry so that too my children can hopefully continue the legacy set by more forefathers.

Point b)

The value of commercial fishing will always be talked about in dollar terms, be that only based on catch and disposal, but also to include secondary and tertiary flow on effects from the commercial harvest.

However, what needs to be also included is the value to the local community in terms of access to good, fresh seafood that is beneficial for health and wellbeing. Access to seafood that has the lowest carbon footprint, access to seafood that is clean and green and is from a sustainable source. All of these factors have commercial benefit to both the local population and the government.

Point c)

Continuing scientific research will continue to help the industry, the use of scientific research to show that our harvesting of wild species is sustainable and with management we can continue into perpetuity. There are some reasonable discussions to be had about the reliability of some of the statistics that are used and also some of the data that is collected, but research needs to underpin all decisions on fisheries into the future, knee jerk reactions are not what the industry wants or needs.

Point D)

N/A

Point E- part iii)

The linking of shares in a fishery to effort I believe does not represent the best outcome to fishers. By doing this we are essentially allowing the person/company/entity that has access to the largest amount of capital to be able to fish the most. To put this in perspective, if i own a 100acres and the bloke next door owns a 1000acres, do we as a state government contemplate forcing the person owning the 100acres to give them up so that the 1000acre farm can suddenly become more viable? Or do we let the 100acre farm provide the most effective farming they can on the portion of land they are allotted?

We constantly hear that family farms are being sold to multi-nationals and large corporations, and yet here we are reforming the fishing industry so that it follows this same path.

The whole premise behind the reform initially was to ensure that our shares actually had a tangible element in relation to the fishing sector we were participating. Then at the announcement sustainability was suddenly thrown into the mix as the reason. The inability of the government to provide a sound logical need for reform indicates that its need is somewhat diminished. The most plausible argument is in relation to latent effort, and as part of the research was strongly indicated. A large number of sectors had about 80% of the catch being undertaken by about 20% of the available licenses.

Thus the mismanagement of the issuing of licenses has led to an oversupply of shares. By suddenly now linking the shares to effort you have effectively created a market where the demand from those 20% of fishers whom undertake the majority of catch outstrips the supply of shares from fishers wanting to leave the industry.

There are many fisherman whom are happy to work on a casual basis based on the time of year, price of fish and perceived quantity. I would argue that a number of these fishers do this based on their age and physical circumstance. What you are trying to do is remove these fishers from the industry and seeing as the government is not willing to buy them out, the government has proposed instead to allow the fisherman whom want to stay working must cannibalise these fishers.