

**Submission
No 123**

INQUIRY INTO COMMERCIAL FISHING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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SUBMISSION FOR PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

I still wonder how the reform has got to this stage as the whole reason for the reform was to get rid of the latent effort. Now all of the latent effort is been reintroduced and there is more effort than ever.

We have a sustainable fishery in NSW and that was never an issue at the start of this process, now it is being bought up as one of the reasons the reform is happening which is untrue. Our fishermen have fished in this lake for generations and we have not had a decline in the amount of fish caught because they are multi endorsed and work different methods at different times of the year. We will have a sustainability issue in the near future if the reform continues as it is currently set out. NSW already imports over 80 % of its seafood, some from unsustainable overseas fisheries. Where will Australians get their seafood once the overseas fisheries have been eroded and the DPI has gotten rid of all our Professional Fishermen

With the buyout to any fishermen wanting to get out of the industry to be offered \$20, 000 for a job that you have worked your heart out with over the years I think is an insult. If the buyout had of been completed first as was suggested there would not have been the mad panic for shares like there has been. This has forced the share price to skyrocket which has been good for some but unattainable for a lot of fishermen wanting to remain in the industry. It is unfair for the Fisheries to expect fishermen to finance the bad management of their department over the years.

The problem with this reform from the get go is the DPI, they are the ones bringing in this reform. Also saying they are consulting with industry is a joke because what is coming out of the Ministers mouth is nothing like what the fishermen have been telling the DPI. All through this process whenever there has been a question regarding every step of the process we are always met with the same answers like "we don't know" "we haven't worked that out yet" "oh we will have to get back to you on that one". How are fishermen supposed to make informed decisions that will impact their businesses and their lives both personally and professionally when they cant get a straight answer from anyone in the department.

Not having an equal playing field like before, there is no way that DPI will be able to police each individual fisherman successfully

Our fishermen in Wallis Lake are all multi endorsed fishers that use their endorsements seasonally, this is what has made the Wallis Lake such a healthy and sustainable fishery.

I have been working at the Wallis Lake Fishermen's Co operative since 2009. My relatives have fished in this area and been members of the Wallis Lake Fishermen's Co operative since its inception 70 years ago. For the last 4 years I have had the job of completing the Fishermen's weekly pays.

I see every kilo of fish and crustacean that comes in and out of the Co operative. I also complete the 3 monthly fish receivers report that goes to DPI that shows the kilos that are weighed into the Co op that correspond with the kilos that are weighed in by the fishermen. The DPI can see from these records alone who works their businesses and who doesn't. Why should the hard working fishermen that have worked this area for generations lose their right to fish because of DPI mismanagement and through no fault of their own.

Another thing I have heard is that it will protect inactive fishermen from becoming active when the stocks improve and allow active fishermen to better manage stocks, BUT I cant understand why people who have a large amount of shares can use unendorsed crew and lease out their businesses to people without the generational knowledge in the industry, while people that are currently endorsed with years of fishing experience and want to stay in the industry be forced out of the only job they know because they cant afford to buy shares **that are not available**.

Some people are saying that the impact on the reform will be minimal and that if you don't adjust to changes you wont survive. If our co operative lose fishermen just because they cant get the shares they need as of 1 July 2017 we will have trouble surviving through no fault of our own. The Wallis Lake co operative has built itself back up over the last 7 years to make itself a very successful business again and one of the largest suppliers to the Sydney Fish Markets.