

**Submission  
No 145**

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

**Name:** Mr Robert Elliott

**Date received:** 23 December 2016

---

## **Robert Elliott Submission and Comments**

**I have decided to put in my submission what was sent in 2014 and 2015 with an update to 2016 as nothing has really changed since the first reforms have come out . If anything it has got much worse.**

**Dear Sirs,**

*I have been fishing for over 57 years in Wallis Lake. My Grandfather, my Father, my Uncles, 3 Brothers, son and two nephews all fished in Wallis lake for well over 120 years. Right now my Brother 78 and my son 44 and my nephew 45 are still fishing the Wallis lake.*

*Fishing runs in the veins of my family. It is the very fabric of who we are and what we do. It is much more than just a Job it is our life.*

*I have seen a lot of changes some good and some not so good but this one would be the worst by a mile. Leave everything as it is if something needs fixing then deal with it when it comes up not jam everything down our neck all at once. Just buy out the licenses of those who want to get out..*

*With all that is proposed it will cause a lot of hardship loss of jobs and disharmony in the Fishing Industry when there is no need to do this. There is no justification in destroying communities and putting people out of work and losing homes for this reform package. There has to be a better way.*

*Fishing at the moment is the best it has ever been. Fisherman in my region give each other a lot more space than they did before and are a happy lot. We all work hard and get on. The Fish Co-op has the best and happiest staff and always pleasant. The hard work of the Directors, staff and financial contributions from the members/share holders after the closure of the marine parks was a tribute to everyone to keep the Wallis lake Fisherman's Co-op operating both for the fisherman and the wider community. Our co-ops throughput directly and indirectly affects many local businesses. The co-op provide 2 slipways, not just for fisherman but for everyone, moorings, ice, chandlery service, and are an on-water fuel depot (we supply the only on-water diesel fuelling point from Coffs Harbour to Port Stephens. We are an emergency depot for fisheries, water police, marine rescue and many travelling boats. ) We also use the local ice works when the input of seafood is so high our 2 ice machines can't keep up with demand. We use freight companies up to 5 times per week. We supply 38 Woolworth's stores daily. We serve local families everyday fresh local seafood and we are renowned for selling what we catch daily. Our town like many other coastal towns in NSW and Australia wide have been established around the local fishing industries.*

*It is with deep concern that in the reform package recommendation and from conversation with the DPI and the Minister that they are not concerned about the*

*co-ops in any of this reform. My question would be what in heavens name is this all about. The share holders of this co-op own the co-op we are fisherman that you left hanging after the marine park closure. The co-op did not get one red cent. Thousands of dollars passed from fisherman for every kilo of fish for years to keep it going. This was a major contribution not only to our community by way of supplying fresh seafood but providing infrastructure for the wider community to use. To totally disregard this in this reform package is a total an unacceptable breach of trust of everyone who lives in our community and must be condemned. The co-op currently employ 14 staff most of them are full time. Some over 20years. it provides young people with part time seasonal work and also having had the best year ever will gross over 7 million this year. What all that brings to the community of Forster Tuncurry cannot be measured in just dollars and cents . Knowing and living the history of this Co-op started by great grandfathers, grandfathers and fathers to the many shareholder fisherman in this co-op and all of which that stands for, to even contemplate that all this could be lost with just a stroke of a pen by this government should this reform package go ahead in its current form will be a tragedy and betrayal beyond words.*

*In my opinion there is a handful of fisherman who give advise to the fisheries and have for many years and have made big dollars in the buy out process before and stand to make big dollars this time if these reforms go ahead. (inside trading maybe).. It seems to me it is like scalping/ front running. Buying all the tickets in the theatre and then on selling them after at increased prices. In this case some buying lots of fishing shares much more than they need then endorsing the reform package.*

*I do not need to explain the immense importance of the fishing industry to this state and to the community as a whole.*

### *About Leasing*

*The Practice of fisherman with multiple licences leasing a licence to somebody else or use more gear than anyone else with one licence has to stop. This practice should be abolished and re looked at from the start with consultation from all fisherman. This practice is being abused in the fisheries.*

*As stated i have been fishing for over 57 years in Wallis Lake my brother has been fishing for 60 years and still fishing. My son and nephew have been fishing 27 to 28 years in Wallis lake. That is a total of 172 years of fishing. We are Professional fisherman and very proud of what our whole family has and continues to contribute to our community and the seafood consumer. These reforms will destroy all of this. The burden of this so called adjustment is going directly to the fisherman.*

*Where will the money come from?*

*This is Social Injustice.*

*These proposed changes will have a huge negative impact on my life. As mentioned*

*above I am almost 75 years of age and 'NOT RETIRED' I still fish, I still mesh, I still prawn, I still trap, I still ocean haul in fact there is not much I don't do. I have worked hard all my life and still work hard and this is my choice but i do it at my pace.*

*To the get to this point in my life when I want to just keep fishing and do what I want to do and retire when I am ready (with my endorsements and shares which were allocated to me in 2007 for 10 years and then a rolled over) only to find that in order for me to stay in the industry I will have to spend thousands upon thousands of dollars to do what I am doing now is a gross injustice and I believe a breach Under the Category Share Management framework which took place in 2005/2006/2007 where Ian McDonald said these shares are allocated for 10 Years Final shares allocated 5th feb 2007. My legal right to fish with my allocated shares therefore is enforce till 2017.*

*It will be impossible for me to spend the necessary monies that you are proposing and impossible for me to ever get a return on any investment I would need to make. In a nut shell you are trying to and going to 'KICK ME OUT' with these reforms. No Democracy here!!!! No public Good here, No fairness here and No Equity in any of this. No Justification.*

*'Just a Government who wants to Sacrifice Certainty for Speed.' and one that has undertook a major restructure with out providing enough funds/resources to do such a major change to a crucial industry.*

*Together with all the above i cannot support the reform share linkage as presented as i believe it will force active fishers out of the industry to make way for big business/investors. I believe in its current form it will kill diversity and have a negative impact on sustainability. This will destroy the industry as we know it ,people will lose their livelihoods and all that implies.*

*IN THIS REFORM PACKAGE SPACE THERE ARE A LOT OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS*

*Our co-op could disappear /no product to market. My question to this reform Why the Impatience? Why so brutal?*

*Why such destruction to hardworking fisherman and their families co- op employees, money leaving communities  
Why?*

*The Fishing Industry is not in such a Perilous state that you have to do open heart surgery like this and destroy lives.*

*There is absolutely no human side being considered here.*

*Also when attending the DPI meeting in Tuncurry my son and I asked about explanations to various options was flabbergasted to say the least to be told that well ie Quota/days option "you could do this then go and get another job for the rest of the year. Was also informed that lots of people do that in the fishing industry.*

*I am a professional Fisherman my son is a Professional Fisherman and we conduct our business in a professional way. We were insulted. Very confused by this total lack of understanding and have serious concerns to the value of what is being communicated. Doesn't say much for the respect and 'social licence' for fisherman or for what you say are the key objectives to this reform.*

*I have serious corruption concerns and believe that some are engineering this reform the way they want it to be ie everything to gain from this reform going ahead as outlined.*

*The reform's intention to improve viability of the industry and strength cannot be achieved by the options presented when they are requiring a level of investment from viable operators that will not be returned within that investment and thereby lead them to exit the industry. In essence, the proposed reform has proposed a level of investment that is too high over too short a time period.*

*Foreign Investment I believe that there is a potential future threat of foreign investment to our industry. Of particular concern is the future rising food need that is facing the world and that because there has been no foreign investment to-date does not mean that it is not a possible future threat. I do not support the removal of the foreign investment rules.*

*If this proposal were to go through I believe it will introduce Cartel Conduct into our fishing industry.*

***THIS GOVERNMENT IS SACRIFICING active fisherman for the "Share Investor"***

*This is unconscionable and indefensible and the Government has a choice to halt the reform now wait for Democracy to take place ie Parliamentary Inquiry and the lower house debate.*

*The Human face of these decision, the social impacts on families businesses and communities are not being taken into account in this reform package. In fact it is not even on the Governments and DPI's radar.*

*You are taking active fisherman's livelihoods away and tossing them out on the street .*

*Region 4 has been greatly impacted by Recreational Fishing Havens. Introduced when buy outs of fisherman in those areas then bought back into the industry all cashed up from Government and moved their effort to region 4 Wallis lake .*

*Those licenses in many cases were "latent" in other parts of region 4 and then were put back into the system by way of leasing even though the individuals they were leasing to, only had a fishing license and had no catch history.*

*Weather in such a large area can be so different i.e. April 2015 season wiped out down central coast Tuggerah and Hunter. Had no real impact on Estuary general in Wallis lake. But under SARC recommendations the regional allocation is a one size fits all approach. Weather and other environmental impacts have not been considered from river system to river system. EG when we had the Hepatitis " A "scare in Wallis lake it was like someone had turned the lights off in the fish that came from Wallis lake catchment. It was not worth it to go to work and catch any fish or anything for that matter as you got nothing for your catch.*

*That situation lasted for a long time. The recovery from that crisis was beyond our control. We even had our local council put signs up along the river and lake saying do not swim or eat fish from the waters.*

*Question.. What would happen to your quota in this instance.??? Would it be carried over to the next year. There can be all sorts of unforeseen situations that impact on your ability to fish. The impact on your income is obvious. The ability to make up the loss of income in the next year will be impossible under the proposed recommendations.*

*The point I am making is that a regional approach with regards to each share class and fishery should be applied with regard for differences in each area, no of fishers and the various rules and ways that a particular method is allowed. Types and shape of traps i.e. Different traps used in Nelson's bay to Wallis lake and in the Manning.*

*I believe Quota will not work in estuary general in any fishery. It will be very time consuming expensive and i do not believe that the Quota given is fair and equitable to be able to sustain my viability. Ocean haul crews will be impacted on the 93 days .*

*I work in Ocean haul crew and the impact of 93 days could mean we lose the ability to chase the traveling mullet into the estuary because the beach is washed away due to weather or the seas are just too high to work safely.*

*I work mostly Tuncurry beach. It can get very dangerous other areas like Nelson bay still in our region 4 catch traveling mullet in the bay which allows them the ability to work during bad weather. If the crew of 8 all have different quota of meshing days left then the ability to catch the traveling mullet which are caught for the export market and sent to the processors will also affect a great proportion of our income. This will also impact the Co-op*

*Again Weather here will be out of our control. We use a boat and motor to shoot the ocean net. In the bays they just use a row boat. Every region and river is different. The impact of this day limit could mean that shooting on the beach will be the preferred option so that you do not lose a day from your meshing . Safety then becomes an issue.*

*Also Our region and Tuggerah Lakes are the only lakes designated flathead set nets . You do this sunset to sunrise. This will also come from your meshing days. So as this is only 9 or so hours you will set a net then mesh all night then pick up flathead net, up at daylight then go splash netting during the day to maximise your 24 hour mesh day limit. This will create big problems with the public.*

*I would have to buy another 250 shares in Estuary trapping as they are going to reduce the 20 traps we already have to 15 traps per 125 shares.*

*If I have to purchase enough shares to do what I am doing now with the regional allocation given i.e. 673.8 kg mud crabs 93 days meshing instead of the whole year having to more than double prawn shares to compete to only do what i am doing now and there is no increase in my income unless I buy even more shares to compete. My ability to stay fishing is going to be severely compromised.*

*One Example. One fisherman in Wallis lake right now has over 1000 shares of traps. He has around 675 mud crab shares right now. He has already stated he will be looking to buy more . The concentration of wealth to him and a couple of*

*other fisherman will see the smaller fisherman be wiped out of the Mud crabs in Wallis lake. This will impact the Wallis Lake Co-op which will be a disaster for all fisherman who rely on the co-op to sell their product.(refer to submission from the Wallis lake Fisherman's co-operative)*

*You will be creating winners and losers. The sense of injustice will increase conflict instead of the what the desired outcome is supposed to be.*

*There must be a system in place that caps the amount of shares any one person can own.*

*One mud crab owner in region 3 as of 1st July 2017 can catch 7/8 ton another can catch over 5/6 ton. This situation would seem is hopeless for anyone trying to compete. Increase investment should give you more income . Before the structural adjustment starts there is no level playing field. And still no transparency on how many more these fisherman will have in this share class. I cannot see how as a one single fishing business owner I can compete against multiple business share holders who will bomb you out with e.g. Mud crabs/trapping with 50 to 100 traps or more when you only have 10 and will have to purchase minimum 5 to 9 more multiple of shares to even match them or compete. I will have to purchase at least another 6 lots of 125 to get the same income as 2014/2015 year. It must be remembered we are not in the Ocean like the Lobster Fishery.*

*The SARC recommendations are taking 'The Will' to work out for hard working fisherman who have placed their trust in government time and time again. There is no justification to have that outcome. There has to be a better way.*

*I draw your attention to....*

*Concern no 1... Response to common concerns raised by Commercial fishers on DPI web site answered by SARC.*

*Options were discarded in response to constructive feedback and further analysis.. While I acknowledge that has been the case in some share classes it is not the case in the Mud crab and Blue swimmer trapping . SARC has combined catch effort and catch quota i.e. Option 2 and Option 3 when last year the Option 3 catch quota was rejected outright by the majority in the first round of submissions.*

*It also states under the same question and answers.....*

*Concern no 1 That an Economic Analysis survey was completed. I cannot for the life of me understand why this was not sent out to all fisherman by mail. But more*



*importantly do not understand why this was not done before the first round of submissions last year. This failure I believe has set the tone for the lack of trust and confidence I feel to be able to make sound business decisions for my future.*

*The SARC has not included any limits on the amount of shares any one person can hold . This is unbelievable. The predictable outcome from the SARC recommendations is the concentration of wealth away from a single fishing business owner to the the already prepared multiple fishing business owners who have had inside, knowledge and information about how the workings and consolidation of this Reform structural adjustment program was designed to play out.*

*The leasing of businesses by armchair fisherman who have taken advantage is also clobbering the active fisher because we are now sharing our catch history with them in the SARC's recommendations. SARCS recommendations are going to create winners and losers. For the loser this could mean not only the loss of a life long business but the loss of a future income by way of work because many fisherman know nothing else. The average age being 57. The flow on effect to family's and the wider community is obvious . This has the potential to destroy families. The uncertainty constant worry on the fisherman also effects their children. I already know of three marriage breakdowns because of the extreme pressure, sheer exhaustion and profound stress that we are all under..... There just has to be a better way.*

*Unless my Business remains diverse i.e. multi endorsed if i have all my eggs in one basket and two bad years in a row then after i have borrowed a substantial amount of money i would not be able to pay it back and i would be bankrupt. We are at the mercy of the weather and cannot control what product comes in from around Australia and imported product to the Sydney Fish Market. We cannot guarantee a price.*

*With the meshing if you are only allowed 93 days you will no longer be able to catch your own bait so bait expenses will increase and will be in short supply . Everyone will want to go meshing at the same time which will in turn bring the price down on the market floor so what is a good price today will be a very low price (if not get a bill for product) tomorrow. Once again we cannot control the product coming in from everywhere.*

*Also each fisherman will forced to catch as much product as they possibly can in a 24 hour period.*

*As it stands at the moment you might go meshing and get enough fish in one shot and come home. 24 hours will cause major problems on the water with fisherman fighting with each other commercial and rec fisherman fighting with each other and oyster farmers and fisherman fighting when netting and trapping around the leases during the day time and holiday period.*

*At the moment the majority is done away from the public eye. They clearly have not read all the negative effects identified in other parts of the world. The job losses are going to be significant with no safeguards put in place regarding limit of shares. if a fisherman gets sick for any length of time is his catch effort going to be rolled over for the next calendar year. The consolidation that will be created by fisherman selling off getting rid of shares that may not be used every year because of weather price imports etc quantity in market will see disaster amongst the NSW Fishing industry. We do not deserve this.*

*Generous Taxation concession would need to be put in place if selling existing shares which attract Capital Gains. The ATO will not recognize the capital investment against the Capital Gains . So the situation is we get no tax advantage from purchasing shares that will not earn us anymore money in the short to medium term and we get clobbered again with a Capital gains tax from being forced to sell shares to continue to work in your business. That would also depend on the future security that would need be put in place regarding fisheries management, cost recovery and guaranteed share of the pie etc.*

*What I believe I will need to buy*

*In my business I would have to invest at least 4/5 lots of 125 mud crab shares to reach the equivalent income from that fishery this year. Cost will be extremely high and I believe the shares would not be there to buy.*

*1 to 2 Blue swimmers (Fish Trapping) 125 min lot of shares*

*I more lot of prawning shares extra 50 to 100 shares but more to compete with those who have extra in the ballot process.*

*At least one more meshing shares at least 71 min to 125 to 150*

*1 to 2 more Eel trapping shares each 125*

*Hand Gathering share have no idea they have not told us anything yet.*

### *Conclusion*

*A diverse multi endorsed Fishing Business is the only way the industry will always remain sustainable. This allows everything to get a spell.*

*The SARC recommendation I believe will kill the Estuary General Fishery. it will no longer be viable as the quota's and effort/days are too low. It does not reflect my current fishing operations. The quota allocation is not fair and equitable. Nor is it Just.*

*Have not been provided with enough information to make a sound business decision.*

*A total lack of information regarding Economic Analysis, Exit Grant proposal and a whole range of documents has not been sent out for all to read. Not every fisher is computer literate and they have had to rely on others to gather the information like copying documents from DPI web site or SARC.*

*Working out what to read what not to read. Hearsay information Short summary from SARC which was very careful to only express the positives of the new changes and left out the many negatives.*

*The whole process up till now as been in my view been inadequate and and ineffective.*

*The whole process of sharing allocation In Estuary general and Mud Crabs Blue Swimmers trapping with armchair fishermen is not fair . Active Fishers should not have their allocation reduced because of inactive fishers.*

*To ensure the Fishing Industry each fisherman that works the estuary "MUST" hold a minimum of 5 endorsements. This will stop overfishing when stocks are low.*

*If stocks are low and you have only a couple of endorsements you will further deplete the stocks.*

*This will reduce the numbers of fish crabs prawns etc ability to breed and spawn.*

*This will have a profound impact on future stocks.*

*As outlined before re seasonal and weather .*

*Example*

*if you have a wet season there will not be a blue swimmer season they don't like the fresh water.*

*if you look at catches along with weather history you will see this is the case. refer to (Wallis Lake c-op) submission Graph.*

*With the prawns financial year 2014/2015 there was no prawns . it wasn't because there was no prawns it was because Wallis lake was full of Jelly Blubber .( You could walk on water they were so thick.)So could not put the net in the water. then the lake filled up with Red weed once again could not put net in the water. All the above out of our control*

*So you can see the only way a fishing business and the industry can survive is to have a Multi Endorsed Fishery.*

*The recommendation with Meshing is going to destroy the industry in Wallis lake.*

*Example. it has been suggested we only go when the price is high.*

*It is out of our control what price from one day to the next .*

*it is out of our control what goes to the Sydney marker not only from around Australia but also what come in from overseas*

*93 days on a 24 hour period will wipe out the lake river system.*

*meshing is Top Set which is Splash and Pick up and bottom set is catch Flathead which involves setting net from sunrise to sunset.*

*So when the price is good one day fisherman will mesh for there 24 hour period  
In a 24 hour period I estimate 16-20 shots in that time because once you clock on you will be forced to work that 24 hours period.*

*There is more than 20 Fisherman with meshing endorsements in Wallis lake. So if 20 fisherman decide to go meshing at the same time because the price is good*

16-20 shots for that period with 725metre of net equals 11.6 km to 14.5 km of net per person in a 24 hour period.

This equates to approximately 232km to 290 km of net in wallis lake in a 24 hour period. this will wipe out the system in one 24 hour period. At the same time you have the Hauling covering several km of the lake.

This will reduce price and wipe out fish stocks in one 24 hour period.

It will also cause an uproar with Rec fisherman because they won't be able to catch anything and will create fights between fisherman and recs as well as fights with fisherman and oyster farmers and fight with fisherman and fisherman.

This will make the industry unsustainable.

I work a lot on my own. At times I work with my son, meshing and crabbing and prawning. Plus Ocean Haul during April May and June.

On many occasions I ask the Co-op if they need any Mullet because I believe that it is important for the shop to have a regular supply of fresh local product . This keeps the customer coming back so they do not go elsewhere (keeping the customer happy). This also delivers on our social license as my product is good quality and looked after and it is most importantly fresh local fish. The impact of the 93 days means that my just going up the river to do a shot for the shop will no longer happen as it will use up one of my days allowance.

I have been happy to do this for a very long time .It has been a win for me as an older fisherman and a win for the co-op and the best of all a win for the seafood consumer. But now that will all be lost. More individual consultation needs to be engaged with fisherman like me by the SARC to make sure that these community values that are established in our co-op are not lost. I do not go to work purely for the money.

**Limiting days in the estuary for meshing netting just simply is not going to work. It will put pressure on the water like never before.**

I am almost 75 years of age and a third generational fisherman and have been the industry all my working life almost 57 years. I am still working in the industry and intend to continue.

*As a Senior Professionally skilled commercial fisherman I take great pride in the part I have played in contributing to providing on going full time employment to 14 to 17 people at the Wallis lake Fisherman's Co-operative.*

*I also take great pride in the contribution that my whole family Grandfather, Father, 3 brothers Son and Nephews have made to the fishing industry and this community.*

*I am not computer literate so rely on my wife to gather all the information for me and for preparing this submission.*

*We have been working on this for many many weeks.*

*One thing that has become very clear to myself and my wife is that the below Issues and actions that were recognised at this workshop simply have not been implemented or used effectively in this whole process in particular the Reform Publication Paper in April 2014 to the Latest SARC draft recommendations and up till now 2016*

*The failure of this Government or DPI who ever is responsible in not following through, first with the establishment of a Peak Industry Body has been a major flaw in this whole process.*

*To the point not even being told that important information such as Economic Analysis Papers and Exit Grant Proposal Papers were on the DPI site. I am very angry that this has been the case and it has made this already difficult time in our life much more stressful than it should have been. Understanding this whole process has been very challenging.*

*It is our belief that the lesson from the Australian Southern Trawl Fishery has not been learned regarding premature and insufficiently planned introduction of the elements needed to promote engagement by fishers. There is now a NSW Fishing Industry divided by two major groups.*

*Here in Wallis lake we had a very workable pool of fishers members of our CO-OP working together for the betterment of our Co-op and this created the best environment we have ever had.*

*But that is now **gone**. The split has not only affected our local fisherman but the whole of the state. This poorly prepared introduction to the changes and ongoing*

failure to correct a situation which has been knowingly out of control for sometime by SARC or the DPI or Minister is of great concern to the future of the industry that I have spent my whole life in.

I am completely disillusioned and feel that anything I have to say will not be heard. I think that I qualify to know more about my fishery than most. I may not be able to articulate it but I do know what works and does not work and more importantly the social impact of what has happened over the last 15 months or so. I have read many papers from other countries where this type of structural adjustment has not worked and has had a profound impact on coastal communities, job losses, and for many life long fisherman it has been a disaster. It has also been stated that this catch share program does not generally increase fish catches.

My family were pioneers in the fishing industry here in Wallis Lake and much knowledge handed down has been gained but my fear is that it will be lost to the speculators and opportunist who are ready and waiting to seize the opportunity to take over when they consolidate their already vast shares purchased from huge pay outs from last buy outs and from insider information.

Below is an extract from

**AUSTRALIAN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT FORUM FISHERIES MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP**

**ADELAIDE 26TH AND 27TH MARCH 2014**

**FRDC Project No 2013/235**

**FISHERIES OCCASIONAL PUBLICATION NO. 119**

*Editors: L. Joll, I. Cartwright and S. Sloan*

**Issue 2: Stakeholder capacity building Step 1: Questions that need to be resolved**

- How do we **effectively engage** with stakeholders in small-scale fisheries? Participants in these fisheries are often not conversant with the internet and modern means of communication. English may be a second language and distrust of government entrenched.
- Who are the **right people** to be engaging with? May be possible to identify industry/ community leaders. In many cases wives are important players in small fishing businesses.
- Do the stakeholders have the **capability and capacity** to engage effectively? To engage in fisheries management processes effectively there is a need for time, knowledge, skills and resources. Where effective fishers organisations exist, they can provide the necessary resources for effective engagement.

**Step 2: Suggested actions**

67

••••  
••  
•••

*Identify the right people affected by issues and to whom capacity building should be targeted.*

*Recognise existing skills/ experiences and build on these to get messages across.*

*Recognise existing peak bodies and their present and future capacities.*

*Identify areas where the **government can assist**, including through various existing funded programmes such as Farm Biz and the range of FRDC funded capacity building projects.*

*Create awareness of training/leadership courses/education.*

*Cover costs to attend meetings; government representatives to meetings are covered by salaries – fishers and other stakeholders generally have to forego income to attend and funding expenses is at least an acknowledgment that input is valued.*

*Be flexible when deciding on locations and timings for consultative and capacity building forms (e.g. setting meetings at night).*

*Provide adequate and understandable information on the issues and encourage meaningful discussion and participation.*

*Be cognisant of differences of language and attitude and adapt processes to suit.*

**Communication.** *Effective communication with all stakeholders is vital, particularly in dealing with social values in an increasingly political and conflicted environment. In general, scientists and, to a lesser extent, fisheries managers, are not good communicators. Consequently there is an increasing need for professional assistance in this field, for capacity building of fishery managers and for well-designed communication strategies. In communicating with the public, messages relying just on the facts are not sufficient. The impacts of management decisions on stakeholder groups, and the process by which decisions were arrived at, are as important as the decisions themselves and the factual basis for them. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on building the capacity of fishery managers to communicate the complex issues they are dealing with, into more easily understandable and digestible information for fishers, fishery stakeholders and the wider community.*

*I do not believe at this time that enough focus and consideration has been given to the social impact that the Governments reform and SARC recommendations are going to have on the future of this community and fishing related infrastructure.*

*I also draw your attention to the answer of.....*

*'Concern no 4' of the latest Response to common concerns raised by Commercial fishers on DPI website.*

*The example used by SARC in the response states "The value of the NSW Lobster Fishery has increased. etc. It fails to state that the original Lobster quota was gifted to the Lobster fisherman based on catch history. Also I found this to be very misleading. Lobsters are outside in the Ocean. It is vastly different to the Mud crab or Blue swimmer crab fishery. Individuals do not go out in the Ocean at night and raid lobster traps. But unfortunately that is what happens in the Estuary trapping*



fisheries. Also it fails to state that you can hold shares in a Lobster Fishery without even being a fisherman.

Example one Lobster fisherman buys his extra quota needed from 2 Builders and a nurse.

Also same question states that experience from around Australia has shown profitability generally improves following structural adjustment. Answer did not mention any individual fishery just reference to the AgEcon Study.

However that study from what I can see refers to only Commonwealth Fisheries. The word 'Generally improves' is not enough for me to have any faith in how this structural adjustment program is going to make me more viable when I am already viable.

Also Government Contribution question. Answered... The government has committed around 25 % of the Annual GVP. to subsidize the adjustment. But it fails to state that the contribution from fisherman as stated by the DPI to NSW Local MP'S will amount to around \$11,300,000.00 dollars. That is \$13,500,000.00 from government and \$11,300,000.00 from fisherman.

I have no idea how SARC has made their estimates.

I believe there is a lack of balance of who is bearing the cost of this restructure. The over allocation of shares was done by past government and therefore the government should bear the cost of mismanagement past performance which has resulted in this situation.

I also believe that we are being engineered into thinking it will not be that bad and the cost to get to where we need to be to compete won't be very much. I also feel that this is what is being promoted to our local members of parliament.

If we are to have any faith in any restructure then there needs to be more money put forward by this Government to mitigate the mistakes of the past.

I also believe that there needs to be an appeals process put in place.

Also the exit grant proposal as stated by Prof Jacob K Goeree said it has important shortcomings and there is considerable room for further improvement.

*Extract from the Professor Jacob K Goeree.*

### *5. Conclusions and Recommendations*

*The current exit grant proposal constitutes an important improvement over earlier suggested approaches that were based on straight buy outs. Yet it has important shortcomings and there is considerable room for further improvement. A multi-round combinatorial market offers such improvement by greatly reducing the uncertainty and strategic complexity that fishing businesses face under the current proposal.*

*In particular, a multi-round combinatorial market would (i) protect exiting businesses from being left with a fragmented and unviable share portfolio, (ii) protect those that stay in the industry from obtaining less than the desired number of shares,*

*(iii) allow for consolidating tender offers, (iv) offer the flexibility to submit mutually exclusive offers to either stay or go,*

*(v) reduce uncertainty about share values and others' (strategic) behavior, (vi) allow for better allocation of the \$15.5 million subsidy,*

*(vii) allow for the Department to impose clearly specified restrictions, (viii) reduce delays and transaction costs.*

*For the practical implementation of the multi-round combinatorial market, important details will have to be settled. First, software that handles the expressive tender offers described above will have to be developed specifically for this application. Second, how this software will be built depends on the format and nature (web, phone, Fax) of the tender submission forms. Third, important decisions with respect to the timing and duration of the tender process have to be made (single shot, repeated rounds during a single day, or over the course of days/weeks).*

*My recommendation would be to develop a combinatorial market form along the lines sketched above. To hire a team or company that can develop the required software and who collaborate closely with the Department, SARC, and industry representatives, to decide on important details (timing, duration, submission forms and formats) that feed back into the software. It is a substantial project and it is imperative that this team starts as soon as possible for the tender process to be conducted in 2015.*

***Of course we know now 2016 that we did not get the combinational market so active fisherman again are at a disadvantage as you could be selling parts of your business and unable to buy what you need.***

*Given the past performance so far this nightmare is only going to get worse unless clear transparent communication and information is provided to everyone in a timely manner.*

*I am Now almost 75. I want to continue to work. At my own pace .I do not want to be forced into retirement. When is enough going to be enough . How much more are you going to take from us. For over 30 years all government have done is try to destroy us. Well no longer we have well an truly had enough . This is a total travesty of justice and should not be tolerated by anyone.*

*Finally*

*THIS WHOLE PROCESS FROM BEGINNING TILL NOW HAS BEEN AN ABSOLUTE SHAMBLES OF TOTAL INCOMPETENCE ,LIES ,CHANGING GOAL POSTS ,LACK OF INFORMATION,SAYING ONE THING THEN ANOTHER . SPIN AND MORE SPIN ON THE GRANDEST SCALE I HAVE EVERY SEEN*

*MY QUESTION TO THE TO THE MINISTER IS.....*

*DO YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO MAKE A DECISION WHICH REPRESENTS A RESPONSIBLE CHOICE AND FOR WHICH AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS LAWFUL,RIGHT OR WISE MAY BE PRESUPPOSED.?*

*DO YOU HAVE THE DISCRETION ,THE ABILITY TO ACT OR MAKE A DECISION ACCORDING TO ONE'S OWN CHOICE OR WHAT IS RIGHT?*

*IS IT RIGHT FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO SHOCK PEOPLE.?*

*IS IT RIGHT FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO DESTROY PEOPLES LIVES?*

*IS IT RIGHT FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO BETRAY PEOPLE?*

*IS IT RIGHT FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO HELP CREATE A FORM OF'ECONOMIC LUDDISM' IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY?*

*IS IT RIGHT FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO HELP ESTABLISH A 'CARTEL CONDUCT' CULTURE IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY.?*

*YOU AS A GOVERNMENT ARE OUTSOURCING THE THE PROBLEMS OF LABOUR TO THE FISHERMAN AND TELLING THEM THEY MUST BARE THE BURDEN OF THIS . WHY?*

*I DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THESE WORDS PUBLIC GOOD,FAIRNESS AND EQUITY. THESE ARE THE FACTORS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN IN TO ACCOUNT IN MAKING DECISIONS DURING THIS REFORM. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS HAS TAKEN PLACE?*

*PERMANENCY AND SECURITY IS WHAT WE WERE PROMISED/ GUARANTEED ON THE 5 TH FEBRUARY 2007*

*IF LABOUR HAD STILL BEEN IN GOVERNMENT WOULD WE HUNDREDS OF ACTIVE FISHERMAN BE FACING THIS DESTRUCTION OF OUR INDUSTRY AND LIVELIHOODS?*

*IN CLOSING*

*YOU AS A GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE WAKING UP EVERY DAY THINKING ABOUT PARTY POLITICS BUT WAKING UP THINKING ABOUT DOING WHAT IS RIGHT.*

*WE AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A GROUP HAVE AN ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO QUESTION THE WAY THESE REFORMS ARE GOING TO SHAPE OUR LIVES. YOU AS A GOVERNMENT HAVE ATTACKED AND DISREGARDED HUMAN VALUES WHICH IS THE VERY FABRIC OF OUR LIFE.*

*JUST BECAUSE THE PROFESSIONAL FISHERMAN ARE NOT AS ORGANISED AS SOME IN YOUR GOVERNMENT/DPI/SARC COMMITTEES WOULD THINK. WE AS A GROUP WILL NOT STAND BY AND LET YOU DESTROY THIS INDUSTRY.*

*YOU MUST LISTEN TO THE VERY PEOPLE YOU ARE REPRESENTING WE MUST BE HEARD. IT IS OUR ABSOLUTE RIGHT.*

*yours sincerely*

*Mr Robert and Heather Elliott*