

# NSW Shellfish Committee

**Wednesday 20 May 2015**

## **Summary of meeting outcomes**

### **Joint DPI Fisheries and Food Authority - Lease Inspections**

Phase one of a joint operation between NSW Food Authority and DPI NSW Fisheries to identify Fisheries aquaculture permit holders who do not have a NSW Food Authority licence has been completed. The operation resulted in 10 DPI permit holders being referred to the NSW Food Authority for licensing or compliance action, 5 permit holders were subject to clean-up notices and ongoing compliance checks and 6 permit holders showed no evidence of oyster production with letters issued to show cause as to why the permit should not be cancelled.

### **Draft Oyster Industry Strategy Endorsed**

The development of an Oyster Industry Strategy to identify methods and strategies to improve profitability and future direction of the NSW Oyster industry is nearing completion. The strategy is being driven by Oyster industry members and is hoped to be finalised soon and circulated amongst the wider oyster industry upon completion. The NSW Shellfish Committee recently viewed the draft version and provided feedback prior to the development of the final version.

### **Subsidy for Local Shellfish Programs Endorsed**

A paper was provided by the NSW Food Authority outlining the fee structure for the State Shellfish Levy and the Local Shellfish Program Subsidies. The paper outlined the projected cost of the NSW Shellfish Program for 2015/16 which was an increase of 2% over the previous financial year which was endorsed by the committee. Also endorsed was the cost sharing arrangement with a split of 42% government and 58% industry funding.

### **Harvest & Hold Scheme**

Following the final endorsement of the NSW Food Authority Harvest & Hold Scheme five local programs have held implementation meetings to initiate the harvest and hold scheme. All local programs with an overall compliance figure of 90% or greater with their management plan requirements are eligible to implement the harvest and hold scheme. Implementation of the scheme will occur inline with each local program annual review.

### **Clyde River vessel moorings**

The Clyde River Shellfish Program, NSW Food Authority and the Roads and Maritime Service are in discussion with boat owners in the Clyde River to ensure all moored vessels are aware of their responsibilities of effluent discharge and to ensure appropriate toilet facilities are present on moored vessels.

### **Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS) Response Plan**

NSW DPI Aquatic Biosecurity developed a response plan to increase preparedness for departmental responses to future incursions of POMS in NSW estuaries. The plan was endorsed by the committee and recommended that the plan be presented to the wider shellfish industry at the 2015 NSW Oyster Industry Field Days.

### **Alternate arrangements to collect local shellfish levies**

A request to the NSW Shellfish Committee has been received to look into an alternate billing method to collect the local shellfish levy. Currently the legislation permits only one method which is an equal fee across all NSW Food Authority licence holders. The request received suggested an alternate billing method of a fee per hectare (similar to the state levy billing method) or a combination of the existing method and the proposed method. Local shellfish programs will be asked to discuss the proposal at their upcoming annual general meetings.