

NSW Shellfish Committee

Wednesday 10 May

Summary of meeting outcomes

Reporting stock and infrastructure losses

NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Aquaculture Administration highlighted the need to get accurate information on stock losses and damage to infrastructure after disaster events so that appropriate assistance is provided to Industry. A letter explaining the process was provided to NSW local shellfish programs as part of the annual general meeting papers.

Harvest and Hold Scheme Evaluation

The NSW Food Authority has commissioned an evaluation into the Harvest and Hold Scheme to quantify its benefit to Industry. As part of the evaluation, a brief survey was issued to all licence holders regarding the Scheme. Industry participation in this survey will greatly assist the evaluation process.

DPI Compliance

The DPI Fisheries Aquaculture Manager provided an update on DPI Fisheries Compliance policies and protocols. Recent triennial inspections in Wallis Lake / Manning went well from a DPI perspective - pre-inspection notification, consistent inspection criteria, extended work program periods. The issue of a breakaway raft in the Nambucca River has focused compliance attention towards meeting best practice standards for rafts. To ensure consistency, the Compliance team has upgraded their field Ipad's for inspection criteria and compliance work instructions were updated in 2016 to provide consistent advice to all officers. Further feedback is welcomed from shellfish growers to the Compliance team (contact your Local District Fisheries Officer or Senior Fisheries Officer Lee Burdett 5524 0604). The Shellfish Committee recommended that invitations to industry meetings are extended to DPI compliance officers.

Seasonal Closure Policy

Seasonal closures have been used as a management strategy by local shellfish programs to avoid having to pay for routine testing to keep harvest areas open when there is no call for or intent to harvest shellfish. This is a cost saving measure employed by some shellfish programs across NSW. To formalise a standard approach for local shellfish programs, the NSW Food Authority presented a Seasonal Closure Policy which was endorsed by NSW Shellfish Committee. A copy of the policy was provided to NSW local shellfish programs as part of the annual general meeting papers.

Triennial Heavy Metal Testing – 2017

The 2017 year coincides with the triennial heavy metal testing undertaken by the NSW Food Authority on behalf of local shellfish programs with samples being collected later in the year. NSW Food Authority will work with local shellfish programs to ensure samples are collected and submitted for analysis. NSW Food Authority has contracted Advanced Analytical who provided a quote based on bulk samples being collected across the state and submitted as a batch of multiple samples. Results will be expected in early 2018.

NSW Oyster Conference 22-24 August 2017 (*Oysters Bringing Us Together*)

The NSW Oyster Conference is scheduled to include interactive workshops, presentations, field trips, trade display and conference dinner at Merimbula. More information can be found at www.nswoysters.com.au/2017conference.