

# NSW Shellfish Committee

Wednesday 20 February 2013

## Summary of meeting outcomes

The NSW Shellfish Committee (NSWSC) held a meeting in Sydney on Wednesday, 20 February 2013. Specific issues considered by the NSWSC at its meeting are detailed below.

### Food safety program compliance report July to December 2012

The Authority provided an update on its compliance, enforcement and inspection activities during the period 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2012. It was noted that compliance by the shellfish sector is outstanding, with the failure rate dropping to 2.2% down from an already impressive 4.2% during the previous period. The NSWSC discussed the introduction of iPads for the Authority's field officers and the efficiencies this will bring across the Authority's audit and compliance program.

The NSWSC noted the compliance report.

### Bellinger and Kalang River working groups

The Authority provided an update on the progress of these working groups to remediate specific pollution issues impacting on these waterways. Progress in both waterways is incremental but is heading in the right direction.

The Bellinger River is now able to open for harvest when environmental conditions are favourable but further remediation effort is needed to increase harvesting opportunity. The Kalang River remains closed but significant progress has been made to investigation and address sewage management issues in the catchment. Once the planned works are completed on the Kalang River final testing will be undertaken to verify that the remediation works are effective prior to re-opening the Kalang River for harvest.

### Pre-emptive harvest policy

The NSWSC discussed the proposal to implement a pre-emptive harvest procedure. Under this new procedure industry would be able to harvest product and prepare it for sale in the period between the collection and reporting of re-opening samples. The Authority agreed to develop a policy paper for consideration by the Committee.

### International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety (ICMSS)

The NSWSC discussed the up coming ICMSS being held in Sydney on 17-22 March 2013. The NSWSC was pleased that the conference was being held in Sydney as it provides an outstanding opportunity to showcase the NSW and Australian shellfish industry to the world. Registration numbers for the conference looked impressive with over 200 delegates from 30 countries expected to attend. Further information is available at [www.icmss2013.com](http://www.icmss2013.com)

### NSW Oyster Conference announced by DPI (31 July – 1 September at Port Stephens)

The NSW Department of Primary Industries announced that they are holding a NSW Oyster Conference "Catch up" and Tradeshow in Port Stephens on 31 July – 1 September 2013. The conference will include presentations relevant to the oyster industry as well as a trade show and social function.

### Jervis Bay shellfish aquaculture project

The Jervis Bay Shellfish Aquaculture Project overseen by Fisheries NSW is progressing well. Proposed lease sites for extensive shellfish production have been identified and classification of the harvest

areas has commenced. This is an alternative species aquaculture site for the NSW shellfish industry with species such as mussels and flat oysters likely candidates for cultivation.

### **Aquaculture lease security bond**

Fisheries NSW raised discussion about contributions to the Aquaculture Lease Security Bond. It was agreed to amend the priority for expenditure of funds accrued via the bond system to:

1. Navigation risk / public health & safety risk
2. Priority Oyster Aquaculture Area (POAA) Classification
3. Amenity - residential and tourist areas
4. Amenity - high use boating / recreational areas
5. Disease / pest risk or other aquatic health risk
6. Local community and oyster industry interest

Contributions to the bond will continue to remain at \$40p.a./hectare for the present time.

It was agreed that interest accrued annually on the Lease Security Trust Account should be used to undertake works and value-add funding applications related to derelict lease clean up work (approximately \$50,000). It was also agreed that contributions should continue to the Lease Security Trust Account to a balance of \$2.6m, which equates to clean up funds of \$1000/hectare to cover the 2600ha of lease area farmed in NSW.

### **Camden Haven cleared for re-opening**

The NSWSC discussed the pollution issue that impacted on the Hanley's Point harvest area in late 2012. The issue was identified as a leaking sewerage pipe which was promptly fixed. Further testing verified that there were no other issues impacting the area and it was approved to be re-opened 20 February 2013. The NSWSC was pleased with the rapid resolution of this issue commending the Authority and Port-Macquarie-Hastings Council for their responsiveness.

### **Wild harvest industry update**

The pipi industry is currently under a seasonal closure until June 2013. Stock levels have increased over the last two years providing a positive outlook for the industry. Biotoxin management plans operated by the industry will be standardised to comply with the NSW Shellfish Program Marine Biotoxin Management Plan.

### **POMS Event – Hawkesbury River**

The NSWSC discussed the recent POMS event that had impacted on the Hawkesbury River. Representatives of the Broken Bay Oyster Association provided a presentation to the NSWSC on the impact of POMS on their industry and their options for moving forward. The NSWSC agreed the best way to assess the option put forward by BBOA to consider the importation of large Pacific Oysters from Tasmania was to prepare of a risk assessment. An options paper was also proposed to consider future management options for POMS outbreaks in NSW waters

### **Domestic wastewater inquiry**

In November 2013 the Environment and Regulation Committee published a report on the Inquiry into the Management of Domestic Wastewater. The report was tabled at the meeting and the 18 recommendations considered by the NSWSC. The NSWSC resolved to prepare a response to the report.

The full report along with transcripts and submissions can be found on the NSW Parliament website listed below:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/0/3D26BB5E802112B5CA25792E0002E58D?open&refnavid=x>

*The next meeting of the NSWSC will be held on Wednesday 22 May 2013.*