

NSW Shellfish Committee

Wednesday 19 November 2014

Summary of meeting outcomes

Industry Development Steering Committee

Following an initial meeting in August to discuss the need for an economic development strategy for the NSW shellfish industry, the industry development steering committee are investigating possible funding sources with the intention to secure a consultant. The focus is to identify strategies to improve profitability at an enterprise level and plan a future course for the industry.

Operation Trident Update

Operation Trident, a joint initiative between NSW Fisheries, NSW Food Authority and NSW Police centred on the theft and black market sale of shellfish is being pushed again prior to the Christmas selling season. Flyers have been printed and issued to aquaculture permit holders and local pubs and clubs along the NSW coastline.

Review of seasonal re-opening requirements

With the modern advancements in algal biotoxin analysis, a revision of the sampling requirements following a seasonal or long term closure has been undertaken. It was found that the policy to sample two phytoplankton samples a week apart was not required as long as a biotoxin sample has been analysed. Previously the policy to sample two phytoplankton samples a week apart was to provide a recent historical picture of possible algal blooms following a period of non-testing. Biotoxin analysis now available in Australia provides a more accurate historical picture of potential prior phytoplankton contamination. Now to re-open after a seasonal or long term closure, the policy is to conduct one round of biotoxin, one round of phytoplankton and one full round of microbiological samples prior to opening.

Port Stephens Pacific Oyster Mortality

A transmission trial of Pacific Oysters was undertaken by DPI Biosecurity with the results showing that no known transmissible disease was identified. As such there is no evidence to support movement controls of Port Stephens shellfish. A brief was released to industry via the DPI Fisheries SMS text service.

Oyster Industry Best Practice Guidelines

Publication of several new Oyster Industry Best Practice Guidelines have been completed and are available on the NSW DPI Fisheries website. Guidelines in this series include Oyster Raft Construction, Floating Basket Long Line Cultivation, Keeping Leases Neat & Tidy and Oyster Industry Risk Management. A draft for Oyster Lease Security was also endorsed by the committee and will be placed on the DPI Fisheries website once finalised.

Permit Conditions and Policies

Aquaculture Permit Conditions have been reviewed and simplified. They will be reissued with new Aquaculture Permits in the new year. Policy development to consider: the management of artificial oyster reef; and Pacific Oysters on leases was also endorsed and drafting will commence in 2015.

The next meeting is to be held on 25 February 2014