

MOBILE APP TRAINING FOR FISHERS

The PFA has partnered with OceanWatch Australia to help fishers learn how to use the FisherMobile App.

Free training workshops are being held during April 2019 to assist fishers transition to the new online new quota usage reporting requirements.

There will be two types of FREE workshops available:

Workshop 1 (**Beginner**) - for fishers that are new to the FisherMobile App and real time reporting (includes the new process for multiple species reporting).

Workshop 2 (**Experienced**) - for fishers already using the FisherMobile App for real time reporting - this workshop will cover the new process for multiple species reporting and a range of other online services available via FisherMobile and FisherDirect.

Details regarding dates and location for the workshops will be available next week and we will provide to all.

NEXT PFA COM MEETING

The next PFA Committee of Management (CoM) meeting is scheduled for Friday 5th April at Maclean Services Club. PFA members are encouraged and invited to attend the meeting and discussions from 11am onwards. Lunch will be provided. Presentations from AMSA and DPI Fisheries will be in the afternoon.

INDUSTRY CONTAINER MEETING

A number of concerned fishers met with lawyers, the PFA and commercial fishermen's cooperative to discuss current knowledge of the submerged containers and options.

Currently we are awaiting advice from AMSA about whether the containers will be removed or not. This decision will dictate what the options are for industry regarding the containers. Without knowing whether the containers will or won't be removed it is impossible to foresee the financial impact experienced by those involved in the situation.

It was noted that: The Law requires compensation to be based on ACTUAL FINANCIAL LOSS.

There are 3 options for claims:

1. Claim of lost opportunity – difficult to value but worth considering.
2. Claim for financial loss that can be demonstrated (such as catch records and GPS plotters etc)
3. Claim for future loss (on both income from fishing activity or value of licence) – this only applies if the containers are NOT removed. This also involves calculating possible future damages.

The cost of the lawyer would be based on an hourly rate (not permitted to take a portion of damages). So, the more persons involved in the claim would reduce the cost to the individuals involved. The PFA is also in discussions with the Ausship Insurers to arrange testing of sonars to see whether it is feasible to use highly advanced Sonars to safely work the area without risk of hook-up.

IF you believe you have a valid claim for damages (and can prove this through GPS plotters/dpi catch records/ DPI letter etc. Then please contact the PFA to register and submit your information. We will provide this to the lawyers.

APPEAL PROCESS

Advice received during the week is that the Appeal Process will not be held until after the election (23 March 2019) as the NSW Government is now in Caretaker Mode. Caretaker mode restricts the government from making significant policy decisions or entering into contracts. We will keep members informed as we learn more. In response to questions from members about transferring of quota for those going through the appeal process:

Quota (once issued) can transfer in or out of a fishing business that have shares that are subject to appeal. The shares (quota shares) that are subject to appeal cannot transfer out of the fishing business unless (i) the appeal has been withdrawn or (ii) the appeals process has been finalised. The fishing business may transfer in additional quota shares (of the type that are subject to appeal) at any time.

The PFA represents its members' interests. If you need our help on any issue, please do not hesitate in contacting the PFA head office (6652-7374) &/or the Chief Executive Officer (0429303371)

Extension of financial assistance - the \$80,000 RAA loan applications for quota shares close 31 May 2019.

COMMONWEALTH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PACKAGE

To assist industries and communities' transition to the new Commonwealth Marine Park management arrangements, the Australian Government has committed **\$35 million** to a Fisheries Assistance and User Engagement Package to provide:

- **Fishing Business Assistance grants** — assistance to affected commercial fishers with a recent history of fishing in Australian Marine Parks as they adjust their business to the new operating environment
- **Our Marine Park grants** — to help marine users and industries engage in marine park management
- **Vessel Monitoring System Assistance** — support to encourage uptake of vessel monitoring systems. This element will be progressed through direct discussion between Parks Australia and fisheries management agencies

NOTE: the funds do NOT apply to state marine parks.

The first grant funding is ONLY available to industry bodies such as the PFA.

Eligible activities must directly relate to the project and can include, but are not limited to:

- Marketing of locally and sustainably caught seafood
- Fisheries certification
- Research into improved fishing gear types or practices that further reduce interactions with Australian Marine Park values
- Fishery wide transition to improved fishing gear types or practices
- Industry training programs increasing awareness and understanding of Australian Marine Park management arrangements, including class approvals and zoning rules
- Industry training programs on minimising the impacts of fishing on non-target species, including protected species identification and handling; and bycatch handling
- Research into the effects of fishing practices and technologies on Australian Marine Park values
- Tools to improve the ability of fishers to easily and effectively comply with Australian Marine Parks rules or increase awareness of Australian Marine Park values
- Citizen science projects that contribute to the knowledge of Australian Marine Parks
- Costs associated with transitioning fishing practices impacted as a result of implementation of Australian Marine Parks

The PFA will work on a number of applications, however we welcome any ideas or proposals from others who wish to work with us.

The PFA has already been contacted by a few members who thought that there may be advantage using the funds to provide VMS to operators free of charge (voluntarily) – they're belief that it would be better to use the funds to purchase the VMS before being forced to install VMS at potentially full cost.

What are your thoughts? Would you wish for us to apply for funds for voluntary adoption of VMS for those who want to??

PIPI & BEACHWORM WORKSHOP

We met this week in Port Stephens to discuss pipi harvest strategies and the potential use of FRDC & CSIRO's FISHPATH modelling to help inform this strategy. We were briefed on FISHPATH which was exciting to see in action –recognising a ground up approach to assessment, monitoring and management. Many NSW fisheries are about to have Harvest Strategies developed and in the development process industry needs to know what fishery management options are out there, as well as learning about what suits and how good it fits into the fishery is critical. FishPath is designed to empower fishermen during the Harvest Strategy process by helping identify monitoring, assessment and management options that are best tailored to the unique aspects of any fishery's characteristics; including its nature of operations, and socio-economic and governance contexts, as getting the right fit is not simple. The software has been designed to be best used in a data-limited fisheries. It aims to simplify the harvest strategy development process by taking into account the characteristics of a fishery and identifying potential best fit management options. With so many management options that could be implemented in a fishery, such as Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), video coverage, length measurements of fish; each comes with effort and cost so you want to make sure you are using that information for a really good purpose, not just for the sake of collecting it because you can.

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YOUR MANAGEMENT FEES

DPI is having some technical issues with their financial notifications system communicating with FishOnline – so this service is no longer available. DPI have assured us that they are working to correct the system. Note that DPI did notify people in our PFA newsletter on 15th February, see below quote:

2nd Instalment Management Fees

Reminder the 2nd instalment of management fees is 7 **due 28 February 2019**.

Payments can be made over the internet, by credit card or BPAY. Details of how to pay are on the invoices issued in August 2018.

Members have also asked us to confirm about fees and payments. DPI's website states:

From July 2018, any increase in the total revenue collected from commercial fishing management charges will be capped at no more than 6% per year (above CPI) for a five-year period.

Application fees for paper-based share and fishing business transfers were also waived over the adjustment period, but were reintroduced from 1 March 2018.

European Union Free Trade Agreement

Do you currently export or like to export to Europe??

Australia and the European Union (EU) commenced negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) on 18 June 2018. In recently concluded negotiations between Canada and the EU (CETA), most seafood tariffs were reduced to 0 per cent. A similar result from the Australia - EU FTA would:

- Significantly lower the cost of exporting to the EU for most seafood exports
- Diversify export market options
- Reduce the risk caused by the dependence upon key Asian markets and;
- Potentially put upward pressure on prices through increased competition.

As part of the negotiations, the Australian Government has invited formal submissions from industry sectors, interested individuals and groups on the potential opportunities and impacts of a FTA with the EU.

It is worth noting that individuals, organisations and groups that make a formal submission are to be registered as a stakeholder by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. By registering you can receive further information about the opportunity and be part of the conversation during consultation and follow up communication.

Click [here](#) to see further information.

How to register your interest:

You can contact Jim Fitzgerald or Peter Horvat by 14 March 2019 to register your interest in the Australian - EU FTA and/or to raise issues that you would like addressed in the formal industry submission to the Australian Government. Email: jim.fitzgerald@frdc.com.au or Phone: 0402 130 766

BYCATCH SUMMARY

The Northern Prawn Fishery Industry is happy for the Australian Council of Prawn Fisheries (ACPF) of which the PFA is a member, to share the results of their trials using Toms Fisheye BRD. They're excited about the massive 44% reduction in bycatch with minimal (0.01%) prawn loss!

The NPF guys have been trialling a number of prototypes over the last few years and the Toms Fisheye is the single version of the Kons Covered Fisheyes (the double). It was scientifically trialled in June on the Ocean Producer and, with some further tweaking, was again trialled in October/November on the Eylandt Pearl (positioned at 60 meshes from the codend drawstrings). A copy of the CSIRO data report is available from the PFA.

There is also a quick summary of what fisheries are up to reduce their fishery bycatch. Seeing trials of bycatch reduction/trawl efficiency go ahead is a high priority for the ACPF. It's evidence for the community of the sector's commitment to the fishing environment. But we know that fishery solutions need to be trialled and owned by each fishery - not at a national level.

If your fishery needs a hand asking for RD&E funding support from your state's FRDC RAC (if that's what you want to do) let me know. Always happy to put for your priorities for research or support.

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