

NSW Fishers endangered by Insurance Company playing hard-ball

18 December 2018

On the 9th August 2018, the fishing vessel Anne Marie 5 hit a container and sunk off Jervis Bay whilst the boat was towing its nets. This has caused a major dilemma for all commercial fishers who previously worked this area and now can't due to the gear being spread across the middle of the ground.

The vessel was insured with Sunderland Marine and they have been asked to remove the sunken vessel and the gear spread across on the ground. However, Sunderland Marine has refused to do so. Despite the vessel being insured, the insurance doesn't include recovery of a sunken vessel. Apparently, this may be a common thing and we have urged all fishers to check the policies for this omission.

Tricia Beatty, Chief Executive Officer for the Professional Fishermen's Association today said "The sunken vessel is now creating both a safety risk for other trawlers operating in the area due to accidental hooking up AND is preventing fishers from accessing viable fishing grounds. Fishers and government have asked Sunderland Marine to honour the intent of the insurance policy and recover the vessel, but they have refused.

"Despite Sunderland Marine stating that they maintain a service-lead philosophy they are sticking to the strict interpretation of the insurance cover. This is extremely disappointing especially considering the cost of vessel insurance premiums that our industry pays to such companies," said Ms Beatty.

Ms Beatty urged all recreational, charter and commercial fishers to check their insurance to make sure it covers the recovery of your vessel.

We can only appeal to the insurance company to show good will and initiate recovery action for the vessel so that our industry can get back to bringing in fresh local fish to enjoy over Christmas, said Ms Beatty.

For media enquire please contact Tricia Beatty, Chief Executive Officer of the PFA on 0429 303 371 or email ceo@pfai.com.au.