



Commercial Fishing NSW Advisory Council (COMMFISH NSW AC)

Dear Minister,

The Commercial Fishing NSW Advisory Council (CommFish NSW) held its 31st meeting on 4 December 2025 in Newcastle. The evening prior, CommFish hosted an informal meet-and-greet with local commercial fishers, which was well received and provided valuable opportunities for open discussion with council members and NSW DPIRD staff. Issues raised during this event were considered at the meeting the following day.

CommFish appreciated your time to join us via video conference. Your announcement of opportunities for commercial fishers under the \$20 million Aquaculture Industry Development Program was warmly welcomed.

Key matters discussed included:

- Your support to commence drafting the next NSW Sustainable Commercial Fishing Strategy, building on the success of the previous strategy.
- The severe social impacts of the White Spot control order on 53 families and your reaffirmed commitment to ongoing support.
- The need for clear water quality standards to manage aquaculture risks and protect wild fisheries, particularly fish nurseries.
- Your agreement on the importance of face-to-face meetings, which strengthen collaboration, enhance key discussions, and support CommFish's mentoring program. We were pleased to introduce Clare Joblin as the new CommFish mentee, adding further diversity to the council.
- Your awareness of progress within the Abalone Industry Working Group and anticipation of a further departmental briefing.
- Appreciation from the Sea Urchin industry representative for your offer to facilitate industry voice at Parliament.
- My personal thanks for your support to accelerate progress on the Business Efficiency Program.

I also provide a summary of topics discussed in your absence for your information:

- CommFish received insights into the current industry Social and Economic survey results and looks forward to publication of both previous and current data on the department's website to enhance industry understanding.
- WTO conditions and export of NSW product, highlighting the importance of accurate reporting and participation in observer and monitoring programs. The Department shared a draft survey to quantify export activity and assist with prioritisation.
- Total Allowable Effort (TAE) for Estuary General and Ocean Trawl prawn fisheries. A draft survey was provided for feedback to gather industry views to feed into future TAE determinations.



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- Update from the Deputy Secretary Fisheries and Forestry, Tara Black on the realignment of her department. We also welcomed the new Director for Fisheries Management, Heath Folpp.
- Finally, we acknowledged Mr Greg Finn for his long-standing commitment as the Ministerial Fishing Advisory Council member on CommFish, as well as his previous role representing the Abalone and Sea Urchin fisheries. His tenure concludes at the end of January 2026, and we expressed our sincere appreciation for his significant contributions to the NSW fishing industry. Additionally, several other CommFish member positions will conclude at the end of February 2026, with an expression of interest currently open for nominations.

Thank you again for your engagement and commitment to supporting the NSW commercial fishing industry.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Richey AM

Chairperson CommFish NSW