



14 December 2016

Hon Bill Byrne MP
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries
GPO Box 46
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Minister

Re: White Spot Disease and Industry Response

The Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) coordinated a meeting of commercial fishers on Tuesday 13th December at Victoria Point to discuss the impacts of White Spot Disease (WSD). Commercial fishers appreciated the attendance of Scott Spencer and Kerrod Beattie from the Department and Dr Jim Thompson of Biosecurity Queensland.

Where to from here?

1. That there is no take of any seafood (fish, crabs or prawns) by either commercial or recreational fishers under the movement control order issued by Biosecurity Queensland. Industry is taking a leadership position to ensure the disease does not spread beyond the Logan River system.
2. That Fisheries Queensland consider opening areas to impacted fishers to assist them in making an income as a result of the movement control order. This situation is unique and requires an “outside the square” response from government.
3. In the longer-term, how can the Queensland Government help commercial fishers deal with the potential market issues post the eradication of WSD?
4. That biosecurity protocols, as they relate to commercial fishers, be reviewed or re-drafted to provide commercial fishers with:
 - a. Timely information;
 - b. A process for commercial fishers to follow in terms of decontamination protocols;
 - c. Other fisheries specific responsibilities to ensure a consistent response.

Commercial fishers were bitterly disappointed with the government’s response regarding compensation. Are there other forms of assistance for industry while the containment and eradication process is ongoing?

The situation faced by commercial fishing families is like the aftermath of a natural disaster, yet there seem to be no programs or schemes to assist industry. Industry is not seeking a hand out but real assistance beyond low cost loans to help fishing families who are impacted by the movement control order to survive this unprecedented event.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Eric Perez, QSIA CEO

Regards

Keith Harris
President
Queensland Seafood Industry Association