

From: David McCarthy
Sent: Friday, 26 February 2021 4:36 PM
To: RRAT, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Submission to enquiry on ITQ and fishing practices

My name is David McCarthy, I have been a fisherman for 50 years, I have owned and operated lobster fishing vessels in SA, TAS, and Victoria. My son currently operates our vessel in Victoria, where we own lobster Quota, we also lease Quota at times.

a/ ITQ is generally used as a very effective management tool to rebuild and sustain fish stocks. Accordingly it results in ecologically sustainable fisheries with excellent economic outcomes for operators, communities and managers. Without the boom and bust cycling of previous styles of management. It generally gives economic confidence, such that banks will assist with industry loans.

b/ The ITQ system generally reduces the historical catch, which was usually required for sustainability. This considerably reduces the number of fishing operators in the community. Any fishers leaving the industry generally got a golden handshake as they left in that the future of the fishery looked much more financially viable than the past.

c/ The Vic. industry is comprised of [1] fishers that own nothing more than a boat, who lease a licence, pots and lobster quota, [2] fishers that own quota and also lease, [3] fishers that only catch their own quota. Group [1] are often fishers that sold out years ago and have come back and can't afford to buy in. They typically believe the investors are gouging them, The reality is the investors are generally retired fishers who lease their quota out. Some fish factories own quota to secure their supply. I personally don't think people with no financial interest in the industry should be allowed to operate, we can lose our licence through criminal behaviour, they have nothing to lose. Quota is for sale and lease on the open market, complaining that it's too expensive is like complaining about house prices. The more efficient operators can make it work.

d/ The enforceability of ecological value of the current system is absolute in the three states lobster fisheries. I don't believe the ITQ in the SE trawl fishery maintains ecological value. Discarding vast amounts of the wrong species or the wrong size of fish is quite destructive. They would be better with a quota on days fished. The health of most fishers is ok. Group [1] fishers would have the worst health outcomes, lower incomes, uncertainty in finding quota to lease.

e/ The current system is about the best available, it ensures sustainability, gives fishers quota certainty, financial confidence and money spent in communities. I do wonder if there would be any benefit in only allowing fishers to purchase quota. DMcCarthy

