

## Cost Recovery Fishery-specific Forums 2014

- Snobs Creek 22 July - Aquaculture
- Queenscliff 25 – Eels, Mixed Fisheries
- Queenscliff 30 July – EZ Rock Lobster, Aquaculture
- Warrnambool 31 July – Mixed Fisheries, WZ Abalone/WZ Rock Lobster
- Traralgon 6 August – Bays and Inlets
- Lakes Entrance 7 August – Bait/Mixed Fisheries, EZ Abalone
- Queenscliff 15 September – CZ Abalone

### Overview

In July, August and September, staff from Fisheries Victoria, and the Executive Director of Seafood Industry Victoria (SIV), travelled to 6 sites over 7 days, and met with 87 fishers and their representatives from 22 licence classes during the fishery-specific cost recovery forums. The discussions mainly focussed on services being provided under the new prospective fisheries cost recovery system. In particular, industry was seeking to clarify services for which there was cost recovery, and possible opportunities to reduce costs. The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (FV) explained potential areas for gaining efficiency and cost savings, including where savings could be achieved through a cooperative approach between industry and government. During the forums FV agreed to undertake a number of actions, and to present the issues identified at the forums to the Fisheries Cost Recovery Standing Committee (FCRSC) at its next meeting. The key issues and actions are listed below, and a summary of issues raised by each forum follows.

### Bays & Inlets - Traralgon

Forum Attendance	
<i>Licence class/organisation</i>	<i>No. present</i>
Corner Inlet	7
SIV	1

**Table 8. Corner Inlet**

	ISSUE	RESPONSE
1	Fisheries research costs for Corner Inlet are too high.	FV will consider further.
2	Level of fisheries management costs in Corner Inlet.	FV advised that costs are lower for non-quota fisheries. FV will look again at management costs recovered (eg in areas of travel, accommodation, printing, provision of Ministerial advice) and will ensure these are adequately reflected in the fishery schedules.
3	Concern about major loss of seagrass in Corner Inlet, and impact on fish stocks. Fertiliser leaching from dairy farms around the inlet considered the major cause.	FV acknowledged that this is a difficult problem. Fisheries officers and managers advocate for fisheries in land-use forums, CMAs and planning processes wherever possible. FV will investigate means to address this issue within DELWP.
Completed actions		
1	An issue raised in a letter from a Bay and Inlet entitlement holder who could not attend the	This issue was considered at FCRSC#35 and #36. It was agreed that the cost to implement this arrangement would

	meeting: Levies and fees be made payable on a quarterly or monthly basis	outweigh the benefits.
2	Definition of activities that make up inspection.	This issue was considered by FCRSC in August 2014. The inclusion of pre and post inspection activities was determined as being included in the inspection definition after being referred to the Minister in October 2014.
3	Taking account of tandem inspection of other sectors (eg recreational) when calculating cost, especially on-water costs.	<p>Inspection costs per visit on land and on water have been provided for each fishery. Commercial inspection estimations have been allocated by 5% of pre and post inspection time to differentiate between times spent on recreational/commercial/illegal fishing.</p> <p>Compliance costs have been estimated to factor in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of active licences in a class;</li> <li>• where multiple inspections occur on one trip; and</li> <li>• dividing costs where operators hold more than one licence.</li> </ul>
<b>Continuing actions</b>		
1	Accurate filling out of logbooks – problems when required to fill out each day but do not have a measure of weight until fish sold.	FVI noted that an estimate is required. The catch and effort data is key information for managing stocks in most fisheries. Recent IT applications show considerable promise for improving efficiency and accuracy of reporting. FV will trial in some fisheries with assistance from fishers.
<b>No further updates planned</b>		
1	Water sampling and analysis cost for Gippsland Lakes mussels.	FV advised that water sampling was a PrimeSafe function, not FV. SIV offered to look into matter.
2	Need to collect recreational catch data for use in stock management.	FV looking to undertake a state-wide recreational fishing take survey (last was 2006).
3	Number of recreational fishers in Victoria.	FV advised that an Ernst & Young study estimated number to be about 700,000. Considered to be on the high side.
4	Commercial versus recreational share of fisheries.	Minister's Fisheries Advisory Council has been asked to consider means to address resource sharing in Victoria.
5	Sea urchins in eastern end of Corner Inlet.	FV advised that a transferrable quota regime has been introduced for the take of sea urchins in 2 areas of the state. Other areas could be allocated if sufficient biomass.
6	Graph of under-recovery is not accurate.	FV acknowledged that it represented an earlier point in time when the RIS was released. Levy values had changed since that time.
7	Penalty for illegal fishing and trading needs to be severe.	FV agreed and noted that it used the 'fit and proper' provisions under the Fisheries Act to exclude persons from industry where they have serious offences.
8	Value in legitimate fishers assisting in identifying illegal operations.	FV agreed – valuable in terms of maintaining the resource and reduces costs to be recovered for compliance. It is appropriate to report through the 13FISH number.

9	Concern that catch and effort data are only collected on fish that are marketable and within size limits.	FV acknowledge that size profile data are also very important for management of stocks – sound stock assessments are needed. There will be a King George whiting assessment later in 2014 (every 3 years). Industry offered to assist through taking researchers out on their boats.
10	Number of inspections by fishery.	FV advised that it would report the number of inspections per year in the annual report, but would not advise of targets in advance.
11	No of inspections seems variable between fisheries (eg Corner Inlet vs Gippsland Lakes).	FV noted that as risks increase, inspections increase (and vice-versa), and that some fisheries have higher risks than others. Understanding where cost fall and risks are highest will assist in determining when IT applications might be most effectively applied.
12	Definition of river mouth when fishing.	FV advised that mouth of rivers for fishing purposes is the most seaward point of land. FV acknowledged that judgement was needed as the position at the mouth of a river changes, however there has been high compliance with this requirement.
13	Cost recovery in the recreational fishing sector.	FV advised that there is no cost recovery from the recreational sector, but advised that Recreational Fishing Licence funds are deposited in a trust account which funds projects and other activities (eg: compliance). 13 Fisheries Officers are funded from the trust account, which also funds projects involved with stock assessment. Minister approves funds allocation from the trust following consideration of recommendations from a special working group of recreational fishing interests.
14	Inspection costs seem high.	FV advised travel time is a major cost component in costing inspections, noting 2 fisheries officers are required for on-water inspections on protected waters and 3 officers required on exposed/off-shore water or out to sea inspections.