



Leon Bignell MP



Government  
of South Australia

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Ms Melinda Cilento  
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Australian Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture  
Productivity Commission  
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Dear Commissioner Cilento

I write in response to the *Draft Productivity Commission Report into Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture* (the Draft Report) released on 31 August 2016.

The Draft Report outlined a number of issues and recommendations relevant to the management of South Australia's marine fisheries. I note from the outset South Australia, through the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA), is recognised as a national leader in the ecologically sustainable development and management of fisheries and aquaculture resources.

The PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture Division has implemented a number of contemporary fisheries policies, to guide decision making on the management of South Australian fisheries, which were acknowledged in the Draft Report. These policies include the *South Australian Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy and Guidelines*, the *Policy for the Allocation of Access to Fisheries Resources between Fishing Sectors*, the *Policy for Co-management of Fisheries in South Australia*, the *Policy for the Release of Aquatic Resources* and the *PIRSA Cost Recovery Policy*.

South Australia is identified as being at the forefront of using Individual Transferrable Quota (ITQ) management systems, which are utilised across a number of South Australian fisheries including: southern rock lobster, abalone, blue swimmer crabs, sardines, giant crabs, vongole and pipi. South Australia also utilises Individually Transferrable Effort (ITE) systems in fisheries such as the Gulf Saint Vincent Prawn Fishery. I also note South Australia was recognised for adopting a best practice approach to addressing Marine Park zoning arrangements, including the approach adopted to address displaced catch and effort through voluntary buy back of displaced catch and effort from relevant fisheries.

Whilst I note the Draft Report acknowledges South Australia's leading fisheries management practices, the recommendations (specifically draft recommendation 4.1) and statements contained in the Draft Report relating to recreational fishing are of concern. Recreational fishing in Australia is referred to in several sections of the Draft Report as being unmanaged and only sporadically monitored. For South Australia, this is an incorrect statement.

Whilst limited entry arrangements are not in place for recreational fisheries – that is, all South Australians have access to the fisheries resources of the state - recreational fish extractions are managed through a number of important measures. A formal allocation of shares between the recreational, commercial and Aboriginal traditional fishing sectors has been implemented through formal Management Plans for important fish stocks, in accordance with provisions contained in Section 43 of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* (the Act). PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture manages fishing sectors in accordance with these shares and the provisions contained in Management Plans, the Act and its supporting regulations.

In support of these formal allocation arrangements, South Australia has a comprehensive set of management arrangements in place for all recreationally important species, including but not limited to bag, boat and size limits, gear controls, spatial and temporal closures. South Australia also has a comprehensive scientific stock assessment program for all important fisheries, a compliance monitoring, education and enforcement program, and a volunteer program to assist with community education and engagement. A comprehensive review of recreational bag, boat and size limits has recently been conducted and is nearing completion.

South Australia has conducted three comprehensive state-wide surveys of recreational catch and participation to estimate recreational catch and effort levels. South Australia supports ongoing collaboration and cooperation between jurisdictions to work towards a national approach to conducting recreational surveys, provided this does not lead to additional and unnecessary cost burdens for South Australia.

A number of initiatives outlined in the State Government submission, have been developed including the largest program to restore native oyster reef habitat in Australia to support healthy fish stocks, a recreational grants scheme, a strategy to provide access to, and stocking of reservoirs, and stock enhancement of Murray cod populations. All of these programs and initiatives have been implemented without the need for a recreational fishing licence.

The Government of South Australia's current policy position does not support the introduction of a recreational fishing licence. South Australia is managing its recreational fishery through the comprehensive range of management measures and initiatives outlined in this letter and the State Government submission dated May 2016.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Report.

Yours sincerely

**Leon Bignell MP**  
Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

October 31 2016