

Please find a brief summary of the points we raised & some relevant background documents. As discussed apologies for the very “basic” response but the impact of POMS in Tasmania is taking up most of our time.

### **Key Points Raised**

- **POMS**

The impact of POMS in Tasmania on South Australia with the restriction on spat imports. Recognising that the SA industry normally purchases 95% of its spat from Tasmania. The national importance of developing a POMS resistant oyster to protect the Australian Pacific oyster industry. Please find attached a draft request for funding for Australian Seafood Industries (ASI) the research/breeding company that is developing the POMS resistant oyster. The requirement for emergency funding is because the normal funding is a growers levy based on spat sales and since POMS was confirmed in Tasmania on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 there has been no or minimal spat sales. The SA industry sees the development of a POMS resistance oyster as its number one priority.

- **Ability to Raise Finance against Leased Water**

The state government have now allowed third party recognition on Aquaculture leases (allowing banks to take some level of charge over the lease) however it is still not equivalent to what is in place for agriculture leases. This puts aquaculture at a disadvantage and does not encourage investment in the aquaculture industry.

- **South Australian Quality Assurance Program**

This program is fully funded by the industries such as oysters that require testing for human health. The oyster industry recognises that it should pay for part of this program, however as most of the precautionary closures of farming areas for sales and requirement for testing are related to rain events & the related run off of town water & farms, these polluters should also contribute. Councils, businesses, and land based farmers who put polluted runoff into the oyster industries lease waters then they should provide funds for the required testing. The only way to make polluters accountable is if they are required to pay. Please refer to a past letter sent to the South Australian Minister for Aquaculture.

- **Provenance**

The Oyster Industry is very proud of the quality of the oysters it produces in the pristine waters off the coast of South Australia and wants to protect the provenance of its product. On a number of occasions our industry is aware of the specific Coffin Bay brand and the more general South Australian brand being used in restaurants and retail outlets to describe oysters that are not in fact from either of those locations. This is of great concern to our industry especially as we strive to reinforce our clean green environment. Australia has a huge opportunity to make the most of its competitive advantage in food, and provenance is a critical part of delivering this. It is our understanding that there is regulation around the illegal use of provenance but we are keen to see some way of enforcing compliance.

- **Cost Recovery**

The South Australian oyster industry is fully cost recovered along with other aquaculture industries and has been for a number of years. It is our understanding this is not the case in all agriculture industries and there once again needs to be an even playing field if our industry is going to be able to attract investment and grow.

- **Australian Quarantine & Inspection Services (AQIS)**

The oyster industry currently exports between 5% and 10% of the oysters sold as locally there is strong demand that meets most supply needs. Export is seen as an opportunity especially backed by our clean green image however anecdotally many growers find dealing with AQIS too difficult to pursue this opportunity.

- **Drilling in the Great Australian Bight**

British Petroleum (BP) and a number of other oil companies are intending to commence drilling in the Great Australian Bight in 2016/2017. This is obviously of concern to not only the oyster industry but other the aquaculture and fishing industries. The South Australian Oyster industry expects the highest level of safety to be implemented to ensure the lowest level of risk. We also expect every safety measure to be implemented to ensure there is not an accident and if there is a blow all measures to cap the blow are immediately accessible. For example we expect the capping stack to be located in Australia so it can reach the blown well as soon as it is able to capped.

We have also found the process of having to deal with/through BP on all concerns & not having an independent body that information can be directly requested from is completely unsatisfactory. The role of NOPSEMA is very unclear & confusing, we expected them to be an independent arbitrator that could be communicated with when information was not provided by BP, that is not the case. Please find attached our submission to BP.

Once again thank you for your interest in our industry.

Regards

*Trudy McGowan*

Executive Officer

South Australian Oyster Growers Association (SAOGA)