



Department of  
Primary Industries



## Appendix 4

# Decommissioning - Community Stakeholder Communications Plan

Prepared By:

*NSW Department of Primary Industries*

&

*Huon Aquaculture Company Pty Ltd*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Community Stakeholders .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3 Informing the Community .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Feedback and Complaints.....</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1 Feedback and Complaints Register .....	3
<b>5 Emergency Contacts.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6 Consultation.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7 Attachments.....</b>	<b>6</b>

**Attachment 1 – Feedback and Complaints Register**

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1: A list of all stakeholders that were consulted about the NSW DPI/Huon MARL research trial.....</b>	<b>2</b>
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### Review history

Version	Date of review	Notes
2	May 2018	
3	July 2021	Decommissioning
4	December 2021	Further updated to reflect proposed decommissioning activities
5	February 2022	Final Update to reflect finalised activities

## 1 Introduction

In compliance with condition E5 of the State Significant Infrastructure Approval SSI-5118 (now SSI-5149, the Decommissioning - Community Stakeholder Communication Plan details the following:

- Identification of relevant community and other stakeholders;
- Details of procedures and mechanisms used to inform the community and stakeholders of the developments progress and other issues;
- Processes to receive and manage feedback and complaints; and
- Phone, email and mail contact details for the development including a 24 hour contact number.

The State Significant Infrastructure application for a 20 hectare Marine Aquaculture Research Lease in Providence Bay was approved 31 May 2013. NSW DPI subsequently advertised an Expression of Interest to attract a research partner to investigate the aquaculture potential of Yellowtail Kingfish. Huon Aquaculture Company Pty Ltd (Huon) was the successful applicant.

NSW DPI and Huon lodged a Modification Application under S115ZI of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to move the lease further out to sea, expand the size of the lease to accommodate mooring infrastructure, utilise the latest in wildlife safe sea pens and to seek minor variations of consent. The Modification Application was approved 4<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

During the preparation of the original application, NSW DPI undertook extensive community consultation in the form of face-to-face meetings, telelinks, email updates, web advice, and two community drop-in information sessions at Hawks Nest and Nelson Bay. This was repeated with the assistance of Huon for the preparation of the Modification Application.

The production trials at the MARL ended on the 30 June 2018, when the last remaining yellowtail kingfish were harvested from site. Following the initial trial, Huon removed all surface infrastructure for refurbishment ready for redeployment. However, with the decision in early 2019 to finalise the research trial, this surface infrastructure wasn't reinstated at the MARL.

This Decommissioning - Community Stakeholder Communication Plan has specifically been prepared for the decommissioning operations at the MARL for the removal of the remaining in water infrastructure.

## 2 Community Stakeholders

A list of all stakeholders engaged during the various consultation stages for the NSW DPI/Huon Marine Aquaculture Research Lease is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1:** A list of all stakeholders that were consulted about the NSW DPI/Huon MARL research trial.

Stakeholders	
Port Stephens and Newcastle MPs	Port Stephens Tourism
Port Stephens Council	Destination Port Stephens
Newcastle Council	Nelson Bay & District Business Chamber
Mid Coast Council	Commercial Fishers & Newcastle Fishermen's Co-operative
NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet	Tomaree Ratepayers & Residents Association
NSW Office of Environment and Heritage	Myall Waterways Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
NSW EPA	Broughton Island Hut Users
NSW Food Authority	Tea Gardens Hawks Nest Progress Association
Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park	Local dive charters
PS-GL Marine Park Advisory Committee	Local whale charters
National Parks & Wildlife Service	Local dolphin swim charters
NSW Roads and Maritime Services	Local recreational fishing representatives
Crown Lands	Local recreational fishing clubs
RMS Waterways Users Group	Local tackle stores
Water Police	Local yacht clubs
Local Land Services	Local motor boat clubs
Marine Rescue	Tea Gardens - Hawks Nest Surf Life Saving Club
Newcastle Port Corporation	EcoNetwork
CSIRO	Marine Parks Association
Fisheries Research Development Corporation	OceanWatch
University of Newcastle	Local aquaculture representatives
Local community	Local seafood businesses

## 3 Informing the Community

The key communication tool to allow the community access to information about the decommissioning operations at the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease will be via the following weblinks:

- NSW DPI: <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aquaculture/starting-up/finfish-aquaculture-lease-modification-application>; and
- Huon Aquaculture: <https://www.huonaqua.com.au/newsroom/>

A Stakeholder Update to all key stakeholders will be provided one-week prior to decommissioning activities commencing.

## 4 Feedback and Complaints

Feedback and complaints about the decommissioning operations at the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease can be registered via the following options:

- NSW DPI
  - *Mail:* Locked Bag 1, Nelson Bay 2315
  - *Email:* [aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au)
  - *Phone:* 02 49821232 Aquaculture Management
  - *Emergency Hotline:-* 1300 920 987
    - NSW DPI / Huon MARL Research Team has also established a hotline (1300 920 987) for the operation of the MARL which will become active once the construction/deployment stage commences. This contact number will be listed in local papers and on the NSW DPI website.
- Huon Aquaculture
  - *Online:* <https://www.huonaqua.com.au/engagement/contact-us/>
  - *Phone:* 03 6295 8111

### 4.1 Feedback and Complaints Register

A feedback and complaints register will be maintained by NSW DPI at the Port Stephens Fisheries Institute (See Attachment 1), which will be regularly reviewed by the research team to determine the most appropriate response. The register will list information such as the following for feedback and complaints:

- Date;
- Person/s receiving the complaint;
- Name, address and contact phone number of person(s) making the complaint;

- Specific details of the nature of the feedback or complaint; and
- Action undertaken in response to the feedback or complaint.

A record will also be made about whether the complaint originated from normal operational procedures, an 'incident' or occasional procedure:

- If from occasional procedures, discussions should be held with complainants regarding whether it was the timing or nature of the impact and how the impacts can be better managed. In many cases an agreement can be reached between parties regarding procedures, timetables, duration and intensity;
- If it resulted from normal operation procedures, these procedures should be reviewed in discussion with the relevant approval authorities.

## 5 Emergency Contacts

NSW DPI has developed a Decommissioning Emergency Protocol to enable it to promptly and effectively deal with emergency situations. The protocol outlines contingency measures and procedures to be implemented in response to emergencies such as oil/fuel/chemical spillage; mooring breach/aids to navigation break-away; vessel grounding; and person overboard. The protocol also includes qualified personnel, reporting requirements and the training requirements for staff.

Contingency measures and procedures for marine fauna entanglement emergencies have been detailed in the Decommissioning Marine Fauna Interaction Management Plan.

NSW DPI / Huon MARL Research Team has established a contact number (1300 920 987) for the public to report all emergency events that will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## 6 Consultation

In the preparation of the original Community Stakeholder Communications Plan the following personnel were consulted.

- Professor Wayne O'Connor (*Principal Research Scientist*), NSW Department of Primary Industries; Conjoint Professor, School of Environmental and Life Sciences, Newcastle University; Adjunct Associate Professor, Genecology, University of the Sunshine Coast; Visiting Fellow, Biological Sciences, Macquarie University;
- Ian Lyall (Manager Aquaculture), NSW Department of Primary Industries.

- Luke Erskine (*Manager, Port Stephens – Great Lakes Marine Park*), NSW Department of Primary Industries, and
- David Whyte (*former Group Technical Manager*), Huon Aquaculture Group Limited.

## **7 Attachments**

### **Attachment 1 – Feedback and Complaints Register**



## Attachment 1

### Feedback and Complaints Register

No.	Date	Name	Contact details	Nature of feedback/complaint	Action taken