



10 February 2017

Hon Barnaby Joyce MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Re: White Spot Disease and Assistance for Commercial Fishers

The Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) appreciates the assistance provided to industry help develop its capacity to deal with white spot disease (WSD). The spread of the virus is a real concern for industry and the with a supply chain value of between \$275 and \$330 million dollars to the Queensland economy alone.

As previously noted, commercial fishers were bitterly disappointed with the government's response regarding compensation. Again, the commercial sector is seeking 'out of the box' thinking in terms of industry assistance. Commercial fishers are not simply looking for handouts but some form of negotiated assistance that can help them pay debts and have secure income during this unprecedented event.

QSIA is gathering information with respect to the financial and broader economic impacts of WSD on commercial fishers but this will take some time and businesses are facing financial hardship as this work progresses.

The current situation means:

- Commercial fishing businesses, which are typically micro-businesses, have had limited to no income over a three-month period with no fixed date for when commercial fishers can resume work; and
- WSD has led to displaced fishing effort because of the quarantining of the Logan River.

On behalf of impacted commercial fishers, I ask for you and the government to reconsider providing financial assistance to impacted commercial fishers.

I would also like to invite you to meet with the impacted commercial fishing operators in the Logan River to provide you with a first-hand account of the hardship faced by industry.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Eric Perez, QSIA CEO on 0417 631 353 or eo@qsia.com.au.

Regards



Keith Harris
President
Queensland Seafood Industry Association

Cc:

1. Senator the Hon Anne Ruston, Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources.
2. Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan, Minister for Resources and Northern Australia.
3. Hon Stuart Robert MP, Federal Member for Fadden.
4. Mr Bert van Manen MP, Federal Member for Forde.
5. Mr Andrew Laming MP, Federal Member for Bowman.
6. Ms Michelle Landry MP, Federal Member for Capricornia.