



MEDIA RELEASE

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ACTION NEEDED ON FUEL DISTRIBUTION AND PRICES FOR FISHING INDUSTRY

QUEENSLAND'S peak fishing industry body has called for immediate action on the distribution and price of fuel.

Governments have been warned fishing-vessel owners could go broke if forced to tie up for extended periods or pay more for their fuel than the catch is worth.

Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) CEO David Bobbermen said fishermen in a number of ports have reported that fuel is unavailable.

In other ports, where fuel is still being supplied, prices are making it uneconomic to fill up and put back out to sea.

"This has all the indicators of a crisis for the fishing industry," Mr Bobbermen said. "Urgent action is needed to ensure fuel is available at a price that allows businesses like fishing, farming and transport to keep working.

"We need to see guaranteed supply and price relief. Arrangements are already in place to return fuel tax to vessel-owners and that could be adapted to maintain an economic price for diesel in particular."

Mr Bobbermen said fishermen had reported fuel shortages in a number of ports throughout the State.

"Mooloolaba is one of the largest fishing ports in Queensland, particularly for prawn trawling and tuna longlining, and operators there are telling me fuel is just not available, and boats can't leave the wharf. I've had similar reports from as far away as Ingham and elsewhere in North Queensland, and everywhere prices have jumped by 40 cents or more.

"This is a serious situation right now and experienced fishermen are saying it's the worst situation they've seen with fuel, even worse than the Iraq War more than 20 years ago.

"We need to talk urgently with the Federal Government about fuel distribution and price relief to keep the industry afloat, and avoid a crisis for fishing businesses and other primary producers."

Further information:

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About the Queensland Commercial Fishing Industry

The Queensland Commercial Fishing Industry operates along the Queensland Coast using varied apparatus, mainly pots, lines, nets and trawling. Historically, it is an industry important to many small coastal towns. In the most recent economic data (2021-22 year), it contributed over \$250 million to the State's GVP. This contribution was valued at "beach price" – which significantly undervalues the industry. Over 900 businesses work in the industry, employing around 3,000 people.

About QSIA

Queensland Seafood Industry Association Inc (QSIA) is Queensland's peak membership-based organisation representing businesses in the wild harvest commercial seafood industry in Queensland. Its history dates back over 100 years. Membership activity ranges from the NSW border to the NT border and encompasses all forms of commercial fishing – namely line, pot, net and trawl. QSIA also has members that provide pre- and post-harvest goods and services to the industry.

The QSIA Vision is:

The trusted advocate for a profitable, thriving and sustainable Queensland Wild Caught Seafood Industry.

QSIA Mission:

To champion Queensland's wild-caught seafood industry, its people, and its communities by enhancing profitability, supporting best practices, fostering innovation, and maintaining sustainability.

QSIA is proud and honoured to have Mr Keith Payne VC, AM as its patron.

