



**Hon Ken Baston MLC  
Minister for Agriculture and Food; Fisheries**

Our ref: 47-09473

Mr Mark Warner  
Committee Clerk  
Estimates and Financial Operations Committee  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Warner

**QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE – 2014-15 ANNUAL REPORT HEARINGS**

I refer to a letter dated 15 December 2015 from the Hon Ken Travers MLC, Chair of the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee in respect of the above matter.

I have pleasure in enclosing responses from the Department of Fisheries.

Yours sincerely

**KEN BASTON MLC  
MINISTER FOR FISHERIES**

11 JAN. 2016

Enc. Estimates and Financial Operations Committee 2014/15 Annual Report Hearings, Answers to Questions Taken on Notice

**ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

**2014/15 ANNUAL REPORT HEARINGS  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

**Department of Fisheries**

**Hon Rick Mazza asked:**

- 1) What time of day did you respond to it (*i.e. the Cockburn Sound fish kill*); was it in the afternoon?

Answer:

The Fishwatch call was received at 08.45 am on Thursday 19 November. Fisheries and Marine Officers were dispatched to the site at 09.10 am.

**Hon Stephen Dawson asked:**

- 2) Is the Department aware of roughly how many fish have died (in the Cockburn Sound fish kill) and what species those fish were?

- a) Roughly how many fish have died?

Answer:

The Department found between 1,500 and 2,000 dead fish as it responded to Fishwatch calls.

- b) What species of fish?

Answer:

A broad range of species have been found, including pink snapper, estuary and stripey catfish, flathead, Port Jackson shark, leather jacket species, scorpion fish, north west blowfish, common blowfish, porcupine fish, squid, cuttlefish, jellyfish and starfish.

**Hon Ken Travers asked:**

- 3) Is that information available to you as an agency, the monitoring of the dissolved oxygen levels across the Sound?

Answer:

This information is made available to the Department on request.

**Hon Stephen Dawson asked:**

- 4) Is it possible to provide the Committee with a list of those individuals or job titles who have been involved in this process, just for us to get an idea of the extent of work that has gone into it?

Answer:

A number of staff from the Department of Fisheries were involved in the Cockburn Sound fish kill event to varying degrees, including:

- Director General
- Deputy Director General
- Executive Director, Research
- Executive Director, Regional Services
- General Manager, Aquatic Environment
- Metropolitan Regional Manager
- Supervising Scientist, Biodiversity and Biosecurity
- Fish Health Laboratory Manager
- Senior Research Scientist, Fish Health
- Research Scientist, Fish Health
- Research Officer, Fish Health
- Senior Research Scientist, Invertebrates
- Senior Fisheries and Marine Officers
- Supervising Fisheries and Marine Officers
- Fisheries and Marine Officers
- Principal Policy Officer, Aquatic Environment
- Senior Policy Officer Aquatic Environment
- Intern Policy Officer, Aquatic Environment
- Senior Media Officer
- Principal Management Officer
- Fisheries Management Officer
- Manager, Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Senior GIS Officer
- GIS Officer
- Manager, Financial Services
- Finfish Scientist
- Ministerial Liaison Officer
- Minister's Fisheries Liaison Officer
- Manager, Strategic Compliance
- Manager Fleet Operations

**Hon Rick Mazza asked:**

- 5) What is the current recreational bag limit for Australian herring in South Australia and what are the processes and timelines in place for amending this.
- a) What is the current recreational bag limit for Australian herring in South Australia?

Answer:

In South Australia, the personal daily bag limit for Australian herring is 60, with a daily boat limit of 180.

- b) What is the process and timelines for amending the current recreational bag limit for Australian herring in South Australia?

Answer:

The Department understands that the South Australian government has a process underway for reviewing the personal daily bag limits of a number of recreational species, including Australian herring.

Once a discussion paper has been released, there will be a period of public consultation before a decision will be made by the South Australian Government whether to reduce bag limits of Australian herring, and if so, by how much.

The Department of Fisheries and the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australian have committed to preparation of a joint harvest strategy for Australian herring. Officers will commence discussions on the joint harvest strategy during 2016.

**Hon Rick Mazza asked:**

- 6) What has been done to progress the election commitment of developing Wellington Dam into an inland fishing hub?

Answer:

To progress this initiative the Government recently approved \$126,000 from the Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund for the project "*Development of a Preliminary Assessment Tool for Determining the Suitability of Waterbodies and Aquatic Fauna for Impoundment Stocking in south-western Australia*".

The project aims to develop a risk assessment-based process for investigating the suitability of a water body for the introduction of aquatic fauna and will provide guidance on the type of fauna which may be best suited to that locality. While the primary focus of developing these criteria will be around introducing fauna for the purpose of increasing recreational fishing opportunities, additional benefits may arise from the process including opportunities aimed at:

- Increasing the amenity value of a water body,
- Providing genetic refuge for fish species, or
- Attracting economic benefit for regional communities.

When this project is complete, the suitability of stocking introduced species into Wellington Dam can be further considered.

**Hon Stephen Dawson asked:**

7) Do you still have a high number of staff on contract? Do you know what the figure is these days?

Answer:

As at 30 June 2015, the Department of Fisheries had 49.1 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) directly employed on fixed term contracts and 3.9 FTEs on a casual basis. The breakdown and comparison with the last financial year is shown below for information.

As at 21 December 2015, the Department of Fisheries also had 7 people indirectly employed through recruitment agency contracts.

<b>Summary Statistics</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Full-time contract	44.0	41.8
Part-time contract	5.2	7.3
Casuals	3.9	3.9

**Hon Stephen Dawson asked:**

8) ‘...the Department was provided with – that extra money was approved by the EERC in the midyear review for a number of projects. They were the aquaculture zones, aquatic biosecurity projects, Beacon Island remediation etc. Are you able to give my by way of supplementary again, the number of staff who might be linked to each of those listed projects?

a) Number of staff linked to the aquaculture zone project.

Answer:

Five

b) Number of staff linked to the aquatic biosecurity projects.

Answer:

This was a rollover of funds from 2013/14 for an existing contract with the Western Australian Marine Science Institute to deliver a report on *Didemnum perlucidum* (a marine pest). Three staff were linked to this project.

c) Number of staff linked to Beacon island remediation project.

Answer:

Eight

**Hon Stephen Dawson asked:**

- 9) What is the staffing component of that (Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park) and how many extra staff will you get as a result of that amount?

**Answer:**

The \$550,000 allocation for Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park includes salary (\$350,000) and staffing costs (\$100,000) for 2 x Broome-based FTEs (Fisheries and Marine Officers) as well as operational costs for vessel and land patrols (\$100,000).

This funding will also be used to contribute to monitoring compliance within the proposed Roebuck Bay Marine Park.

**Hon Stephen Dawson asked:**

- 10) On the issue of compliance and monitoring, can I have—you can give it to me now or provide it by way of supplementary—the numbers of how many staff the department has in the compliance and monitoring area? Perhaps, if you are able to provide me with the last two years plus this year and the next year as well.

Perhaps by way of supplementary, if you are able to provide me the figures for the last financial year and anticipated numbers for the next two financial years that would be great.

**Answer:**

The tables below provide the information for Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Fisheries and Marine Officer (FMO) positions by location for the financial years 2013/14 and 2014/15.

It is not anticipated there will be a change in the quantum of FMOs for the next two financial years. There may be some changes to the location mix of FMO's to address compliance resourcing needs based on risks that arise from planning processes during that period.

<b>2013/14</b>			
<b>Area</b>	<b>District Office</b>		<b>Region Total</b>
<b>Northern</b>			<b>17</b>
	Kununurra	2	
	Broome	10	
	Karratha	5	
<b>Gascoyne</b>			<b>10</b>
	Exmouth	4	
	Carnarvon	3	
	Denham	3	
<b>Midwest</b>			<b>15</b>
	Geraldton	9	
	Dongara	2	
	Jurien	4	
<b>Metro</b>			<b>33.5</b>
	Lancelin	4	
	Hillarys	6	
	Fremantle	9.5	
	Rockingham	4	
	Mandurah	10	
<b>South</b>			<b>14</b>
	Bunbury	4	
	Busselton	4	
	Albany	4	
	Esperance	2	
<b>Serious Offences Unit</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Special Projects</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Biosecurity</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Strategic Compliance</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Marine Operations</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>114.5</b>	<b>114.5</b>

<b>2014/15</b>			
<b>Area</b>	<b>District Office</b>		<b>Region Total</b>
<b>Northern</b>			<b>19</b>
	Kununurra	2	
	Broome	10	
	Karratha	7	
<b>Gascoyne</b>			<b>10</b>
	Exmouth	4	
	Carnarvon	4	
	Denham	2	
<b>Midwest</b>			<b>15</b>
	Geraldton	11	
	Jurien	4	
<b>Metro</b>			<b>33.5</b>
	Lancelin	4	
	Hillarys	6	
	Fremantle	9.5	
	Rockingham	4	
	Mandurah	10	
<b>South</b>			<b>15</b>
	Bunbury	5	
	Busselton	4	
	Albany	4	
	Esperance	2	
<b>Serious Offences Unit</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Special Projects</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Biosecurity</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Strategic Compliance</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Marine Operations</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>114.5</b>	<b>114.5</b>

**Hon Ken Travers asked:**

11) Do you have the figures on how many of your staff were diverted to the shark cull program in the 2014/15 financial year? What was the final figure in terms of the amount of time and effort your staff spent on the shark cull, and how much of that were you ultimately compensated for?



Answer:

The resources required to manage the trial shark drum line program in the metropolitan area for the three month period (January to April 2014) were drawn from across the State with the combined effort of those officers equating to 3 full time equivalent positions.

The total costs incurred by the Department in supporting the shark drum line trial totalled \$757,000 and an amount of \$495,000 was reimbursed to the Department. An amount of \$262,000 was already in the Department's budget allocation and these resources were applied to the management of the shark drum lines.

**Hon Rick Mazza asked:**

12) How many aquaculture licences are current in Western Australian coastal waters?

Answer:

There are 52 current aquaculture licences in Western Australian coastal waters (excluding licences for pearling of the species *Pinctada maxima*). The licence holders and locations of the licensed sites are set out below.

<b>Licence holder</b>	<b>Location</b>
Pelsaert (WA) Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
Elmwood Holdings	Abrolhos Islands
Warburton Aquaculture Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
Abrolhos Pearls WA Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
Sea Urchin WA Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
Zeewyck Pearl and Diving Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
Radar Holdings Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
B Ayling A&S Rose AI&A Flannigan P/L	Abrolhos Islands
WTN Nominees P/L & Pelsaert (WA) P/L	Abrolhos Islands
A&T Basile	Abrolhos Islands
E Whitby & S Bonney	Abrolhos Islands
Grange Court Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
P & K Armstrong	Abrolhos Islands
Batavia Coral Farm Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
Abrolhos Pearls WA Pty Ltd	Abrolhos Islands
SJ & JD Arrow	Beagle Bay
Indian Ocean Fresh WA P/L	Champion Bay Geraldton
Durack Institute of Technology	Champion Bay Geraldton
Blue Mussel Holdings Pty Ltd	Cockburn Sound
Blue Mussel Holdings Pty Ltd	Cockburn Sound
MPA Fish Farms Pty Ltd	Cone Bay
Chile Creek Aboriginal Corp	Dampier Peninsula
Emama Nguda Aboriginal Corp	Derby
WG Aboriginal Corp	Eclipse Islands
MG Kailis Pty Ltd	Exmouth Gulf
A Webb & J Rinkens	Exmouth Gulf

Terry Maxwell  
Ocean Grown Abalone Pty Ltd  
Bonakey Nominees Pty Ltd  
Anthony Johnson  
Robert Michael  
Gareth James  
Global Barramunid Pty Ltd  
MG Kailis Pty Ltd  
Mackerel Islands Pty Ltd  
Bardi Aboriginal Assoc  
Lindsay Michael  
Ocean Foods International Pty Ltd  
Tasmanian Seafoods Pty Ltd  
WA Ocean Park Pty Ltd  
Tasmanian Seafoods Pty Ltd  
Blue Lagoon Pearls Pty Ltd  
Tasmanian Seafoods Pty Ltd  
E Francis  
Scott Szulc  
Dibbin & Dibbin  
G & N Peck  
WA Southsea Pearls Pty Ltd  
Tennereef Pty Ltd  
Sea Bed Enterprises Pty Ltd  
Gareth James  
Xavier Launay

Exmouth Gulf  
Flinders Bay, Augusta  
Jurien Bay  
King George Sound  
King George Sound  
King George Sound  
Lake Argyle  
Learmonth  
Mackerel Islands  
One Arm Point  
Oyster Harbour  
Oyster Harbour and King Sound  
Shark Bay  
Shark Bay  
Shark Bay  
Shark Bay  
Shark Bay  
Shark Bay  
Shark Bay  
Sholl Island  
Warnbro Sound  
Warnbro Sound  
West Lewis Island  
West Moore Island  
West of Bunbury  
Wilson Inlet  
Wilson Inlet