

NORMAC 57 Final Minutes
25 October 2004
Brisbane

NORMAC 57 - List of Attendees

NORMAC

Stuart Richey	Chairman
Les Roberts	AFMA Member
Eddie Hegerl	Conservation Member
Ian Poiner	Scientific Member
David Carter	Industry Member
Efrem Gamba	Industry Member
Les Lowe	Industry Member
George Raptis	Industry Member
Margaret Tailby	EA Permanent Observer
Jim Gillespie	State Government observer
Annie Jarrett	Executive Officer

Advisors

Cathy Dichmont	CSIRO
Peter Jackson	Industry
Ron Earle	Industry
Louise Deacon Casey	Industry
Mike O'Brien	Industry
Theresa Lowe	Industry
Clayton Nelson	Industry
Wade Whitelaw	AFMA

Apology

Ean Casey	Industry Member
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Invited Guests

Dr. Sainsbury	AFMA Board
Dr. Tom Kompas	

Observers

Norm James
Warwick Smyth
John Thomas
Ian Boot
Phil Robson
Brian Corbett

Helen Corbett
Scott Howard
Peter Schultz
Albert Menzel
Dianne Langstone
Tony Murray
Bo Jensen
Max O'Halloran
Tony LaMacchia
Dave Maden
Chris Bourke
Brian Bienke
Irene Bienke
Sue Bennett
Paul Taylor
Gary Taylor
Glennis Taylor
Fred Taylor
Noel Hoschke
Cynthia Hoschke
Robert Rose
June Rose
Geoff Featherstone
Con Raptis
Col James
Ted Norton
David Fitzpatrick (solicitor for NPF Qld Trawl Assn)
David Hannay (solicitor for Lowe family)

Item 1 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10.20 am. The Chairman welcomed Les Roberts as the new AFMA member on the MAC, Dr Keith Sainsbury in attendance from the AFMA Board and Dr. Tom Kompas.

The Chairman welcomed all observers and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting. Mr. Richey advised that it is a normal meeting of NORMAC, and not an open forum, and requested all advisers and observers to observe normal meeting protocols. He recognized that there was considerable interest in the issues to be discussed and indicated that all observers would be given an opportunity to speak at an appropriate time during the meeting.

It was noted that the main purpose for the meeting was for NORMAC to consider the submissions received on the economic model of the NPF. The chairman expressed appreciation for the time and effort which had gone into providing advice to NORMAC. It was noted that all NORMAC members and advisers had been provided with copies of each submission, as had the AFMA Board.

Item 2 Apologies/Adoption of Agenda

The meeting noted an apology from Ean Casey who was at sea, and noted that Mr Casey could be contacted by telephone during the course of the day.

The meeting noted that due to an unavoidable business commitment, Mr. George Raptis was not in attendance but would be arriving about mid-morning.

Resolution:

That the agenda as proposed be adopted

Item 3. Declaration of Interests

The Chairman reminded members that the AFMA policy paper on MACs and the CAC Act required members to declare their interests in relation to the MAC and/or specific agenda items. The interests of members were declared as follows:

Stuart Richey:	FRDC Board Member
Ian Poiner	AIMS

The specific commercial interests of the industry members of NORMAC were recorded as follows:

Efrem Gamba:	A shareholding in a company holding 10 B Class SFRs and a number of gear SFRs; and a holder with a direct interest in gear SFRs
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George Raptis:	Shareholder in 20 Class B's and a number of gear SFRs
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David Carter: CEO of a company holding 8 Class B SFRs and a number of gear SFRs

Ean Casey: Shareholder in 1 B class SFR and a number of gear SFRs (Noted in his absence)

Les Lowe: Shareholder in 4 Class B SFRs and a number of gear SFRs

Item 4. Correspondence

NORMAC was provided with a list of incoming and outgoing correspondence since the last meeting. Additional correspondence relating to remuneration of MAC members was circulated at the meeting.

It was noted that, with the exception of correspondence from NTTOA (6 /9/04) and Fitzpatrick Teale Solicitors (10/8/04; 16/8/04), this list did **not** include the submissions received on the recommendations of NORMAC 56 or the Kompas model, nor did it include acknowledgements sent in response to those submissions.

Resolution:

That NORMAC notes the inward and outward correspondence

Item 5. Record of NORMAC 56

NORMAC noted that a number of comments on the NORMAC 56 draft minutes had been provided by Ean Casey and Trysh Stone. NORMAC noted that the comments from Ean Casey reflected his current thinking but agreed that the draft minutes were a correct record of the discussions at the meeting. The comments provided by Ms. Stone supported the view that the draft minutes were a correct reflection of the discussions and outcomes at NORMAC 56. NORMAC agreed to incorporate minor editorial changes provided by Mr. Casey.

Louise- Deacon Casey noted the advice from Trysh Stone in relation to a query on the number of SFR holders in attendance at NORMAC 56. Ms Deacon-Casey indicated that Ean Casey did not receive the email to which Ms Stone referred and requested AFMA to provide a copy of it.

Resolution:

That NORMAC approves the draft record of NORMAC 56 as amended

Item 6 Action Arising from NORMAC 56

NORMAC considered the 'action arising' from NORMAC 56.

It was noted that an AFMA paper on confidentiality rules would be considered at the next meeting of the AFMA Board.

NORMAC noted the outstanding item to be provided by Theresa Lowe in relation to at- sea surveys and agreed to Ms Lowe's request to carry the action item over to the next meeting.

NORMAC noted that the appointment of all members had been rolled over for 6 months, with appointments extended until 31 March 2005. AFMA Management indicated that members will undergo a full induction process, whether or not they have been previously been MAC members.

Resolution:

That NORMAC notes the Action Arising from NORMAC 56.

Item 7 Confirmation of Out of Session Decisions

NORMAC noted that the one out of session decision was a proposal to change the Principal Investigator in the Weipa R & D Project. The majority of members had approved this proposal with no objections received.

Resolutions:

That NORMAC reaffirms its approval of the proposal to change the principal investigator in the Weipa R & D project.

Item 8 AFMA Management report

NORMAC received a report on issues relevant to the NPF from AFMA Management.

NORMAC noted the advice from AFMA Management in relation to the Coburg Marine Park boundary and the discussions between AFMA and the States and Territory on squid issues.

AFMA Management advised that training for the Crew Member Observer (CMO) Program was held from 3-5 August at the Gold Coast. Twelve vessels are currently part of this program and are collecting data and samples as part of the integrated bycatch project. In addition, another 25 vessels are collecting bycatch samples as part of the Directed Industry Collection (DIC) project. Seven vessels have been provided with scientific permits to allow the testing of the effects of BRDs on sea-snake bycatch. No results are available yet. One vessel has been provided with a scientific permit to trial the 'Fishbox' BRD. Anecdotal information is that it appears to have a reduction on fish species except dollar fish.

Two short duration scientific permits are currently in force for the collection of prawn brood stock. The vessels have been operating in the JPG and around Melville Island.

The AFMA Manager advised that port meetings on the economics of the fishery were held by AFMA in Cairns, Darwin and Brisbane respectively from the 22nd to the 24th of September. Dr Tom Kompas and Les Roberts attended the meetings to answer questions and explain the economic model. Industry attendance at the meetings was 8, 5 and 12 persons respectively. NORMAC expressed its appreciation to Dr. Kompas for making these presentations during his illness.

NORMAC was advised that AFMA and CSIRO have recently completed a project that investigated alternative management strategies in the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark (SESS) fishery. A downstream result of this study, now being developed, is a project entitled 'Evaluation of strategic options for management of Commonwealth fisheries'. This project has 2 major components;

- Undertake a qualitative assessment of alternative management strategies for the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF); and
- Investigate the applicability of the alternative management strategies approach for the Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF).

This project will report on the usefulness of the alternative management strategies approach to the NPF. The results will be available by April 2005 in time for the NPF alternative management strategies workshop.

It was noted that the Blue Mud Bay native title claim is ongoing. Both the Australian and NT governments have conceded that the claim area lies within waters internal to the NT. To this effect DAFF have again (22/9/04) requested that the NT Government manage the prawn fishery in waters within the limits of the NT in a manner that is consistent with AFMA's management arrangements. AFMA was awaiting a response from the NT.

The NPF Manager indicated the need to submit log book returns to assist in the timely production of the annual data summary. NORMAC agreed that AFMA would follow up on any late returns as quickly as possible.

NORMAC was advised that the first National Prawn Industry Conference is scheduled to take place in Cairns from the 28th to 30th of November. A separate research workshop is to be held on Wednesday 1 December. The intent of the workshop is to look at research requirements for the future. This may include bycatch, ecological and economic issues – the intent is for industry, managers and researchers to discuss what they see as the important issues and try and ensure future research is focussed and applicable to all prawn fisheries. AFMA Management indicated that the workshop may provide an impetus / forum to further develop a BRD workshop in the future.

NORMAC agreed to investigate the possibility of a group booking rate for NORMAC members to attend the conference. David Carter agreed to ascertain whether a group rate was possible. It was agreed that funding for conference attendance through the NPF levy base would be on an 'as required' basis and subject to members being there on NORMAC related business.

AFMA Management advised that the 4th international fisheries observer conference is being held in Sydney from the 8th to 11th of November at the Manly Pacific Hotel. CSIRO are presenting a paper entitled '*Demonstrating the Effectiveness of Fishery-dependent Data Collection Methods*' and AFMA will be presenting a poster entitled '*Bycatch Data Collection for the Northern Prawn Fishery – A New Approach*'. Both projects report on the present bycatch project which is looking at the most cost effective way to collect bycatch data. Components being assessed include the crew member observer program (CMO), the directed industry collection (DIC), logbooks, research surveys and scientific observers.

NORMAC noted advice from AFMA Management regarding research proposed to address the requirement for a conversion factor from twin to quad gear.

AFMA Management advised that NPF levy notices had been sent out in October and that whilst the NPF budget was underspent to the end of August, it was expected that the items will balance with time.

It was noted that Mr Tony Rundle had recently been appointed as the new AFMA Chair and that other changes in staffing in relation to the NPF had occurred.

Mr. Raptis joined the meeting at 11.00

Resolution:

That NORMAC notes the report

That SFR holders be requested to send log book returns in quickly and that AFMA Management will follow this up

Item 9 Industry Report on NPF (Verbal)

The Chairman requested industry members to provide a verbal update on issues affecting the fishery. A range of comments were put forward as follows:

- fuel prices very high, exchange rates unfavourable, catches in Western gulf ranging from 250 – 350 kg per night although some higher catches had been reported

- about 45% of the catch is U6; market is trying to discount U6 prices; game playing in size assortments in cargos, modest optimism from Japanese market place, inquiry levels at interesting highs compared to recent times

- biggest problem is not working Queensland waters within GOC due to closure in July/ August, being forced to work a particular area in second half is creating target fishing which will be bad for the fishery

- price of tigers risen, reason is excess stocks have been consumed; late starting time causes mad rush in top up stocks; November market does not want prawns because its too late; Japanese don't want larger prawns; not enough fishing time; 25% reduction needs to result in two more months fishing; the Australian dollar going up; Japanese don't want banana prawns; lucky to have found Chinese market; not turning over

enough money due to short fishing seasons; crews not available; banana prawns resorting to domestic market as hard to sell

- fishing time needs to be longer but at the right time to get best tiger prawn catches ie August

- stronger demand and increase in average price of tigers – a number of operators still holding substantial banana holdings – price outlook is poor – banana markets are changing –demand is later in the year and better for larger sizes

Resolution:

That NORMAC notes the comments provided by industry members

Item 10. Consideration of Submissions received on Kompas Economic Assessment of the NPF

The Chairman again reminded all in attendance that this was a formal NORMAC meeting and not an open forum. Mr Richey indicated that he was first seeking input from NORMAC members and that observers would be given an opportunity to expand on their submissions by way of a short presentation on anything they may have missed in their submissions, or any additional points they wished to make.

The AFMA Member outlined the processes which had occurred since NORMAC 56. It was noted that, because of the nature of recommendations from NORMAC 56 and concerns about the economic model, the AFMA Board had agreed to provide the Rose/Kompas report to stakeholders and to seek submissions from stakeholders for consideration by NORMAC.

Mr. Roberts advised that port visits had been undertaken by he and Tom Kompas to ensure a full understanding of the economic model and the data which underpinned it. Mr. Roberts indicated that the AFMA Board considered some issues relating to the NORMAC 56 recommendations at the August meeting, including the quad gear issue, and background advice from AFMA Management. It was noted that a very large number of submissions had been received and that all members of the AFMA Board had been provided with a copy of the submissions.

NORMAC noted that copies of all submissions received were included in the NORMAC folders, with the exception of two submissions which were received after agenda papers were dispatched. Copies of these submissions were tabled. It was noted that, for ease of reference, a 'Summary of Comments' was prepared for all but one of the submissions and included in the NORMAC folders. It was noted that, because of the technical nature of the submission from Sterling Trawl Gear Services, and to ensure no important points were omitted, no attempt had been made summarise that document.

Mr. Roberts indicated that AFMA Management and the NORMAC Executive Officer had prepared a Table of Categories and Main Points raised in the submissions and proposed that, for ease of discussion, the table be used as a basis for NORMAC's consideration of the issues. It was noted that the Summary had been separated into

broad categories, being Process, Model/Economics, Management, Policy and Social. A list of 'main points' was identified under each category.

To provide structure to the NORMAC discussions, it was agreed to first consider the issues identified in each category and to identify and discuss any other issues of relevance.

Process

NORMAC considered concerns about due process. This included concerns that the sub-committee appointed to commission an economic modelling study to determine the optimal level of return to the fishery had not met, and that Dr. Kompas had been appointed without reference to all members of the committee. NORMAC was informed of the process which led to the involvement of Dr. Kompas, including informal discussions which took place with Dr. Kompas and some NORMAC and committee members in Canberra.

NORMAC noted that the purpose of the informal discussion was to ascertain whether or not the work being undertaken by Dr. Kompas on the bio-economic model for the NPF could deliver the economic information that NORMAC agreed to commission at its January meeting. During these discussions, Dr. Kompas indicated that it would be possible to provide the information NORMAC was seeking through the modelling work in the bio-economic study and that his study could be completed in time for the results to be presented at NORMAC 56 in June 2004.

NORMAC noted that Les Lowe did not concur with advice from David Carter that he (Les Lowe) had been invited to participate in the discussions.

NORMAC noted that Dr. Kompas had not been specifically appointed, rather it had been proposed to use the outcome of his economic model instead of commissioning a separate study. It was noted that all NORMAC members and advisers were informed of the proposed change in approach by email and that no comments were submitted on the revised approach. It was agreed that MAC members have a responsibility to raise issues of concern if and when they arise.

NORMAC agreed that the process undertaken which led to the involvement of Dr. Kompas in the economic assessment of the NPF was not perfect, but noted that the MAC is an advisory body and that the original process established by NORMAC for commissioning an economic assessment of the fishery was not a legislative process.

NORMAC noted the involvement of Dr. Kompas had resulted in the economic advice required by NORMAC being provided in a cost effective and timely way. NORMAC members and advisers agreed that Dr. Kompas was an appropriately qualified person to provide that advice.

NORMAC acknowledged that the full Kompas/Rose report was not available for NORMAC 56 but noted that the requirement to have the results of the study completed in time for a presentation at NORMAC 56 had been fulfilled.

NORMAC noted that whilst a number of submissions were critical of the process surrounding the involvement of Dr. Kompas, other submissions received were in support of the Process and the work which had been undertaken.

In response to concerns that a Northern Prawn Fishery Industry Organisation (NPFIO) meeting had not been held prior to NORMAC 56, the meeting noted that it is not the responsibility of the NORMAC Executive Officer to call NPFIO meetings and that this was an industry, not a MAC issue.

Model/economics

There was considerable discussion on the points identified in this category. The main concerns raised were that the model is based on tiger and endeavour prawns and does not include banana prawns or byproduct. It was noted that the model had been specifically designed to determine the optimal level of fishing effort (from an economic aspect) for the tiger/endeavour prawn fishery, and for that reason the model does not include other species.

Dr. Kompas advised that including banana prawns does not change the optimal value for the tiger prawn fishery. In response to a comment that the assessment should not just be on one part of the fishery, NORMAC noted that that is how the fishery currently operates, as the fishery management arrangements are primarily implemented in response to the tiger prawn fishery assessments.

It was noted that the model is very sensitive to changes in prawn prices, and concerns about this were raised in a number of submissions. One of the observers, Tony Murray spoke to his submission which was largely based on market and exchange rate forecasts and indicated he believed that the ABARE forecasts were extremely pessimistic. It was noted that even if the ABARE forecasts are less favourable than marketers believed, with a price up to \$30 per kilo the model still indicates that the fishery is overcapitalized.

It was proposed that any improvements in the market would be negated by adverse conditions in fuel prices and exchange rates. It was noted that fuel prices in the model were based on 2003 and that the model did not allow for the increases in fuel prices which had occurred.

Cathy Dichmont, Chair of the NPFAG, provided advice from the NPFAG on the technical aspects of Kompas model. NORMAC noted the FAG advice that *“Given the simplicity of the economic model in the ABARE report, it is clear that the actual effort level required to achieve MEY detailed in the report is not precise, but is in the right order of magnitude.*

Importantly, though, the majority of the FAG agreed that the conclusion is robust; that there is too much effort in the fishery for economic efficiency. Furthermore, any reduction in effort below E_{MSY} would also reduce the biological risk of overexploitation”.

NORMAC noted that a number of submissions indicated that the model validates

the concerns expressed by some stakeholders about the economic downturn in the fishery.

Management

Several submissions, including that put forward by Sterling Trawl Gear Services, were critical of the tiger prawn stock assessment however NORMAC noted that the tiger prawn assessment is based on the best available data for the fishery.

NORMAC agreed with submissions indicating that fishing in August will improve catches and marketing prospects but recognized this must be balanced to ensure effort neutrality on tiger prawns. It was noted that a process is in place for reviewing the tiger prawn season dates for 2005.

In response to comments that there is no need to adopt a target reference point of MEY as the fishery is operating at MSY, NORMAC noted advice from Dr. Kompas that it is inappropriate to have a target reference point which would result in zero profits.

It was also noted that the Commonwealth fisheries policy statement specifically states that MEY is an appropriate target for fisheries managers.

It was noted that the Government's preferred method of management was output controls where appropriate and that Kompas Rose report indicated that output controls are preferential to input controls. NORMAC reiterated that a review of alternative management options (including output controls) is a priority for the MAC and that a process is in place to undertake the review. However it was noted that the review process and the implementation of any new management system would take at least two years and was not an option for addressing the economic problems of the fishery in the short term.

NORMAC noted that it had been agreed to develop a translation formula from twin to quad gear to ensure effort neutrality, and to obtain data to ensure that other gear types do not have additional negative ecological impacts.

There was strong consensus between all industry attendees at the meeting that if a 25% reduction occurs, more fishing time should be made available to operators, however it was noted that this would need to be effort neutral on tiger prawns.

Policy

NORMAC noted that a number of submissions were critical of NORMAC'S approach to implement management arrangements to address the economic efficiency of the fishery. It was noted the economics of the fishery is a key element of fisheries management and that this is enshrined in AFMA's legislative objectives and in the *NPF Management Plan 1995*. Members were reminded that economics had been considered and that restructuring for the purpose of improving economic efficiency had occurred in the NPF in the past.

There was also discussion in relation to the action in the fisheries policy review that

AFMA should develop a paper that provides its interpretation of its legislative objectives. The AFMA member indicated that this has yet to be finalized but that is not an argument for not taking actions consistent with the pursuit of any of AFMA's legislative objectives, including ecological sustainability and economic efficiency.

NORMAC noted that the submission provided by Darryl McPhee included comments on AFMA's objectives and the need to integrate them, the requirement to pursue, not necessarily achieve MEY as a target, and comments on whether a reduced fleet would result in the pursuit of MEY.

Social Impacts

NORMAC noted advice from the AFMA member that social impacts resulting from adjustment, including flow on effects on employment and local communities, are the responsibility of government, not the management agency. This is clearly documented in the Government's fisheries policy statement.

It was noted that a number of the submissions indicated that any reduction would impact more on the smaller operators who would be forced out of business. In considering whether a reduction would have a differential impact on single vessel or multi vessel operators, Dr. Kompas indicated that in his view the least efficient trawlers would exit the fishery as a result of reduction. This was generally agreed by the meeting.

At the conclusion of the discussions on the 'Categories' the Chairman repeated the outcome of the discussions and the points which were to be recorded in the 'Table of Categories & Main Points'.

Following the discussions on each of the categories, the Chairman invited all attendees to provide any additional comments they wished to make on issues of concern. A large number of observers, including David Fitzpatrick, solicitor acting on behalf of the NT Trawler Owners Association and NPF Qld Trawl Association, and David Hannay solicitor for the Lowe family, provided verbal comments. The nature of comments made by various participants at the meeting included the following:

- the need to balance and pursue (not necessarily achieve) AFMA's legislative objectives
- concerns about the urgency of economic restructuring rather than waiting for the outcome of the management options review
- allegations that larger fleets are having financial difficulties
- including the presentation of public financial records of the public company, Deep Sea Fisheries
- lack of due process in relation to the appointment of Dr. Kompas and validity of the Kompas Rose report in the absence of due process.

- the NORMAC 56 decision was flawed and wrong, there was no urgency to make a decision at this time; if operators are claiming economic hardship a full investigation of operators profits should be undertaken and hard evidence provided; defer the decision until a full review of other management options is completed; NORMAC should revoke its earlier decision and advise the AFMA Board accordingly

- need to combine bananas and tigers together to get a true figure on the economics of the whole fishery

- recommendation for 25% reduction to make fishery more economical is flawed because if everybody takes 25% reduction in net, the boats left in still won't be efficient; most productive areas are shut at most productive times

-reduction is totally unnecessary as tiger prawns stocks have recovered – reduction will cause efficient operators to become inefficient to the benefit of large operators

fisheries management is dynamic; there is need to balance objectives, the economic efficiency objective has suffered due to measures taken to improve sustainability

- \$200,000 profit is not a good return on a 28 million dollar investment, this was not a rushed decision and should not have come as a surprise, concerns about economics of the fishery have been discussed at length, reduction is only tool available to address the problem

- fisheries restructuring is a permanent fact of life as industry is constantly adjusting to circumstances, happy to participate in a review of other options including output controls although has some concerns about quotas for the NPF, regardless there are too many boats in the fishery and some boats have to go

Resolutions:

Having considered the issues raised in both the submissions and at the meeting, **the majority of members endorsed the recommendation from NORMAC 56 for a 25% reduction of gear to occur prior to the commencement of the 2005 banana prawn season**

(Note: Two industry members did not support the recommendation for a 25% reduction in gear)

That the MAC unanimously agrees that a review of all available information be undertaken by the NPFAG and NORMAC prior to the 2005 tiger prawn season with a view to allowing fishing to occur in August 2005

That any August fishing must be effort neutral on tiger prawns unless the FAG advises that there is sufficient recovery to increase effort on tiger prawns without jeopardizing the stocks

The views of each MAC member and the two permanent observers are recorded as follows:

David Carter (industry member): endorse the recommendation from NORMAC 56 for a 25% reduction and seek an outcome from the Board as quickly as possible to provide certainty in the fishery; agree that a review of available information be undertaken for the purpose of obtaining fishing time in August

Ean Casey (industry member – contacted by telephone): believes all other options should be explored first, time should not be a factor in an issue as important as this, concerned about a move to MEY, believes the data in the model may be questionable and concerned that model is not complete; position still the same as last meeting, does not support 25% reduction

Efrem Gamba (industry member): no new substantive issues in the submissions or discussions that cause him to change his view, support the 25% reduction, support the review for August fishing

Eddie Hegerl (conservation member): decisions on reduction cause great anguish as they have social implications, hard to know who is going to be most disadvantaged, notes that the same people who claim they were going to go broke from previous reductions are still operating in the fishery; economic outlook in terms of aquaculture and fishing costs not good; support reduction as a prudent action; look at impacts of reduction on single boat operators

Les Lowe (industry member): totally opposes reduction, no need for reduction, would like AFMA to look at other alternatives, need more working time at the right time of the year, look at impacts of reduction on single boat operators

Ian Poiner (research member): his position has not shifted, the fishery has done outstandingly well in environmental performance, stock management is good, tiger prawn recovery is on track, process in place to look at time trade-offs, it is now an appropriate time to look at economic performance of the fishery, need to look at the economics of the fishery as a whole, supports 25% reduction

George Raptis (industry member): supports 25% reduction, strongly recommends that the AFMA Board consider allowing fishing in August

Les Roberts (AFMA member): supports 25% reduction on the basis that it will enhance the economic performance of the fishery as a whole

Margaret Tailby (DEH permanent observer): supports reduction, believes the figures show that the fishery is not economically efficient and there is a downward trend in profitability, supports August fishing provided effort neutral on tiger prawn stocks

Jim Gillespie (State Government permanent observer): supports reduction, requests AFMA to consider impacts of reduction on single boat owners, supports move for August fishing provided effort neutral on tiger prawns

Item 11 Other Business

The EO advised that Iain Smith had declined to take up membership on the Northern Planning Advisory Committee and that the NOO office had approached NORMAC seeking an industry nominee for the group. NORMAC noted that Dr. Poiner had also been appointed as the scientific adviser to the group but that he was not there as a representative of NORMAC.

Michael O'Brien was proposed and accepted as the NORMAC nominee to the committee.

NORMAC noted advice from Margaret Tailby that some changes were occurring with the NOO and she would provide NORMAC with any information relevant to those changes.

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place in early to mid-February 2005.

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.

