

Ms Kristina Crichton
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Public Administration
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace
West Perth WA 6005

Inquiry into Private Property Rights

Dear Ms Crichton,

Seafood Industry Australia (SIA) supports the inquiry into private property rights, particularly as they pertain to commercial fishing. As the national peak body for the Australian seafood industry, representing the wild-catch, aquaculture and post-harvest sectors, we welcome improved property rights and, by association, improved security for our industry and the broader community. Our sector employs many thousands of Australians and makes a significant economic contribution, particularly in rural and regional Australia. We are also responsible for providing more than 1 billion meals each year. Therefore, we believe the social, economic and food security of our community is connected to surety of resource access and recognition of property rights.

SIA also supports the WAFIC submission and associated detailed legislative review.

SIA has identified resource security and private property rights, as one of the most pressing issues for the Australian seafood industry. The absence of secure access to resources, both aquatic and terrestrial, is a major threat and looming impediment to the growth and prosperity of the Australian seafood industry. Improving security is critical to providing an environment that encourages innovation and the confidence to invest and work in our industry. The establishment of a clear property right provides the necessary economic underpinning to assist our industry attract and service equity essential for development, not just for fishing businesses, but for our post-harvest businesses, freight companies and local communities across Australia.

To this end, in February 2019, SIA held the “Tipping Point” meeting in Fremantle, to discuss and support the WA WRL industry. In an unprecedented show of unity, industry leaders from every state and territory participated in this event to discuss pathways to address the security and property rights threat and the associated the devaluation and destabilisation of the commercial seafood industry around the nation. The meeting highlighted the critical nature of property rights and the need for coordinated national action. In response SIA has created the national seafood Resource Security Task Force.

The role of the Task Force is to identify and execute strategic priorities, and through advocacy improve security of access to the natural resources underpinning the operation of the Australia’s wild-catch, aquaculture and post-harvest seafood businesses.

Fair and reasonable compensation, in the event of diminution or removal of access or property right, is a fundamental component of resource security.

Yours sincerely



Jane Lovell
CEO