

# THE TURNBULL COALITION TEAM

# CCHQ 2016



27 June 2016

Ms Katherine Winchester  
Chair  
National Seafood Industry Alliance Inc  
Via email: [nsia09@gmail.com](mailto:nsia09@gmail.com); [ceo@ntsc.com.au](mailto:ceo@ntsc.com.au)

Dear Ms Winchester,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the views of the Coalition on important issues facing your members. On behalf of the Coalition Members of Parliament and candidates I am pleased to respond to your survey.

Australia's future depends on how well we can continue to grow and shape our economy.

Only the Liberal and National Parties have an **economic plan** to do that and ensure Australia's future.

We have a clear plan to transition the economy from the mining and investment boom to a stronger and more diverse economy.

The key elements of our national economic plan for jobs and growth are:

- An Innovation and Science programme bringing Australian ideas to market. This means greater investment and more jobs and opportunities for our young people;
- A New Defence Industry plan that will secure an advanced defence manufacturing industry in Australia. This will create thousands of new hi-tech, higher paying jobs;
- Export Trade Deals that will generate more than 19,000 new export opportunities. These will create many more jobs for our urban and regional families;
- New Tax Incentives, which will include tax cuts for more small businesses. More than two million businesses can benefit, to deliver more growth and jobs; and
- A Strong New Economy with more than 200,000 jobs expected to be created.

Our national economic plan and management is already paying dividends. Last year our economy continued to grow creating almost 300,000 new jobs, many of them in small business.

We cannot put economic growth and the jobs that come with it at risk with a return to Labor and their debt and deficits, high taxing, big spending ideas.

Only a Liberal and National Party Government can protect Australia's future.

Once announced, our policies will be available at [www.liberal.org.au](http://www.liberal.org.au) and [www.nationals.org.au](http://www.nationals.org.au).

Thank you for communicating the Coalition's commitments to your members.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several fluid, connected strokes that form the name 'Tony Nutt'.

Tony Nutt  
National Campaign Director

## **COALITION RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL SEAFOOD INDUSTRY ALLIANCE INCORPORATED**

The Coalition supports the commercial fishing and aquaculture sectors and understands their importance in securing Australia's food base, in generating valuable export income and in creating regional jobs and economic activity. The Coalition is proud of the sustainability of Commonwealth fisheries and the importance of working together with industry to develop the sector.

### **Peak body project**

At the 2013 election, the Coalition committed \$500,000 to establish a peak representative body for the seafood industry. Progress is being made and the taskforce is working on an approach forward to bring back to Government. The project funding is for four years and the Coalition is committed to continue to support the project to completion. It is vital that the seafood industry speaks with one voice to Government to achieve positive outcomes for the industry.

### **Red tape reduction**

The Coalition committed at the 2013 election to reduce red tape in the sector. During the Coalition's term, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) has proposed 35 measures to reduce red tape. AFMA has implemented 15 of these measures with 10 partially complete and another 10 in progress. AFMA is working with the Commonwealth Fisheries Association to progress these red tape reduction initiatives.

Initiatives already implemented include providing for renewal of fishing permits online, single party registration of leases, streamlining carrier boat conditions in the southern Bluefin tuna fishery, opening the Cascade Plateau to longline fishing for blue eye trevalla and multi-season registration of leases, and introducing e-monitoring in a number of Commonwealth fisheries.

The Government continues to progress initiatives to cut red tape for fisheries arising from the White Paper on Developing Northern Australia. These include: moving to single jurisdiction management of northern fisheries; devolving aquaculture management to the States and Territories; sharing licensing and compliance services; and extending export approvals to 10 years for low risk fisheries.

### **Productivity Commission**

In 2015, the Coalition initiated a Productivity Commission inquiry into the regulatory burden imposed on the Australian marine fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Its terms were broad and included:

- identifying opportunities to increase productivity and reduce red tape;
- identify the extent to which fisheries management regimes align with and protect the interests of the wider community in the use of the shared resource (ie balance between recreational, commercial, indigenous, conservation and consumers);

- investigate the extent to which greater use of cost recovery arrangements is applicable and informs the cost of delivery of fisheries production, conservation and other community service obligations; and
- consider environmental regulation and its relevance to fishing.

The Coalition looks forward to reviewing the recommendations of the review expected to be released publicly in early 2017. The Coalition won't anticipate the results of this broad ranging inquiry.

### **Support for AFMA and FRDC**

The Coalition is committed to a balanced and science-based approach to all decisions regarding access to Commonwealth fisheries.

The Coalition supports the independent, science-based statutory regulator, AFMA. The Coalition has every confidence in its ability to regulate Commonwealth fisheries and the approach it used to consult with industry on the setting of fishery specific quota and to inform industry and stakeholders on resource levels based on best available scientific evidence.

The Coalition strongly supports rural research and development, and the important work undertaken on behalf of the fisheries industries by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). Commonwealth matching funding for the FRDC has increased under the Coalition, from \$18.7 million in 2014-15 to an estimated \$20.3 million in 2016-17.

The Coalition has delivered on our 2013 commitment to invest \$100 million in the Rural Research and Development for Profit programme, with \$78 million in projects approved so far. The \$4 billion Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper invested a further \$100 million to extend the Rural R&D for Profit programme to 2022. In the first round of the Rural R&D for Profit programme, the FRDC was successful in receiving a \$3 million grant to support growing an Australian Yellowtail Kingfish aquaculture industry. In the second round of Rural R&D for Profit the Coalition has provided \$236,000 for research into easy open oysters. This is in addition to \$787,000 provided by the Coalition to support research into breeding Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome resistant oysters.

### **Opportunities under free trade agreements**

Demand for our premium products overseas continues to rise, bolstered by new access to regional markets and tariff cuts secured under free trade agreements.

Through the Korea–Australia Free Trade Agreement key products like frozen southern Bluefin tuna (10 per cent tariff) and rock lobsters (20 per cent) can now enter duty free.

Key seafood gains under the Japan–Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA) include immediate or gradual elimination of tariffs on lobsters, shrimps, prawns, abalone, oysters, crabs, fresh sea urchins, fish oils, tuna, fresh or chilled swordfish, fresh marlin and Atlantic salmon.

Under the China–Australia Free Trade Agreement tariffs of up to 15 per cent are being eliminated by 2019 on abalone, rock lobster, southern Bluefin tuna, salmon, trout, swordfish, crabs, oysters, scallops, prawns, and mussels.

The Coalition will continue to pursue trade agreements to promote jobs and opportunities for Australian businesses. Under free trade agreements being pursued with nations such as India and Indonesia, there could be opportunities for improved access to supply high quality seafood to the growing middle class population as well as to the five-star hotel sector.

### **Biosecurity**

The Coalition is strongly committed to an effective and modern biosecurity system that is able to protect our nation’s agricultural industries and environment from pests and diseases. The task of protecting our borders has never been greater with increased movement of people and products both into and out of Australia.

The Coalition has undertaken the biggest overhaul of Australia’s biosecurity system in 100 years with \$550 million to be invested to 2019, including a new Biosecurity Rapid Response function. The 2016-17 Budget contained an additional \$15.9 million over four years to build an advanced analytics capability within the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, to further strengthen biosecurity protection and planning.

The Biosecurity Advanced Analytics initiative will improve the Department’s ability to turn information into intelligence and thus to better manage biosecurity risks that threaten our agricultural sector, the rural communities that depend on them, the environment and the broader economy. This will increase the Government’s ability to know why, when, where and what pests and diseases should be the focus of biosecurity activities—which will increase preparedness for potential pest and disease incursions.

In implementing the new biosecurity system, the Coalition has taken into account the importance of biosecurity to Tasmanians and specifically the need for regional difference to be recognised in the new *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act). Tasmanian Senator Richard Colbeck, the former Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, worked very closely with Minister Joyce and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources during the development of the Act. Senator Colbeck and Tasmanian Liberal MPs, Andrew Nikolic (Bass), Brett Whiteley (Braddon) and Eric Hutchinson (Lyons) have made sure regional differentiation continues to apply under the new legislation, for the protection of Tasmania’s unique island biosecurity status and the State’s clean and green international reputation.

Existing regional differences continue to apply with the commencement of the Act on 16 June 2016 and beyond, as they applied under the previous system. Commonwealth Biosecurity staff will

continue to screen for and block exactly the same prohibited items at our borders under the new biosecurity regulations as they have been screening and blocking previously.

### **Country of Origin food labelling**

The Coalition's current improvements to country of origin labelling are for the sale of food in retail outlets. In finalising our proposed reforms, the Coalition undertook robust stakeholder consultation, conducted nationally representative consumer market research and did a cost benefit analysis to make sure they would not impose costs on business that would outweigh the benefits to consumers.

The Coalition wants to see similar work done before introducing any new legislation for seafood labelling in the hospitality sector. We have committed to a review of the labelling changes after two years. This review may be an opportunity to consider extending the labelling beyond the current framework.

### **Resource rent tax**

The Coalition has no plans to introduce a resource rent tax, or to attempt to obtain resource rent from Australian Fisheries.

### **457 Visas**

The Coalition's position has always been very clear: where an Australian worker is willing and able to carry out a job, they should be given priority.

The Coalition understands, however, that a business that has to close because it cannot source skilled employees will employ no one. That is a lose/lose outcome for the employer and Australian workers.

The Turnbull Government remains committed to ensuring that temporary visa programmes, such as the Subclass 457 programme, remain flexible and responsive to the economic cycle in line with employer demand.

### **Maintenance of the Fuel Tax Credit Scheme**

The Coalition has no plans to abolish the Fuel Tax Credit scheme.

### **Commonwealth Marine Reserve Review**

The Coalition recognises the value of Australia's network of marine protected areas. We are committed to ensuring the ongoing health of our marine biodiversity while supporting sustainable use and access to marine resources.

The Turnbull Government's commitment is reflected in the \$56 million of new funding for Commonwealth marine reserves announced in the 2016 Budget. This funding will establish a world-class management programme for the reserves, support commercial fishers affected by the reserves, provide more opportunities for engagement with recreational fishers and community groups, promote local growth in tourism, and protect marine areas. The Coalition will continue to consult with relevant stakeholders to ensure the successful operation of our marine reserves.

A re-elected Coalition Government will prepare new management plans for the South-West, North-West, North and Temperate East Networks and the Coral Sea Commonwealth Marine Reserve, within the next 12 months. This will involve two opportunities for public comments. The new plans will be based on the recommendations of a major independent review tasked with listening to the community and considering the balance between economic, social and environmental interests.

Until new management plans come into effect there are no 'on the water' changes for marine reserves and the protections that were in place before November 2012 still apply.

The South-East Network of marine reserves was not subject to the independent review, nor is the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which also received an additional \$171 million in the Budget.