

May, 2012

Attention Nova Scotia Fishermen's Associations:

At the most recent NS Fisheries Minister's Conference in January a discussion was held with participating industry members on the concept of the development of enabling legislation for the establishment of the Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act. This enabling legislation would allow for the establishment of a board that would be responsible for registration and training of fishermen in Nova Scotia. There was lengthy discussion around this and participants had the opportunity to give feedback on governance, structure, criteria, registration and financial. At the end of the day there was consensus to move forward and have the Minister draft a Bill to be presented at the spring session of the legislature.

On April 26th Bill 59 Fish Harvesters Registration and Certification Board Act was presented in the legislature. The second reading and debate was held on May 1st and the bill went to law amendments on May 3rd. 3rd reading took place on May 7th and Royal Assent on May 17th. This bill has now become an Act.

So what does this mean? Since this is enabling legislation it will be up to industry as to when/if they want to utilize the Act. This Act allows for the establishment of a board that will oversee registration and training of fishermen in Nova Scotia. The plan of the board is to utilize the Personal Fishing Registration (PFR) currently being collected by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to support the organization and apply this money towards training for fishermen. This won't be an additional cost to fishermen but an opportunity to use these funds to help offset training costs.

Next steps – There is a lot of work to be done before a board can be established and to enact on the proposed legislation. Over the summer months a working group will use the feedback given from industry at the Minister's Conference to develop draft by-laws. This working group is made up of fishermen's associations from both the Gulf and Maritimes Regions and is

coordinated by the Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council. In the fall, harvester's associations will be invited to a workshop where the focus will be to review the draft by-laws and industry can make changes where they see fit. We encourage all associations to take part as this is intended to be industry led and your feedback is important.

The working group wants this to be a very transparent process and would like feedback from industry every step of the way. We have attached a Questions and Answers document which should help give you a better understanding of the intention of this Act.

If you would like to get involved further or would like to know more please feel free to contact us at any time. You can also check out our website to gain further information.

This is a positive step and will allow for an industry led registration and training system for fishermen in Nova Scotia.

Best regards,

Lisa Fitzgerald