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Page: 1/2

Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures

Original: English

SUBSIDIES**REPLIES TO QUESTIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES¹ REGARDING
THE NEW AND FULL NOTIFICATION OF AUSTRALIA²**

The following communication, dated 30 October 2019, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Australia.

Australia thanks the United States for its questions and provides the following replies.

New South Wales**Commercial Fisheries Business Adjustment Program (BAP)****Question 1**

Please provide some background on the nature of the "shares" that can be bought and how the mechanism of shares fits into the overall management system.

Reply

Under the NSW *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, certain fisheries are designated as 'share management fisheries'. Shares in a share management fishery allow access to the fishery (if a minimum shareholding requirement is met) and in some cases, quota in proportion to the size of the shareholding. In five of the seven share management fisheries that currently exist, there are various 'classes' of share that determine the method(s), permitted species and/or waters in which the fisher can operate.

Prior to the commercial fisheries Business Adjustment Program (BAP), only the NSW Abalone and Lobster fisheries were subject to quota management. The BAP introduced catch and effort quota management for many additional species and methods, through the allocation of effort quota (days) to holders of existing 'access' shares, and the issue of new species quota shares to eligible shareholders.

Question 2

How is it determined that certain fishers can expand their operations?

Reply

Share management provides the flexibility for fishers to customize their fishing businesses subject to specific fishing business transfer rules. Fishers that own shares in a fishery (or sector of a fishery) that is managed by catch or effort quota can transfer shares to vary their quota holding to suit their level of fishing. Fishers may also purchase shares of a class they do not own to gain access in other fisheries or fishery sectors.

¹ G/SCM/Q2/AUS/60.

² G/SCM/N/343/AUS.

Question 3

Is it the long-term goal for fishers to pay the entire cost of the management system?

Reply

Commercial fishers in NSW already pay annual charges that help fund management, research, compliance and administration. No decisions have been made on any long-term goals for this system. However, the NSW Department of Primary Industries is currently working with industry on revisiting costs and the structure of management charges.

Question 4

What is the nature (e.g., fishing port; storage facility; undeveloped) of the Crown Land for which rental subsidies are provided?

Reply

Rent waivers were provided to Fishermen's Co-operatives located on Crown Land. The nature of the land thus occupied varies, with some co-operatives holding longer-term leases allowing them to develop infrastructure such as wholesale and retail buildings, processing and storage facilities, wharves and moorings.
