

Queensland Seafood

Industry Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

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BILLBOARD A SIGN OF NEW SEAFOOD PROMOTION CAMPAIGN

A STATEWIDE seafood promotion campaign to improve returns to fishermen kicked off today with the launch of a roadside billboard in Brisbane.

The new billboard is part of what the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) says will be a long term campaign to promote local wild-caught Queensland seafood.

The official launch was conducted by Mr Tim Mulherin, Minister for Primary Industries & Fisheries, as morning peak hour traffic streamed past the billboard on busy Lutwyche Road, Windsor.

QSIA Senior Vice-President Mr Robin Hansen said the aim of the campaign was to boost sales of Queensland seafood, in turn raising demand for the local product and increasing returns to fishing families.

“Our marketing campaign will remind Queenslanders to buy local Queensland seafood first,” Mr Hansen said. “This is a high profile location that motorists will clearly see as they go about their business each day, and more billboards are planned to go up across Brisbane in the months ahead.

“The billboard proclaims ‘Queensland Seafood: because you deserve the best’ and includes the QSIA website, where more information on seafood is available.

“Market research tells us that Queenslanders want to eat delicious Queensland seafood. More than two million Queenslanders already eat seafood at least once or twice a week and, when asked, an overwhelming majority of respondents said they actively choose Australian seafood over imported seafood if it is available.

“However, there are now more than four million Queenslanders, so consumption can still be boosted. And that’s not an unrealistic goal: everyone should be eating at least two seafood meals every week for good health.”

Mr Hansen said one of the most serious issues facing the local Queensland seafood industry was availability of Queensland seafood to consumers in competition with imported seafood from low labour-cost countries.

“Queensland fishing families are being forced to compete with more and more imported seafood in the marketplace, most of it coming from low labour-cost countries and so potentially selling cheaper than our own locally-caught Queensland seafood,” he said.

“The dollar value of seafood imported into Australia has risen from \$780 million in 1999 up to a massive \$1.18 billion in 2007. This represents an increase of \$400 million, or more than 50%, and the quantities are rising every year.

“Add to this the rising cost of fuel that is really hurting Queensland fishers and you can see that our industry is facing some serious challenges ahead.

“Of course, what this could mean down the track is that Queensland seafood-lovers are denied access to much of the State’s own seafood, a tragedy when you consider we have some of the very best quality seafood in the world.

“One thing every Queenslander can do to improve the situation is -- when you go to your local fish and chip shop, supermarket, retail outlet or restaurant -- ask for Queensland seafood. Country of origin labelling is required by law, so look for the seafood labelled ‘Product of Australia’ and then ask which items are from Queensland.

“We should all be proud of our fishing industry and take every opportunity to promote Queensland seafood. Queensland-caught seafood is well managed, environmentally sustainable and good for your health, and we want to spread this message far and wide to communities across Queensland.”

FURTHER INFORMATION: Mr Robin Hansen, Tel. 0428 794 992