



**THE HON DARREN CHESTER MP**  
**Assistant Minister for Defence**

Wednesday 4 November 2015

**Federal Government supports commercial fishers in**  
**Tilligerry Creek and Fullerton Cove**

The Federal Government will provide financial assistance to commercial fishers adversely affected by the NSW Government's fishing bans in Tilligerry Creek and Fullerton Cove.

As part of the support package, commercial fishers who derive the majority of their income from fishing in the areas affected by the bans may be eligible for an Income Recovery Subsidy equivalent to Newstart or Youth Allowance, and Business Assistance Payments of up to \$25,000.

Commercial fishers who have experienced financial hardship as a direct result of the closure of fisheries linked to the PFOS/PFOA contamination around RAAF Base Williamstown may be eligible to receive the Income Recovery Subsidy backdated from the date of the original fisheries closure on 4 September 2015.

The Business Assistance Payment is a \$5000 lump sum to eligible businesses to assist with immediate costs. Affected businesses may also be eligible for further hardship payments of up to \$20,000.

"The Federal Government acknowledges that this has been a particularly challenging time for local commercial fishers," Assistant Minister for Defence Darren Chester said.

"This package will ensure eligible fishers are supported during the current ban."

Member for Patterson Bob Baldwin welcomed the financial assistance package.

"It is important that the local fishing community is supported as a result of events outside their control," Mr Baldwin said.

PFOS and PFOA were extensively used in fire fighting foams world wide up until 2008 due to their effectiveness in extinguishing liquid fuel fires.

The chemicals are also used in a range of industrial, commercial and domestic products including water proofing on clothes, carpet and paint and in the manufacture of some non-stick cookware.

Defence continues to work with NSW government agencies, local Councils and other Commonwealth agencies to further investigate the nature and extent of the contamination at RAAF Base Williamstown.

For more information about the support payments, please visit [humanservices.gov.au/centrelink](http://humanservices.gov.au/centrelink) or call **180 23 22**.

**Media:**

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## Additional Information

### Who is eligible for these payments?

To be eligible for the Income Recovery Subsidy, you:

- must be an Australian resident and living in Australia while receiving this payment
- must be 16 years or older and another person is not receiving a Commonwealth payment on their behalf
- must derive more than 50 per cent of their income from the Hunter River and Port Stephens fisheries
- must be able to demonstrate a loss of income as a direct result of the closure of these fisheries must not be receiving or be eligible for another income support payment or pension.

To be eligible to claim the Business Assistance Package, a business must:

- have a registered ABN on or before 4 September 2015
- have an annual business turnover of less than \$10 million per annum
- usually derive more than 50 percent of its business turnover from fishing in the closed fisheries
- provide verifiable evidence that it has been involved in fishing in the closed fisheries, or that it would have been involved if not for the closure. Verifiable evidence consists of a:
  - copy of fishing licence;
  - copy of catch records; or
  - statutory declaration stating the portion and value of income that would have come from the closed fisheries.

To be eligible for the Business Hardship Package, a business must:

- have received a Business Assistance Payment
- have continued to incur business expenses since the closure of the Hunter River and Port Stephens fisheries
- show evidence that in the usual course of business, the expenses would have been paid from income derived directly from fishing in the Hunter River and Port Stephens fisheries
- show evidence that:
  - as a result of paying these expenses, the business does not have adequate or sufficient funds in reserve (funds include cash on hand, amounts in bank accounts, including term deposits, and loans to other people that can be called in), or
  - having incurred these expenses, the business does not have adequate or sufficient funds in reserve to pay the expenses.

### When and how can people claim payments?

- Claim forms are available from the Department of Human Services website at [humanservices.gov.au/centrelink](http://humanservices.gov.au/centrelink) or a local service centre.
- Once you have completed your claim form you can:
  - mail it to the Department of Human Services at:
    - Reply paid 7815  
Canberra BC ACT 2610
  - fax it to 1300 727 760;
  - or take it to your local service centre.
- For more information about eligibility criteria call **180 23 22** Mon-Fri from 8am to 5pm local time