

Media Release

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SYDNEY FISH MARKET CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE IN SEAFOOD AT BIENNIAL AWARDS

Top players in the seafood industry gathered at Sydney Seafood School on Thursday, 20 July for the biennial *Sydney Fish Market Seafood Excellence Awards*.

Sydney Fish Market continually recognises the hard work and dedication of seafood retailers, restaurants and suppliers who battled it out across ten award categories that were presented on the evening.

In attendance was the Honourable Melinda Pavey MP, Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight and the Honourable Niall Blair MLC, NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Regional Water, and Minister for Trade and Industry, who assisted with the presentation of the awards.

Minister Blair said, "The seafood industry continues to thrive and diversify and I am committed to continue to work closely with the industry to overcome challenges and create a robust and optimistic future.

"The NSW Government's aim is to increase the value of NSW primary industries by 30 per cent by 2020 - aquaculture and the seafood industry is front and centre in this target and will provide significant opportunities in driving economic growth."

The Seafood Excellence Awards is also an opportunity for the Market to celebrate its symbiotic relationship with regional NSW.

New research by Deloitte Access Economics estimates that through seafood trading and attracting tourism, Sydney Fish Market contributes \$41 million in value added to the regional NSW economy and supports 254 full time equivalent jobs in regional NSW's fishing and tourism supply chains.

Of the 14,500 tonnes of seafood traded through SFM's auction annually, approximately 56% is sourced from NSW, the vast majority of which (86%) is from regional areas. In 2015/16 seafood from regional NSW exceeded 6,800 tonnes and was worth \$53million in value.

General Manager, Bryan Skepper, said, "Sydney Fish Market is proud to support regional economies and jobs in NSW and this evening is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all of the people in our industry from the primary producers right through to the friendly retailers and restaurateurs who provide the public with great tasting, high quality seafood."

The People's Choice Awards called upon the public to rally behind their favourite seafood eateries and cast their votes across three categories; Best Seafood Restaurant, Best Fish and Chips and Best Seafood Retailer at Sydney Fish Market. Proving ever popular, more than 18,000 seafood fans took to the polls across the three categories this year.

Winner of the Best Seafood Restaurant was Manly Fish Café while Claudio's Quality Seafoods was crowned Best Seafood Retailer at Sydney Fish Market for the third consecutive time.

The hotly contested Best Fish and Chips award underwent a rigorous new process to determine the top shop this year. An online public voting process was followed by the highest-ranked stores undergoing mystery visits and taste tests by a panel of expert judges. Terrigal Beach Fish and Chip

Co. took out the public vote while Pelican Rocks Café was crowned the top winner in this category by the judges.

The Star of the Sea is the evening’s most prestigious award, gifted to an individual who is considered an ambassador for the seafood industry, and has made a significant contribution to the development of the NSW seafood industry.

Veronica Papacosta was awarded the honour this year for her contributions to the establishment and implementation of Seafood Industry Australia, the national peak body for the seafood industry.

Commercial Fishermen’s Co-Operative Ltd picked up an accolade for Best Seafood Retailer (NSW), as well as collecting the Best Seafood Business Award.

Best Supplier (NSW) and Best Supplier (Interstate or Overseas) awards were presented to seafood providers that have demonstrated excellence in the sustainable production of quality seafood through innovation in fishing or aquaculture practices, and that have contributed substantially towards a positive public profile for the seafood industry. These awards were taken out by Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-Operative Ltd and Moana New Zealand Trading as OPC respectively.

The award for Excellence in Environmental Practice has become increasingly important for businesses as seafood lovers are more interested in sustainable seafood practices and scrutinise the origin of the fish and seafood they buy than ever before. This year saw an increase in nominations then previous years with Sea Urchin Harvest Pty Ltd taking out the title.

On the night, more than 140 guests were treated to a decedent seafood-based menu created by The Caterer – A Sydney Company. Entertainment for the evening was provided by The Skylarks and Master of Ceremonies duties were handled by Australian chef, and TV presenter “Fast Ed” Halmagyi.

Sydney Fish Market thanks all sponsors for their support of the 2017 awards, including: 2017 Gold Sponsor, The NSW Government, through the Department of Primary Industries; ReSource Environmental Solutions; Lindsay Transport; GSA Insurance Brokers; Commercial Fisherman’s Co-Operative; PWC; Fisheries Research and Development Corporation; K&L Gates; Australian Fisheries Management Authority; SafeWork NSW and Gasoline.

Winners and highly commended recipients of *Sydney Fish Market Seafood Excellence Awards* are:

Category	Winner	Highly Commended
Best Seafood Restaurant (People’s Choice)	Manly Fish Café	

Best Seafood Retailer at Sydney Fish Market (People's Choice)	Claudio's Quality Seafoods	
Best Fish and Chips (People's Choice)	Terrigal Beach Fish and Chip Co	
Excellence in Environmental Practice	Sea Urchin Harvest Pty Ltd	Matt Broadhurst
Best Supplier (NSW)	Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-Operative Ltd	
Best Supplier (Interstate or Overseas)	Moana New Zealand Trading as OPC	Clean Seas Seafood Limited and Walker Seafoods Australia
Best Seafood Retailer (NSW)	Commercial Fishermen's Co-Operative Ltd	Pittwater Seafood Mona Vale
Seafood Business Award	Commercial Fishermen's Co-Operative Ltd	Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-Operative
Best Fish and Chips	Pelican Rocks Café	
Star of The Sea Award	Veronica Papacosta	
Safety Award	Sydney Fish Market	Professional Fishermen's Association

For further information about the 2017 *Sydney Fish Market Seafood Excellence Awards*, please visit: www.seafoodexcellenceawards.com.au

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