

## **NUTFA PRESS RELEASE**

**In response to several recent ill conceived comments made in recent weeks in the FN, made by some in the industry regarding NUTFA's legal actions against DEFRA, I felt it necessary to clarify this Associations position.**

**NUTFA is the only National voice for the under ten's in the UK, who account for 85% in numbers and 31% in KW capacity of the UK fleet.**

**This Association has 364 members to date and is growing on a daily bases, whatever percentage this is, it is without question the largest membership of any fishermen's organization in the UK and is ONLY one year old.**

**NUTFA firmly believes and supports local and regional fishermen's organizations such as the NDFFA amongst many others who work very hard trying to maintain some form of stability for their members in these very difficult times.**

**The purpose of NUTFA is to have one voice when national issues need addressing and support local and regional associations if we have membership in that area and are requested to do so. As an example of this I put a request to Jonathan Shaw last summer asking for 500 tons of Whiting quota from the extra 1500 tons of Hague preference quota obtained by DEFRA, I considered this a reasonable request as the under tens account for 31% in fleet capacity, this extra 500 tons of quota was intended for the lads in the NE who had had a very poor winter on the prawns as the over whelming Cod and Whiting stocks had hovered most of them up and Whiting was the only other species available at the time. Unfortunately as is common practice with DEFRA they gave all 1500 tons of this extra quota to the PO's and told the under tens that if they wanted any they could lease it of the them at unaffordable prices.**

**Just another clear case of discrimination against the under Ten's by DEFRA.**

**So although not always successful when the cards are so heavily stacked against us we will always try our best for our members.**

**After receiving this news I sent a formal letter of complaint to the Minister regarding this discrimination, the Minister then asked for a meeting with us within 24 hours. After much discussion at the meeting we were eventually offered the decommissioning deal, so it could be argued that if it wasn't for these Association actions, the decommissioning deal would never have arisen.**

**The intended two tire licensing system was voted against by all sectors of the industry, firstly because it would not be necessary and secondly because once implemented DEFRA would be able to add all kinds of extra restrictions to all under ten licenses in order to make their false quota numbers add up.**

**We have also been advised that the two tier licensing system is highly discriminating and is therefore unlawful.**

**NUTFA has openly stated it will challenge the intended two tier system, this is because it is a very strong case for us to start the judicial review, and will open a huge can of worms for DEFRA, including the quota management system, all of the cases of discrimination and unlawful actions of which there are many.**

**Recently there has been some concerns raised by Nick Prust amongst others that the decommissioning will be withdrawn by DEFRA if we do challenge the two tier system, I cannot comment on the fine detail of our actions obviously, but I can assure all fishermen that our legal actions will in no way affect any one receiving there decommissioning.**

**(PLEASE NOTE)**

**DEFRA have timed the decommissioning payments so any one receiving it may face a 40% Capital gains Tax bill, if this money is not rolled into another Business in their same financial year for some this may only be two weeks, PLEASE TAKE FINANCIAL ADVICE.**

**I would suggest Nick Prust join NUTFA ASAP so he can get in line for his share of compensation, for most, if not all of the quota he has been forced to lease by DEFRA, due to their discrimination against him, if we are successful in our bid for justice.**

**We have been advised that total compensation claims are expected to be in excess of £800m, this huge figure demonstrates the severity of DEFRA's unlawful actions over many years.**

**I would like all under tens and none sector fishermen to note some of the laws which DEFRA must comply with.**

*A law may be deemed unsafe if it affects a persons or businesses income, if a Public inquiry has not first been held.*

**Under this law I would suggest amongst many others like the Lime Bay closure could be unlawful.**

*EU Law under the CFP, all member states must comply.*

*PO's must never be permitted to dominate quota.*

**DEFRA have permitted and encouraged this to happen.**

*All EU fishers must be permitted to earn a reasonable living at all times.*

**Under this law DEFRA must ensure all UK fishers have equal amounts of quota dependent on class of vessel, the under ten's account for 31% in capacity of the UK fleet but only receive 3% of the quota, ten times less than there entitlement.**

**DEFRA were aware before the first round of decommissioning in the 1990's that Registered Buyers and Sellers was to be introduced, they also knew the under tens and non**

sector did not have enough quota in their pools to earn a reasonable living, so they had every opportunity then to reallocate the quota from the decommissioned vessels, if they wished to do so.

If DEFRA wants the under tens to work in a quota system then so be it, providing they first ensure there is enough quota for each vessel to earn a reasonable living, as they have always done. This figure would currently be around £100,000 per vessel - Per year for all full time (ONLY SOURCE OF INCOME) vessels.

*All EU inshore fishers must be given preferential treatment to safeguard jobs and small communities.*

DEFRA have proven to be the biggest single threat to inshore fishers and small community's and are fully prepared to force hundreds of small fishing and shore based Businesses into Bankruptcy rather than stand up to their responsibilities and rectify the quota chaos they have directly caused throughout the industry.

They also have a duty of care to ensure all fishers are treated equally and fairly, clearly this has never been the case.

NUTFA has no interest in taking quota away from any legitimate fishermen who need it, our aim is to make DEFRA compulsory purchase all quota at market value held by slipper skippers who are legally entitled to sell or lease their quota after DEFRA offered them decommissioning on the cheap which in turn caused the quota problems for all sectors of the industry, this quota would then be reallocated to the under ten's, none sector and even sector vessels. All we expect is equality within the industry and nothing more.

None of the NUTFA Committee have ever received any monies except travel expenses for the work they have done for the Association, we employ no secretaries and keep running costs to a minimum, we all have our own Businesses to run as well as the Association business including many meetings. I personally have had to pay far more attention to my business in recent months, as our UK orders have dried up due to DEFRA's actions, thankfully orders are now flowing in from abroad as the pound has devalued so much in recent months, so not all issues can be given our undivided attention, but we will always try and address our members concerns to the best of our ability.

I have no doubt that there will always be a degree of infighting within the industry, but I would suggest the under tens at least are more united now than ever before.

There is one thing I think we would all agree on, that DEFRA are the single biggest threat the industry and our fish stocks have ever had to face.

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