

STATEMENT OF BOB APPO

1. I have lived and worked in the crab net fishing industry in Gladstone for decades. My father was similarly involved in professional fishing, and taught me. I am presently aged 57.
2. I ceased net fishing after my heart attack in 2008, as it was too strenuous. However I continue to be actively involved in the crab industry, although I am currently recovering from knee surgery. I traditionally fish the Grahams Creek area.
3. I was fishing in Gladstone in the early to mid 1980s. There was a lot of harbour dredging and new wharf construction activities going on, pretty much continuously for a number of years. They also dredged and reclaimed the Marina about that time. I actually worked on the dredges in the harbour for a few months at that time, as a deckhand. The crabs developed the rust spots and ulcers, and juvenile stocks went down dramatically.
4. In the end it was not worthwhile financially to continue, so I moved to the Gulf of Carpentaria to crab around 1986. I returned later, but the disease in the harbour was still bad and the dredging was still going, so I went to the Northern Territory and crabbed up there for a time period.
5. I returned to Gladstone around 1988. Things were still poor, but I had my home in Gladstone. I had to net fish and crab just to earn enough to survive; there were still a lot of diseased crabs and volumes were low. Once the large scale dredging and marine construction stopped, the disease in the harbour started to settle; numbers of sick crabs and fish started to gradually go down in the late 80s and early 90s. It did take 5 to 10 years though for stock levels

B. B. Appo
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and fish and crab health to get back to where it had been before the big dredging program.

6. In about 1996/1997 the large scale construction and dredging started again, this time with channel dredging to make it deep enough for bigger boats, more reclamation at Fishermen's Landing and more new wharves. It didn't take long for the problems with the crabs to start all over again.
7. It was just like the mid 80s, with rust spots and lesions on the crabs. It quickly got up to 20 to 30% of the adult male crabs we had to throw back. We didn't really measure or monitor the females or juveniles; we just threw them back.
8. We complained to the Government again, and showed the fishing inspectors the diseased crabs. No-one in Government seemed to care that much; we were just told to throw the bad ones back. I told ABC Radio about it, and did a radio interview in which I confirmed it was caused by Harbour dredging.
9. Eventually some Government group put up some money. Around early to mid 1997 I and some other crabbers started to deliver crabs to Central Queensland Uni, to Dr Walker and Leonie Andersen, to test. We had permits to take juveniles and females.
10. I would take in the males with lesions, plus any females and juveniles I caught. We were paid \$1 per crab for those. Some had rust spots and lesions, others did not.
11. I kept all my good adult males and sent them to market; they were not sampled or checked by the Uni. If they had small rust spots or small holes, they were ok to sell in those days. So they were never included in the statistics.

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12. Dr Leonie Andersen was in contact with me and Mick McMullen all the time during crab sampling. She told us one day that the metals in the crabs were so high that they were almost not fit for human consumption. She said if metals got any higher, they would have to close the harbour down to fishing.
13. Once they stopped the large scale dredging and construction around Gladstone, things slowly got back to normal over a period of years. It was the mid 2000s before stock levels really were pretty healthy again, and my catches returned to where they were before the dredging of the late 1990s.
14. When they started dredging again in October 2010 I knew I was in for the same crab health problems. They had 2 dredges working not far from where I crab in Grahams Creek. The ulcerated crabs and rust spots didn't take long to reappear.
15. I can confirm that before they started dredging and construction in October 2010, it was very rare to find even a single ulcerated crab. Basically there had been very few for almost 10 years, basically since the impacts from the last big dredge program ended.

DATED this 21ST day of DECEMBER

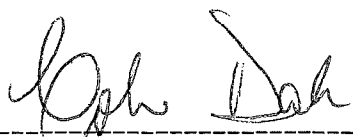
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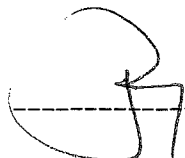
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STATEMENT OF COLIN EDWARD DALE

1. I am a Professional crabber based in Gladstone. I have fished in that area since approximately 1989.
2. It was about 1996/7 that I noticed that I was catching more and more mud crabs that had rust spots and ulcers on their shells and claws. It was evident to me that there was a real health issue arising with the crabs.
3. The ulcers would get quite big in some cases. You could see it started as a black spot or rusty coloured spot, but then later it would be an open ulcer. You could put your finger through the shell when the rust spots became larger. Once they became too noticeable, you could not sell the crab.
4. The crab disease was affecting males and females, and also juveniles.
5. At that time there was a lot of dredging reclamation and construction going in the Gladstone harbour not far from where I was crabbing. It had not been a problem before then; I would very rarely find a crab with any ulcer or spot. After the dredging and construction started, it became a major problem very quickly.
6. I was throwing back many diseased crabs, and the percentage was increasing. I went to Central Queensland Uni with some of the diseased crabs and asked for help. I was then introduced to Dr Mike Walker, one of the scientists. He was very interested and said he would try and help.
7. After awhile CQU started a Gladstone mud crab research project. I would take them in the crabs, or on some occasions Leonie Andersen, a vet who worked for Dr Walker, would come to my home to sample the crabs. Often I held them while she took blood samples.

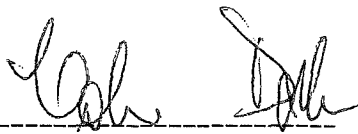


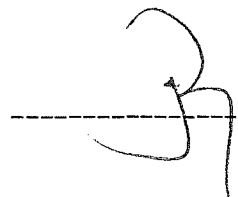
COLIN EDWARD DALE



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8. I estimate I delivered 600 to 700 crabs to the Uni, in an effort to see what could be done. It was male, female and undersized crabs they checked.
9. On 27 June 1997 Dr Walker wrote to me and provided me with a preliminary report. I attach that report. In the end, Leonie Andersen indicated that there was a problem with metals causing stress in the crabs.
10. The ulcerated crab problem gradually faded away after the large scale dredging period ended. It took years to get back to normal though. Eventually we were getting very few ulcerated crabs, and it seemed like the problem was gone.
11. Unfortunately the problem has surfaced again recently, after another period of intense dredging and Port construction. This most recent development and dredging phase started in October 2010, although there was a lot of drilling and other activities before then.
12. It started the same way it did last large scale dredging works. Crabs started appearing with rust spots again, then gradually blisters and then the open ulcers. I noticed the problem from about the middle of 2011, although the problem has really become noticeable in the past few months. It is accelerating, just like it did last time in the late 1990s.
13. I am very saddened and frustrated, as the cycle takes years until recovery once major dredging starts. This time it is Australia's largest dredging project, so I fear the impacts will probably be more extreme. Already the rust spots are on many of the adult and some of the juvenile crabs. The later stage open ulcers are up to around the 10% mark or higher where I crab. Once the holes open up we are unable to market the crabs.


COLIN EDWARD DALE

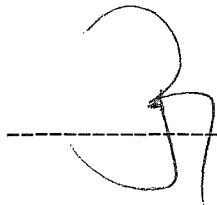

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14. I am very worried about my loss of income, and my way of life. My entire family relies on the crab business. My disabled son crabs with me every day. It is already hard to sell Gladstone crabs, and if the dredging has again stressed the crabs and pushed their metal levels too high, our future is grim.

DATED this 21ST

day of DECEMBER 2011.


COLIN EDWARD DALE


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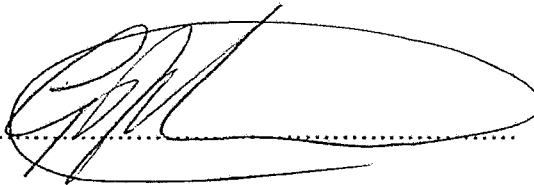
STATEMENT OF GARY JOHN GRANT

1. I have lived and operated a commercial fishing business in the Gladstone region for more than 30 years. I started my business around 1979. Initially I operated a mud crab and estuary fish netting business. I fished in and around Gladstone harbour and also the Boyne River.
2. I had spent many years around Tannum Sands before I started pro fishing, and knew the areas very well.
3. I caught a lot of my product around Toolooa Creek, south of QAL. My target net species were barramundi and grunter in summer and salmon in winter. There other species taken, including bream. It was seasonal, with around 6 months of most years occupied with netting, and the balance of the year mud crabbing. I generally sold my catch to the Fish Board; there were not many other buyers back then.
4. In the early 1980s the Gladstone Port Authority ("the Port") started a major capital dredging program, digging up the harbour to make the shipping channels deeper. The marina was also built around that time. There was a real lot of work going on. I believe it was from around 1980 to around 1982, from memory. The harbour water certainly became continually very dirty and filled with dredge sediment.
5. Soon after it started I started to catch sick fish and crabs in and close to the areas where all the dirty water was. That was the first time I had ever seen sickness in a large number of fish and crabs in the waters in Gladstone harbour and the estuaries nearby. The ulcers on fish and crabs just started, and then got worse while all the harbour works went on for a few years.
6. I did not know the cause of the marine animal disease at that time. I actually wondered whether it was QAL discharge. At that time little was known about dredging impact on fish and crabs. All I knew was that the water was now continually dirty, at all times of the tide and all year. It never cleaned up as there was too much work going on ripping up the mudflats and channel, sending sediment everywhere with the big tides we get in Gladstone.
7. I became concerned when I started to catch diseased bream and salmon, 2 of my main target species. The fish had red rashes on their bodies and fins, and some raw patches where the scales/skin and also the tail was partially eaten away. It became quite bad in some places around the harbour, so I stopped fishing at those places.

8. I was throwing back a lot of fish, regardless of where I tried to fish around Gladstone in the early 1980s. I recall Toolooa Bends was one area where there was a high level of fish disease at that time. I knew I couldn't sell them with rashes and ulcers, so I just threw back the bad ones. There were so many sick fish though that my profits went well down.
9. The mud crabs also started getting holes in their claws and shells soon after the major dredging started. The disease started with patches of orange spots on the shell, and black spots on their claws. Then in more advanced cases the orange and black marks had turned into holes; the shell was eaten away quite badly with many of them. The crabs with bad ulcers were obviously quite sick and looked disgusting. I threw them back in the water.
10. The health problems with the fish and crabs hurt my catch and therefore my income. All the noise from the dredges and the extra vessel traffic around where I was trying to work also helped drive many fish away from the entire area, and so caused my catch to drop even further.
11. I decided to move my fishing operations elsewhere. There was nothing you could do about Port development impacts, reclamation of fishing grounds, or sick fish issues in those days. Most of the other Gladstone based professional net fishermen shifted their fishing activities out of the Gladstone area for awhile, until it all the disease finished a few years later. Some went north like me.
12. I based most of my fishing operations around Cape Capricorn, about 30 miles north. I lived on my boat for months at a time. There was plenty of crab and fish up there, and there were no marine animal health problems.
13. I lived on the boat up there, often doing week long trips before returning to Gladstone with a load of fish and crab product. I did that for a couple of years. Eventually I also took a day job to help meet my living and family expenses. I had children at home, so working away all the time was not ideal. My young family basically needed me at home more.
14. Due to the problems in the Gladstone crab and net fishery, I elected to start reef fishing in about 1984. I wanted to get away from my reliance on fishing in the Gladstone harbour, as it seemed clear there would be problems catching enough healthy fish when the Port did major developments.

15. This involved buying a larger line fishing vessel and travelling to the Capricorn Bunker group of coral reefs to the east of Gladstone, out in the Coral Sea. I targeted coral trout and other reef fish species and sold them into the domestic fish fillet market in Gladstone.

Signed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Grant', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Gary Grant

Ph 49781513

Mail: 34 Flora Drive
Beecher
Gladstone

Statutory Declarations Act 1959

STATUTORY DECLARATION

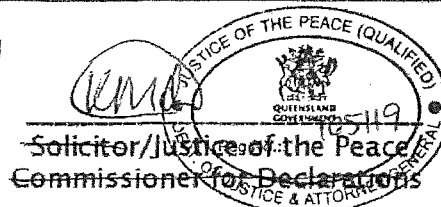
QUEENSLAND
TO WIT

I, MICHAEL McMULLEN of 4 Denis Street, Murumba Downs, via Brisbane In the State of Queensland, do solemnly and sincerely declare:-

1. I formerly resided in Gladstone, Central Queensland, where I operated my own professional crabbing business for 27 years. I harvested mud crabs from areas around Gladstone harbour, and then sold them to fish markets.
2. I ceased crabbing a few years ago and moved to Brisbane. My licence is now leased.
3. I remember that from 1981 to 1984 approximately there was a large scale dredging and construction period in Gladstone harbour. Prior to that work commencing crab and fish stocks were excellent. That all changed once the dredging started. I recall that from about 1981 to 1984 they dredged the harbour and Marina, and also the shipping channel all the way out. They were also reclaiming areas and building walls around those areas. They also did more dredging in the late 1980s in the harbour area. This was all massive dredging and construction level, not the normal channel maintenance that didn't interfere with our fishing.
4. Soon after all the big dredging started in the early to mid 1980s the crabs started to get rust spots and ulcers through their shells. The fish also were getting ulcers and pink rashes over them, including the salmon and barramundi around Fisherman's Landing. Some salmon and barramundi were swimming upside down or on their sides, like they were disorientated. You could pick them up by hand. The little bait fish were all dying.
5. I was extremely concerned about crab and fish health, so I sent samples to Government in Brisbane and asked them to investigate the cause. I sent in sick crabs, and also small fish, the bait fish with rashes and ulcers. They had asked me not to send the diseased big fish like salmon and barra. They were not interested at all. At first they said they had lost the samples. I sent in more. They would not investigate, instead they said it was probably naturally occurring and due to salinity, not dredging and harbour development. I was getting nowhere with my complaints that they investigate.

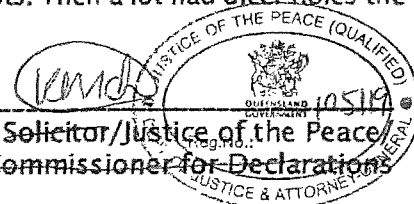
Michael McMullen
MICHAEL MCMULLEN

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6. I then tried the media. I went to the Gladstone Observer and tried to get them to take on the issue. They would not get involved, and would not print the information.
7. It was obvious the Government was not interested in taking action. My catch rates were down, and fish and crab disease was high. I had gone from 120 crabs per day to around 15 that I could keep. So many had to be thrown back because of all the large rust spots and ulcers over their shells. It was not viable for me to remain, so I shifted to Rockhampton and fished up there for a period of years, waiting for the Gladstone area to recover.
8. When I returned after bulk of the dredging was over, it still took years for the crab stocks to recover. Gradually once major dredging and construction stopped the rate of ulcers and rust spots dropped until there were virtually none with it. It became a rarity. However, I had much lower catches than before the big dredge period, and that continued for 10 or 11 years. I recall the 1991 flood seemed to clear out all the muck in the harbour and things seemed to start picking up again after that.
9. Things then were ok until about 1994/5, when I again noticed some crabs with ulcers appearing. It was not a high rate, but I was concerned and so put in samples to Government. The Port Authority had been doing a lot of reclamation and bund wall works near where I crabbed. Once again, the Government was not interested in investigating the cause. It was very frustrating! That period passed, and the problem did not develop fully again, like it was in the 1980s, for a few more years.
10. Then in around 1996/7 they started another round of large scale dredging and construction in the Gladstone Port. There were channel dredging, new wharfs, and more reclamation works. It went on continuously for a few years. As I anticipated, the crabs with ulcers and rust spots quickly appeared again, within a few months of the works starting.
11. Once again I sent in samples and asked for action by Government. After awhile someone funded some research by Central Queensland University. I would take in crabs for checking by Leonie Andersen. She would check them and then I would take them and release them back in the wild. After awhile we were paid \$1 per crab for this work. Dr Andersen told me that the problem was the metals; she said that the metals were so high they were virtually not fit for human consumption if things got any worse.
12. This dredging period was the same as the earlier ones, in terms of impact on my profit. Crab stocks went down rapidly, and you had to throw back of the ones with the worst disease, as they could not be sold with the really bad ulcers. Most of the adult crabs had the rust spots and ulcers, to differing degrees. Most had the rust spots. Then a lot had ulcer holes the


MICHAEL MCMULLEN


Solicitor/Justice of the Peace
Commissioner for Declarations

size of a 10 cent piece, all the way up to a 50 cent piece. It was exactly the same as the disease I saw in the mid 1980s when the large scale dredging was going on. The juveniles did not have it as much, but as in the earlier dredge periods the juvenile numbers dropped a lot.

13. The catch rates were so low that profit was reduced a great deal. I hung in until 2002, but things had not improved, so I left the industry and relocated from Gladstone to Brisbane.

I understand that a person who intentionally makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence under Section 11 of the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*, and I believe that the statements in this declaration are true in every particular.

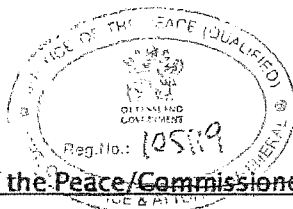
Taken and Declared before me, at
Murrumbidgee Downs, QLD
this 20th day of December 2011

Before me

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M. J. McMillan

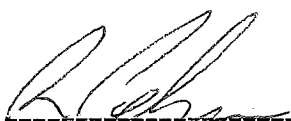
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Solicitor/Justice of the Peace/Commissioner for Declarations

STATEMENT OF RICHARD PERSHOUSE

1. I am a commercial fisherman and have been involved in fishing in the Gladstone region for over 30 years. During that time I have spent much fishing time in and around the Gladstone harbour itself.
2. On or about 26 September 2011 I was crab fishing up near Sea Hill and Deception, together with Ricky Wogant. It was the day before we met with Minister Craig Wallace in Gladstone.
3. I first noticed that a fish kill had occurred on the banks at Sea Hill. I saw a big Barramundi, a large King Salmon, a Spanish Mackerel, a number of Blue Salmon, and an assortment of other dead fish on the banks. There were also 2 dead turtles on the bank beside the dead fish.
4. We then went to Deception Flats, near Deception Creek. The same thing had happened there. There were more dead turtles, plus dead triple tails, a barra, a number of blue salmon, and also several dead sharks.
5. There had been no netting and there were no other vessels nearby. We attribute the fish kills to the dredge sediment plume that routinely travels up the Narrows.
6. We reported it to National Parks by phone, but did not see any response. We did not report it to Fisheries, as it was just beyond the emergency fish closure area. However, the dredging has caused significant declines in the marine health of that area. Even the black and white hawks have left the area. We always had 30 or 40 following our boats; now there are usually generally none.



RICHARD PERSHOUSE




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7. This is not the first time I have witnessed the dredging impacts. It happens every time they do large scale dredging and construction in the harbour.
8. The first time I saw it was in the early 1980s, when they were dredging the channel and doing other construction works for a few years straight. I was working as a deck hand for Robbie Pike. We were netting in the Calliope River mouth, not far from the dredging. We started to get salmon and mullet covered in red rashes and ulcers. The rashes were on their gut area, and the ulcers anywhere on their bodies.
9. We just cut them up and put them in as bait for recreational crabbers. The fantail mullet were especially impacted by the rashes and lesions, but the blue salmon had it as well.
10. We were getting the rashed and ulcerated fish all around the harbour. We were netting also between South End and Gatcombe Heads. I was involved for about 12 months, and the fish disease was constant and at a high percentage. All we could use the fish for was bait. The worst area was near the Calliope; that was where a lot of the dredging and construction work was happening.
11. Around 1991 I started by own crabbing business. I did ok until the dredging and construction really got going again around the mid 1990s. At that stage I crabbed from Deception all the way down to Grahams Creek, depending on the season. They were dredging the harbour, all the way through to Clinton Coal Wharf.
12. In 1997 I noticed that after the construction and dredging had ramped up, and I started getting many ulcerated crabs, from Grahams Creek all the way through to Deception. The crabs got rust spots, and you could push your finger straight through. Some had full on holes, and you could see their



RICHARD PERSHOUSE

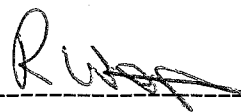


WITNESS

insides. The percentage of crabs impacted ramped up quickly, to the point where 40 to 50% of them had the lesions and rust spots.

13. I started sending samples to Dr Walker, the boss at Central Queensland Uni. He got me and other crabbers a permit to take females and undersized, so they could study it. I would take in 50 crabs at a time, just at random. They would keep them 2 days, then I would collect them and release the ones that were not legal.
14. I saw that the disease got into smaller crabs too. Even some that were only 3 inches across the shell. Many females had it bad. The numbers of crabs went right down and hurt our profit.
15. I asked Leonie Andersen, who was working for Dr Mike Walker, what the problem was. She told me it was the increased metal in the water, causing the crabs stress and making the shell disease from the inside out. It started as a bubble on the inside, then eventually burst through at the top of the shell. She said the water was depressing their immune systems and making them sick.
16. Eventually once dredging scaled down the disease went away. You would rarely see a diseased crab.
17. However, earlier this year the problem started again, as dredging and construction ramped up from October 2010. It was just the same as last time that happened. We have the same crab ulcerations, fish diseases, and rust spots on most of the crabs.
18. There is no difference to last dredging and construction impacts in the late 1990s. We are seeing impacts on crabs even higher than then. The percentage of crabs with ulcers or the rust spots that are the start of it is already very


RICHARD PERSHOUSE


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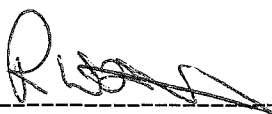
high, over 40%. The disease and fish kills have occurred all the way up the Narrows, as the sediment travels up there with the currents and winds.

19. If the metals in the crabs are high again, I worry about whether they are really fit to eat anyway.

DATED this 21ST day of DECEMBER 2011.



RICHARD PERSHOUSE



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