

SEAFOOD TRADE MATTERS

e-Newsletter

SafeFish Update October 2014



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Histamine Expert Working Group

Histamines are the second most common cause of seafood illness outbreaks in Australia.

The Codex Committee of Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) is currently reviewing maximum allowable levels (MLs) for histamine in seafood.

SafeFish held an expert working group meeting on the 14th of October in Melbourne to provide input into the Australian official position on the proposed Codex changes.

Representatives from the Department of Agriculture, FSANZ, the Australian and New Zealand seafood industries, and histamine experts from Australia and New Zealand discussed the proposed changes, in particular, whether lowering the ML would reduce histamine illnesses.

It was concluded that current MLs have been shown to be effective.

Incidents typically occur when food businesses do not follow good hygienic practices or appropriate HACCP procedures.

On this basis SafeFish will be providing the Australian government with the technical rationale to support the negotiating position at the next Codex CCFFP meeting that the current Histamine MLs should not be reduced.

Australian Marine Biotoxin Partnership

The Australian Marine Biotoxin Partnership (AMBP) was originally formed in 2010 to address a lack of commercial analytical testing facilities for marine biotoxins in Australia. Following a Seafood CRC research project that demonstrated the commercial viability of establishing a biotoxin testing facility in Australia Advanced Analytical Australia established one in Sydney which has now been successfully servicing industry, regulators and researchers for over two years.

SafeFish reconvened this group in Hobart on the 15th October in conjunction with the Australian Shellfish Quality Assurance Advisory Committee meeting. The potential for the AMBP to provide benefit to all stakeholders by providing technical support to assessing and managing marine biotoxin risks for Australian seafood was discussed.

It was agreed that the AMBP would provide a forum for industry, regulators and researchers to discuss research priorities and capability gaps and to progress action on these issues. SafeFish is currently drafting a Terms of Reference for the partnership.

For further information on the above, or to join in the SafeFish discussions on these or any other SafeFish topic, please call Alison Turnbull on 08 83039623 or visit <http://SafeFish.com.au>