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# Psychosocial Risk Factors in Commercial Fishing Industry

Dr. Fatima Junaid

# Our team

**Dr. Fatima Junaid: Massey University**

**Andrew Barney: Massey University**

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**Shalaine Jackson: Guard Safety/ FirstMate**

**Tom Eats: Maritime New Zealand**

# Collaboration



- Massey University, Guard Safety, First Mate and Maritime New Zealand collaboration
- Pilot study to determine psychosocial risks in the fishing industry
- Three-Phase project:
  - Consultation - Data Collection- Consultation

# Agenda

01

**Project Objectives and Aims**

02

**Background**

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**Project Methodology**

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**Phase 1: Initial Consultation with fishers for survey development**  
**Phase 2: Survey**  
**Phase 3: Fishers' Feedback**

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# Project Objectives and Aim

**An industry led approach to indicating *what* is going on for people *who work* in the sector – *what* are the stressors?**

**Exploring suitable research methodology for working with fishers**

**Using Copenhagen Psychosocial Risks Questionnaire (COPSOQ)**

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

01

**Fishing is a high-risk industry physically**

But little/no studies of risks to well-being

02

**2021 WorkSafe Psychosocial Survey ("WorkSafe")**

- 3000+ respondents across wide range of industries
- 2% fishers, but results combined with "transport" workers
- No access to the fishers' raw data

03

**2023 MNZ commissioned this psychosocial study**

# Project Methodology

**Methodology developed overtime: Consultation with FirstMate and Fishers,  
communication with MNZ over 9 months  
Presentation at the Global COPSQQ conference 2023**

**Phases: Consult and adapt the survey - Survey- Feedback from the Fishers**

# Phase 1

## Consultation with Fishers

**Adapting COPSOQ  
for fishers**

**13 Participants: a mix of deep water and inshore fishers**

**The edits and additions to the COPSOQ**



Objective: To ensure a diverse group of New Zealand commercial fishers could discuss and agree on a suitable adaptation of COPSOQ for use in the New Zealand fishing industry.

A workshop and focus group discussion

Workshop:

- Explaining COPSOQ and its use.
- Relevance for fishers

Discussion:

- What needs to be edited, deleted and added
- And why?

# Phase 1: Consultation process

**Focus was on:**

Wording/Language  
Questions  
Constructs

# Edits and Additions

## Language edits

- Change the word 'manager' to 'skipper'
- 'Co worker' to 'Mate'
- Change of words for clear understanding such as:

Does your work put you in emotionally disturbing situations?

Does your work put you in emotionally difficult situations?

Does your work require that you do not state your opinion?

Does your work let you state your opinion?

## Additional questions

### Regulation and Compliance load

Does your work require following a level of regulations?

Does your work require understanding a large number of changing regulations?

Does compliance to regulation take up a lot of your time everyday?

### Compliance worries

Are you worried about compliance?

Are you worried that the existing regulations will negatively affect your existing work?

Are you worried about not being able to continue due to the operating regulations?

### Skill Development

Are your skills undervalued at work?

Do you feel you have advanced accordingly in regard to how long you have worked?

### Satisfaction with Job

Do you often end up working without pay?

### Influence

Does your sector have much say in the compliance regulations created for fishing sector?

# Key points

- Lengthy written documents,
- Complex, formal language

Regulation and compliance presentation

Difficulty in Compliance

- Regulations difficult (and too many) to understand, and apply
- Low literacy

- Fear of failure
- Expense
- Time intensive
- Cost intensive

Regulation and Compliance load

- Fishers like face-to-face interaction
- Getting them in one room will be difficult and costly
- Online /email may not work
- Research has to engage someone familiar for relationship building

## **Methodological comments & suggestions**

**The survey is long**

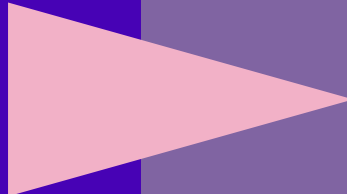
# Phase 2

**COPSOQ Survey through the Navigators**

**Participants: 47**

# Survey Conclusions

**Caution: These  
are pilot study  
findings**



- **Regulation and Compliance** load a significant problem for industry – rated very highly by all demographic groups. *Worrying about compliance* more focused on specific groups *who were very worried* about it.
- **Work Pace** an issue for most groups, but *WorkSafe* survey suggests this may be problem for many industries.

# Navigators' feedback



**One fisher comments sums it up:**

“It (the Survey) covered a fair bit, but I think it should possibly go more in depth about why so many fishers are worried about their future in the fishing industry and the main cause/driving factor. Why would we encourage young guys to go back to school to get tickets (fishing qualifications) or try pave their way through the fishing industry when there is so many going broke or wanting to get out with all the new regulations been thrown at us at the moment, feels like the inshore industry is at a choke point. My rant like many others can go on for a good hour.”

# Phase 3

Feedback from the fishers

**What we asked and what we heard**

**Participants: 9**

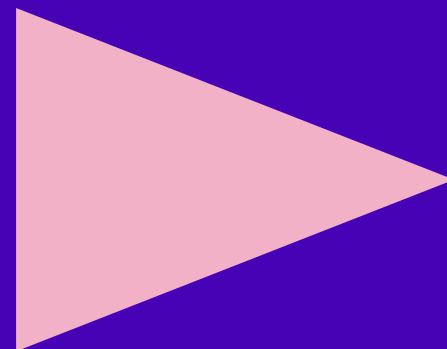


# Fishers' feedback Process

- **Online meeting.**
- **The invite was sent by FirstMate**
- **Fatima presented the project aims, the role of the collaborators, and the survey findings.**

- **The presentation was 25 minutes, the feedback and discussion was 45 minutes**
- **Fatima and Andrew took questions, heard the participants, and collated the feedback.**

# What we asked the fishers: Feed forward



**Do these findings  
resonate with you?**

**Is there anything we  
have missed that we  
should have asked?**

**What would you like to see  
that will help ?**

**Is the current situation  
sustainable for fishers?**

**Knowing what we found from  
our pilot study, what does it  
mean for you as a fisher?**

**Any other comments**

**What do we need to ask, who should we ask, how  
should we ask, and why?**

# Future Research

- **Scale up the pilot study– Representative sample**
- **Understand the best way to hear and communicate with fishers**
- **Explore research methods suitable for fishers**
- **Develop a wellbeing framework for fishers**
- **Find ways to increase knowledge of, and compliance with regulations amongst fishers**
- **Have more collaborations between the stakeholders**

# Thank you

**Any questions**

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