Submission of

Te Runanga o Nga Kaimahi Māori o te Service and Food Workers Union Ngā Ringa Tota

to the

Ministerial Inquiry Into Foreign Charter Vessels

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1. Introduction

1.1 This submission is made on behalf of Māori members of the Service and Food Workers Union Ngā Ringa Tota (SFWU), who are represented by our union Runanga, Te Runanga o Nga Kaimahi Maori, SFWU Ngā Ringa Tota.

1.2 We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Ministerial Inquiry into Foreign Charter Vessels (the Inquiry).

1.3 Our Runanga supports the submission of the Service and Food Worker's Union Ngā Ringa Tota, the New Zealand Council Trade Unions (NZCTU) and the NZCTU Runanga. We also support submissions made by two Māori workers in the fishing industry and members of our union, Christine Hutana and Victor Norman.

1.4 The fishing industry has traditionally been a source of work for Māori and changes in the industry have impacted hard on Māori workers. It is our submission that these changes, including the use of FCVs and the subsequent devastating reduction of the land-based fishing workforce, has impacted very significantly on Māori workers.

1.5 That impact has included loss of potential of employment for future generations and impediments for tangata whenua to exercise their cultural rights including rangatiratanga and manaakitanga of our fishing resources.

1.6 The Treaty of Waitangi protects the rights of all New Zealand citizens including tangata whenua. The Treaty also protects the rights of tangata whenua to carry out their cultural obligations.

1.7 There must be recognition that the Government has obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi to protect everyone, including tangata whenua.

1.8 It is our submission that changes in the fishing industry have had a significant negative impact on Māori.

2. Recommendations

2.1 We support the recommendations in our union's submission.

2.2 In particular we wish to highlight calls to maximise employment opportunities, training and career paths for Māori workers.

3. Background

3.1 Te Runanga o Nga Kaimahi Māori, SFWU Ngā Ringa Tota has had significant contact with our Māori members about their experience in working in the fishing industry and increasing concerns about the direction taken by the fishing industry. Of

particular concern is the impact of the changes in the industry on employment and the lost job opportunities and potential loss for Māori futures in the fishing industry.

3.2 These concerns are expanded on in the SFWU submission. To summarise, the fishing industry has been a traditional source of employment and career paths for Māori. Changes in the industry, including the use of FCVs and the associated reduction in land-based value-added processing, has devastated the number of jobs in the industry. Māori unemployment is currently at an acceptably high level of 16% and Maori youth unemployment is at 28%. Our Runanga has deep concerns at this.

3.3 Initially our union supported the concept of quota being granted as part of Treaty of Waitiangi settlements. We were hopeful that this would lead to many more jobs for our people. Unfortunately the reverse has been the case and this is also a source of deep concern for our Runanga.

3.4 Many of these concerns were articulated by Māori workers at a hui of 200 Sealord workers which our Runanga convenor and National vice-President Maori, Muriel Tunoho, facilitated with Te Tai Tonga Maori Party MP, Rahui Katene at Whakatu marae in Nelson in mid-2009.

3.5 Our Runanga also initiated the SFWU petition calling for an inquiry into the New Zealand fishing industry and on 4 August 2011 we helped present the petition with over 12,000 signature along with other union members and the wider community to Māori Party Te Tai Tonga MP Rahui Katene, Labour MP and spokesperson on Trade Maryan Street, and Green Party MP and spokesperson on Oceans, Marine Conservation and Fisheries, Gareth Hughes.

The petition called on the House of Representatives to conduct an inquiry into:

- The New Zealand fishing industry's relationship with foreign fishing companies
- Foreign crewing of joint ventures
- Chartered and New Zealand fishing vessels

And the New Zealand fishing industry's impact on:

- Sustainable fishing practices
- The employment of New Zealand workers on land and at sea
- The relevant communities within New Zealand

3.6 We welcomed the Minister of Fishing, Phil Heatley, announcement of the Government Inquiry into the fishing industry.

3.7 However, our Runanga is concerned that the Inquiry may narrowly focus on the shameful treatment of foreign crews. Our Runanga led a delegation from the SFWU to submit our petition to the Primary Production Select Committee on 4 August 2011. Our very strong submission was that the Inquiry must encompass all the industry issues, particularly the impact on New Zealand jobs and Māori.

4. Conclusion

4.1 It is the submission of the SFWU runanga that the impact of FCVs has raised important issues for Māori. It is therefore very important that there is a Māori voice in the Inquiry.

4.2 Our Runanga wishes to appear before the Inquiry to present on this submission.