



**Fisheries and Aquaculture
Office of the Minister**

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January 22, 2026

Dear Association Representative:

Earlier today, the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture announced the designation of new offences, enforceable through Summary Offences Tickets (SOTs), under the *Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act* and Fish Buyers and Fish Processors Regulations. The goal of these new SOT provisions is to help the Province combat illegal activities within the fish buying and fish processing sector that are impacting the sustainability of our resources and the safety of our communities. Prior to this initiative, there had been no SOTs provisions relating directly to the buying and processing of fish in Nova Scotia.

Today's announcement provides the Department of Natural Resources' Conservation Officers and our recently announced new Inspectorate (once implemented) with the ability to issue SOTs, which involve a specific out-of-court settlement (OCS) fine amount for infractions against the Act and regulations. This includes falsifying or unlawfully altering or destroying documents (\$5,000 for a first offence and \$10,000 for subsequent offences) and buying or processing illegally caught fish (\$25,000 for a first offence, \$50,000 for subsequent offences). These new, stronger Summary Offences ensure that the fine amounts match the seriousness of the illegal activity. A full list of the Summary Offences and their associated OCS fines is attached to this letter.

This represents the latest action the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture has taken to combat illegal activities in our sector. In November we announced the establishment of a new Inspectorate that will be responsible for monitoring, inspecting and investigating regulatory compliance and acting on offences.

These new initiatives, in combination with previous actions focused on combatting illegal activities in the fish buying and processing sector, will help our seafood industry grow and generate additional tax dollars for our economy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kent Smith', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Honourable Kent Smith, E.C.N.S.

Enc.