

Information for the Dungeness Crab Task Force
CA Sea Urchin Commission Funding Questions

1. How is the California Sea Urchin Commission funded?

Commission activities are funded by an assessment on sea urchin harvested and processed in California and which is paid equally by divers and handlers if both are parties to the CSUC or paid entirely by whichever part of fishery makes up the Commission. Current the Commission includes only divers and they pay the full assessment of \$0.01. The CSUC sets the assessment rate annually at any amount up to \$0.015 (or \$.03 including divers and handlers)

2. How often does the group meet?

The CSUC meets quarterly, normally be face to face meetings, except it decided in July 09 to conduct one meeting each year by conference call to save money. In addition, the CSUC has an Executive Committee and special purpose committees that meet periodically by conference call.

3. How much does each meeting cost per individual?

The CSUC approved at its creation to pay the costs (travel, lodging, meals, etc.) for individual members and alternates to attend all business meetings and other meetings where individuals represent the CSUC (e.g., FGC, legislative hearings, MLPA, etc.).

4. What are the yearly costs for the Commission to run?

It is hard to say how much is spent as a base amount to operate the CSUC, likely in the range of \$30,000 to \$40,000 annually. Its budgets have ranged between \$150,000 to \$250,000 annually. It is in the process of reviewing and re-prioritizing activities since the processors have terminated their participation.

5. How is membership determined?

The Sea Urchin Commission is directed by an elected Commission which originally included ten elected commissioners and one appointed public member. Currently the CSUC includes five elected diver members and one public member (five diver alternates are elected also). Diver members are elected by geographical areas/harbors (San Diego, San Pedro, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and north coast). The CSUC also includes several non-voting members representing government entities which are significant to the sea urchin fishery.

6. What do the fishermen get out of it?

This is a hard one because everyone has different expectations. They get a fishery organization to represent their interests that has sustainability in structure, procedures, and funding. Leadership and management is transparent and inclusive. The commission structure gives the fishery independence in decision making, setting priorities and carrying out projects. The fishery collects its own funding, adopts its own budget, hires its own staff/consultants, decides its own positions on legislative and regulatory questions, and selects its leaders.