

AquaScope

News from PIRSA's
Aquaculture Division

June 2009 Ed. 1

Red tape slashed for development approvals

Many South Australian aquaculture licence holders will now enjoy faster and cheaper approvals when moving or setting up new sites.

The State Government has amended its development regulations for new and existing licence holders in the aquaculture zones of Eastern Spencer Gulf, Smoky Bay, Lower Eyre Peninsula, Anxious Bay and Coffin Bay.

The regulation changes mean applicants will no longer need to lodge a separate application for development approval or wait for interagency referrals to move or apply for new applications in these zones.

PIRSA Aquaculture Acting Executive Director, Heather Montgomerie, says it's a great outcome for both industry and government, making the regulatory system more user-friendly.

"It's something we've been pushing for... because essentially the development process

was a doubling up of the same approval processes that industry already go through when we conduct our site specific assessments.

And from a cross government perspective we're already having those discussions about the suitability and scale of the aquaculture at a zoning level," she said.

Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Association Chief Executive Officer, Brian Jeffriess, also welcomed the changes describing them as a major step forward for the aquaculture industry.

"The former system did not allow for rapid changes in the movement of pens, and with weather conditions affecting fish and infrastructure this is crucial," he said.

"Time required to get approvals between departments was a major barrier in achieving a rapid response, but now we have the flexibility required to become more responsive."

What do the changes mean?

NO development approval is required for new and existing sites within the aquaculture zones of Eastern Spencer Gulf, Smoky Bay, Lower Eyre Peninsula, Anxious Bay and Coffin Bay.

AQUACULTURE lease and licence assessments and approvals shortened by up to 2 to 5 months.

NO development approval required for licence holders wanting to move sites within the above zones.



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The Inside Scope

**With Heather Montgomerie
A/Executive Director, PIRSA Aquaculture**

Hello and welcome to the first edition of PIRSA Aquaculture's new quarterly newsletter, AquaScope.

Through this new publication we aim to provide the aquaculture industry with a regular communication channel for keeping up to date with current issues and developments from PIRSA.

South Australia's aquaculture industry has become a fast developing industry, positioning itself as a world seafood leader.

And while this growth is exciting, it is most important that industry and government work together to ensure this growth is sustainable and conducted in an orderly fashion.

My vision for this publication is to showcase how PIRSA Aquaculture is working with industry on key issues, new projects and policy changes. We also aim to provide as much information as possible on new government resources, projects and initiatives affecting the aquaculture industry.

Our main story this quarter is about changes to the aquaculture development regulations, which PIRSA Aquaculture has been pushing for some time now. The changes to these regulations is good news for those located within the aquaculture zones in eastern Spencer Gulf, Smoky Bay, Lower Eyre Peninsula, Anxious Bay and Coffin Bay.

In short, these changes have reduced red tape, allowing licence holders to now move sites within their zones without having to go through the administrative process of applying to the Development Assessment Commission (DAC).

I am very pleased about this outcome. It is a great example of government departments working together to ensure efficient and streamlined regulatory processes.

Also highlighted this quarter is the importance of public liability insurance, the marketing benefits of environmental monitoring and the impending launch of our SA Aquaculture DVD.

Finally I'd like to say that this publication is as much yours as it is ours. Please don't hesitate to get involved. If you have a topic of interest you'd like us to feature or an issue you want us to cover, please contact us.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy our first edition of AquaScope.

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Introducing... your new Minister

Paul Caica has been appointed as the new Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister and already he has set his sights firmly on supporting the growth of the State's aquaculture industry.

Appointed on 3 March following a Cabinet re-shuffle, Mr Caica also took on the portfolios of Forests and Regional Development, and maintained his existing Industrial Relations portfolio.

A keen fisherman, Mr Caica believes there is significant growth potential for the aquaculture industry and says he looks forward to working with industry in ensuring its sustainability.

"I am very impressed with the dynamism of the aquaculture industry and I look forward to seeing its continued growth," he said.

"The State Government's goal to double the State's seafood production to \$2 billion

annually by 2015 has already been underpinned by the establishment of the re-developed Lincoln Marine Science Centre.

"The State Government contributed almost \$4.5 million towards the project, which we launched earlier this year, making it one of Australia's premier marine research and teaching organisations."

First elected to South Australian Parliament as the Member for Colton in 2002, Mr Caica has also been Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education; Minister for Science and Information Economy; Minister for Youth; Minister for Gambling; and Minister for Volunteers.

(Left): Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Minister, Paul Caica.

Leading the way in clean, green marketing

World leaders in environmental management, Clean Seas says the secret to its international success has definitely been its 'clean, green' image.

Experts in the captive breeding of Kingfish, Mulloway and Southern Bluefin Tuna, Clean Seas' environmental practices go above and beyond all required legislation and world's best practice standards.

Harvesting 70 to 80 tonnes per week, the Eyre Peninsula based company exports to America, Europe, South East Asia, and more recently China.

Marcus Stehr, Clean Seas Managing Director, says environmental monitoring, whilst compulsory, is also a top marketing priority for the business, and crucial in reaching global markets.

"Without the environmental monitoring procedures in place, you will not get into those overseas markets, and you won't get into the supermarkets," he said.

"They all want sustainable seafood and it all has to come from having good environmental practice."

Clean Seas divers check the floor of the sea cages at least six days a week and deep sea water testing is conducted regularly with underwater camera and video surveillance. The company is also environmentally accredited with the Friends of the Sea, and operates to ISO 14001 and ISO 9001 environmental standards.

"We're constantly re-evaluating stock, looking at health requirements and looking at how we can best improve our operations in terms of monitoring the environment," Marcus said.

"We also have a health team that goes out and does histograms and health checks on our fish once a month."

Having recently returned from Europe, where he spoke at the Brussels Seafood Show on the importance of the company's environmental practices, Marcus says consumers will continue to push for fresher, cleaner and more sustainable produce.

"The monitoring, stocking density, investigative analysis work, making sure that there's good seawater, that the environment is being looked after - that is some of the most important elements that customers are interested in these days," he said.

"If companies are serious about having a long term business in aquaculture and a sustainable industry, then environmental management is right at the forefront of that. Without that you can't have anything."

(Below): Marcus Stehr, Clean Seas Managing Director, says environmental monitoring is a top priority for the business, and crucial in ensuring its international success across global markets.



Lights, camera, action!

South Australia's diverse and picturesque aquaculture industry is set to star in a new DVD.

An initiative of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) and PIRSA Aquaculture, the six minute DVD is a visual journey of what South Australia's aquaculture industry has to offer.

The DVD includes cooking segments and voice-overs in four different languages, including English, Spanish, French and Chinese. PIRSA's own Xiaoxu Li from SARDI, Adriana Montoya from Fisheries, and Emmanuelle Bovy from Aquaculture star as the bi-lingual voice-overs in the DVD.

It also touches on the research and management controls that make our aquaculture industry one of the most sustainable in the world.

PIRSA Aquaculture's Policy Officer, Emmanuelle Bovy, says the DVD, which is expected to be released by the middle of 2009 will be sent to chefs in France and other European distributors.

"The concept was first raised during the European Seafood Exhibition 2008, where the South Australian government signed an agreement with Euro-toques, an association of the best chefs in Europe," she said.

"The agreement was that European chefs would use South Australia's seafood in their menus and develop new recipes using our produce.

"The DVD was suggested as a great tool to assist the European chefs become familiar with SA's produce... see the environment where it's grown and examples of how it can be used in recipes."

The DVD will also be available for purchase as a promotional tool for other SA aquaculture businesses.

(Right): PIRSA Aquaculture's Policy Officer, Emmanuelle Bovy, says a new promotional DVD is set to be launched in the aim of providing industry with a new tool to open up new market opportunities.



Monitoring the new marketing edge

Some licensees may consider it an inconvenience, but the fact is environmental monitoring is essential to the success of South Australia's ever expanding industry. Without it the State's aquaculture industry would not be able to demonstrate its sustainable credentials.

Peter Lauer, PIRSA Aquaculture's Manager Environment and Biosecurity Programs, says it is in the best interest of aquaculture companies to look beyond monitoring as a burden and instead see it as a valuable marketing opportunity.

"Companies that successfully undertake their Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) responsibilities can clearly demonstrate their commitment to maintaining a healthy environment for the community and consumers," he said.

"This enables them to capitalise on the clean green image of Australia's seafood and enhance the marketability of their aquaculture products.

"They can also use the standards required by PIRSA to support accredited eco-labelling that can offer businesses a marketing edge over other interstate and overseas producers."

Each year, aquaculture licensees are required to submit an EMP report to PIRSA Aquaculture under the Aquaculture Regulations 2005.

This information includes both physical and

biological factors relevant to monitoring the effects of farming on the licensed site.

While originally introduced to address public and industry concerns about the environmental effects of aquaculture development, Peter says the EMPs are also an essential resource management tool for PIRSA Aquaculture.

"We use the information when developing or changing policies to ensure industry is not only being regulated fairly, but also at a rate that's beneficial for sustained growth that is environmentally sound," he said.

(Below): (L-R): SARDI Aquatic Sciences' Mike Guderian and Bruce Miller-Smith, with PIRSA Aquaculture's Peter Lauer.



Don't put your business at risk

Do you have current public liability insurance? If not, you're not only breaching the conditions of your lease, but also putting your business at risk.

PIRSA Aquaculture Policy Officer, Lauren Tester, says leaseholders simply cannot afford to go without insurance and is urging all holders to update their policy as soon as possible.

"Condition 10 and 19 of an aquaculture lease requires that leaseholders have a current public liability policy in the amount of \$10 million," she said.

"This ensures that the lessee and the Minister are protected against any loss arising out of the use of the leased area, either through property damage, death, illness or injury."

PIRSA Aquaculture must also receive a copy of the public liability insurance certificate within five working days of receiving the lease.

Lauren says it's important that lease-

holders also remember to let their insurance company know of any new updates, such as when there are new lease numbers as a result of subdivision or when leases are relocated.

"It's essential the business is always protected. You do not want to find out you are not covered because of a change in lease number," she said.

Information that must be included on the policy and/or certificate:

- Type of business (e.g. aquaculture, abalone farming, finfish farming)
- The Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries as an interested party
- All lease numbers covered by the policy
- The amount of \$10 million per occurrence.

(Left): PIRSA Aquaculture Policy Officer, Lauren Tester, is reminding all leaseholders to update their public liability insurance.



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