

PIRSA

Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Abalone (Aquaculture) Sector

2019-20



Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries
and Regions

Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Abalone (Aquaculture) Sector 2019-20

Information current as of 30 June 2020
© Government of South Australia 2020

Disclaimer

PIRSA and its employees do not warrant or make any representation regarding the use, or results of the use, of the information contained herein as regards to its correctness, accuracy, reliability and currency or otherwise. PIRSA and its employees expressly disclaim all liability or responsibility to any person using the information or advice.

All Enquiries

Business Manager, Fisheries and Aquaculture
Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA)
2 Hamra Avenue, West Beach SA
GPO Box 1625, Adelaide SA 5001
T 08 8207 5333
E chiara.ciui@sa.gov.au

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Resource Planning..... | 4 |
| Aquaculture Leasing and Licensing | 6 |
| Legislation..... | 8 |
| Compliance Operations..... | 9 |
| Aquaculture Systems | 10 |
| Aquatic Animal Health..... | 11 |
| Environmental Monitoring and Management..... | 13 |
| Program Management and Administration..... | 14 |
| Other Aquaculture Activities..... | 15 |

DRAFT

Resource Planning

| | Deliverables |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Monitored aquaculture zone allocations through audit and review, notably with respect to availability of water enquiries from existing and potential aquaculture industry stakeholders. |
| 2. | Commenced the review of the Aquaculture (Zones-Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013 to accommodate future expansion of aquaculture sectors, including the subtidal Mollusc Sector. Established the Lower Eyre Peninsula Review Advisory Committee to make recommendations for the review of the <i>Aquaculture (Zones-Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> , with two meetings held during this period. Drafted a Statement of Intent outlining proposed amendments to the zone policy, including a proposal to establish abalone as its own prescribed class as presented to the Committee in April 2020. |
| 3. | Finalised the Draft Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2020 and supporting Policy Report for approval, and commenced implementation. The policy development process included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two month public consultation period • Two public briefings (Adelaide and Port Lincoln) to assist submissions • Review of submissions and amendments to the Draft Policy and Policy Report |
| 4. | Ongoing liaison and consultation with relevant government departments, prescribed bodies and relevant stakeholders in relation to zone policy development. |
| 5. | Provided advice to stakeholders/members of the public in relation to existing aquaculture zone allocations (i.e. area, biomass, etc.). |
| 6. | Provided input to a range of State and Commonwealth Government environmental and conservation initiatives, to ensure aquaculture zone development objectives and aspirations were adequately taken into account and factored in to broader conservation policy development. |
| 7. | Provided advice to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) on proposed port facilities in Spencer Gulf and Kangaroo Island. |
| 8. | Provided formal response to DIT regarding a mandated referral to PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture for aquaculture developments outside of aquaculture zones and land-based aquaculture developments under the proposed Phase 2 of the Planning and Design Code. The referral is an important mechanism for PIRSA to minimise the regulatory burden on the aquaculture industry created by the planning approvals process. |
| 9. | Reviewed and provided a submission to DIT on the draft Phase 2 and 3 of the Planning and Design Code, which replaces all development plans for the State, to streamline development approvals for future marine-based aquaculture development outside of aquaculture zones, as well as land-based aquaculture development, and to mitigate impacts from other forms of development on the aquaculture industry. |
| 10. | Held an aquaculture development scenario testing workshop with DIT, Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Environment Protection Authority (EPA), council planners, and aquaculture industry representatives, to assist industry understand DIT's new planning system and to provide feedback. |

| | |
|-----|---|
| 11. | Ongoing liaison and consultation with DIT to streamline the process for aquaculture lease holders to surrender/remove associated lands title leases. |
| 12. | Provided input to DIT's review of referral fees under the <i>Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016</i> , in regard to PIRSA's provision of advice to the relevant planning authority for aquaculture development applications. |
| 13. | Reviewed and provided a response to the EPA on their Dredge Guidelines to mitigate potential impacts to the aquaculture industry. |
| 14. | Undertook a two month public call for lease tenure applications within the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Anxious Bay) Policy 2007</i> , <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Tumby Bay) Policy 2015</i> and <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Streaky Bay) Policy 2011</i> to be submitted to the Aquaculture Tenure Allocation Board (ATAB) for consideration, which included lease tenure for the Abalone Sector. |
| 15. | Facilitated and provided support to a Aquaculture Tenure Allocation Board (ATAB) meeting for consideration of lease tenure applications for the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Anxious Bay) Policy 2007</i> , <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Tumby Bay) Policy 2015</i> , and <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Streaky Bay) Policy 2011</i> public call. Draft internal procedures for ATAB meetings to assess applications for lease tenure were also tabled. |
| 16. | Commenced process to draft and make variation regulations to amend the <i>Aquaculture Regulations 16</i> , in relation to contemporising and streamlining prescribed bodies under regulation 5 for referral of draft aquaculture policies under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> . |
| 17. | Commenced review of current and future provisions for the rehabilitation of aquaculture leases. |
| 18. | Facilitated the preparation of an industry led application to address workplace wellness for the seafood sector in South Australia. |

Aquaculture Leasing and Licensing

| | Deliverables | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|--------|---------------|---|--------------------|---|----------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | Ongoing maintenance of internal licence audit functions, including auditing procedures (i.e. flowcharts, checklists and manuals) and performance relating to Abalone licences. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | Completed database maintenance and updates as required. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | Completed update to electronic Production Return and Environmental Monitoring Program reporting including design and testing of each new report. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | Reviewed renewal and transfer applications to ensure correct information is received at the time of application. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | Updated licence/lease records as required. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | Maintenance of systems and procedures to support day to day administration of leasing and licensing activities related to the Abalone Sector. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | Conducted audits of internal processes and functions including application checklists. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | Records management of leasing and licensing documentation. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | <p>Processing of Abalone applications (see table below).</p> <table> <tr> <th>Abalone: Application Type</th><th>Number</th></tr> <tr> <td>Lease renewal</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lease amalgamation</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence amalgamation</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Vary licence application</td><td>1</td></tr> </table> | Abalone: Application Type | Number | Lease renewal | 2 | Lease amalgamation | 1 | Licence amalgamation | 1 | Vary licence application | 1 |
| Abalone: Application Type | Number | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lease renewal | 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lease amalgamation | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Licence amalgamation | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vary licence application | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. | Processed annual production returns from the Abalone Sector. This included follow-up on unreturned production returns to ensure licence holders met their obligations under the regulations, collation and analysis of information. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11. | Finalised PIRSA internal guidelines for determining lease performance criteria and terms for aquaculture leases and licences, including determination of terms for applications to extend the term of aquaculture production leases up to 30 years. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12. | Processed requests for information from licence holders via front counter, phone or e-mail. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13. | Liaised with government stakeholders to verify the credentials of lease/licence holders for application processing as required. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14. | Issued invoices relating to annual fees (including quarterly reminders), licence renewals, transfers and/or surrenders for 3 Abalone licences and 5 Abalone leases. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15. | Reconciled receipt of annual lease and licence fees, application fees and liaised with Shared Services SA as required. | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|-----|---|
| 16. | Established a process for assessing and considering tourism based infrastructure on aquaculture leases, in consultation with DIT and the EPA. |
|-----|---|

DRAFT

Legislation

| | Deliverables |
|----|--|
| 1. | Finalisation of proposed amendments to the Act to enable the extension of the term of aquaculture production leases from 20 to 30 years, and to enhance notification requirements to persons with a registered interest on leases prior to a lease being cancelled. These proposed Act amendments were included in amendments made under the Treasurer's Statutes Amendment and Repeal (Simplify) Act 2019. Input into implementation matters. |
| 2. | Strategic input into the implementation of administrative decisions in all program areas as required to ensure they are informed and legally valid and consistent with the requirements of the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> and associated Acts to promote efficient and transparent government administration. |
| 3. | Provided input into the finalisation of the draft Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2020 for approval, including a review of over 300 lease and licence conditions with the Office of Parliamentary Council (OPC) and the Crown Solicitor's Office to ensure these remain modern and reflective of the aquaculture industry's practice. |
| 4. | Review of aquaculture related notices issued under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> and related Ministerial delegations. |
| 5. | Updating of Ministerial delegations including sub-delegations under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> . |
| 6. | Input into compliance / enforcement/ litigation matters as required. |

Compliance Operations

| | Deliverables |
|----|--|
| 1. | <p>Site surveillance inspections were undertaken by Fisheries Officers to ensure lease and licence holders compliance with the Act, associated Acts, Regulations, policies and specific lease and licence conditions, and to investigate complaints from the public. Surveillance activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine site inspections undertaken by Fisheries Officers. • Reports made to PIRSA subsequent to compliance inspections outline any compliance issues with a site and include photographs and site waypoints. • Follow up inspections as required for sites that have identified compliance issues. • These inspections were carried out within a reasonable timeframe, with due consideration of the risks to other users of the waters or resource. • Inspections also undertaken on sites that have been or are due to be, rehabilitated by lease or licence holders or contractors of lease and/or licence holders on an as required basis. <p>The sites inspected were deemed compliant with all requirements.</p> |
| 2. | No theft incidents were reported during 2019/20 from the abalone farms. |
| 3. | Communication and monitoring activities are undertaken by PIRSA and related SA government agencies to ensure compliance by Abalone lease and/or licence holders with legislation (Act, other Acts, Regulations and policies) and conditions of leases and/or licences. |
| 4. | Procedures and processes required for response to notifiable events (e.g. entanglements, high mortalities) in an efficient and timely manner are developed and implemented by all agencies concerned. |
| 5 | Crown Solicitor's Office engaged to recover costs of rehabilitation of former lease sites. |

Aquaculture Systems

| | Deliverables |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Accurate and efficient systems maintained and enhanced to provide for effective and efficient management and administration of the Abalone Sector, in accordance with the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> . |
| 2. | Provided for public transparency of use of the State's aquaculture resources (e.g. Public Register is available on the PIRSA website for all stakeholders, including the Abalone Sector, relevant government agencies and general public). |
| 3. | Safeguarded licence holder details by adhering to broader government guidelines (e.g. records management requirements for public service document standards and freedom of information requests). |
| 4. | Included in management of the PIIMS database was assessing reporting functionalities, liaison with the PIRSA IT group, testing updates to the database, reporting of functional issues and trouble-shooting with system users. |
| 5. | Included in management of the Public Register system was rollout of updates, reporting of functional issues to the PIRSA IT group, testing when updates occurred and trouble-shooting with system users both internally and externally. |
| 6. | Included in the management of ArcGIS was the rollout of updated software, appropriate training for use of the program, recognition, requests and testing for software fixes, liaison with the PIRSA spatial group, reporting spatial information and trouble-shooting with system users. |
| 7. | Management of the Microsoft Access Database included alignment of databases annually to reflect data requirements of Environmental Monitoring Reports. |
| 8. | Management and maintenance of an electronic lodgement system for the environmental monitoring program and production return data for the Abalone Sector. |
| 9. | Development of an electronic reporting system to retrieve data directly from PIIMS in regards to electronic Environmental Monitoring Reports. |
| 10. | Management of records management systems (e.g. Objective) included testing of various functionalities, liaison with the PIRSA IT group and requests for further updates to systems and software. |
| 11. | Ongoing maintenance and trouble-shooting of the electronic lodgement system (my PIRSA) for environmental monitoring program and production return data. |

Aquatic Animal Health

| | Deliverables |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Seventeen invertebrate (including mollusc) related mortality events were reported to PIRSA and investigated. Samples were submitted to the laboratory and tested to rule out disease. Subclinical <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. was detected in a wild abalone mortality event, but did not appear to be the cause of mortalities. Further details are below (Deliverable 2). <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. is a notifiable disease, which is endemic in South Australia. |
| 2. | High mortalities (sea cucumbers and abalone) were reported at Hardwicke Bay in August 2019. Based on high algae counts in water samples and histopathology results, the likely cause of the mortality was attributed to a harmful algae bloom (<i>Karenia mikimotoi</i>). Prior to this event, <i>Karenia mikimotoi</i> was monitored in the Boston Bay and Louth Bay areas. Oceanographers suggested the two blooms may be linked. Incidental subclinical <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. was detected in 7/20 abalone tested (PCR). |
| 3. | Completed the South Australian component for the Commonwealth project titled "Active surveillance of wild and farmed Abalone to establish stronger disease status baselines." This project aimed to demonstrate that wild and farmed Australian Abalone were free from withering syndrome, and to provide accurate knowledge of the disease status for AVG and <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. The project was funded by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources with substantial in-kind support and resources from PIRSA. |
| 4. | Maintained passive surveillance systems, including summarising relevant pathology reports from the State Vetlab, summarised fish kill and aquaculture mortality investigations to demonstrate South Australia's disease freedom for trade and market access purposes. |
| 5. | Provided advice to various government agencies, including the EPA and DIT, and organisations/companies, including Flinders Ports, Maritime Constructions and Kangaroo Island Plantation Timbers Ltd. to mitigate potential aquatic animal health risks posed by marine developments/activities. PIRSA also provided advice on biofouling and ballast water management to various companies and vessel operators. |
| 6. | Implementation of mitigation strategies in a related mollusc sector as identified in risk assessments. This was to facilitate effective disease management (disease prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies). |
| 7. | Completed the project "Improving early detection surveillance and emergency disease response to Ostreid herpesvirus using a hydrodynamic dispersion model" (Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC): 2018-090). In this project, we defined the disease management areas (biosecurity zones) in a related mollusc sector. |
| 8. | Commenced the project "Risk factors and management strategies associated with summer mortality in Australian abalone" (FRDC: 2019-147). In this project, our primary aim is to improve current understanding and management of risk factors associated with summer mortality in abalone. |
| 9. | Emergency Disease Response training and update of PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity SA. |
| 10. | Abalone livestock translocation request assessed. Meetings, advice and documentation provided to inter-state trade partners enquiring about the movement of mollusc aquaculture livestock. |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 11. | Attended meetings, reviewed documents, contributed to national policy developments and represented South Australia on the national Sub-Committee on Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH). |
| 12. | Chaired the National Aquatic Veterinary Medicines Working Group (under SCAAH), to facilitate progress of veterinary medicine permits with the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA), and progress of the national strategic plan for aquatic animal health (including objective 4: Improving availability of appropriate veterinary medicines). |
| 13. | Reviewed and updated the notice <i>Prohibition of Entry into and Movement within South Australia of Aquaculture Stock Notice 2020</i> under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> . |

DRAFT

Environmental Monitoring and Management

| | Deliverables |
|----|--|
| 1. | Developed, assessed and processed annual EMP reports for four Abalone licences. |
| 2. | Assessed periodic EMP results for two Abalone licences. |
| 3. | Prepared the Zoning In - South Australian Aquaculture Report 2017/18 and commenced drafting the 2018/19 report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia, including EMP summary information for each aquaculture sector. |
| 4. | Ongoing maintenance of reporting databases for environmental compliance matters, ecological interactions and marine debris. |
| 5. | Conducted bi-monthly meetings with the EPA to discuss and prioritise environmental issues and projects relating to the aquaculture industry. |
| 6. | Reviewed and provided a submission on the EPA's Aquatic Ecosystem Condition Report for the West Coast, in relation to aquaculture activities. |
| 7. | Contribution to, support for and implementation of, numerous research projects to assess environmental and economic impacts relating to or applicable to Abalone aquaculture, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRDC 2016-005: eSA marine |

Program Management and Administration

| | Deliverables |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Managed major service providers' contractual agreements, and any other contractual agreements with industry associations. |
| 2. | Project managed and administered external contractual services and agreements – including liaising with the PIRSA Accredited Purchasing Unit, preparing acquisition plans and selecting evaluation criteria, managing tender processes, drafting purchase recommendations and liaising with the Crown Solicitor's Office to develop contractual agreements. |
| 3. | Provided advice on procurement and invoicing requirements. |
| 4. | Met agreed timeframes on management and administration of external contractual services. |
| 5. | Ensured appropriate management of industry funds and services. |
| 6. | Coordinated and facilitated cost recovery processes and program agreements, including liaising with program providers, managers and financial services as required. |
| 7. | Met with industry on matters relating to cost recovery, lease and licence fee setting and related policy issues. |
| 8. | Developed, reviewed and implemented cost recovery processes and program agreements for the Abalone Sector for the 2020/21 financial year, which are transparent, evidence-based and developed in a consultative manner. |
| 9. | Ongoing review, development and documentation of the cost recovery process and procedures in line with Australian Government Cost Recovery Guidelines. |
| 10. | Provision of relevant, accurate and timely advice was provided to the Chief Executive of PIRSA and Minister so they were aware of current and emerging issues faced by PIRSA and the Abalone Sector. |
| 11. | Consulted with the Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Director Operations, PIRSA Fisheries Managers, and the Office of the Minister and other parties as needed. |
| 12. | Provision of information to inform responses and decisions in relation to public and industry concerns raised with the Chief Executive of PIRSA and the Minister. |
| 13. | Provided assistance to the Abalone Sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. |

Other Aquaculture Activities

| | Deliverables |
|----|--|
| 1. | 2017/18 annual economic report, incorporating Abalone Sector data, finalised and published on PIRSA website. |
| 2. | 2018/19 annual economic report, incorporating Abalone Sector data, drafted. |
| 3. | All aquaculture sector production data collated and entered, and forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling 2018/19 report. |

