

# **Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Mussel Sector**

2021-22



Government  
of South Australia  
Department of Primary  
Industries and Regions

# Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Mussel Sector 2021-22

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# 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.	Continued the review of the <i>Aquaculture (Zones-Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> to accommodate future expansion of aquaculture sectors, including the Mussel aquaculture sector. The Lower Eyre Peninsula Review Advisory Committee continued to work with industry sectors and other government agencies to make recommendations for the review. The Statement of Intent outlining proposed amendments to the zone policy, including consideration of the needs and expectations of the mussel Sector, was finalised and endorsed by the Committee. A draft <i>Aquaculture (Zones-Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2022</i> and supporting report was developed based on the Statement of Intent, and preparations commenced for public consultation on the draft policy.
3.	Finalised the <i>Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2022</i> , which was approved on 16 February 2022, and commenced implementation of the Policy.
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 into broader conservation policy development.
7.	<p>Provided advice to the Attorney General's Department (AGD) on a number of proposed developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port Spencer Grain Export Facility Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addendum</li> <li>• T-Ports Grain Handling and Export Facility development application</li> <li>• Hawsons Iron Ore development application</li> <li>• Whalers Way Orbital Launch Complex Environmental Impact Statement</li> <li>• SA Water Eyre Peninsula desalination plant development application</li> </ul>
8.	<p>Provided advice to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) on a number of proposed developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stuart's Landing boat ramp</li> <li>• Port Playford Export Facility port limits</li> <li>• Nepean Bay native oyster reef</li> <li>• Point Turton fireworks aquatic activity licence</li> </ul>
9.	<p>Provided advice to the Department for Energy and Mining (DEM) on a number of proposed developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port Bonython hydrogen plant</li> <li>• Port Augusta Export Facility offshore transshipment points</li> </ul>

10.	Continued to provide advice to AGD regarding a mandated referral to PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture for marine-based developments under the <i>Planning, Development and Infrastructure (General) Regulations 2017</i> to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture operators and aquaculture zones.
11.	Continued to provide advice to AGD regarding proposed amendments to the Planning and Design Code under the <i>Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016</i> to streamline the development assessment and approval process for future marine and land-based aquaculture developments.
12.	Finalised process to reappoint three ATAB members under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
13.	Finalised procedures of the ATAB and PIRSA internal guidelines for ATAB appointments and the public call process for lease tenure applications.
14.	Provided formal comment on the State Landscape Strategy in regard to promoting aquaculture development.
15.	Led the development and passage of the <i>Aquaculture (Tourism Development) Amendment Act 2021</i> to amend the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> to streamline the assessment and approval process for aquaculture related tourism developments.
16.	Provided input to the Blue Economy CRC Marine Spatial Planning project to mitigate potential impacts to the aquaculture industry from other users of the marine resource.
17.	Provided input and support to the Marine Bioproducts CRC to support sector growth.
18.	Continued process to draft and make variation regulations to amend the <i>Aquaculture Regulations 2016</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> .
19.	Continued to attend and provide input to the National Aquaculture Committee on behalf of South Australia.
20.	Meetings and advice to SA Water regarding a proposed desalination plant for the lower Eyre Peninsula and potential impacts to aquaculture.

# 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 Mussel Sector licences.						
2.	Completed database maintenance and updates as required.						
3.	Completed update to electronic Production Return and Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) 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 Mussel Sector.						
7.	<p>Processing of Mussel Sector applications (see table below).</p> <table> <tr> <th>Mussel: Application Type</th><th>Number</th></tr> <tr> <td>Lease renewal</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>Species addition</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	Mussel: Application Type	Number	Lease renewal	3	Species addition	1
Mussel: Application Type	Number						
Lease renewal	3						
Species addition	1						
8.	Processed annual production returns for 32 licences within the Mussel Sector. This included follow-up of unreturned or incorrectly completed production returns to ensure licence holders meet their obligations under the regulations, and to provide effective collation and analysis of information.						
9.	Processed requests for information from licence holders via front counter, phone or e-mail, including support for advice on online reporting systems.						
10.	Liaised with government stakeholders to verify the credentials of lease/licence holders for application processing as required.						
11.	Issued invoices relating to annual fees (including quarterly reminders) for 32 Mussel leases and licences.						
12.	Reconciled receipt of annual lease and licence fees and liaised with Shared Services SA as required.						
13.	Reviewed all lease and licence application forms and amended where required.						

# Legislation

	Deliverables
1.	Assessed and responded to freedom of information requests in relation to PIRSA's administration of the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
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 <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> (and other relevant legislation) to promote efficient and transparent government administration.
3.	Provided input into the finalisation of the draft <i>Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2020</i> for approval, in conjunction with Office of Parliamentary Council (OPC).
4.	Reviewed aquaculture related notices issued under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> and related Ministerial delegations for same.
5.	Updating of Ministerial delegations including sub-delegations under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
6.	Input into compliance / enforcement / litigation matters as required.
7.	Provided input into draft amendments to the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> through the <i>Aquaculture (Tourism Development) Amendment Bill 2021</i> to streamline the assessment and approval process for aquaculture related tourism developments.

# Compliance Operations

	Deliverables
1.	<p>Site inspections were undertaken by Fisheries Officers to ensure lease and licence holder compliance with the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i>, associated Acts and regulations, policies and specific lease and licence conditions. Surveillance activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports made to PIRSA subsequent to compliance inspections outline any compliance issues with a site and include photographs and site waypoints.</li> <li>• Follow up inspections as required for sites that have identified compliance issues.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul> <p>Fisheries Officers inspected sites at Louth Bay, Boston Bay and Proper Bay.</p>
2.	<p>Fisheries Officers received reports of Aquaculture related debris which had washed ashore across an area from Louth Bay to Point Bollingroke. The grower was prompt to follow up and retrieve mussel farming related debris.</p>
3.	<p>Fisheries Officers responded to enquiries from the general public relating to farmed mussel waste being used as berley.</p>
4.	<p>Fisheries Officers followed up a late EMP and Production Return with a grower.</p>
5.	<p>Communication and monitoring activities are undertaken by PIRSA and related SA government agencies to ensure compliance by Mussel lease and/or licence holders with legislation (Act, other Acts, Regulations and policies) and conditions of leases and/or licences.</p>
6.	<p>Procedures and processes required for response to notifiable events (e.g. entanglements, high mortalities) in an efficient and timely manner were developed and implemented by all agencies concerned.</p>



# Aquaculture Systems

	Deliverables
1.	Accurate and efficient systems maintained and enhanced to provide for effective and efficient management and administration of the Mussel 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 Mussel 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 troubleshooting 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 troubleshooting with system users both internally and externally.
6.	Included in the management of ArcGIS was the rollout of update 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 troubleshooting 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 environmental monitoring program and production return data for the Mussel 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 troubleshooting of the electronic lodgement system (my PIRSA) for environmental monitoring program and production return data.
12.	Maintain accurate and up to date information on the PIRSA Aquaculture website, including for the Mussel sector.

# Aquatic Animal Health

	Deliverables
1.	Two invertebrate (including mollusc) related mortality events were reported to PIRSA and were investigated. This included both aquaculture and wild fish kills. Samples were submitted to the laboratory and tested to rule out disease.
2.	Maintained passive surveillance systems, including summarise relevant pathology reports from the State Vetlab, summarise fish kill and aquaculture mortality investigations to demonstrate South Australia's disease freedom for trade and market access purposes.
4.	Provided advice to various government agencies, including the EPA, SA Water and DPTI, and organisations/companies, to mitigate potential aquatic animal health risks posed by marine developments/activities. The AAH team also provide advice to PIRSA Biosecurity as required in their management of biofouling and ballast water for various companies and vessel operators.
5.	Provided advice to other government agencies, including the EPA, SA Health, DEM, with regards to heavy metal levels of aquatic species (including mussels and other molluscs) in the Port Pirie area to support continued trade and market access for the broader seafood industry.
6.	Implementation of mitigation strategies in two related mollusc sectors as identified in risk assessments. This is to facilitate effective disease management (disease prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies).
7.	Conducted Emergency Disease Response training and updated PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity.
8.	Meetings attended, reviewed documents, contributed to national policy developments and represented South Australia on the national Sub-Committee on Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH).
9.	Advice to the Chief Veterinary Officer (Biosecurity) as required, including for mortality / disease cases, state based emergency response preparedness and for national committees (e.g. Animal Health Committee, National Biosecurity Committee).
10.	Attended Aquatic Veterinary Medicine Technical Advisory Group meetings (under SCAAH), to facilitate progress of veterinary medicine permits with the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA).
11.	Progressed the project "Improving the availability of safe and effective veterinary medicines for Australia's seafood industry (FRDC 2020-094)". In this project, one of our primary aims is coordinate a national effort to facilitate the progress of priority aquatic veterinary medicines in the seafood industry through to permitting or registration with the APVMA.
12.	Coordinated with SASQAP to ensure risks to the Mussel Sector were mitigated with veterinary medicine use in adjacent sectors.
13.	<p>Reviewed and updated a notice under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Notifiable Diseases</i></li> </ul> <p>Reviewed and updated a regulation under the <i>Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23A—Taking of bivalve filter-feeding molluscs in Port Adelaide River estuary</li> </ul>

# Environmental Monitoring and Management

	Deliverables
1.	Developed, processed and assessed results of annual Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) reports for 32 Mussel licences.
2.	Conducted Ecologically Sustainable Development risk assessments and management of EPA/DIT referral for 2 new mussel aquaculture leases/licences.
3.	Monitored periodic EMP under regulation 23 of the <i>Aquaculture Regulations 2016</i> and analysed results, including benthic video and associated reports, from Mussel Sector licences actively farmed during the preceding reporting year.
4.	Commenced drafting the 2022 South Australian Aquaculture Report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia in 2020/21, including EMP summary information for each aquaculture sector.
5.	Continued working with Industry to progress the draft sector-based strategy for the Mussel Sector, including ensuring alignment with State plans and strategies relating to aquaculture development.
6.	Ongoing maintenance of reporting databases for environmental compliance matters, ecological interactions and marine debris.
7.	Conducted regular meetings with the EPA to discuss and prioritise environmental issues and projects relating to the aquaculture industry.
8.	Liaised with Fisheries Officers for environmental issues related to the Mussel Sector, particularly in relation to site audits. This included a provision of technical input/mapping regarding environmental compliance and development and operation of aquaculture sites.
9.	Reviewed and provided comment on a number of guidelines/proposals that may impact the mussel sector (e.g. SA Productivity Commission Inquiry, PIRSA/DEW marine mammal interaction procedure, National Environment Science Program seal research proposal, Offshore windfarms development application, the Blue economy CRC for Marine Planning, EPA dredge guidelines, Port Lincoln desalination plant proposal).
10.	Development of specific licence conditions and macroalgae management areas to mitigate biosecurity risks associated with growing algae on existing licensed sites, including liaising with SARDI and Biosecurity SA and notification to all licence holders permitted to farm algae of the new management arrangements for algae aquaculture.

# 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 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, licence setting and related policy issues.
8.	Developed, reviewed and implemented cost recovery procedures and program agreements for the Mussel Sector for 2022-23 that are transparent, evidence-based and are 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 to the Chief Executive of PIRSA and the Minister so they were aware of current and emerging issues faced by PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Mussel Sector.
11.	Consulted with the Chief Executive, Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Director Operations, PIRSA Fisheries Managers, and the Office of the Minister and other parties as needed.
12.	Provided assistance to the Mussel Sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
13.	Finalised PIRSA internal guidelines for assessing fee waiver requests under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .

## Other Aquaculture Activities

	Deliverables
1.	All aquaculture sector production data collated, entered and information forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling the 2020/21 report.
2.	2020/21 annual economic report, incorporating Mussel Sector data, drafted, finalised and published on PIRSA website.
3.	Provided Executive Officer support for the South Australian Seafood Advisory Forum.