

PIRSA

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

2020-21



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 2020-21

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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 Abalone 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, 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.
3.	Conducted further consultation on the draft Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2020 and supporting Policy Report, finalised the Draft Policy and supporting Policy Report for approval, and sought concurrence from the Minister responsible for administering Specially Protected Areas for the Draft 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 the following proposed developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of the Whalers Way Orbital Launch Complex Environmental Impact Statement • Adequacy of the Cape Hardy Port Environmental Impact Statement addendum • Port Playford Export Facility development application • Port Spencer Grain Export Facility amendment to the Public Environmental Report
8.	Provided ongoing advice to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) 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.
9.	Provided ongoing advice to DIT on the implementation of the <i>Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016</i> and associated Regulations. Particularly on the application of the Planning and Design Code and how this relates to future marine-based aquaculture development outside of aquaculture zones, and to mitigate impacts from other forms of development on the aquaculture industry.
10.	Facilitated and provided support to an 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.

11.	Continued 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> .
12.	Continued review of current and future provisions for the rehabilitation of aquaculture leases.
13.	Undertook process to reappoint three ATAB members under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
14.	Provided formal comment on Regional Landscape Plans to Landscape Boards in regard to promoting aquaculture development.
15.	Drafted 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.
16.	Provided a submission to a Commonwealth inquiry by the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources into the Australian aquaculture sector.
17.	Provided a submission to the SA Environment, Resources and Development Committee Parliamentary inquiry into the role and functions of the Coast Protection Board in relation to aquaculture development applications.
18.	Provided input into policy development by the Department for Energy and Mining for Offshore Wind Farms within coastal waters to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture development.
19.	Continued to attend and provide input to the government agency National Aquaculture Committee on behalf of South Australia.
20.	Reviewed and provided a response to the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources on proposed amendments to the <i>Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006</i> to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture development.

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.	<p>Processing of Abalone Sector applications (see table below).</p> <table> <tr> <th>Abalone: Application Type</th><th>Number</th></tr> <tr> <td>Lease amalgamation</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence amalgamation</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>New lease</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>New licence</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Seedstock collection</td><td>1</td></tr> </table>	Abalone: Application Type	Number	Lease amalgamation	2	Licence amalgamation	2	New lease	1	New licence	1	Seedstock collection	1
Abalone: Application Type	Number												
Lease amalgamation	2												
Licence amalgamation	2												
New lease	1												
New licence	1												
Seedstock collection	1												
9.	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.												
10.	Processed requests for information from licence holders via front counter, phone or e-mail.												
11.	Liaised with government stakeholders to verify the credentials of lease/licence holders for application processing as required.												
12.	Issued invoices relating to annual fees (including quarterly reminders) and Abalone Sector applications for 4 Abalone licences and 6 Abalone leases.												
13.	Reconciled receipt of annual lease and licence fees, application fees and liaised with Shared Services SA as 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 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, in conjunction with Office of Parliamentary Council (OPC).
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.
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 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"> • Fisheries Officers inspected a site following reports the site boundaries were not marked appropriately. All four (4) Saint Andrew's Crosses were located off the correct location. The lease holder was contacted and arranged for the Saint Andrew's Crosses to be re-located accordingly. Fisheries Officers conducted follow up inspections of the site and confirmed the site had been returned to compliant status. • Debris from a site was reported to have drifted up Spencer Gulf. Fisheries Officers liaised with the lease holder to have the debris collected. • These inspections were carried out within a reasonable timeframe, with due consideration of the risks to other users of the waters or resource.
2.	No theft incidents were reported during 2020/21 from the abalone farms.
3.	The Regional Manager West was provided a tour of a farm premise and operations.
4.	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.
5.	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.
6.	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 troubleshooting 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 regard 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.

Aquatic Animal Health

	Deliverables
1.	Six invertebrate (including mollusc and crustaceans) related mortality events were reported to PIRSA and investigated. This included both aquaculture and wild fish kills. Samples were submitted to the laboratory and tested to rule out disease.
2.	Reviewed and commented on the final draft report 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, Water and the Environment with substantial in-kind support and resources from PIRSA.
3.	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.
4.	Provided advice to various government agencies, including the EPA and DIT, and organisations/companies, including 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.
5.	Facilitated the implementation of disease mitigation strategies as identified in risk assessments. This is to facilitate effective disease management (disease prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies), including for AVG.
6	Progressed 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 rule out disease as a cause and improve current understanding and management of risk factors associated with summer mortality in abalone.
7	Submitted an application for a project titled "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 to 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.
8.	Emergency Disease Response training and update of PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity.
9.	Abalone livestock translocation requests assessed. Meetings, advice and documentation provided to inter-state trade partners enquiring about the movement of mollusc aquaculture livestock.
10.	Attended meetings, reviewed documents, contributed to national policy developments and represented South Australia on the national Sub-Committee on Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH).
11.	Attended the Aquatic Veterinary Medicine Technical Advisory 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).

12.	PIRSA provided input into developing and reviewing AQUAPLAN 2021-2026, which is Australia's fourth national strategic plan for aquatic animal health. The plan outlines agreed industry and government priorities for enhancing Australia's management of aquatic animal health.
13.	Communications sent to all fish processors reminding them of the disease risks and current legislative restrictions for processing and distribution of bait and berley and controls on interstate movement of abalone.
14.	Reviewed and updated the notice <i>Prohibition of Entry into South Australia of Unprocessed Abalone (Haliotis spp.)</i> under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> and the notice <i>Temporary prohibition on the use of Abalone as bait or berley</i> under the <i>Fisheries Management Act 2007</i> .

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.	Commenced drafting the 2021 Zoning in - South Australian Aquaculture Report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia in 2019/20, including EMP summary information for each aquaculture sector.
4.	Ongoing maintenance of reporting databases for environmental compliance matters, ecological interactions and marine debris.
5.	Responded to industry requests in regard to applications and management of leases and licences
6.	Assessment and advice to the PIRSA Fisheries policy group on seedstock applications
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 navigation and environmental issues related to the Abalone Sector, particularly in relation to site audits and development and operational requirements of aquaculture sites.
9.	Reviewed approval procedure for in-water cleaning companies provided by Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (Federal Government).

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 2021-22 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 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.
14.	Finalised PIRSA internal guidelines for assessing fee waiver requests under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .

Other Aquaculture Activities

	Deliverables
1.	2018/19 annual economic report, incorporating Abalone Sector data, finalised and published on PIRSA website.
2.	All aquaculture sector production data collated, entered and forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling the 2019/20 report.
3.	2019/20 annual economic report, incorporating Abalone Sector data, drafted.
4.	Facilitated the establishment for, and provided executive officer support to, the South Australian Seafood Advisory Forum.
5.	Attended the Urrbrae Agricultural High School Show Day to promote aquaculture related careers.

