

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

2022-23



**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 2022-23

Information current as of 30 June 2023

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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	Released the Draft Aquaculture (Zones - Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2023 (the Draft Policy) and supporting Report for public consultation and referral to prescribed bodies and public authorities to accommodate future expansion of aquaculture sectors, including the Abalone aquaculture sector. Submissions received during consultation were considered, with amendments then made to the Draft Policy and supporting Report to finalise the Policy.
3	Provided correspondence, held a series of industry information sessions, and progressively reissued all aquaculture lease and licence certificates as part of implementation of the <i>Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2022</i> .
4	Commenced process to develop draft aquaculture tourism development regulations to assist implementation of the <i>Aquaculture (Tourism Development) Amendment Act 2021</i> , including key stakeholder consultation and risk assessment of current tourism developments.
5	<p>Provided comment to the Department for Trade and Investment (DTI) on a number of proposed developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA Water Eyre Peninsula desalination plant development application
6	<p>Provided comment to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) on a number of proposed developments/activities to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proposed seabed lease for a grain loading facility off Wallaroo ○ Proposed seabed lease for a deep-water port off Port Neil
7	Initiated process to reappoint ATAB members and seek two new ATAB members under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
8	Inducted members of the ATAB regarding the public call process for lease tenure applications.
9	Provided advice to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEE) on several proposed legislative reforms to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft national environmental standard for matters of national environmental significance ○ Draft national artificial reef guidelines
10	Provided comments to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) on the draft inputs on the State of the Environment Report, including updates to actions on 2018 recommendations.
11	Provided comments to Infrastructure SA on the Northern Water Supply project to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture.
12	Provided advice to DTI regarding proposed amendments to the Planning and Design Code under the Miscellaneous Technical Enhancement Code Amendment to streamline the development assessment and approval process for future marine and land-based aquaculture developments.
13	<p>Provided advice to the Department for Energy and Mining (DEM) on a number of proposed legislative reforms to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ South Australia's Green Paper on the Energy Transition ○ Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Generation Act Issues Paper and Draft Bill
14	Ongoing liaison and consultation with relevant government departments, prescribed bodies and relevant stakeholders in relation to zone policy development.
15	Provided advice to stakeholders/members of the public in relation to existing aquaculture zone allocations (i.e. area, biomass, etc.).
16	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.
17	Continued to provide 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.
18	Continued to provide input and support to the Marine Bioproducts CRC to support sector growth.
19	Continued review of current and future provisions for the rehabilitation of aquaculture leases.
20	Continued to attend and provide input to the National Aquaculture Committee on behalf of South Australia.

21	Meetings and advice to SA Water regarding a proposed desalination plant for the lower Eyre Peninsula and potential impacts to aquaculture.
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Aquaculture Leasing and Licensing

	Deliverables
	Activity 1 – Management of Leases and Licences
1.	Maintained the eBusiness environment, systems and procedures to support day to day administration of leasing and licensing activities, including industry consultation and liaison and reviewing of licence application forms and processes.
2.	Ongoing liaison with relevant government (e.g. Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT), Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Attorney-General's Department – Native Title) and non-government agencies (industry peak bodies).
3.	Implemented Broodstock and Seedstock Collection Permit regulations and processing of permit applications.
4.	Maintained internal lease and licence audit functions, including auditing procedures (checklists and manuals). Issued outstanding and annual invoices relating to licence and lease renewals, transfer's and surrenders.
5.	Maintenance undertaken relating to public liability insurance and indemnity for aquaculture leases, including requesting evidence of cover from lease holders when required.
6.	Processed annual production returns and environmental monitoring program reports. Followed up non-submission of reports to ensure licence holders met their obligations under the Act and ensure information is collated effectively for the development of economic reporting. 8 reports have been monitored.
7.	Generated annual invoices, collected associated fees and payments, followed up unpaid invoices for the 4 active Abalone licences.
8.	Processed requests from lease and licence holders who made such inquiries through the call centre, via facsimile or e-mail
	Activity 2 – Processing of lease and licence applications
9.	Follow up for one lease/licence renewal required and no other Abalone Leasing and Licensing applications were received during 2022-23.
10.	Ongoing liaison with licence holders.
11.	Internal risk assessment documents specific to each application were produced.
12.	Adhered to internal policies, guidelines and processes relating to applications.
13.	Case management administration is ongoing.

Legislation

	Deliverables
1.	Input into 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 Act to promote efficient and transparent government administration.
3.	Review of aquaculture related notices issued under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> and related Ministerial delegations for same.
4.	Updated sub-delegations of Ministerial powers and functions under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
5.	Input into compliance / enforcement / litigation matters as required.
6.	Provided input and assistance into the development of draft aquaculture tourism development regulations to assist implementation of the <i>Aquaculture (Tourism Development) Amendment Act 2021</i> .
7.	Input into and review of development of draft consultation Biosecurity Bill to consider impacts on aquaculture
8.	Review of broader government referred Cabinet submissions for aquaculture legislative and administrative impacts

Compliance Operations

Deliverables
<p>A lease / licence holder was notified of the outcomes of his site being inspected, including non-compliance with site and navigational marking requirements. In due course, the lease / licence holder notified PIRSA that the non-compliance had been rectified, which was confirmed via a re-inspection by Fisheries Officers.</p>
<p>A lease / licence holder provided Fisheries Officers with a progress update of his site which was in the early stages of development and progression toward farming. This update was appreciated by local Fisheries Officers.</p>
<p>A land-based farm was inspected by Fisheries Officers, with the respective Manager providing an informative update of the on-site farming processes. The Fisheries Officers conducted an audit of the site and confirmed the stock register was up to date.</p>

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 updates such as those related to the implementation of the <i>Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2022</i> , 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.	Maintenance of the 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 testing, 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 Abalone Sector.

Aquatic Animal Health

	Deliverables
1.	Five invertebrate (including mollusc) mortality events were reported to PIRSA and investigated. Mortality investigations included both aquaculture and wild fish kills. Samples were submitted to the laboratory and tested to rule out disease and harmful algae.
2.	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.
3.	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 Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG). Also involved advice and assistance to Biosecurity and industry with regard to AVG detection in Victoria to manage risks to South Australia.
4.	Published a peer reviewed journal article in Aquaculture entitled: "Risk factors for summer mortality in greenlip abalone (<i>Haliotis laevis</i>) and hybrid abalone (<i>H. laevis</i> × <i>Haliotis rubra</i>): A case-control study". This publication used data from FRDC 2019-147 project "Risk factors and management strategies associated with summer mortality in Australian abalone".
5.	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.
6.	Emergency Disease Response training and update of PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity.
7.	Abalone livestock translocation requests assessed. Presentations, meetings, advice and documentation provided to inter-state trade partners enquiring about the movement of mollusc aquaculture livestock (for example presented at national Australian Abalone Growers Association meeting and also in a national workshop run by Seafood Industry Australia).
8.	Attended meetings, 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 the Aquatic Veterinary Medicines Working Group (under SCAAH), to facilitate progress of veterinary medicine permits with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).
11.	<p>Reviewed and updated a notice under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Notifiable Diseases</i> <p>Reviewed and progressed a new notice under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prohibition on the Use of Abalone as Bait or Berley.</i>

12.	Reviewed PIRSA Fish Kill response manual with Biosecurity team and provided Fish Kill investigation training to PIRSA compliance officers.
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Environmental Monitoring and Management

	Deliverables
1.	Developed, assessed and processed annual EMP reports for four Abalone licences.
2.	Finalised the 2023 South Australian Aquaculture Report which contained a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia in 2021/22, including EMP summary information for the abalone aquaculture sector.
3.	Commenced drafting the 2024 South Australian Aquaculture Report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia in 2022/23, 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 and liaised with industry in regard to applications and management of leases and licences, including extensive discussions on new pilot leases in lower Spencer Gulf and Ceduna, and surrender of existing leases.
7.	Assessment and advice to the PIRSA Fisheries policy group on a seedstock application.
8.	Conducted regular meetings with the EPA to discuss and prioritise environmental issues and projects relating to the aquaculture industry.
9.	Liaised with Fisheries Officers for environmental issues related to the Abalone 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.
10.	Reviewed a number of guidelines/proposals/legislation that may impact the Abalone Sector (e.g. Port Lincoln Desalination Plant, PIRSA/DEW marine mammal interaction procedure, Agrifutures Plastic waste project, National FRDC welfare project, National Environmental Standard for Matters of National Environmental Significance, Native Vegetation Act Amendments).
11.	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 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.	Developed, reviewed and implemented cost recovery processes and program agreements for the Abalone Sector for the 2022-23 financial year, which are transparent, evidence-based and developed in a consultative manner.
8.	Ongoing review, development and documentation of the cost recovery process and procedures in line with Australian Government Cost Recovery Guidelines.
9.	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 and the Abalone Sector.
10.	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.
11.	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.
12.	Provided administrative support to the Independent Cost Recovery Review Panel, e.g., mail outs to all licence/lease holders, meeting coordination, travel bookings and other adhoc administration support during the review.

Other Aquaculture Activities

	Deliverables
1.	All aquaculture sector production data collated, entered and forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling the 2021/22 report.
2.	2021/22 annual economic report, incorporating Abalone Sector data, drafted, finalised and published on PIRSA website.
3.	Attended and presented at a number of forums and conferences, including the World Aquaculture Conference in Darwin (June 2023) and Sixth FRDC Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity in Cairns (July 2023) on aquaculture policy and planning, aquatic animal health or environmental matters.
4.	Provided lectures to Flinders University and University of Adelaide students on aquaculture policy and aquatic animal health.