

ADVICE TO: PIRSA FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (PROF. GAVIN BEGG – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)

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SUBJECT: SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GIANT CRAB FISHERY – STANDARDISED COMMERCIAL CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT – 2025/26 SEASON

DATE: 18 AUGUST 2026

KEY ISSUES

- The management policy for the Giant Crab Fishery (GCF) identifies the 3-year average standardised Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) of legal-size Giant Crab as the primary performance indicator (PI) for both the Southern Zone and Northern Zone.
- In the Northern Zone (NZ) in 2025/26, the 3-year average standardised CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab was **1.88 kg/potlift**. The 2025/26 estimate has increased 2% since 2024/25 (1.84 kg/potlift) and is 11% higher than the lowest estimate on record in 2023/24 (1.69 kg/potlift).
- In the Southern Zone (SZ) in 2025/26, the 3-year average standardised CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab was **1.70 kg/potlift**. The 2025/26 estimate has decreased 4% since 2024/25 (1.77 kg/potlift) and is 9% higher than the lowest estimate on record in 2021/22 (1.56 kg/potlift).

BACKGROUND

The Giant Crab Fishery (GCF) uses steel framed pots to target Giant Crabs (*Pseudocarcinus gigas*) in waters at the edge of the continental shelf in South Australia in a fishing season between 1 October and 31 May in the following year.

The management policy (PIRSA 2024) identifies 3-year average standardised Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) of legal-size Giant Crab as the primary performance indicator (PI). The PI is applied separately for the Northern Zone and Southern Zone and is calculated from targeted catch and effort information.

This Advice Note reports the estimates of 3-year average standardised commercial CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab for the 2025/26 season in the Northern Zone and Southern Zone.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

Standardised annual estimates of commercial CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab were calculated for each zone using the yearly season effects (or regression coefficients) estimated from a lognormal regression model that accounted for month, licence, Marine Fishing Area and depth. The standardised index was then scaled relative to the CPUE value in 2000/01. The 3-year average

standardised CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab was then calculated as the moving average from the current and previous two fishing seasons.

In the Northern Zone in 2025/26, the 3-year average standardised CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab was **1.88 kg/potlift**. The 2025/26 estimate is (1) 2% higher than 2024/25 (1.84 kg/potlift) and (2) 11% higher than the lowest estimate on record in 2023/24 (1.69 kg/potlift) (Figure 1).

In the Southern Zone in 2025/26, the 3-year average standardised CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab was **1.70 kg/potlift**. The 2025/26 estimate is (1) 4% lower than 2024/25 (1.77 kg/potlift) and (2) 9% higher than the lowest estimate on record in 2021/22 (1.56 kg/potlift) (Figure 2).

The next annual stock status report for the GCF is due to be provided by SARDI to PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture by 28 February 2027.



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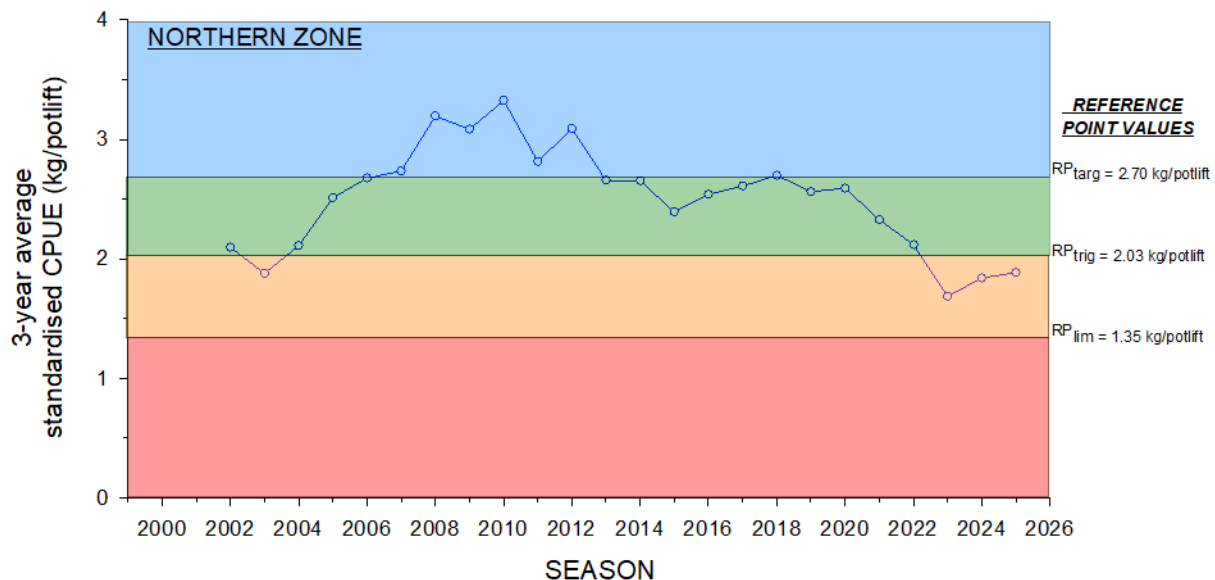


Figure 1. Three-year average standardised commercial CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab caught in the Northern Zone of the GCF between 2000 and 2025. Values represent a 3-year moving average. Target Reference Point = RP_{targ} ; Trigger Reference Point = RP_{trig} ; Limit Reference Point = RP_{lim} . Fishing season refers to the year the fishing season started e.g., 2025 = 2025/26 fishing season.

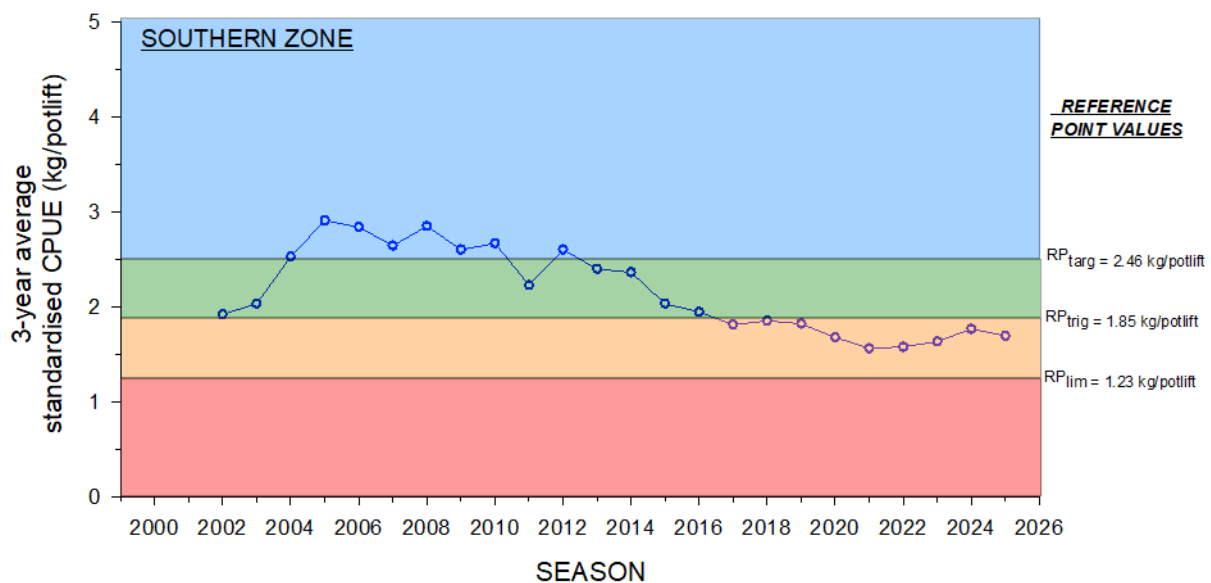


Figure 2. Three-year average standardised commercial CPUE of legal-size Giant Crab caught in the Southern Zone of the GCF between 2000 and 2025. Values represent a 3-year moving average. Target Reference Point = RP_{targ} ; Trigger Reference Point = RP_{trig} ; Limit Reference Point = RP_{lim} . Fishing season refers to the year the fishing season started e.g., 2025 = 2025/26 fishing season.

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REFERENCES

PIRSA (2024). Policy for the Management of the South Australian Commercial Giant Crab Fishery. Primary Industries and Regions South Australia. Adelaide, Australia.