

PIRSA

Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Finfish Sector

2020-21



Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries
and Regions

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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 subtidal Finfish 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 consideration of the needs and expectations of the Finfish Sector.
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.	Completed a targeted review of the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Eastern Spencer Gulf) Policy 2005</i> , including a two month consultation period, to include algae as a permitted farming species within the three aquaculture zones located at Hardwicke Bay to provide diversification of aquaculture operations within the area.
5.	Ongoing liaison and consultation with relevant government departments, prescribed bodies and relevant stakeholders in relation to zone policy development.
6.	Provided advice to stakeholders/members of the public in relation to existing aquaculture zone allocations (i.e., area, biomass, etc.).
7.	Provided input to a range of State and Commonwealth Government environmental and conservation initiatives, to ensure aquaculture zone development objectives and aspirations were adequately considered and factored into broader conservation policy development.
8.	<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
9.	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.
10.	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.

11.	Undertook process to reappoint three ATAB members under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
12.	Provided formal comment on Regional Landscape Plans to Landscape Boards in regard to promoting aquaculture development.
13.	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.
14.	Ongoing liaison and consultation with DIT to streamline the process for aquaculture lease holders to surrender/remove associated lands title leases.
15.	Provided a submission to a Commonwealth inquiry by the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources into the Australian aquaculture sector.
16.	Facilitated and provided support to an ATAB meeting for consideration of lease tenure applications for the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> and <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Tumby Bay) Policy 2015</i> public call. Draft internal procedures for ATAB meetings to assess applications for lease tenure were also tabled.
17.	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> .
18.	Continued review of current and future provisions for the rehabilitation of aquaculture leases.
19.	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.
20.	Provided ongoing administrative information to Clean Seas Seafoods Limited to assist with their Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certification process.
21.	Amended the Louth Bay aquaculture zone in the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> via Gazette to temporarily increase the biomass for farming of aquatic animals in a manner that involves regular feeding.
22.	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.
23.	Continued to attend and provide input to the government agency National Aquaculture Committee on behalf of South Australia.
24.	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 Finfish licences.								
2.	Completed database maintenance and updates as required.								
3.	Completed testing and amending electronic Production Return and Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) reporting.								
4.	Review of 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 Finfish Sector.								
7.	Conducted audits of internal processes and functions including application checklists.								
8.	Records management of leasing and licensing documentation.								
9.	<p>Processing of Finfish applications (see table below).</p> <table> <tr> <th>Finfish: Application Type</th><th>Number</th></tr> <tr> <td>Lease renewal</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence variation</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lease movement*</td><td>1</td></tr> </table> <p>*Environmental assessment and interagency referral conducted</p>	Finfish: Application Type	Number	Lease renewal	5	Licence variation	2	Lease movement*	1
Finfish: Application Type	Number								
Lease renewal	5								
Licence variation	2								
Lease movement*	1								
10.	Processed annual production returns from the Finfish Sector. This included follow-up on unreturned production returns to ensure licence holders meet their obligations under the regulations, collation and analysis of information.								
11.	Processed requests for information from licence holders via front counter, phone or e-mail.								
12.	Liaised with government stakeholders to verify the credentials of lease/licence holders for application processing as required.								
13.	Issued invoices relating to annual fees (including quarterly reminders), licence renewals, transfers and/or surrenders for 22 Finfish licences.								
14.	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 Act 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 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 surveillance inspections were undertaken by Fisheries Officers to ensure lease and licence holders comply 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.
2.	<p>Fisheries Officers monitored sites in Boston Bay for compliance with site marking requirements. Sites maintained at a high overall standard.</p> <p>A member of the public reported a large section of black piping had been deposited onshore near Red Banks. Clean Seas was aware and removed the piping as promptly as possible.</p>
3.	<p>Fisheries Officers received feedback from members of the public alleging escaped farmed yellowtail kingfish and conducted follow up investigations.</p>
4.	<p>Communication and monitoring activities are undertaken by PIRSA and related SA government agencies to ensure compliance by Finfish lease and/or licence holders with legislation (Act, other Acts, Regulations and policies) and conditions of leases and/or licences.</p>
5.	<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 Finfish 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 Finfish 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 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 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 environmental monitoring program and production return data for the Finfish 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 trouble-shooting of the electronic lodgement system (my PIRSA) for environmental monitoring program and production return data.

Aquatic Animal Health

	Deliverables
1.	Nine finfish 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. No significant or notifiable diseases were detected.
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.	Administered the regulation and compliance for off-label veterinary medicine use. Assessed and processed 22 veterinary prescriptions for the finfish sector to support Ministerial approvals for off label use of veterinary medicines to maintain fish health and welfare. Liaised with industry veterinarian, EPA, adjacent mussel industry and other government departments during assessment.
4.	Assisted with progress of permit and registration for veterinary medicines with APVMA through meetings, workshops and communications with APVMA, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE), Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), National Aquaculture Council, aquaculture industry sectors, EPA, PIRSA rural chemicals, veterinarians and researchers.
5.	Assessment and advice to the PIRSA Fisheries Management Group on Finfish stock release applications to ensure the risks of introduction and spread of disease in State waters are minimised.
6.	Finalised and submitted the final report for the project "Development of a national sector-specific biosecurity plan guideline and template for the sea-cage finfish (non-salmonid) industry of Australia (DAWE/FRDC: 2019-088)".
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 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.	Conducted Emergency Disease Response training and updated PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity.
9.	Provided advice and reviewed documentation in relation to disease risks posed by aquatic pests (including a compliance case), biofouling and ballast water management.
10.	Provided advice to other government agencies, including the EPA, SA Health and DEM, with regards to heavy metal levels of aquatic species (including mussels and other molluscs) in the Port Pirie area to support trade and market access for industry.
11.	Communications sent to all fish processors reminding them of the disease risks and current legislative restrictions for processing and distribution of bait and berley, including the duty to prevent the introduction and spread of notifiable diseases.

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.	Attended meetings, reviewed documents, contributed to national policy developments and represented South Australia on the national Sub-Committee on Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH).
14.	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).

Environmental Monitoring and Management

	Deliverables
1.	Developed, assessed and processed annual EMP reports for 17 Finfish licences.
2.	Conducted Ecologically Sustainable Development risk assessments and management of EPA referral for 1 Finfish movement application and two condition variation applications (biomass variation).
3.	Commenced drafting the 2021 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.	Implemented the 2019/20 to 2023/24 (4-year) Regional Environmental Monitoring Program for the Finfish Sector in Lower Spencer Gulf (in conjunction with EPA, SARDI and industry) that included specific research to monitor impacts of aquaculture nutrients on seagrass.
5.	Implementation of a research project (FRDC 2018-186) to assess impacts of Finfish aquaculture on seagrasses in Fitzgerald Bay as part of the ongoing environmental monitoring program for Finfish aquaculture expansion in the Fitzgerald Bay aquaculture zone.
6.	Discussion with the EPA to review and amend EMP requirements as requested by industry, leading to an improved and more efficient monitoring program for industry.
7.	Reviewed and implemented periodic EMPs for Finfish licences in the Fitzgerald Bay and Louth Bay aquaculture zones in consultation with the Finfish Sector and the EPA.
8.	Ongoing assessment of periodic EMPs for Arno Bay, Louth and Boston Bay aquaculture zones.
9.	Responded to environmental issues related to the Finfish Sector, including pollution, escapes of aquaculture stock and interactions between marine mammals and aquaculture infrastructure.
10.	Continued to respond to stakeholder submissions in relation to Finfish lease/licence applications (e.g., new sites and movement of sites in Fitzgerald Bay), including seeking SARDI advice and modelling regarding environmental concerns. This also included PIRSA meeting with Whyalla City Council, local shack owners and Conservation Council SA. Multiple Ministerial and Divisional communications (9) with concerned stakeholders in regard to finfish aquaculture in Fitzgerald Bay.
11.	Ongoing maintenance of reporting databases for environmental compliance matters, escapes of stock, interactions and marine debris.
12.	Conducted regular meetings with the EPA to discuss and prioritise environmental issues and projects relating to the aquaculture industry.
13.	Liaised with Fisheries Officers for environmental issues related to the Finfish Sector, particularly in relation to marine debris, escape and site audits. This included provision of technical input regarding environmental compliance and development and operation of aquaculture sites.
14.	Contribution to, support for and implementation of, various research projects to assess environmental impacts relating to or applicable to Finfish aquaculture, including:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FRDC 2018-186: Assessing the capacity for sustainable finfish aquaculture in the vicinity of seagrasses
15.	Focussed on meeting the Finfish Sector's needs in relation to company strategies for farming and investigating opportunities for expansion. This included discussion with SARDI, EPA and industry and subsequent amendment of the Louth Bay biomass limits at a zone and site level.
16.	Provided advice on the EPBC change to the listing of Australian Sea Lion from 'Vulnerable' to 'Endangered'.
17.	Reviewed approval procedure for in-water cleaning companies provided by Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

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 procedures and program agreements for the Finfish Sector for 2021-22 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 was provided to the Chief Executive of PIRSA and Minister, so they were aware of current and emerging issues faced by PIRSA and the Finfish 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 Finfish 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 Finfish Sector data, finalised and published on PIRSA website.
2.	All aquaculture sector production data collated and entered and forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling 2019/20 report.
3.	2019/20 annual economic report, incorporating Finfish Sector data, drafted.
4.	Attended the Urrbrae Agricultural High School Show Day to promote aquaculture related careers.
5.	Facilitated the establishment for, and provided executive officer support to, the South Australian Seafood Advisory Forum.

