December 2015

To: Licence holders in the Gulf St Vincent commercial Blue Crab Fishery

NOTICE TO FISHERS:
BLUE CRAB FISHERY TEMPORARY FISHING TRIAL FOR THE 2015/16 SEASON

I write to inform you of temporary trial management changes that have been implemented for the commercial Blue Crab Fishery in Gulf St Vincent for the 2015/16 season.

Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) Fisheries and Aquaculture have received a proposal from the South Australian Blue Crab Pot Fishers Association (SABCPFA) Inc. to undertake a temporary fishing trial during the annual commercial seasonal closure period (1 November 2015 to 15 January 2016) in Gulf St Vincent.

The temporary fishing trial has been supported for the 2015/16 season under the following conditions which are implemented through the attached notice issued under section 115 of the Fisheries Management Act 2007:

- All commercial pot fishery licence holders are given access from 15 December 2015 to 15 January 2016, excluding weekends and public holidays
- The existing spatial closure arrangements for the commercial sector in the metropolitan area and Outer Harbor will be maintained
- No commercial fishing will be permitted in all inshore waters from St Kilda to Stansbury, from the high water mark, out to 2 nautical miles
- No more than 10% of a licence holders annual quota can be taken during this period
- Collection and reporting using the current research framework for the fishery be continued, with additional finer spatial scale information including latitude and longitude of catch and effort information incorporated into the data collection
- Additional economic information on the value of catch needs to be compiled and reported on by SABCPFA at the end of the trial to enable assessment of the economic benefits

These temporary trial arrangements for the 2015/16 season are proposed to strike a balance between commercial and recreational access to the Blue Swimmer Crab resource, and ensure adequate catch data is collected on any potential risks posed to spawning crabs. The proposal will allow commercial fishers to access the pre-Christmas and emerging live market for Blue Swimmer Crabs and to evaluate the economic benefits of the trial. Note that a thorough evaluation of the trial will take place before any decision is taken on future amendment of the existing closure.

Please find attached the exemption notice and a map of the closure areas. If you have any queries in relation to the commercial Blue Crab Fishery please contact Keith Rowling, Program Leader, Community Based Fisheries on (08) 8226 1745

Yours sincerely

Sean Sloan
DIRECTOR, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE POLICY