



18 March 2020

FISHERIES AND
AQUACULTURE
Level 14
25 Grenfell Street
Adelaide SA 5000
GPO Box 1625
Adelaide SA 5001
DX 210
Tel (08) 8226 0900
www.pir.sa.gov.au

NOTICE TO NORTHERN ZONE ROCK LOBSTER FISHERY LICENCE HOLDERS

Extending the 2020 fishing season in the Inner Region

Dear licence holder

PIRSA has been actively working with industry through the Rock Lobster Fishery Management Advisory Committee (RLFMAC) to consider mitigation actions to assist licence holders overcome the impacts of the market disruption related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

I write to advise that, as delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, on the advice and recommendation of the RLFMAC, I have made a determination to vary the fishing closure normally in place between 1800 hours on 31 May 2020 and 1200 hours 1 November 2020 under the *Fisheries Management (Rock Lobster Fisheries) Regulations 2017*. This determination removes the normal fishing closure in 2020 and allows you to fish during this time using your 2019/20 quota entitlements up to the start of the next fishing season on 1 November 2020.

The determination to remove the winter fishing closure in 2020 has been made considering:

1. The objectives of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*
2. The recommendation of the RLFMAC that the fishing season in the Inner Region be extended as a temporary arrangement to assist licence holders overcome the impacts of the current Coronavirus related market disruption
3. Industry feedback on the temporary arrangements

The RLFMAC met on 27 February 2020 and recommended temporary management arrangements to assist fishers through the market disruption, including allowing commercial fishing during the normal winter fishing closure in the Northern Zone Inner Region in 2020. The extension will allow fishers additional time to use their uncaught quota entitlements if markets are re-established. The South Australian Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishermen's Association (SANZRLFA) support this recommendation. The RLFMAC recommendation was made in consideration of scientific advice from SARDI regarding the sustainability of extending the fishing season in the Inner Region in 2020. This Advice Note is attached for your information.

The RLFMAC will review these arrangements in early 2021 and may provide a recommendation for continuation of those arrangements in 2021, if required.

As you will be aware, provisions allowing for a 12-month fishing season in the Outer Region of the Northern Zone were implemented in May 2016. These arrangements were based on the scientific advice after a two-year targeted research project in the Northern Zone and recommendations from the RLFMAC. The results from this research are available from the SARDI website at https://pir.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/274119/A2769465.pdf.

At that time the regulations were implemented for the Outer Region, a provision was also introduced to allow for the Minister to make a determination to vary the length of the fishing closure in the Inner Region of the commercial fishery as a precautionary and sustainable management tool.

Marine Scalefish Access

The requirements for Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery licence holders to fish under “owner operator” arrangements between 1800 hours on 31 May and 1200 hours on 1 November included in licence condition 11741 and 11763 remain unchanged. Decisions regarding the use of replacement masters during this period are guided by the Replacement Masters Guidelines that has previously been sent to you.

Giant Crab Access

The winter fishing closure for Giant Crab will remain in place and any Giant Crab incidentally caught in rock lobster pots in the period from 1800 hours on 31 May to 1200 hours on 1 November must be released as soon as practicable.

Rollover of uncaught quota entitlements

PIRSA is also actively pursuing amendment to the *Fisheries Management (Rock Lobster Fisheries) Regulations 2017* to allow rollover of uncaught quota entitlements from the 2019/20 fishing season to the 2020/21 and 2021/22 fishing seasons as recommended by the RLFMAC. Further information on this matter will be provided to licence holders as soon as possible.

Please contact Dr Annabel Jones, Program Leader-Commercial Fisheries, on telephone (08) 8429 0165 or email Annabel.jones@sa.gov.au if you require any further information regarding the management of the fishery or telephone 8204 1370 for any licensing enquiries.

Yours sincerely



Prof Gavin Begg
A/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

As delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development