

PIRSA

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

2019-20



Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries
and Regions

Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Mussel Sector 2019-20

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Resource Planning

| | Deliverables |
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| 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. | Commenced the review of the <i>Aquaculture (Zones-Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> to accommodate future expansion of aquaculture sectors, including the subtidal Mussel Sector. Established the Lower Eyre Peninsula Review Advisory Committee to make recommendations for the review of the <i>Aquaculture (Zones-Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> , 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 Mussel Sector, as presented to the Committee in April 2020. |
| 3. | Finalised the Draft Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2020 and supporting Policy Report for approval, and commenced implementation. The policy development process included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two month public consultation period • Two public briefings (Adelaide and Port Lincoln) to assist submissions • Three aquaculture sector briefings, including with the Mussel Sector, to assist submissions • Review of submissions and amendments to the Draft Policy and Policy Report |
| 4. | Ongoing liaison and consultation with relevant government departments, prescribed bodies and relevant stakeholders in relation to zone policy development. |
| 5. | Provided advice to stakeholders/members of the public in relation to existing aquaculture zone allocations (i.e. area, biomass, etc). |
| 6. | 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 in to broader conservation policy development. |
| 7. | Provided advice to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) on proposed port facilities in Spencer Gulf and Kangaroo Island. |
| 8. | Provided formal response to DIT regarding a mandated referral to PIRSA for aquaculture developments outside of aquaculture zones and land-based aquaculture developments under the proposed Phase 2 of the Planning and Design Code. The referral is an important mechanism for PIRSA to minimise the regulatory burden on the aquaculture industry created by the planning approvals process. |
| 9. | Reviewed and provided a submission to DIT on the draft Phase 2 and 3 of the Planning and Design Code, which replaces all development plans for the State, to streamline development approvals for future marine-based aquaculture development outside of aquaculture zones, as well as land-based aquaculture development, and to mitigate impacts from other forms of development on the aquaculture industry. |
| 10. | Held an aquaculture development scenario testing workshop with DIT, Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Environment Protection Authority (EPA), council planners, and aquaculture industry representatives to assist industry understand DIT's new planning system and to provide feedback. |

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| 11. | Provided input to DIT's review of referral fees under the <i>Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016</i> , in regard to PIRSA's provision of advice to the relevant planning authority for aquaculture development applications. |
| 12. | Reviewed and provided a response to the EPA on their Dredge Guidelines to mitigate potential impacts to the aquaculture industry. |
| 13. | Undertook a two month public call for lease tenure applications within the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2013</i> , and <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Tumby Bay) Policy 2015</i> to be submitted to the Aquaculture Tenure Allocation Board (ATAB) for consideration, which included lease tenure for the Mussel Sector. |
| 14. | 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. |
| 15. | Commenced 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> . |
| 16. | Commenced review of current and future provisions for the rehabilitation of aquaculture leases. |
| 17. | Facilitated the preparation of an industry led application to address workplace wellness for the seafood sector in South Australia. |
| 18. | Ongoing liaison and consultation with DIT to streamline the process for aquaculture lease holders to surrender/remove associated lands title leases. |
| 19. | Amended the <i>Aquaculture (Zones – Eastern Spencer Gulf) Policy 2005</i> via Gazette notice to designate the Point Pearce (east) and Point Pearce (west) intertidal aquaculture zones as non-public call areas, to facilitate the submission of applications to ATAB at any time. |

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 Mussel licences. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | Completed database maintenance and updates as required. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | Completed update to electronic Production Return and Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) reporting including design and testing of each new report. | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | Reviewed 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 Mussel Sector. | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | Conducted audits of internal processes and functions including application checklists. | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | Records management of leasing and licensing documentation. | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | <p>Processing of Mussel applications (see table below).</p> <table> <tr> <th>Mussel: Application Type</th><th>Number</th></tr> <tr> <td>Lease renewal</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence variation*</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence transfer</td><td>1</td></tr> </table> | Mussel: Application Type | Number | Lease renewal | 3 | Licence variation* | 23 | Licence transfer | 1 |
| Mussel: Application Type | Number | | | | | | | | |
| Lease renewal | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Licence variation* | 23 | | | | | | | | |
| Licence transfer | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 10. | Processed annual production returns from the Mussel 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. | Finalised PIRSA internal guidelines for determining lease performance criteria and terms for aquaculture leases and licences, including determination of terms for applications to extend the term of aquaculture productions leases up to 30 years. | | | | | | | | |
| 12. | Processed requests for information from licence holders via front counter, phone or e-mail. | | | | | | | | |
| 13. | Liaised with government stakeholders to verify the credentials of lease/licence holders for application processing as required. | | | | | | | | |
| 14. | Issued invoices relating to annual fees (including quarterly reminders), licence renewals, transfers and/or surrenders for 32 Mussel licences. | | | | | | | | |
| 15. | Reconciled receipt of annual lease and licence fees, application fees and liaised with Shared Services SA as required. | | | | | | | | |
| 16. | Established a process for assessing and considering tourism based infrastructure on aquaculture leases, in consultation with DIT and the EPA. | | | | | | | | |

Legislation

| | Deliverables |
|----|---|
| 1. | Finalisation of proposed amendments to the Act to enable the extension of the term of aquaculture production leases from 20 to 30 years, and to enhance notification requirements to persons with a registered interest on leases prior to a lease being cancelled. These Act amendments were included in amendments made under the Treasurer's Statutes Amendment and Repeal (Simplify) Act 2019. Input into implementation matters. |
| 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, including a review of over 300 lease and licence conditions with the Office of Parliamentary Council (OPC) and the Crown Solicitor's Office to ensure these remain modern and reflective of the aquaculture industry's practice. |
| 4. | Reviewed 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. |

Compliance Operations

| | Deliverables |
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| 1. | <p>Site inspections were undertaken by Fisheries Officers to ensure lease and licence holder compliance with the Act, associated Acts, and Regulations, policies and specific lease and licence conditions. Surveillance activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection of all Boston Bay and Louth Bay sites were undertaken by Fisheries Officers, following advance notice of the inspections being provided to growers. Inspections focussed mainly on navigational marking requirements. All sites were deemed to be in good working conditions and marked appropriately. • 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>A vessel suspected of carrying <i>Perna viridis</i> (AGM) was detected in Western Australia (WA). The vessel was treated prior to departing for South Australia (SA). Upon arrival in SA, an inspection of the vessel was conducted by a dive team which confirmed mussels the vessel had been carrying whilst in WA had been destroyed by the treatment.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Communication and monitoring activities are undertaken by PIRSA and related SA government agencies to ensure compliance by Mussel lease and/or licence holders with legislation (Act, other Acts, Regulations and policies) and conditions of leases and/or licences.</p> |
| 4. | <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 |
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| 1. | Accurate and efficient systems maintained and enhanced to provide for effective and efficient management and administration of the Mussel Sector, in accordance with the Act. |
| 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 Mussel 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 Mussel Sector. |
| 9. | Development of an electronic reporting system to retrieve data directly from PIIMS in regards 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 |
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| 1. | Seventeen invertebrate (including mollusc) related mortality events were reported to PIRSA and were investigated. Samples were submitted to the laboratory and tested to rule out disease. Subclinical <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. was detected in a wild abalone mortality event, but did not appear to be the cause of mortalities. Further details are below (Deliverable 2). <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. is a notifiable disease, which is endemic in South Australia. |
| 2. | High mortalities (sea cucumbers and abalone) were reported and investigated at Hardwicke Bay in August 2019. Based on high algae counts in water samples and histopathology results, the likely cause of the mortality was attributed to a harmful algae bloom (<i>Karenia mikimotoi</i>). Prior to this event, <i>Karenia mikimotoi</i> was monitored in the Boston Bay and Louth Bay area. Oceanographers suggested the two blooms may be linked. Incidental subclinical <i>Perkinsus</i> spp. was detected in 7/20 abalone tested (PCR). |
| 3. | Maintained passive surveillance systems, including summarise relevant pathology reports from the State Vetlab, summarise fish kill and aquaculture mortality investigations to demonstrate South Australia's disease freedom for trade and market access purposes. |
| 4. | Livestock translocations: meetings, advice and documents (including import protocols and farm biosecurity guidelines) provided to interstate trade partners interested in the movement of mollusc aquaculture livestock. |
| 5. | Provided advice to various government agencies, including the EPA and DPTI, and organisations/companies, including Flinders Ports and Maritime Constructions, to mitigate potential aquatic animal health risks posed by marine developments/activities. PIRSA also provided advice on biofouling and ballast water management to various companies and vessel operators. |
| 6. | Implementation of mitigation strategies in a related mollusc sector as identified in risk assessments. This is to facilitate effective disease management (disease prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies). |
| 7. | Completed the project "Improving early detection surveillance and emergency disease response to Ostreid herpesvirus using a hydrodynamic dispersion model" (Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC): 2018-090). In this project, we defined the disease management areas (biosecurity zones) in a related mollusc sector. |
| 8. | Conducted Emergency Disease Response training and updated PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity SA. |
| 9. | Meetings attended, reviewed documents, contributed to national policy developments and represented South Australia on the national Sub-Committee on Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH). |
| 10. | Chaired the National Aquatic Veterinary Medicines Working Group (under SCAAH), to facilitate progress of veterinary medicine permits with the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA), and progress of the national strategic plan for aquatic animal health (including objective 4: Improving availability of appropriate veterinary medicines). |
| 11. | Coordinated with SASQAP to ensure risks to the Mussel Sector were mitigated with veterinary medicine use in adjacent sectors. |

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| 12 | Reviewed and updated the notice <i>Prohibition of Entry into and Movement within South Australia of Aquaculture Stock Notice 2020</i> under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> . |
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Environmental Monitoring and Management

| | Deliverables |
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| 1. | Developed, assessed and processed annual Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) reports for 32 Mussel licences. |
| 2. | Conducted Ecologically Sustainable Development risk assessments and management of EPA referral for 23 Mussel licence applications related to licence condition variations. |
| 3. | Prepared the Zoning In - South Australian Aquaculture Report 2017/18 and commenced drafting the 2018/19 report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia, including EMP summary information for each aquaculture sector. |
| 4. | Progressed the draft sector-based strategy for the Mussel Sector in conjunction with industry. |
| 5. | Ongoing maintenance of reporting databases for environmental compliance matters, ecological interactions and marine debris. |
| 6. | Conducted bi-monthly meetings with the EPA to discuss and prioritise environmental issues and projects relating to the aquaculture industry. |
| 7. | Liaised with Fisheries Officers for environmental issues related to the Mussel Sector, particularly in relation to site audits. This included a provision of technical input regarding environmental compliance and development and operation of aquaculture sites. |
| 8. | Contribution to, support for and implementation of, numerous research projects to assess environmental and economic impacts relating to Mussel aquaculture: FRDC 2014-027: Pacific Oyster feeds and feeding in South Australian waters: towards ecosystem based management (noting mussel feeding habits are included) FRDC 2016-005: eSA marine FRDC 2016-808: Future Oysters CRC-P CRC-P species diversification including a pest and biosecurity risk assessment for Rock Oysters |
| 9. | Ongoing assessment of two Expression of Interests to farm Rock Oyster species, incorporating draft SARDI report on the risks associated with Rock Oysters. |

Program Management and Administration

| | Deliverables |
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| 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 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, licence setting and related policy issues. |
| 8. | Developed, reviewed and implemented cost recovery procedures and program agreements for the Mussel Sector for 2020/21 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 Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Mussel 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. | Provided assistance to the Mussel Sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. |

Other Aquaculture Activities

| | Deliverables |
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| 1. | 2017/18 annual economic report, incorporating Mussel Sector data, published on PIRSA website. |
| 2. | 2018/19 annual economic report, incorporating Mussel Sector data, drafted. |
| 3. | All aquaculture sector production data collated and entered, and forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling 2018/19 report. |

