Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

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NOTICE TO SARDINE FISHERY LICENCE HOLDERS

Dear licence holder

I write in relation to the management arrangements for the 2027 quota period for the South Australian Sardine Fishery (SASF).

Unit Values and Total Allowable Commercial Catches (TACCs)

As a delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, I have determined, for the purposes of Regulation 9(2) of the Fisheries Management (Sardine Fishery) Regulations 2021 (the Regulations) and licence conditions, the unit values and corresponding TACCs for Sardines and Anchovy for the 2027 quota period, as set out in the table below:

Quota	2027 TACC (tonnes)	Total units	2027 Unit value (kg/unit)
Sardine – Spencer Gulf Zone	30,000	14,000	2,142.86
Sardine –Gulf St Vincent Zone	6,000	14,000	428.57
Sardine – Outside Zone	14,000	14,000	1,000.00
Anchovy	1,000	420	2,380.95

I have considered the following information when determining the TACC, quota unit values and other management arrangements for the 2027 quota period:

1. The objectives of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007*.
2. Regulation 9 of the Fisheries Management (Sardine Fishery) Regulations 2021.
3. The harvest strategy decision rules in the Management Plan for the South Australian Commercial Sardine Fishery.
4. 2026 fishery data and South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) advice.
5. The advice from the South Australian Sardine Industry Association (SASIA) dated 9 October 2026.

Setting the TACC at 50,000 tonnes continues the arrangements of Tier 2 of the harvest strategy decision rules.

I note the Mean Size of Sardines (MSS) for Gulf St Vincent was 136.7 mm Fork Length (FL) and the MSS for Spencer Gulf was 130.1 mm. As both are ≤142 mm FL, spatial management (size-based) decision rules within the Harvest Strategy (9.8.3) prescribe that a reduction in maximum catch will apply to each zone. I have considered and accepted the request by SASIA that size-based rules are not applied in determining zone allocations for the 2027 quota period, due to exceptional circumstances related to the likely impact of the algal bloom on Sardine behaviour in 2026 and healthy status of the Sardine stock.

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Under-catch and Over-catch Arrangements

With regard to the carry-over of uncaught quota entitlements, and in consideration of SASIA's request, I intend to consider any carry-over of uncaught SASF quota entitlements on individual licences from the 2026 quota period to the 2027 quota period up to a maximum of 10% of quota entitlements on the licence upon conclusion of the 2026 quota period, consistent with the default provisions of the Regulations.

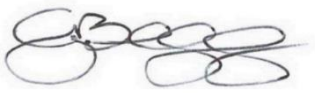
Any quota entitlements carried over from the previous quota period cannot be transferred.

With regard to over-catch provisions, I support SASIA's request for 10% over-catch such that if the total catch of Sardine taken by the holder of a licence during the 2027 quota period exceeds the Sardine quota entitlement under the licence for that quota period:

- by not more than 10% of the quota entitlement for that licence, the conditions of the licence may be varied so as to decrease the quota entitlement for the following quota period (2028) by 1 kilogram of Sardines for each kilogram taken in excess of the quota entitlement; or
- if the catch exceeds the quota entitlement by more than 10%, the conditions of the licence may be varied so as to decrease the quota entitlement for the following quota period (2028) by 2 kilograms of sardines for each kilogram taken in excess of the quota entitlement.

Please note that the level of observer coverage for the SASF in 2027 is still being considered and I will provide advice on this matter in due course.

Yours sincerely



Prof Gavin Begg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

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