

ADVICE TO: PIRSA FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

FROM: SARDI AQUATIC AND LIVESTOCK SCIENCES

SUBJECT: APPROPRIATE LOCATION AND TIMING OF SPATIAL SPAWNING CLOSURES FOR KING GEORGE WHITING

DATE: 24 APRIL 2026

KEY ISSUES

- PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture have requested advice on the most appropriate location and timing of spatial spawning closures for King George Whiting for Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent.
- The most appropriate temporal closure would extend from April to July.
- The most appropriate spatial closure is that originally implemented in 2017/18.

BACKGROUND

PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture have requested advice on the most appropriate location and timing of spatial spawning closures for King George Whiting for Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent, which are provided in this Advice Note.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

Two sources of evidence inform the timing of temporal spawning closures for King George Whiting. These are reproductive biology of the adults and retrospective hatch dates of successful recruits.

Spawning occurs from, at least, March to May with a peak in April (Fowler et al., 1999).

Based on back-calculated hatch dates from settlement data, available evidence indicates that successful spawning contributing to recruitment occurs from April to July (Rogers et al. 2019a,b).

This means the most appropriate temporal closure would extend from April to July.

Evidence indicates that south-eastern Spencer Gulf and Investigator Strait are the most important spawning areas with demonstrated high recruitment contribution to both Spencer Gulf and Gulf St Vincent from these locations (Drew et al. 2020). Smaller spatial closures increase risk of reduced recruitment.

This means that the most appropriate spatial closure is that originally implemented in 2017/18 (Figure 1).



Fig. 1. King George Whiting spawning spatial closure implemented in 2017/18.

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