



18 September 2025

FISHERIES &amp; AQUACULTURE

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GPO Box 1625  
ADELAIDE SA 5001  
Tel (08) 8207 5332  
www.pir.sa.gov.au**ALGAL BLOOM – Q1 2025-26 FEE RELIEF GUIDELINES**

Dear Lease/Licence Holder

The State Government announced an initial fee relief package to licence holders impacted by the algal bloom, to waive their respective quarterly fees for April to June. In recognition of the ongoing impact, the State Government has extended to the fee relief package to Q1 of 2025-26 (July to September 2025).

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) has been actively assessing algal bloom PIRSA fee relief applications through the Fee Relief Working Group.

Impacted lease and licence holders are required to apply for relief either via their relevant industry association or directly to PIRSA if they are not association members or choose to represent themselves. Affected associations are compiling and submitting claims to PIRSA on behalf of their members.

Below are several scenarios that may be applicable to you regarding fee relief:

1. Lease and licence holders who have been approved for either the Algal Bloom Fisheries and Aquaculture Assistance Grant or Algal Bloom Small Business Support Grant, are automatically eligible for PIRSA fisheries and aquaculture annual licence fees relief, for July to September 2025.  
If you have been approved for a grant, please email [pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au](mailto:pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au) with your approval from the Department of State Development (DSD), and PIRSA will process fee relief for July to September 2025.
2. Lease and licence holders who have been approved for PIRSA fisheries and aquaculture annual licence fee relief in Q4 of 2024-25 only, are not automatically eligible for fee relief for Q1 of 2025-26. They will need to submit a new application for the respective quarter.

Eligible participants will receive a credit or refund equal to 25% of their 2025-26 annual fee, reflecting the impacted quarter.

Applications are open from 1 October 2025 until 31 December 2025.

Applicants must provide evidence of impacts, such as area and catch history, lost fishing days, and business or financial disruptions.

For more details, please refer to the enclosed Guidelines for the PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture Algal Bloom Fee Relief Program.

## Grants

On 18 August 2025, the State Government announced changes to the grant criteria for business grants on offer, extending and expanding the eligibility for businesses requiring financial support.

One of these changes includes commercial fishery or aquaculture licence holders that have had their licence fee waived by PIRSA are now eligible for the Small Business Support Grant or the Algal Bloom Fisheries and Aquaculture Assistance Grant.

If your licence fee has been waived by PIRSA, please ensure you apply for one of the available grants if you haven't already. You will need to:

1. hold an active Australian Business Number (ABN) as at 1 January 2025;
2. meet the Australia-wide grouped payroll criteria outlined in the guidelines; and
3. be a South Australian entity (and are not an excluded entity).

Please submit an application to the Office for Small and Family Business. The application form and additional information can be found here:

<https://business.sa.gov.au/programs/algae-bloom>.

The Government will continue to review the grant program and make further adjustments where necessary.

Should you have any further queries in regard to this matter please email [pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au](mailto:pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au) or via phone (08) 8207 5332, or contact your sector representative.

Your sincerely



Georgina Ross  
**A/GENERAL MANAGER, REGULATORY AND BUSINESS SERVICES  
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE**

*Enclosure 1: PIRSA - Algal Bloom Fee Relief Guidelines*

## Algal Bloom Fee Relief Program

To support impacted commercial fishers and aquaculture operators, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) has released the *Algal Bloom Fee Relief Program Guidelines*. These Guidelines outline who is eligible, what evidence is required, how to apply, and how relief will be assessed. They are designed to ensure a consistent and fair approach to providing support for businesses affected by the current Algal Bloom event.

### 1. About the Program

The South Australian Government is offering targeted fee relief for commercial fishers, aquaculture operators, and charter boat fishery licence holders affected by the 2025 algal bloom. The initiative is funded through the Thriving Regions Fund.

The purpose of this program is to provide **pro-rata relief (25% of annual fees)** to eligible licence (and lease) holders to alleviate costs incurred during the April–June and/or July–September 2025 quarter, reflecting the impacted quarters.

### 2. Funding Available

Eligible operators may receive a credit or refund equivalent to 25% of their applicable annual fee.

Eligible fees for relief consideration include:

- PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture licence fees
- Aquaculture lease and licence fees
- Biosecurity SA Food Safety Scheme and audit fees.

### 3. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for fee relief, applicants must:

- Hold a current commercial fishery licence, aquaculture lease/licence, or charter boat fishery licence issued by PIRSA;
- Have experienced operational impacts during the April–June and/or July–September 2025 quarters due to the algal bloom event;

- Submit an application via an industry association (e.g., MFA, SAPFA, SAOGA), or directly to PIRSA;
- Have already received relief for the same fees via other government schemes.

## 4. Application Information

Applications are now open, until advised further.

Applications can include:

- Areas typically fished or farmed, compared to impacted zones (as identified by Fishwatch and SARDI reporting);
- Catch history for **April 2025 – June 2025** and/or **July 2025 – September 2025**
- Catch history for **April–June** and/or **July–September** for **2022, 2023, and 2024**;
- Additional supporting information such as:
  - Fishing days lost
  - Disruption to operations
  - Business or personal financial impacts.

*Note: These are guidelines only. PIRSA will consider other evidence that credibly demonstrates impact and will assess catch history from CDRs and catch and effort returns. However, for operators still submitting paper logbooks, PIRSA may not yet have access to their most recent data, particularly for 2025. Where this is the case, applicants are encouraged to submit any recent returns or other relevant documentation to support their application.*

## 5. Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed by PIRSA's **Fee Relief Review Group**, comprising senior officers from the regulatory, finance, and legislative teams.

The following approach will be applied:

- **Outcome model:** applicants are either eligible or ineligible, based on evidence.
- Relief will be issued as **25% of total eligible annual fees**, representing the affected quarter (April–June and/or July/September 2025).
- Assessments will be conducted on a **rolling basis**, with recommendations submitted weekly for approval.

## 6. Examples of Relief Amounts

Below are average annual fees and corresponding relief amounts for the most impacted sectors:

Sector	Annual Fee	Approx. Relief (25%)
Marine Scalefish Fishery	\$7,500	\$1,875
Charter Boat Fishery	\$2,646	\$661
Oyster Aquaculture	\$2,294	\$573

## 7. How Relief Will Be Applied

Relief will be issued either as:

- A **credit** applied to current debt or future invoices; or
- A **refund**, upon request.

The choice of mechanism will be confirmed with each eligible operator.

## 8. Lodging Applications

Operators can apply:

- Through their industry association (preferred), or
- Directly to PIRSA at:  
**Email:** [pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au](mailto:pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au)  
**Phone:** (08) 8207 5332

## 9. Support Services Available

Additional support is available via:

- [Rural Financial Counselling Service \(RFCS\)](#)
- [Family and Business Support \(FaBS\) Program](#)

These services may assist operators facing broader financial hardship beyond what fee relief addresses.

## 10. Terms and Conditions

Applicants must:

- Submit only accurate and verifiable information;
- Acknowledge that this program is a **one-off measure** and does not create precedent for future events.

## 11. More Information

For enquiries:

**Email:** [pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au](mailto:pirsa.fisheriesbusiness@sa.gov.au)

**Phone:** (08) 8207 5332

For program updates and guidance:

**Website:** [pir.sa.gov.au/primary\\_industry/commercial\\_fishing/licensing\\_and\\_registration/fee\\_relief](http://pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/commercial_fishing/licensing_and_registration/fee_relief)