Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

A7755876

FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE
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12 November 2026

NOTICE TO LICENCE HOLDERS IN THE MARINE SCALEFISH FISHERY

Management arrangements for Blue Crab in the waters of the West Coast

Dear licence holder

I write to advise of arrangements regarding the management of Blue Crab in the waters West of longitude 135° East as part of the Marine Scalefish Fishery (MSF).

For the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Blue Crab fishing seasons, temporary measures were implemented to curb targeted effort and support constraining the total catch of Blue Crab in the West Coast. These arrangements limited the number of lift nets that could be used to 10 regardless of the number of licences operating from one registered boat.

On 26 October 2026, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) met with key stakeholders to review 2025/26 catch information, SARDI advice, preliminary information from the voluntary catch sampling program and to consider potential management options for 2026/27.

Management arrangement options were discussed at the meeting which noted that whilst 2025/26 catches remained above the long-term average, catch rates also remained high, suggesting high stock abundance. Importantly, the proxy for abundance (standardised catch per unit effort) was above the target reference point under the harvest strategy in the Management Plan for the Commercial Marine Scalefish Fishery (the Management Plan).

Whilst there was no support for application of a catch cap, there was support for formalising the temporary measure that restricts the number of lift nets that can be used from a boat to 10 regardless of the number of licences operating from that boat in the waters West of longitude 135° East.

After consideration of stakeholder feedback, SARDI advice, the ongoing sustainable status of Blue Crab in the West Coast, application of the harvest strategy under the Management Pan, and objects of the *Fisheries Management Act 2007* (the Act), I, as delegate of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development (the Minister) have imposed a new licence condition on all MSF licences pursuant to section 55(2) of the Act, as follows:

New licence condition

When fishing in the waters West of longitude 135° East, the total number of lift nets used at any one time from a registered boat must not exceed the number endorsed on the licence or licences and must not, in any case, exceed a total of 10 lift nets at any one time, regardless of how many licences are operating from that boat.

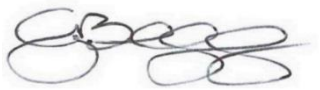
Updated copies of licences reflecting changes to conditions will be available through the myPIRSA portal, available at: myPIRSA Portal. Alternatively, licence holders may request a copy from PIRSA Fisheries Licensing at PIRSA.FisheriesLicensing@sa.gov.au.

I encourage all MSF Blue Crab fishers to participate in the voluntary catch sampling data program that is being led by industry to support future enhancements to the assessment of Blue Crab in the waters of the West Coast. For information about this program, please reach out to a peak industry association for the MSF.

Note, licence holders have a right under section 111 of the Act to seek an internal review of a decision to impose conditions on a licence. Applications for review must be made within one month of the day on which the decision was made.

PIRSA is appreciative of sector input into the process to consider the management arrangements for Blue Crab in the West Coast. Should you have any further queries in regard to this matter please contact Mrs Yolande Markey, Fisheries Manager on 0427 979 085 or at Yolande.markey@sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Prof Gavin Begg
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

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