

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

2022-23



**Government
of South Australia**

Department of Primary
Industries and Regions

OFFICIAL

Annual Report on PIRSA's Service Delivery on the Cost Recovery Agreement for the Tuna Sector 2022-23

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Resource Planning

	Deliverables
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.	Released the Draft Aquaculture (Zones - Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2023 (the Draft Policy) and supporting Report for public consultation and referral to prescribed bodies and public authorities to accommodate future expansion of aquaculture sectors, including the Tuna aquaculture sector. Submissions received during consultation were considered, with amendments then made to the Draft Policy and supporting Report to finalise the Policy.
3.	Commenced process to develop draft aquaculture tourism development regulations to assist implementation of the Aquaculture (Tourism Development) Amendment Act 2021, including undertaking key stakeholder consultation and risk assessment of current tourism developments.
4.	<p>Provided comments to the Department for Trade and Investment (DTI) on a number of proposed developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA Water Eyre Peninsula desalination plant development application Whalers Way Orbital Launch Complex aquaculture activity licence
5.	<p>Provided comments to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) on a number of proposed developments/activities to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed seabed lease for a deep-water port off Port Neil
6.	Initiated process to reappoint ATAB members and seek two new ATAB members under the Aquaculture Act 2001.
7.	Inducted members of the ATAB regarding the public call process for lease tenure applications.
8.	<p>Provided advice to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) on several proposed legislative reforms/developments to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed offshore renewable energy area in the Southern Ocean Two EPBC referrals for proposed offshore wind farms in Commonwealth waters Draft national environmental standard for matters of national environmental significance Draft national artificial reef guidelines
9.	Provided comments to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) on the draft inputs for the State of the Environment Report, including updates to actions on 2018 recommendations.
10.	Provided comments to Infrastructure SA on the Northern Water Supply project to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture.
11.	Provided advice to DTI regarding proposed amendments to the Planning and Design Code under

	the Miscellaneous Technical Enhancement Code Amendment to streamline the development assessment and approval process for future marine and land-based aquaculture developments.
12.	<p>Provided advice to the Department for Energy and Mining (DEM) on a number of proposed legislative reforms to mitigate potential impacts to aquaculture, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ South Australia's Green Paper on the Energy Transition ○ Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Generation Act Issues Paper and Draft Bill
13.	Ongoing liaison and consultation with relevant government departments, prescribed bodies and relevant stakeholders in relation to zone policy development.
14.	Provided advice to stakeholders/members of the public in relation to existing aquaculture zone allocations (i.e. area, biomass, etc.).
15.	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 into broader conservation policy development.
16.	Continued to provide input to the Blue Economy CRC Marine Spatial Planning project to mitigate potential impacts to the aquaculture industry from other users of the marine resource.
17.	Continued to provide input and support to the Marine Bioproducts CRC to support sector growth.
18.	Continued review of current and future provisions for the rehabilitation of aquaculture leases.
19.	Continued to attend and provide input to the National Aquaculture Committee on behalf of South Australia.
20.	Provided correspondence, held a series of industry information sessions, and progressively reissued all aquaculture lease and licence certificates as part of implementation of the Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2022.
21.	Meetings and advice to SA Water regarding a proposed desalination plant for the lower Eyre Peninsula and potential impacts to aquaculture.

Aquaculture Leasing and Licensing

	Deliverables																
	Activity 1 – Management of Leases and Licences																
1.	Maintained the eBusiness environment, systems and procedures to support day to day administration of leasing and licensing activities, including industry consultation and liaison and reviewing licence application forms and processes.																
2.	Case management functions (e.g. discussions prior to application submissions, following up on outstanding information or requirements relating to applications).																
3.	Ongoing liaison with relevant government (e.g. Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT), Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Attorney-General's Department – Native Title) and non-government agencies (industry peak bodies such as ASBTIA)																
4.	Maintained of internal lease and licence audit functions, including auditing procedures (checklists and manuals) and performance criteria relating to leases and licences.																
5.	Continued implementation of an agreement between PIRSA and EPA through meetings discussing ways to increase efficiency																
6.	Annual reconciliation of tuna quota entitlements with lease area to ensure sufficient leasable area is available for the farming of tuna quota.																
7.	Processed annual production returns and environmental monitoring reports from the SBT sector. Followed up unreturned reports to ensure licence holders met their obligations under the Act and ensured information was collated effectively for the development of economic reporting. Monitored 12 reports.																
8.	Generated annual invoices, collected associated fees and payments, followed up unpaid invoices. Reconciled receipt of annual lease and licence fees, application fees and liaised with Shared Services SA as required.																
9.	Reviewed all lease and licence application forms and amended where required. Internal policies, guidelines and processes relating to application were adhered to.																
10.	Processed requests from lease and licence holders who made inquiries over the phone or e-mail.																
11.	Responded to public submissions specific to applications.																
12.	Processing of tuna applications (see table below). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Tuna: Application Type</th><th>Number Completed</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Lease movement*</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence variation</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lease renewal</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lease divisions</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lease amalgamation</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence amalgamation</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Licence Transfer</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Tuna: Application Type	Number Completed	Lease movement*	2	Licence variation	5	Lease renewal	7	Lease divisions	1	Lease amalgamation	1	Licence amalgamation	1	Licence Transfer	0
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	*Environmental assessment and interagency referral conducted		

Legislation

	Deliverables
1	Input into freedom of information requests in relation to PIRSA's administration of the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
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	Review of aquaculture related notices issued under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> and related Ministerial delegations for same.
4	Updated sub-delegations of Ministerial powers and functions under the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
5	Input into compliance / enforcement / litigation matters as required.
6	Provided input and assistance into the development of draft aquaculture tourism development regulations to assist implementation of the <i>Aquaculture (Tourism Development) Amendment Act 2021</i> .
7	Input and review of development of draft consultation Biosecurity Bill to consider impacts on aquaculture.
8	Review of broader government referred Cabinet submissions for aquaculture legislative and administrative impacts.

Compliance Operations

Deliverables

Fisheries Officers completed a small volume of patrol operations in the vicinity of SBT farms during the ranching period from February 2023, however, did not observe any activity that may be associated with SBT theft. No information was provided by members of the public or farmers in relation to SBT theft instances, although the full picture may not be known until the 2023 harvest was completed and stock assessment completed.

Advance notification of site inspections, to be conducted in June 2023, was provided to the Tuna Sector.

Fisheries Officers inspected numerous sites off Port Lincoln. Fisheries Officers undertaking the inspections assessed each site against the requirements of the *Act* and *Regulations*, and lease and licence conditions, with a focus on ensuring navigational and site marking requirements were being met.

As has been the case in recent years, the sites inspected were observed to be in generally good condition and working order. Some of the sites contained instances of non-compliance with site and navigational marking requirements, with the respective lease holder notified in writing shortly thereafter and requested to rectify.

Several instances of marine mammals entrapped within farm cages were reported, with each being released without incident or harm to the animal involved.

PIRSA Compliance engaged with the Tuna Sector on several occasions following reports provided by the public in relation to aquaculture farm debris that had washed ashore.

Aquaculture Systems

	Deliverables
1.	Accurate and efficient systems maintained and enhanced to provide for effective and efficient management and administration of the Tuna Sector, in accordance with the <i>Aquaculture Act 2001</i> .
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 Tuna 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 is assessing reporting functionalities, liaison with the PIRSA IT group, testing updates to the database, reporting of functional issues and troubleshooting with system users.
5.	Included in management of the Public Register system is rollout of updates such as those related to the implementation of the <i>Aquaculture (Standard Lease and Licence Conditions) Policy 2022</i> , reporting of functional issues to the PIRSA IT group, testing when updates occur and troubleshooting with system users both internally and externally.
6.	Included in the management of ArcGIS is 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 troubleshooting with system users.
7.	Management of the Microsoft Access Database includes 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 Tuna Sector.
9.	Maintenance of the electronic reporting system to retrieve data directly from PIIMS in regard to electronic Environmental Monitoring Reports.
10.	Management of records management systems (e.g., Objective) may include testing of various functionalities, liaison with the PIRSA IT group and requests for further updates to systems and software.
11.	Ongoing testing, maintenance and trouble-shooting of the electronic lodgement system (my PIRSA) for environmental monitoring program and production return data.
12.	Maintain accurate and up to date information on the PIRSA Aquaculture website, including for the Tuna Sector.

Aquatic Animal Health

	Deliverables
1.	34 fish related mortality events were reported to PIRSA and investigated. Mortality investigations included both aquaculture and wild fish kills. Samples were submitted to the laboratory and tested to rule out disease. No significant or notifiable diseases were detected.
2.	Assisted with progress of minor use permit and registration for veterinary medicines with APVMA through meetings, workshops and communications with APVMA, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), Seafood Industry Australia (SIA), aquaculture industry sectors, EPA, PIRSA rural chemicals, veterinarians and researchers.
3.	Assessment and advice to the PIRSA Fisheries Management Group on Finfish stock release applications to ensure the risks of introduction and spread of disease in the State are minimised.
4.	Progressed the project titled "Improving the availability of safe and effective veterinary medicines for Australia's seafood industry (FRDC 2020-094)". In this project, one of our primary aims is coordinate a national effort to facilitate the progress of priority aquatic veterinary medicines in the seafood industry through to permitting or registration with the APVMA.
5.	As part of FRDC 2020-094, sought veterinary medicine priorities from the tuna sector and secured funding for two fish projects (applicable to Tuna and Finfish industries) to collect data toward permitting products.
6.	Conducted Emergency Disease Response training and updated PIRSA Emergency Response Plans as required with PIRSA Biosecurity.
7.	Provided advice and review of documentation in relation to disease risks posed by aquatic pests, biofouling and ballast water management.
8.	Meetings attended, reviewed documents, contributed to national policy developments and represented South Australia on the national Sub-Committee on Aquatic Animal Health (SCAAH).
9.	Advice to the Chief Veterinary Officer (Biosecurity) as required, including for mortality / disease cases, state based emergency response preparedness and for national committees (e.g. Animal Health Committee, National Biosecurity Committee).
10.	Attended the Aquatic Veterinary Medicine Working Group meetings (under SCAAH), to facilitate progress of veterinary medicine permits with the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA).
11.	Reviewed and updated a notice under the <i>Livestock Act 1997</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Notifiable Diseases</i>
12.	Reviewed PIRSA Fish Kill response manual with Biosecurity team and provided Fish Kill investigation training to PIRSA compliance officers.

Environmental Monitoring and Management

	Deliverables
1.	Developed, assessed and processed annual Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) reports for 8 Tuna licences.
2.	Conducted Ecologically Sustainable Development assessments and management of EPA referral for Tuna applications: 5 variations (3 x biomass variations plus 1 species addition and 1 conversion to finfish), 1 x division, 2 x moves, 1 x amalgamation.
3.	Finalised the 2023 South Australian Aquaculture Report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia for 2021/22, including EMP summary information for the tuna aquaculture sector.
4.	Commenced drafting the 2024 South Australian Aquaculture Report which contains a summary of production and management of aquaculture in South Australia in 2022/23, including EMP summary information for the tuna aquaculture sector.
5.	Continued the 2019/20 to 2023/24 (4-year) Regional Environmental Monitoring Program for the Tuna Sector in Lower Spencer Gulf (in conjunction with EPA, SARDI and industry) that included specific research to monitor impacts of aquaculture nutrients on seagrass. Reviewed milestone reports and data from this program.
6.	Responded to industry requests/questions/mapping in regard to applications and management of leases and licences.
7.	Assessment and advice to the PIRSA Fisheries policy group on a seedstock application.
8.	Ongoing maintenance of reporting databases for environmental compliance matters, marine debris and chemical use.
9.	Reviewed adopt-a-beach results.
10.	Conducted regular meetings with the EPA to discuss and prioritise environmental issues and projects relating to aquaculture industry.
11.	Liaised with Fisheries Officers for environmental issues related to the Tuna Sector, particularly in relation to site audits. This included provision of technical input/mapping regarding environmental compliance and development and operation of aquaculture sites.
12.	Provided data to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment regarding the SA Tuna Farm register (Tuna site locations and company names/contacts).
13.	Provided advice on developments in Spencer Gulf as they relate to the Tuna Sector to ensure impacts are considered and managed by the proponents of the proposed development (e.g. Port Lincoln desalination plant proposal, offshore windfarms, Port Bonython Hydrogen plant).
14.	Reviewed a number of guidelines/proposals/legislation that may impact the Tuna Sector (e.g. PIRSA/DEW marine mammal interaction procedure, Agrifutures Plastic waste project, National FRDC welfare project, National Environmental Standard for Matters of National Environmental Significance, Native Vegetation Act Amendments).

15.	Notification to all licence holders permitted to farm algae of the new management arrangements for algae aquaculture.
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Program Management and Administration

	Deliverables
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 Tuna Sector for 2022/23 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 the Minister, so they were aware of current and emerging issues faced by PIRSA Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Tuna Sector.
11.	Consulted with the Chief Executive, Executive Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Director Operations, PIRSA Fisheries Managers, and the Office of the Minister and other parties as needed.
13.	Provision of information to inform responses and decisions in relation to public and industry concerns raised with the Chief Executive of PIRSA and the Minister.
14.	Provided administrative support to the Independent Cost Recovery Review Panel, e.g., mail outs to all licence/lease holders, meeting coordination, travel bookings and other adhoc administration support during the review.

Other Aquaculture Activities

	Deliverables
1.	All aquaculture sector production data collated and entered and forwarded to BDO EconSearch for compiling 2021/22 report.
2.	2021/22 annual economic report, incorporating Tuna Sector data, drafted, finalised and published on PIRSA website.
3.	Collected, through annual fees, the Tuna industry's annual contribution to the FRDC.
4.	Managed the 2022/23 fund transfer to the FRDC as prescribed in the ASBTIA Industry Partnership Agreement.
5.	Attended and presented at a number of forums and conferences, including the International Seaweed Symposium in Tasmania (February 2023), the World Aquaculture Conference in Darwin (June 2023) and Sixth FRDC Australasian Scientific Conference on Aquatic Animal Health and Biosecurity (July 2023) on aquaculture policy and planning, aquatic animal health or environmental matters.
6.	Provided lectures to Flinders University and University of Adelaide students on aquaculture policy and aquatic animal health.
7.	Attended and presented at the ASBTIA Workshop in December 2022 on the Draft Aquaculture (Zones- Lower Eyre Peninsula) Policy 2023.