



Fisheries Regulations 2019

Aquaculture

New fisheries regulations will commence on 1 February 2020

The Minister for Fishing and Boating, Jaala Pulford MP, recently approved the making of the Fisheries Regulations 2019 and the new regulations commence from 1 February 2020. The new regulations provide for continued investment and growth in aquaculture across Victoria.

What are the key regulatory changes for aquaculture in Victoria?

The new regulations are largely the same for aquaculture producers, although some important changes will occur, including:

- The information requirements for the annual aquaculture production return now needs to include the average price obtained for each species sold during the return period. However, the requirement to report details of fish coming onto the farm and the name of any relevant aquaculture fisheries reserve named on the licence are no longer required.
- A standardised fish receipt or fish movement record will be required for all sales of fish (exemptions may apply). Penalties may apply for businesses or persons found to be without proper documentation for possession and sales of fish. A fact sheet on traceability documentation for aquaculture producers provides further details on this change and can be accessed on the VFA website at: www.vfa.vic.gov.au/newrules
- The required minimum height of boat registration markings has been reduced from 23cm to 20cm to reflect the size of lettering that is readily available commercially (8 inches or 20.32cm).
- Grounds for suspending a commercial aquaculture licence have been prescribed in regulation. These include if the person has breached a licence condition, if the person has been found guilty of certain offences, or if they have defaulted on a payment of a fisheries-related fine. Under these circumstances, the VFA may require the holder of a fishery licence to show sufficient cause as to why the licence should not be suspended.
- The requirement for licence holders to report theft of documents to police has been removed (note: licence holders must still notify the VFA).

- The regulations have been amended to clarify that wild catch commercial fishers cannot fish in aquaculture reserves unless authorised (this is an administrative change only).
- A new offence has been created for removing, interfering, damaging or defacing a fisheries-related sign, such as a sign erected by the VFA to show rules around access to aquaculture reserves (20 penalty units).
- A new offence prohibiting commercial fishing boats from displaying false identifying marks has been created (20 penalty units).

All other existing laws relevant to aquaculture will remain unchanged.

When do I need to comply with the new requirements?

Aquaculture licence holders and seafood business need to comply with these requirements from 1 February 2020.

Where can I get further information?

Further information on the Fisheries Regulations 2019 and general information about aquaculture in Victoria can be found at www.vfa.vic.gov.au.

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