

## Regulation of Trawling for Octopus and Finfish in Victorian Coastal Waters

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments share responsibility for the management of fisheries in the waters off Victoria's coast. In 1997, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments made arrangements so that certain fisheries are managed under Victorian law by the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) and others are managed under Commonwealth law by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

These fisheries may relate to the types of fish that may be taken, or the method by which fish are taken. For example, **AFMA is responsible for managing all trawl fishing for finfish in Victorian coastal waters**, while **the VFA is responsible for managing trawl fishing for bay bugs, eastern king prawns, sand crabs and school prawns**. Responsibility for managing the take of a particular type of fish can differ between trawling and other fishing methods.

The VFA may only issue licences for the fisheries that are managed under Victorian law. This means that a particular person or business may have to get licences from both the VFA and the AFMA, depending on the type of fish being taken or method of taking the fish.

### How do the arrangements regulate finfish?

Under the arrangements, trawling of finfish is regulated by Commonwealth law. **Only AFMA has legal power to issue licences or permits that allow for targeted trawling of finfish.**

Victorian licences that allow **trawl fishing for bugs, crabs and prawns are only permitted to take finfish as bycatch of this trawling (excluding Billfish such as marlin and swordfish, and Northern Bluefin Tuna and Southern Bluefin Tuna which may not be taken under the arrangements)**. This bycatch is regulated by Victorian law.

**Please note:** This finfish bycatch is subject to additional weight and other limits set out under Victorian regulations, including a range of prohibited species.

### How do the arrangements regulate octopus?

Under the arrangements, trawling of octopus is regulated by Commonwealth law. **Only AFMA has legal power to issue licences or permits that allow for targeted trawling of octopus.**

Victorian licences that allow **trawl fishing for bugs, crabs and prawns are only permitted to take octopus as bycatch of this trawling.**

This bycatch is regulated by Victorian law.

**Please note:** This octopus bycatch is subject to weight and other limits set out in the Fisheries (Inshore Trawl Bycatch Management) Notice 2024.