

Cost Recovery Fishery-specific Forums 2014

- Snobs Creek 22 July - Aquaculture
- Queenscliff 25 – Eels, Mixed Fisheries
- Queenscliff 30 July – EZ Rock Lobster, Aquaculture
- Warrnambool 31 July – Mixed Fisheries, WZ Abalone/WZ Rock Lobster
- Traralgon 6 August – Bays and Inlets
- Lakes Entrance 7 August – Bait/Mixed Fisheries, EZ Abalone
- Queenscliff 15 September – CZ Abalone

Overview

In July, August and September, staff from Fisheries Victoria, and the Executive Director of Seafood Industry Victoria (SIV), travelled to 6 sites over 7 days, and met with 87 fishers and their representatives from 22 licence classes during the fishery-specific cost recovery forums. The discussions mainly focussed on services being provided under the new prospective fisheries cost recovery system. In particular, industry was seeking to clarify services for which there was cost recovery, and possible opportunities to reduce costs. The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (FV) explained potential areas for gaining efficiency and cost savings, including where savings could be achieved through a cooperative approach between industry and government. During the forums FV agreed to undertake a number of actions, and to present the issues identified at the forums to the Fisheries Cost Recovery Standing Committee (FCRSC) at its next meeting. The key issues and actions are listed below, and a summary of issues raised by each forum follows.

Abalone & Rock Lobster - Queenscliff

Forum Attendance	
Licence class/organisation	No. present
Rock Lobster EZ	4
Ocean Access	1
SIV	1

Table 4. Abalone Central Zone and Rock Lobster Eastern Zone

	ISSUE RAISED	ACTION / RESPONSE
1	Need to review catch and effort logbooks to make data recording easier.	FV prepared to review C&E provision.
2	Need for separation between “intentional” and “accidental” breaches. Industry needs feedback onsite so can address.	Fisheries Officers do distinguish offences by intention. FV is actively considering electronic recording of catch and effort input data. Noted that an app (IT application) had been developed for specific fisheries, and there exists a need for industry training prior to use.
3	Problem of obtaining quota in RL Eastern Zone, potentially due to claimed monopoly on quota holdings in the zone. It was suggested limits be placed on the amount of quota able to be held.	FV agreed to work with SIV to consider the issue.
Completed actions		

1	Central Zone Abalone requested an alternative meeting date.	FV agreed and a meeting was held on 15 September 2014.
2	Fishers' involvement in selection process of contractors to provide services (eg outsourced research services).	FV agreed to discuss as part of review of contractual research services. FCRSC has considered contestability for cost recoverable services at meetings #35 and #37. Rock lobster and abalone research services have been identified as key candidates. Further discussion will occur in 2015.
3	Quarterly reporting of results in relation to services provided.	Reports on quarters 1-3 of the 2014/15 licensing year have been published on the FV website at http://www.FV.vic.gov.au/fishing-and-hunting/commercial-fishing/fisheries-cost-recovery/cost-recovery-quarterly-reporting Further reports will be added to this website as they are made available.
4	The cost of data entry and management costs related to catch and effort recording need to be looked at.	FV reviewed Catch & Effort costs in October 2014. Revised costings were agreed at FCRSC#36 and the new levy costs will be reflected in 2015/16 licence renewals.
5	Length of time it takes for hard copy of licence to get to holder – appears excessive, noting that fishers are unable to operate without the licence and majority of changes (lease, etc) are processed on the first day of the season.	FV has reviewed the timeliness for receipt of hardcopy licences by fishers. The printing and postage of licences in hardcopy only requires 1-2 working days once payment and correct licensee details are received.
6	Apportionment of inspection costs where service provided to more than one sector.	Commercial inspection estimations have been allocated by 5% of pre and post inspection time to differentiate between times spent on recreational/commercial/illegal fishing.
7	Greater inspections time on-water for rock lobster in the Eastern zone than in the Western zone	FV advised that greater spread of fishers in the Eastern zone means more travel time per inspection.
Continuing actions		
1	Goodwill and respect for FV weakened – need to build trust between industry and FV.	2014 consultative process a start and fishery specific discussion will continue in 2015.
2	Needs to be clear separation of data management from pure research function because of differences in cost. Potential savings in the SARDI contract.	FV agreed to discuss as part of review of contractual research services. FCRSC has considered contestability for cost recoverable services at meetings #35 and #37. Rock lobster and abalone research services have been identified as key candidates. Further discussion will occur in 2015.
3	Time of day of meetings – afternoons and evenings preferred. Amount of time needed for these industry consultation meetings.	FCRSC agreed that cost recovery would be addressed at existing industry meetings as far as possible in 2015. SIV and FV will coordinate industry discussions to review the cost recovery service schedules in 2015.
4	Noted that rock lobster sector will be considering management costs in more detail at a later point.	FV acknowledged industry wants to continue discussion on management.
5	Clear demonstration of industry savings will help support for electronic applications.	FV will, as far as possible, estimate costs and potential savings, and will discuss within the FCRSC and with industry before considering implementation. FV flagged the evaluation and possible use of VMS as a means to make

		savings in inspection services.
No further updates planned		
1	Foreign ownership of fisheries entitlements.	Fisheries legislation excludes foreign ownership. However, if an Australian company is established by a foreign national with Australian residency, then no restriction applies.
2	Slide on under recovery of levy funds is invalid because basis for calculation of levies was incorrect.	FV acknowledged that it represented an earlier point in time when the RIS was released. Levy values had changed since that time.
3	<p>Issues raised in an email from a Central Zone abalone entitlement holder who could not attend the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short notice of forum unacceptable. • Levy imposts well outside cost imposed on abalone industry in other states. • Increases in levies come at an all-time low in productivity in the abalone industry. • Process of setting levies does not allow the affected fishers to be engaged. • In real commerce it is not possible to base cost calculations on estimates. • Explanation of levies inadequate and 2-hour window to discuss is too short. • Rights and certainty across all fisheries remain unresolved. • System is too bureaucratic, unfair and self-serving for the good operation of an industry from which to draw equitable management fees. • More helpful to industry to express changes in percentages and compare with other states. • Not enough transparency in the development of levies. • Little industry support due to the complex, covert, imprudent nature of the scheme thus far. 	FV has noted the issues raised and regrets not having the opportunity to discuss abalone Central Zone concerns at the 30 July meeting.