

RL & GC RAG #46

Item 4. Recreational Reporting Program

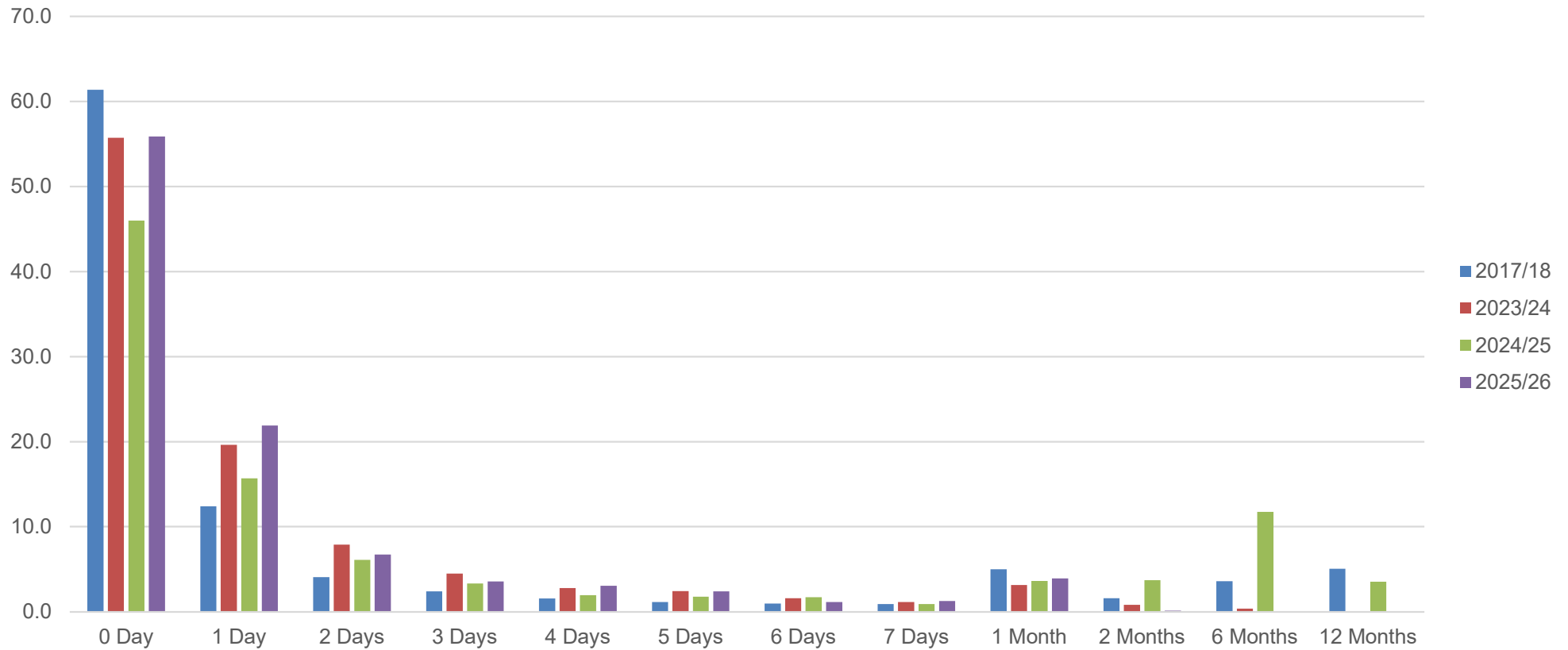


Item 4. Recreational Reporting Program



What is the difference in time between catch date and date that catch is reported?

Item 4. Recreational Reporting Program



Percentage of fishers reporting lobster catch over time

Item 4. Recreational Reporting Program



	Reported same day	Reported within 7 days	More than 7 days
2017/18	61.4%	84.8%	15.2%
2023/24	55.7%	94.5%	5.5%
2024/25	46.0%	76.5%	22.6%
2025/26	55.9%	94.7%	4.1%

Conclusion - High level of compliance amongst those who report their catch.

Need – Improve reporting rate of recreational fishers targeting rock lobsters through Education and Compliance

- email reminders to fishers registered to take lobster, both past and present.
- VFA social media posts
- Dive Clubs and Associations
- Compliance – Official warnings & PINS

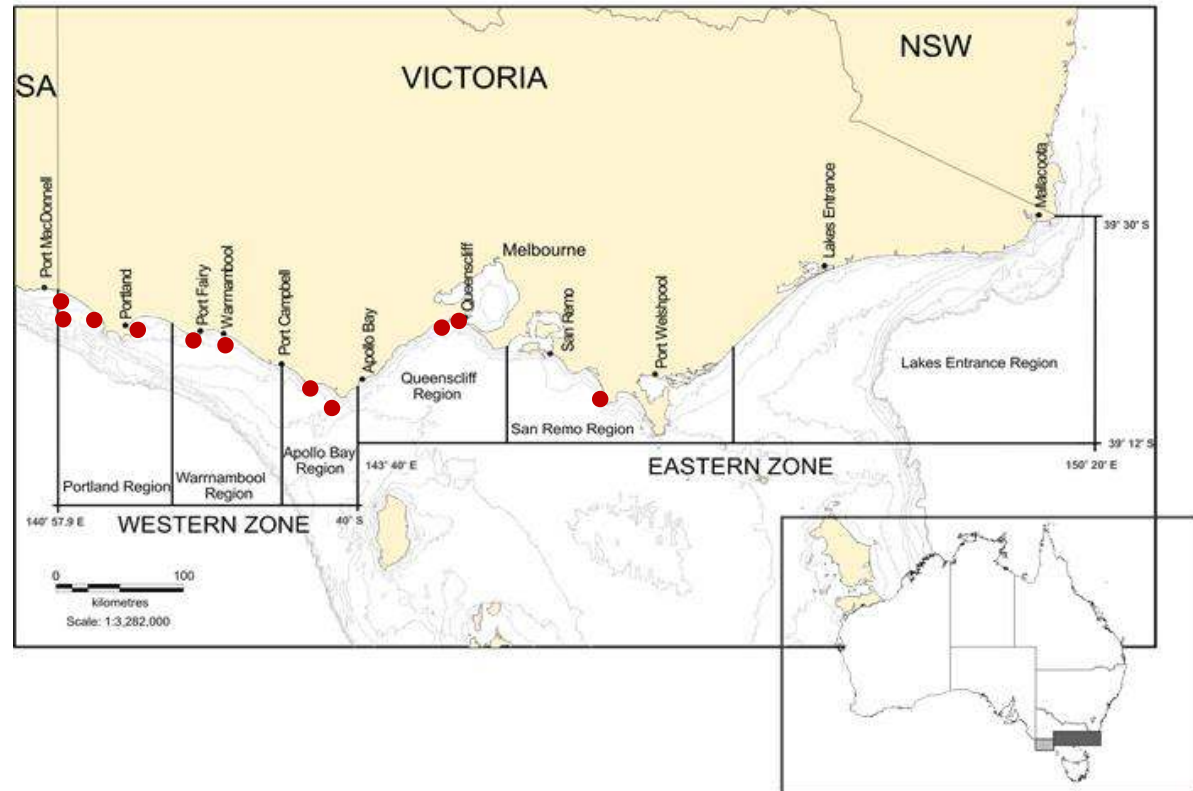
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Item 5. Monitoring Program



Item 5.1 Fixed Site Surveys

- WZ since 2002
 - 8 sites
 - Escape gaps closed
- EZ since 1996
 - 3 sites
 - Escape gaps closed (50% pots)



Item 5.1 Fixed Site Surveys



Issue :In recent years, certain sites have become less attractive for fishers to survey.

- Contributing factors
 - Areas of lower catch rate or lower value catch
 - Timing of surveys
 - Increasing operating costs

Item 5.1 Fixed Site Surveys



Background

- Surveys undertaken in February each year since 2002.
- Reference sites were established through consultation with Industry.
- Reduced from 12 survey sites to 8 in 2017.
- Fishery independent surveys reduce sampling bias – same sites at the same time each year.
- Significant source of LF data used in the annual stock assessment.
- Data used to calculate PRI.
- EOI sought from RL operators to undertake survey each year.
- Competitive tender with capped price (\$1,650/day).

Item 5.1 Fixed Site Surveys



2025/26

- Poor response to the EOI, with no initial interest shown for a number of the WZ survey sites.
- Individuals were contacted but were not prepared to undertake the surveys for the capped price.
- VFA agreed to increase the value of the tender to ensure survey continuity.
- Considered reasonable due to the considerable travel distances to the respective sites and the fact there had been no increases to tender cap in recent years.
- Approximately 25% increase in operating for WZ fixed site surveys this year.
- Intended that costs will be covered by slightly reduced observer coverage and less spending on supplies and inventory.

Item 5.1 Fixed Site Surveys



Future

Option 1. Fixed site surveys maintained and additional costs recovered through licence fees.

Option 2. Fixed site surveys reduced and savings used to increase observer coverage.

Item 5.2 Rock Lobster Tagging



To Tag or Not to Tag? – That is the question

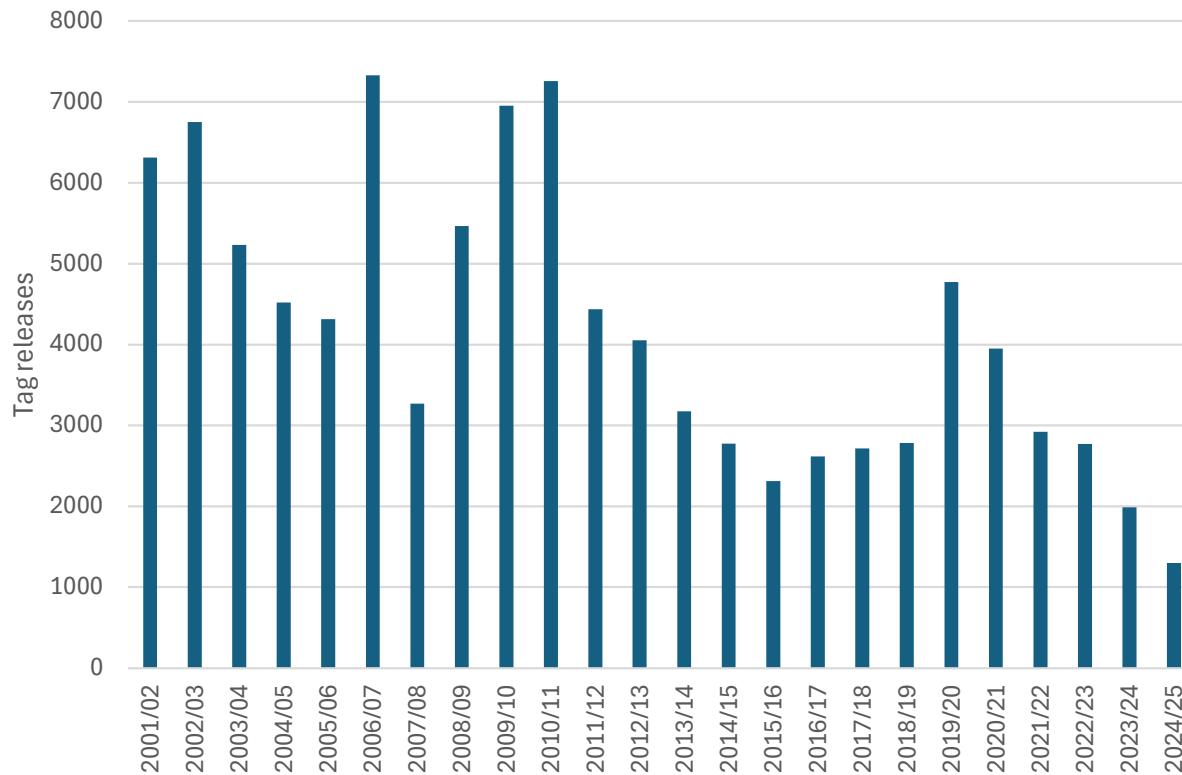


Tag recapture data provides information on lobster growth and movement.

Growth is a parameter in the model – updated infrequently

Movement not so important – 80% of lobsters shown not to move

Item 5.2 Rock Lobster Tagging



Numbers of lobsters tagged by fishing season

Item 5.2 Rock Lobster Tagging



Should we continue to tag lobsters?

- Difficult to maintain enthusiasm over long periods.
- Providing timely feedback is important but time consuming.
- What is the value of small numbers of recaptures to growth model?
- Tagging biased towards smaller lobsters.

Recommendation

Discontinue tagging for now with a view to reinstate a tagging program in the future with a more intensive, targeted approach, should the need arise.

