



Fisheries Regulations 2019

New Papi Fishery Access Licence Class

New commercial fishing opportunities help increase the economic, social and cultural value of Victoria's commercial fishing sector. They provide economic development opportunities for current fishers to add value to their operations and provide a pathway for new entrants into our fisheries.

Under the Fisheries Regulations 2019, the VFA are establishing a Victorian Papi Fishery; a sustainable and healthy fishery that offers economic opportunities to the commercial fishing sector and a high-quality seafood product to the consumer.

Why is this licence class being established?

Following on from the declaration of the Victorian Papi Fishery Management Plan in 2018, the Victorian papi fishery is being transitioned to an ongoing quota-managed fishery, authorised by a Papi Fishery Access Licence. These changes will be enacted through the Fisheries Regulations 2019.

For those interested, a copy of the Management Plan can be found at: www.vfa.vic.gov.au/commercial-fishing/papi-fishery/victorian-papi-fishery-management-plan

How many licences will be available?

As specified in the Victorian Papi Fishery Management Plan, the VFA appointed an Independent Allocation Panel (the Panel) to provide advice to the Minister for Fishing and Boating on the commercial licence holders who are eligible for the allocation process, as well as the most appropriate method for allocating the papi resource amongst these eligible licence holders.

It is expected that a small number of licences will be issued for the Discovery Bay zone and one licence for the Venus Bay zone. After the fishery has been established through the new Fisheries Regulations, an Expression of Interest process will be conducted for a limited number of temporary permits to enable papi fishing under strict conditions in the Western and Eastern zones. This will give OFAL holders an opportunity to fish for papi in relatively unfished areas.

When will the licences be available?

The new Fisheries Regulations will come into operation on 1 February 2020. At this stage, the expectation is that the Victorian Papi Fishery will operate from 1 April to 30 March each year, but the fishery commencement date may change to 1 July. Fishing for papi will be authorised under transitional arrangements from 1 February 2020 until the fishery commences.

What are the characteristics of the licence?

The new Papi Fishery Access Licence will have the following characteristics:

- the licence will be transferable;
- there will be an ability to nominate an operator, in addition to the licence holder, to carry out activities authorised by the licence;
- the licence holder or operator may only be assisted by one crew member when undertaking collection of papi under the access licence (a total of two persons per operation);
- the licence will be subject to any conditions that the VFA deems appropriate and that are expressed or referred to on the licence; and
- cost recovery will apply once transferrable licences are allocated. This will cover fisheries management services such as compliance, management and research.



The following reporting requirements are prescribed for the Pipi Fishery Access Licence:

- pre-fishing notification and immediate post-fishing reporting to the VFA;
- monthly catch and effort Pipi Fishery logbooks with the ability to move to e-catch (electronic reporting); and
- catch disposal records (CDRs) to provide information on the landed commercial catch for the purpose of tracking the flow of legal catch from the first point of sale.

How will the Victorian Pipi Fishery be managed?

The fishery will be subject to a Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC), which will effectively, responsibly, and efficiently limit the total catch by the commercial fishery.

The TACC will be set and managed by individual management zone on the basis of available biological, economic and social information.

A Quota Management System will be implemented for the commercial fishery to protect biological sustainability and to ensure economic productivity, while enhancing community support for fisheries management. Quota is a specific, tradable entitlement that controls total take to meet sustainability objectives while encouraging investment, stewardship and cooperation to maximise the value of the resource.

What does this mean for Ocean Fishery Access Licences (OFAL) and other commercial licence holders?

Under the changes to the Fisheries Regulations, no other licence class except for the Pipi Fishery Access Licence class will be able to fish for pipi from 1 February 2020. These changes are expected to have minimal impact on OFAL fishers however, as take of pipi has already been restricted to a small number of OFAL holders by Fisheries Notice since 2017. As noted above, there will be opportunities for OFAL holders to access pipi in the relatively unfished Western and Eastern zones in the future. It is also not expected to affect other licence classes as there has been minimal pipi catch recorded by other licences outside of Discovery Bay.

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