

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.

Mixed Fisheries - Queenscliff

Forum Attendance	
<i>Licence class/organisation</i>	<i>No. present</i>
Ocean Access	3
Wrasse	4
Ocean Scallop	1
Inshore Trawl	2
WPPPB	1
Unknown	1
VSFA	1
SIV	1
By email (Wrasse/Ocean Access)	1

Table 3. Mixed Fisheries (Ocean Access, Trawl Inshore, Wrasse, Ocean Scallop, Fish Receivers, PPB Purse Seine, Westernport/Port Phillip Bay

	ISSUE RAISED	RESPONSE/ACTION
1	Why are Wrasse licences not transferrable?	FV need to manage the risk of sudden influx of operators on the resource. FV have agreed with SIV to discuss the management of the Wrasse fishery, including options for transferability.
2	Wrasse is a small fishery that is not being recognised by government approaches. Need to remove latent effort and open up viable options for fishers in this licence class.	FV will discuss improved management of the Wrasse Fishery with Seafood Industry Victoria (SIV). Commercial entitlements should ideally be secure and transferable, but there also needs to be effective constraints on take.
Completed actions		
1	Fish receivers schedule needs correction to indicate attribution of costs between	FV has reviewed abalone receiver costs and will adjust costs to access licence holders and receivers as appropriate for 2015/16.

	receivers and fishers, in relation to undertaking inspections at the receiver's premises.	
2	What is the cost breakdown of an inspection?	FV provided tables setting out a breakdown of components of inspections and their cost for each fishery at each forum in 2014.
3	Will the costings be revised at the end of the year?	FV has calculated revised levies for 2015-16 for each fishery following revision of services and associated costs with FCRSC. The resulting amendments will take effect from 1 April 2015.
Continuing actions		
1	What business would accept 75% of services being delivered?	Approximately 250 categories of services are delivered across the 42 licence classes. Some of these services involve very small amounts of staff time and operating cost. The 75% delivery is arbitrary but represents a practical level to monitor these services. FCRSC are reviewing the terminology to reflect this arrangement.
2	How can we improve reporting and reduce compliance costs?	FV is in discussion with FCRSC and SIV to identify candidate fisheries as a priority to consider/trial shifting to electronic reporting.
3	We haven't ever seen anything from the stock assessments	FV will be transferring status reports to the web to provide accessible, up to date information on stock status.
4	Why don't the schedules include services that will advance/rebuild the scallop industry?	The schedules set out services to manage the scallop fishery. The research and management services seek to manage a depleted stock and re-build the fishery. 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.
5	Are these the final costs?	As risks change so will the costs and changes are expected as a result of these forums and the deliberations of the FCRSC. FV has calculated revised levies for 2015-16 for each fishery following revision of services and associated costs with FCRSC. The resulting amendments will take effect from 1 April 2015.
6	Licences are slowly having access to stock reduced eg urchins and pipis now need separate licence.	FV committed to work with SIV and industry to ensure the Ocean Access licence retains value in the future.
7	How are costs split between the recreational and commercial sectors?	The cost for recoverable services is based on the estimated proportion of take by commercial fishers. The percentage recoverability is available in the service schedule for each fishery. FCRSC agreed that the finfish apportionment would be set at 50/50. This is effected through the levies charged for stock assessment for shared species and some management functions until further data becomes available.
No further updates planned		
1	If we came to you and said we want to bring in VMS, can it happen?	In principle, yes. At this time it is likely FV would use Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) to monitor, and fisher buys unit. It would take at least a few months to introduce, get agreement with AFMA, vary licences initially and change the Regulations later. FV has invested in trial VMS units as the use of VMS is supported by the department. Data collected through VMS reporting would help with science and reduce compliance risks.
2	Would introducing VMS across a licence class	VMS will generally reduce search time and these are costs of at-

	reduce costs?	sea inspections. FV can calculate savings for particular fisheries identified as priority candidates.
3	How do I know that I'm getting value for money?	FCRSC has looked at ways to assess value: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking (South Australia and New Zealand); • transparency (through specification and cost of services in schedules); and • contestability (same service by external provider).
4	What value are the biomass surveys for scallop fisheries?	They inform quota setting and provide information on stock distribution.
5	Who does stock surveys; is it FV in-house?	Stock assessment and monitoring are primarily undertaken by Fisheries Victoria, but for some fisheries (abalone, rock lobster) services are contracted. FV is open to discussion of contestable provision of research services.
6	What do the inspection FTE figures mean in dollars, and how have they been apportioned?	FTE costs are identified in the service schedule for each fishery. Inspection costs per visit on land and on water have been provided for each fishery. Commercial inspection estimations have been allocated by 5% of pre and post inspection time to differentiate between times spent on recreational/commercial/illegal fishing. Compliance costs have been estimated to factor in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of active licences in a class; • where multiple inspections occur on one trip; and • dividing costs where operators hold more than one licence.
7	Is scallop research going to be done 3 times ie by each jurisdiction?	The current arrangements for managing Bass Strait scallops across jurisdictions are inefficient. There is potential to consolidate services eg one stock assessment process. Victoria has promoted this consolidation with the Commonwealth and Tasmania, but has not been able to make progress.
8	Do FV have a gut feel for how widespread non-compliance of reporting is in PPB?	The department does not have precise estimates. However last year, FV looked at two cases and both were reporting falsely, did not abide by warnings, and were not in attendance at nets. Collaboration between industry and FV to identify deliberate misreporting will reduce the risk of non-compliance, reducing cost of compliance services. Finding fishers at night and in remote areas result in a time consuming and expensive element of compliance.
9	What do fishers get for these levies?	Levies are cost recovery for statutory services. However cost recovery does provide benefits over time through opportunity to develop more efficient services and reduce costs through greater use of industry data and involvement in management.
10	Do you recover all the costs?	By 2016 FV will only recover 69% of recoverable services based on Department of Treasury and Finance guidelines. This level of recovery is a result of the concessions on services, including recreational fishing, intelligence and surveillance, preparation of management plans, and administration of cost recovery.
11	By email: Non-transferable licences Regulation that restricts use of nets to target shark Costs cannot be measured Paying costs without seeing benefits	Noted.