



Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources

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2017 / 18 Further Abalone Quota Order and Size Limit Fisheries Notices

I write to advise you that I have set the 2017/18 Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) and minimum size limits for the Victorian abalone fishery after undertaking consultation in accordance with Section 3A of the *Fisheries Act 1995*.

I offer my thanks to everyone who attended the zonal TACC advisory workshop in Hastings and for the constructive dialogue during the forum. I would also like to convey my appreciation to those who provided a written submission in relation to this important matter.

I have set the following TACCs and management arrangements for the central abalone zone:

- the blacklip abalone TACC is 274.0 tonnes (a reduction of 6.2 tonnes from 2016/17), subject to the conditions described below;
- the greenlip abalone TACC is 3.4 tonnes (no change from 2016/17), subject to the conditions described below; and
- the legal minimum sizes for blacklip and greenlip abalone as specified in the attached Fisheries Notice. Note that I have taken industry advice with regard to the blacklip abalone size limits and have decided to continue the sizes that were in place during the 2016/17 season.

DEDJTR and Abalone Victoria [Central Zone] (AVCZ) are committed to rebuilding abalone stocks in the central abalone zone. As discussed at the workshops and detailed during the consultation period, the 2017/18 TACC and management arrangements are subject to the following conditions:

1. Industry must manage its catches within the target ranges specified for each Spatial Management Unit (SMU). Mandatory closures will be implemented by DEDJTR when catches reach the upper limit. DEDJTR will continue to provide weekly updates on catch levels and a review of catches will be undertaken when the threshold levels are reached.

SMU	Lower Limit	Lower Threshold	Target	Upper Threshold	Upper Limit
SHIPWRECK COAST SMU	14.8	18.0	21.2	24.4	27.6
CAPE OTWAY SMU	44.5	48.4	52.3	52.3	60.1
SURFCOAST SMU	2.8	3.4	4.0	4.6	5.2
PORT PHILLIP BAY SMU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
BACK BEACHES SMU	46.3	56.3	66.2	76.1	86.1
FLINDERS SMU	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0
PHILLIP ISLAND SMU	35.4	38.6	41.7	41.7	48.0
KILCUNDA SMU	9.9	12.0	14.1	16.2	18.3
CAPE LIPTRAP	8.8	10.6	12.5	14.4	16.3

SMU	Lower Limit	Lower Threshold	Target	Upper Threshold	Upper Limit
PROM WESTSIDE SMU	14.0	17.0	20.0	23.0	26.0
PROM EASTSIDE SMU	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.0	8.1
CLIFFY GROUP SMU	3.5	4.3	5.0	5.8	6.5

2. Maintaining greenlip access in 2018/19 will be subject to following conditions being met by Industry in 2017/18:
 - the minimum legal size limit will be 145/150mm to protect breeding stock;
 - separate reporting of greenlip catch and effort (refer to attached document for IVR reporting instructions);
 - collection of size data from harvested greenlip;
 - provision by AVCZ of an annual report and spreadsheet to DEDJTR; and
 - participation in an annual audit to be undertaken by DEDJTR.

3. DEDJTR and AVCZ to continue to work together to develop and implement a harvest strategy in 2017 that rebuilds the abalone biomass as required under the *Victorian Wild Harvest Abalone Fishery Management Plan*.

Compliance with the above conditions and positive trends in key indicators, including standardised pre-recruit abundance, standardised recruit abundance and standardised catch per unit effort, will be important factors in determining if the TACC is retained in 2018/19.

I look forward to working with AVCZ on the harvest strategy and testing it alongside the current process during the next TACC setting period. It will be important over this next year for DEDJTR to work with AVCZ to get the data logger program fully implemented and to share this data with DEDJTR as part of the evidence to inform stock status for abalone in Central Zone. DEDJTR will continue to work with AVCZ to establish the Fishery Resource Advisory Group (FRAG) which together with the harvest strategy and data logging program will strengthen the management of the Central Zone fishery.

I have included with this letter a copy of the 2017/18 Further Quota Order, the Fisheries (Central Abalone Zone) Notice and the current central zone reef code maps for your reference. I encourage you to use these documents to ensure compliance with the current SMU and size limit boundaries and manage fishing accordingly. I also encourage you to regularly check Fisherweb to monitor catch levels.

Please contact Bill Lussier, Manager Marine and Estuarine Fisheries, on (03) 5258 0206 or bill.lussier@ecodev.vic.gov.au if you require any further information regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely



Travis Dowling
Executive Director Fisheries Victoria

16/03/2017