



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Annual Report 2023–24

afma.gov.au

Securing Australia's fishing future

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Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Letter of transmittal

1 October 2024

Julie Collins MP
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

We have pleasure in presenting to you the annual report of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

The annual report has been prepared in accordance with all obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* and the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*.

During 2023–24, AFMA continued to deliver regulatory and management services to Australian fisheries operators and the broader community. This has ensured sustainable and profitable Commonwealth fisheries that contributed approximately \$400 million in gross value of production. Compliance activities by AFMA officers helped ensure that these valuable and sustainable fish resources were not undermined by illegal fishing.


Fisheries and the marine environment are in a state of flux throughout Australia. Non-fisheries issues such as climate change and the continued competition for marine space with sectors such as offshore energy necessitate a dynamic approach to fisheries monitoring, assessment, research, and management. At the same time, most commercial fisheries are far smaller (number of vessels and amount of fishing effort) than they have been in the past, posing reduced risks to the ecosystem. AFMA is altering our management approach to minimise unnecessary regulation to ensure commercial fleets can maximise net economic returns, while maintaining our globally recognised standards for sustainability. At the same time, we have growing concerns that AFMA cannot mitigate some environmental trends, particularly those related to climate change.

As required under section 10 of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, we certify that we are satisfied that AFMA has:

- prepared fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans
- put in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, recording or reporting mechanisms that meet the specific needs of the agency, and
- taken all reasonable measures to appropriately deal with fraud relating to the agency.

We give you this annual report, which has been prepared for the purposes of section 46 of the PGPA Act, to present to the Parliament.

Yours sincerely



Helen Kroger
Chair



Wez Norris
Chief Executive Officer
Accountable Authority

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User guide

This report provides details of the operations and performance of AFMA for the financial year ended 30 June 2024, as forecast in the *Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio Budget Statements 2023–24* and the *AFMA Corporate Plan 2023–26*.

This report has been prepared in accordance with Australian Government requirements. It addresses all applicable obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, and annual reporting requirements set out in the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*, the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*, and other relevant legislation.

Review by Chair and CEO

The review by the Chair and Chief Executive Officer looks at AFMA's key achievements in 2023–24, and an outlook for 2024–25.

Overview of AFMA

Explains our role and functions, stakeholders, and our organisational structure.

Annual performance statements

Details AFMA's Annual Performance Statements 2023–24 explaining our major objectives, performance results and an analysis of those results.

This part also describes performance results in each fishery, including any significant changes to management arrangements and opportunities and challenges faced in meeting our performance objectives.

Report on financial performance

Consists of AFMA's financial statements for the 2023–24 financial year as independently audited by the ANAO. These statements include financial performance, senior executive service (SES) remuneration, financial status, and cash flows during 2023–24.

Management and accountability

Covers AFMA's governance arrangements and practices, including financial management, human resource management activities, risk management practices, and monitoring and review mechanisms.

Appendices

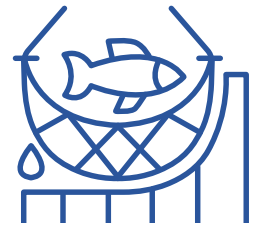
Includes details of resource statements, employee statistics, key management personnel remuneration, and other management issues. The joint authority annual reports from the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and Queensland are also included in the appendices.

References

A list of annual report requirements as set out in the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Amendment (Non-corporate Commonwealth Entity Annual Reporting) Rule 2014 and the Resource Management Guide 135 *Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities* is provided at the end of the report. Also included is a list of abbreviations and acronyms, a glossary, and an index.



Review by Chair and CEO



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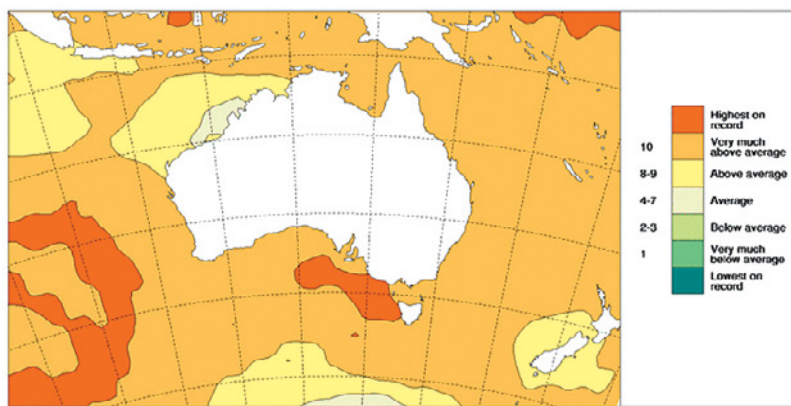
Review by Chair and CEO

Significant issues for us

Throughout 2023–24, we continued to promote and support sustainable Commonwealth fisheries, which is essential to the achievement of our economic objective.

Climate change remains the single largest threat to the marine ecosystem and the Commonwealth fisheries that rely upon it.

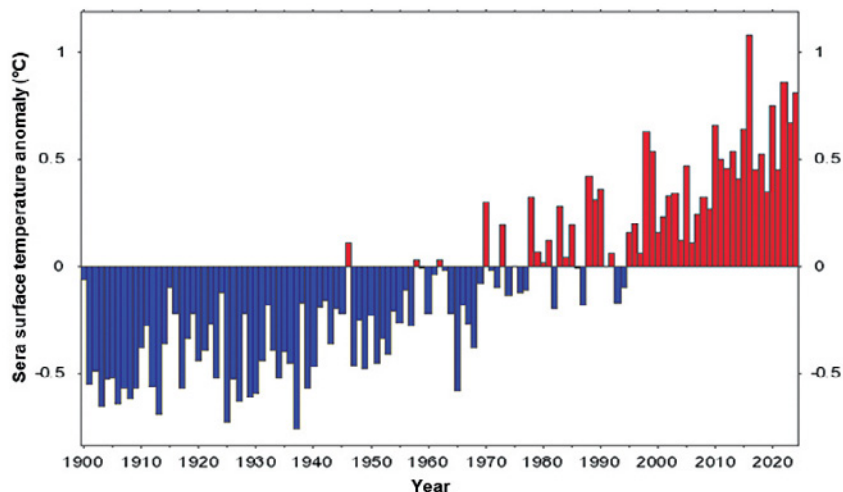
Figure 1: Sea surface temperature (SST) deciles for the Australian region July 2023 to June 2024, relative to the 1900–2023 average



© Commonwealth of Australia 2024, Bureau of Meteorology

Issued: 13/08/2024

Figure 2: Time series of annual SST anomaly for the Australian region from 1900–01 to 2023–24. Source: Australian Bureau of Meteorology, using NOAA ERSST



Global sea surface temperatures in 2023–24 were the highest on record (which was also the case in 2022–23), and this was particularly the case in Australia. As shown above, most of the Australian region experienced sea surface temperature well above long-term averages, with some regions experiencing the highest on record. It is important to note that sea surface temperature is only one indicator of the changing marine environment, alongside higher than average sub-surface temperatures, large-scale changes to the distribution and eddying of Australia's major ocean currents, increased acidification and decreased oxygen levels.

These changes have an undeniable impact on the productivity, distribution, and food-chain of commercially important fish stocks, and this relationship is becoming clearer in published literature, particularly through ecosystem modelling that estimates the trajectory of key fish stocks with, and without, observed and predicted further changes to the marine environment through climate change. For some species, the expected population trend is negative, despite almost zero catch from the commercial sector. Such an outcome suggests that Australia's marine ecosystem will be substantially different in the future.

AFMA has responded to this in two ways. The first is to develop and trial a Climate Risk Framework (CRF) that seeks to ensure climate risks are formally considered in our decision-making processes using a risk-based semi-quantitative approach.

The CRF offers an immediate, efficient, and practical solution while more quantitative approaches are being developed that allow integration of climate science with harvest strategies, stock assessments and/or ecological risk assessments. Secondly, we have been working closely with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to ensure that key government policies on harvest strategies and bycatch management also recognise the inevitable changes to the marine environment, and provide fit-for-purpose policy settings, and expectations in that context.

Another issue we have been addressing is competition for marine space. We have been working with both the fishing industry and DCCEEW to ensure there is a good understanding of the potential displacement of fishing effort as a result of proposed offshore energy precincts. We are continually reviewing our regulatory footprint to ensure appropriate protection is in place for fishing while other government priorities are being fulfilled.

Illegal fishing by foreign vessels in Australian waters, particularly in the Kimberly Marine Park, remains a key threat to Australia's civil maritime security and is discussed in detail below.

Lastly, social and financial issues continue to challenge industry viability. While varied between fisheries, issues of high fuel price and freight costs, low and inelastic market prices, and crew availability and cost are continually raised as threats to the future of the industry.

Our performance and financial results

Our fisheries make a valuable contribution to the broader Australian community by providing employment, supporting economic development in regional areas, and generating export earnings. The fisheries assessed by Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) in the Fishery Status Reports 2023 generated an estimated gross value of production (GVP) of \$437 million in 2021–22. This is 29 per cent of Australia's total wild-catch fisheries GVP of \$1.51 billion¹.

Ecologically sustainable development

Our Management Advisory Committees and Resource Assessment Groups continue to collate data on the impacts of fisheries we manage. We have welcomed new modelling of the status of stocks with and without climate signals, to better understand which species are more or less sensitive to climate change. We have been working with colleagues from the US, Canada, and Japan to build more climate-ready decision points and move towards more quantitative decision making.

During 2023–24, there was no change or increase in the number of stocks for which management measures were based on species-appropriate scientific assessment. The number of AFMA-only stocks assessed as 'subject to overfishing' remains low.

Maximise net economic returns

We address this objective by specifying an appropriate catch or effort target for each of the key commercial stocks taken in each fishery, where feasible, and implementing management measures that provide incentives for cost minimisation and revenue maximisation for the commercial sector. ABARES provides commentary on likely and estimated Net Economic Returns (NER) trends in specific fisheries in its annual Fishery Status Reports.

A formal Fishery Management Paper on NER will be published when the review of the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy is complete.

Compliance

The 2023–24 financial year has seen AFMA deliver solidly on the domestic compliance front. Most of the specific targets specified in our National Compliance and Enforcement Program (NCEP) have been met. In addition, we have increased capacity and focus on our fisheries intelligence capability to maintain our approach to identifying fishery-specific risks as well as targeting higher risk operators.

Illegal fishing by foreign fishing vessels, mainly from Indonesia, but also from Papua New Guinea in the Torres Strait remains a high priority for AFMA and a key risk to fisheries and the marine environment, as evidenced by our reporting below.

¹ Refer <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/fisheries/fishery-status>

We and Maritime Border Command (MBC) (involving Australian Defence and Australian Border Force), remained focused on locating, apprehending, and prosecuting illegal foreign fishers in Australian waters. Our collaborative efforts led to seized catch and fishing equipment, disposal of vessels, and apprehension of foreign fishers. We also successfully prosecuted numerous foreign fishers for offences under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* (Cth). Penalties ranged from 12-month good behaviour bonds to imprisonment for up to ninety days, sending a clear signal that Australia is active in global action against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU).

To complement these direct enforcement activities, we maintained our active international engagement and capacity building program, rolling out public education campaigns in Indonesia and training opportunities in many south east Asian and Pacific countries. These activities seek to reduce illegal fishing in the region generally, and at its source.

Efficient, cost-effective, and accountable management

The Minister for Finance approved a \$1.100 million operating loss for AFMA for 2023–24 to accommodate several unforeseen budget pressures, including a substantial increase to our Comcare premium (≈\$0.450 million) and increases to staff salaries as a result of the public service-wide enterprise bargaining process (≈\$0.480 million).

Our actual operating loss was \$0.911 million which was absorbed in AFMA reserves.

The 2023–24 financial year was the third year of our Data Transformation and Electronic Monitoring Program, which aims to deliver a range of deregulation outcomes to AFMA and industry. Major progress included:

- Data Transformation – The Agency Data Capture project was finalised, providing additional tools for industry to report its information digitally, saving time and effort, while also decreasing AFMA's costs and providing for enhanced timeliness and accuracy of data to support decision making.
- Electronic Monitoring (EM) – This year we welcomed the commencement of at-sea EM trials in the Northern Prawn Fishery, Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery, Commonwealth Trawl Sector, and sub-Antarctic fisheries. These trials are intended to assess the practicalities, costs, and benefits of introducing EM to provide increased confidence that fishing activities are being independently monitored, and fisheries related data is accurately reported to improve the overall quality of scientific assessments and decision-making.

Outlook for the next reporting period

For the next reporting period, continued slowing of seafood consumption in some Asian countries, and changing composition of expected exports is projected – with increases in salmonid and prawn exports, and falls in rock lobster². Declining prices are expected to result from slow growth in export demand for Australian seafood, and an appreciating Australian dollar, and these will exacerbate the existing challenges to industry viability.

The key issues outlined above will remain the primary foci for AFMA's fisheries work.

An additional key challenge will be meeting the growing expectations for public service reform and reporting which, while important to ensure proper governance of public funds, is disproportionately expensive in the short term for small agencies to deliver.

Further context is provided in AFMA's *Corporate Plan 2024–27*, available on our website.



Helen Kroger
Chair



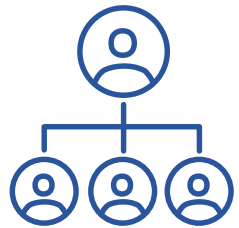
Wez Norris
Chief Executive Officer

² Refer: <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/fisheries/fisheries-economics/fisheries-forecasts#challenging-conditions-continue-for-seafood-exports>





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Overview of AFMA

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) is established under the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* (the FAA) to manage Australia's Commonwealth fisheries on behalf of the Australian community in accordance with the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* (FMA). Our purpose is to pursue the ecologically sustainable development (ESD) of Commonwealth fisheries for the benefit of the Australian community.

Our outcome

Ecologically sustainable and economically efficient Commonwealth fisheries, through understanding and monitoring Australia's marine living resources and regulating and monitoring commercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal fishing.



Our objectives

We fulfil our purpose by actively pursuing, and having regard to, our objectives.

Act and section	Summary of objective ¹
Fisheries Administration Act 1991 – section 6	Implement efficient and cost-effective fisheries management.
	Ensure the exploitation of fisheries and related activities is consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development. ²
	Where Australia has obligations under international agreements, ensure the exploitation of fish stocks and related activities in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) and the high seas are carried out consistently with those obligations.
	To the extent that Australia has obligations under international law or agreements, ensure that fishing activities by Australian flagged vessels on the high seas are conducted consistently with those obligations. ³
	Maximise net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries.
	Ensure accountability to the fishing industry and the Australian community in the management of fisheries resources.
	Achieve government targets in relation to the recovery of AFMA's costs.
	Ensure that the interests of commercial, recreational, and Indigenous fishers are considered.
Fisheries Management Act 1991 – section 3	Ensure, through proper conservation and management measures, that the living resources of the AFZ are not endangered by over-exploitation.
	Achieve optimum utilisation of the living resources of the Australian fishing zone.

Note 1: Objectives that AFMA 'must pursue' are shaded blue. AFMA is to 'have regard to' the unshaded objectives.

Note 2: The principles of ecologically sustainable development are detailed in section 6A of the FAA.

Note 3: This objective is listed as one that AFMA must pursue in the FAA and as one that AFMA is to have regard to in the FMA.

In pursuing our objectives, we must ensure, as far as practicable, that measures adopted must not be inconsistent with the preservation, conservation, and protection of whales.

AFMA at a glance



AFMA fisheries officers activities included...



Of these, **25** were desktop inspections

Organisational structure

AFMA is organised into four functional areas with the following roles:

- Fisheries management teams: Deliver innovative, transparent, and flexible regulatory arrangements that ensure sustainability of fish stocks and the broader marine environment, while ensuring that barriers to commercial activity are appropriately mitigated.
- Fisheries operations teams: Deliver data-led, risk-based monitoring, control and surveillance and enforcement activities to support the integrity of regulatory measures.
- Fisheries information teams: Develop new and manage existing information products to inform regulatory practice in fisheries management and fisheries operations teams while administering industry-focused client management.
- Corporate teams: Enable and expedite the work of technical fisheries branches through proactive delivery of supporting services and advice.

The AFMA Executive team, comprising the CEO, Deputy CEO, General Manager Fisheries Operations, and the Chief Operating Officer (COO), empowers the functional teams above through strategic leadership and relationship building within government and across industry, other fishing sectors and broader marine environment stakeholders.

Our organisational structure as of 30 June 2024 is presented below.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Senator the Honourable Murray Watt			
AFMA Commission Ms Helen Kroger, Mr Wez Norris, Ms Catherine Cooper, Mr Brett McCallum, Ms Sevaly Sen, Dr David Smith, Mr Scott Spencer, Mr Will Zacharin			
AFMA Chief Executive Officer Mr Wez Norris			
Deputy Chief Executive Officer Ms Anna Willock			
Fisheries Management Branch	Fisheries Information and Services Branch	Fisheries Operations Branch	Corporate Services Branch
		General Manager Mr Justin Bathurst	Chief Operating Officer Ms Mira Bacelj
Northern Fisheries and Co-management Senior Manager Mr Brodie Macdonald	Fisheries Data and Licensing Services Senior Manager Mr Andrew Powell	National Compliance Strategy Senior Manager Mr Tod Spencer	Legal and Parliamentary Services A/g General Counsel Mr Daniel Dal Piva
Northern Fisheries Torres Strait Fisheries Senior Manager Mr Steven Harris	Electronic Monitoring Senior Manager Mr Tamre Sarhan	International Compliance Operations Senior Manager Mr Brendan Rayner	Business Partnership and Strategy Chief Finance Officer Ms Jo Hobson
Demersal and Midwater Fisheries Senior Manager Ms Sally Weekes		International Compliance Policy Senior Manager Mr David Power	People, Capability and Engagement Senior Manager Ms Corinne Fox
Tuna and International Fisheries Senior Manager Ms Selina Stoute			Technology and Digital Services Chief Information Officer Ms Belinda Cook
Policy, Environment, Economics and Research Senior Manager Mr Ryan Murphy			
Climate Adaptation and Strategic Reform Senior Program Manager Mr Dan Corrie			

Members of accountable authority

As a regulatory authority and non-corporate Commonwealth entity, AFMA comprises the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Commission and AFMA staff.

The CEO is the Accountable Authority under the PGPA Act as well as the Agency Head under the *Public Service Act 1999* and is also appointed as an AFMA Commissioner. The CEO is responsible for assisting the Commission in giving effect to its decisions. In addition, the CEO is separately responsible for exercising AFMA's foreign compliance functions and powers, and for functions under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*. The CEO is subject to Ministerial Direction with regard to AFMA's foreign compliance functions, and under the *Public Service Act 1999* is required to be responsive to government in implementing the government's policies and programs.

Members of AFMA's Commission

Ms Helen Kroger – Chair

Helen has held leadership positions in the private, public and not for profit sectors for the last 20 years. She is a former Liberal Senator for Victoria, Government Whip, and active former member of numerous key Senate and Joint Committees. She has extensive board experience and advises corporations on regulatory compliance, governance, communications, and stakeholder management issues.

Mr Wez Norris – Chief Executive Officer

Wez is an AFMA Commissioner and the CEO. He has a Bachelor of Applied Science in Natural Systems and Wildlife Management from the University of Queensland. He has worked for Queensland Fisheries, previously at AFMA, as the Manager of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery, and then spent ten years as the Deputy Director-General at the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, in the Solomon Islands. He has worked on a number of significant fisheries reform projects, including prawn trawl, hand-line and hand-collectable fisheries, and also held positions in the Torres Strait and in a Ministerial Office.

Ms Catherine Cooper – Member

Catherine currently chairs the Environment Protection Agency of South Australia and Central Adelaide Waste and Recycling Authority. Catherine is an industry leader and she was a finalist in both the 1997 and 1998 Telstra Business Women's Awards. She has extensive committee and board experience including as former Chair of the Fisheries Council of South Australia, the South Australian Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee, and Aquaculture Advisory Council.

Mr Brett McCallum – Member

Brett has been a director of Bresal Consulting since November 2015. He has a Bachelor of Commerce and is a past Deputy Chair of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. He is currently chair of the Western Australian and South Australian Research Advisory Committee, the Australian Aquatic Animal Welfare Strategy Working Group, and the Offshore Snapper Fishery Advisory Committee in the Northern Territory. His expertise covers commercial fisheries management, government policy setting, natural resource management, economics, and business management. He has over 40 years' experience in peak fishing industry representation as Chief Executive of the WA Fishing Industry Council and the Pearl Producers Association. Brett has held senior managerial positions with several leading Australian fishing, pearling and exporting companies.

Ms Sevaly Sen – Member

Sevaly is an applied economist with over 30 years' experience in fisheries in Australia, Oceania, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Sevaly ran her own consultancy company in the UK, worked for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation in southern Africa, and the Institute of Fisheries Management in Denmark. Since moving to Australia in 1999, Sevaly runs her own consultancy business. She has been a member of the Fisheries Council of South Australia, the NSW Structural Adjustment Review Committee, and the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee.

Currently she is a member of the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Working Group, is advisor to Sydney Fish Market on sustainability issues, and coordinates an FRDC sub-program.

Dr David Smith – Member

David led the Marine Resources and Industries Research Program of Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Oceans and Atmosphere. The Program focused on research that supports the balanced use of marine resources, including sustainable marine industries (fisheries, offshore oil and gas), and biodiversity conservation. Prior to joining CSIRO in 2005, he was Director of the Marine and Freshwater Resources Institute in Victoria. He has over 30 years' experience in fisheries assessment and management, and research management. Since September 2018, he has been a consultant. He currently is the Independent Chair of the National Research Providers Network for Fisheries and Aquaculture and is a member of the National Marine Science Committee. He is an Adjunct Professor at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies.

Mr Scott Spencer – Member

Scott has over 40 years' experience in natural resource management and public policy development. He is a former Secretary of the Queensland Fish Management Authority, Director General of the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water, Deputy Director General (Policy) in the Queensland Department of Premier and Cabinet and, most recently, Deputy Director General, Fisheries and Forestry within the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Scott was also Chair of the Board of Directors of Sunwater Ltd and, for a number of years, operated his own private consultancy. He has held numerous statutory positions including as Commissioner on the then Murray–Darling Basin Commission. Scott has formal qualifications in Economics.

Mr Will Zacharin – Member

Will currently works as a private consultant specialising in the areas of fisheries and biosecurity. He spent 20 years as a Senior Executive with the Department of Primary Industries and Regions, South Australia, with nine years as the Executive Director, Fisheries from 2000 to 2009, and Executive Director, Biosecurity from 2010 to 2019.

Will has been involved in fisheries science, management, and aquatic animal health and sustainability throughout his 34-year public service career. He has participated in a wide range of boards and committees involved in fisheries management, marine resource research, and planning and resource allocation. He is the current Chair of the NSW Total Allowable Fishing Committee which determines the total allowable catch and effort for the major fisheries in NSW. Will holds post graduate qualifications in science and business and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study fisheries allocation arrangement in 2001/2.

AFMA Commissioners – attendance at Commission meetings

Five Commission meetings were held in 2023–24. The table below shows the number of meetings Commissioners attended.

Commissioner	Period as Commissioner within 2023–24	Meetings attended 2023–24
Ms Helen Kroger	Full year	5
Mr Wez Norris	Full year	5
Ms Catherine Cooper	Until 15 November 2023	2
Mr Brett McCallum	Full year	5
Mrs Sevaly Sen	Full year	4
Dr David Smith	Full year	5
Mr Scott Spencer	Full year	5
Mr Will Zacharin	8 December 2023 –30 June 2024	2

Programs administered by AFMA during 2023–24

Domestic compliance program

AFMA's approach to compliance and enforcement is described in the [National Compliance and Enforcement Policy 2022](#). We implement risk-based domestic compliance programs, and participation in the Australian Government's civil maritime surveillance and response arrangements improves management of Australian fish stocks. We also provide fisheries management, licensing and domestic compliance services for the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984*.

International compliance program

Engaging internationally is integral to improving the management of fish stocks within and beyond the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ). Our activities include education, monitoring, and enforcement to protect Commonwealth fisheries from illegal fishing, and engaging internationally to provide specialist advice, as well as delivering capacity building programs to deter illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing beyond Australia's borders.

Climate adaptation program

Climate change challenges our understanding of, and ability to influence, fish stocks and marine ecosystems. AFMA's Climate Adaptation Program is implementing a range of measures to incorporate climate change information and risks into decision-making frameworks, to ensure that management of Commonwealth fisheries is adaptive to the impacts of climate change.

Data transformation and electronic monitoring program

AFMA was provided \$20.1 million over the forward estimates in the 2021–22 Budget to reduce regulatory burden, increase productivity, and improve environmental outcomes across Commonwealth fisheries. The Data Transformation and Electronic Monitoring (DT&EM) Program combines two inter-related projects:

- Data Transformation combines leading edge data integration and access.
- Electronic Monitoring to be expanded across Commonwealth fisheries to collect fine-scale at-sea fishing data.

Linked programs

There was no change to AFMA's contribution to the Department of Home Affairs' Border Enforcement Program.

AFMA provides the fisheries focus within the Australian Government Civil Maritime Surveillance and Response Program and is responsible for the administration of legislation on illegal fishing in the Australian Fishing Zone. We deter and prevent illegal foreign fishing by supporting cooperative enforcement operations, prosecution of offenders, confiscation and disposal of foreign fishing vessels, carrying out education programs, and capacity building projects.





Annual performance statements



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Annual performance statements

Statement of preparation

I, as the accountable authority of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), present the 2023–24 annual performance statements of AFMA. These statements are prepared for paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and section 87 of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*.

In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, and accurately present AFMA's performance in the reporting period, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act (section 16F of the PGPA Rule).



Wez Norris

Chief Executive Officer

Overview

The annual performance statements present our achievements against our purpose and performance measure targets, as set out in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023–24 and our Corporate Plan 2023–26, which includes our Annual Operational Plan.

In the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023–24, AFMA's sole outcome (Outcome 1) is 'Ecologically sustainable and economically efficient Commonwealth fisheries, through understanding and monitoring Australia's

marine living resources and regulating and monitoring commercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal foreign fishing'.

In 2023–24, we planned to deliver our outcome across four goals with 12 performance measures.

Performance summary

Table 1 below provides a summary of our overall performance. Of the 12 measures, nine were met, one was not met, and two measures could not be confirmed at the time of publication due to the unavailability of ABARES data until October 2024. Detailed analysis is provided on pages 25–40.

Changes to performance measures

Over at least the last four reporting periods, we have been endeavouring to improve the quality and reliability of our performance information as well as clarify our performance information across the portfolio budget statements, our corporate plan, the annual performance statements, and our annual report. The changes we made between publishing our Annual Report 2022–23 (in October 2023) and our Corporate Plan 2023–26 (in June 2024) are summarised in Table 2 on pages 41–43. This table also shows the changes we made in 2023–24 for the 2024–25 reporting year with the rationale for these changes.

Table 1: Performance summary 2023–24

Goal	Performance measures	2023–24 Target		Result	
		Met	Partially met	Not met	
Management of Commonwealth fisheries consistent with principles of ecological sustainable development	1. Percentage of Total Allowable Catch (TAC) determinations which are based on Resource Assessment Group (RAG) or Management Advisory Committee (MAC) scientific assessments.	Greater than or equal to 95 per cent.	✓		
	2. The number of new Ecological Risk Assessments (ERAs) completed for regulated species.	Greater than or equal to five.	✓		
	3. Independent evaluation of the biological and economic status of fish stocks managed solely by AFMA.	No additional stocks evaluated as 'overfished'.			ABARES preliminary assessment not yet available
	4. Compliance with conditions imposed on fisheries assessments.	100 per cent of fisheries assessments maintained.	✓		
	5. The number of stocks with target reference points based on Maximum Economic Yield (MEY), an agreed proxy thereof, or a multi-stock harvest strategy.	No change or an increase.	✓		
	6. Net Economic Return as assessed in the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) Fishery Status Reports.	Positive trend over rolling three-year average.			ABARES preliminary assessment not yet available

Goal	Performance measures	2023–24 Target			Result	
		Met	Partially met	Not met		
Compliance with Commonwealth fisheries laws and policies and relevant international fishing obligations and standards	7. Treatment of identified domestic compliance risks as outlined in the National Compliance and Enforcement Program (NCEP).	95 per cent of AFMA's National Compliance and Enforcement Program performance targets met or within threshold.	✓			
		8. Incidence level of illegal foreign fishing vessels operating in the Australian Fishing Zone.	Lower than the previous three-year average.			✓
		9. Compliance rate with international obligations, implemented by AFMA, as assessed by International Fisheries Management Organisations (IFMOs) (implemented by AFMA).	Greater than 90 per cent.	✓		
	Deliver effective, cost efficient and accountable management of Commonwealth fisheries resources	10. Cost recovery budget.	At or below 2005–06 once adjusted for CPI.	✓		
		11. Engagement with legislated peak body.	Commonwealth Fisheries Association is satisfied that meaningful opportunity is given to contribute to planning, delivery, and reporting.	✓		
		12. Number of services offered digitally.	Increase in the number of empirical data collection services offered electronically.	✓		

Performance results

Corporate Goal No. 1: Management of Commonwealth fisheries consistent with principles of ecological sustainable development

AFMA manages Commonwealth fisheries on the basis that minimising the impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem and ensuring sustainable harvests leads to better ecological and social outcomes for the Australian community. We rely on rigorous science and stakeholder engagement in accordance with AFMA's Strategic Research Plan, as well as through our Management Advisory Committees (MACs), Resource Assessment Groups (RAGs), stakeholder forums, specialist working groups, workshops, and other advisory bodies and forums.

Performance measure 1

We manage the sustainability of fishing stocks mainly by setting the maximum amount of a particular fish species that can be taken by commercial fishers during a fishing period (known as Total Allowable Catch (TAC)). All TACs are based on scientific assessments. We rely on MACs and RAGs for advice on and review of scientific data and information about the appropriate TAC for fish-stocks, sub-stocks, and species.

Percentage of Total Allowable Catch determinations which are based on Resource Assessment Group/Management Advisory Committee scientific assessments.

Target	Greater than or equal to 95 per cent
Actual result	Achieved: 100 per cent
Previous year performance	There is no basis for an assessment of performance over time as this measure was amended in 2022–23

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

In 2023–24, all species that have TAC determinations have been subject to scientific assessment by RAGs and MACs. The nature and regularity of that scientific assessment varies based on several factors, such as the level of take, expected risk, and availability of data.

Some of the fisheries we manage have Total Allowable Effort (TAE), which is a comparable proxy to a TAC. For completeness, we are planning minor revisions to this measure for 2025–26 to clarify that both TACs and TAEs are covered in our performance measure.

Performance measure 2

Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) is a process that evaluates the likelihood that a regulated fishery is experiencing adverse ecological effects as a result of exposure to one or more stressors (for example commercial fishing activity in fisheries). ERAs provide fisheries managers with information about the link between exposure to stressors and effects, enabling managers to compare various scenarios and choose a course of action. We complete ERAs at the fishery (rather than fish species) level.

The number of new Ecological Risk Assessment assessments completed for regulated species.

Target	Greater than or equal to five
Actual result	Achieved: Five completed
Previous year performance	There is no basis for an assessment of performance over time as this measure was amended in 2022–23

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

The target (of five or more ERAs) is not intended to be an arbitrary number since ERAs are triggered by increased risk in a fishery. We do not intend to maximise the number of ERAs undertaken as this will not improve our overall management of fisheries. Work is underway to clarify in our performance measures that we aim to minimise the risk to species within the fisheries we manage, to the extent that risks are within our power to manage.

In this financial year, five ERAs were undertaken as outlined in the table below.

2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Prawn Fishery Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three commenced Nil finalised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery Small Pelagic Fishery Purse seine Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Macquarie Island Longline Fishery

Performance measure 3

The ABARES Fishery Status Reports assess the biological status of commercial fish stocks, the economic status of Australian Government-managed fisheries, and the broader impact of Australian Government-managed fisheries on the environment.

The biological status of a fish stock is assessed based on requirements from the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy, which requires that harvest strategies for commercial fish stocks are implemented and maintained above certain biomass limits to avoid overfishing. The economic status of each Australian Government-managed fishery (excluding jointly managed Torres Strait fisheries) is determined by assessing management performance against the economic objective to maximise Net Economic Return (NER) to the Australian community. A fishery's NER over a particular period is equal to fishing revenues minus fishing costs.

Fish stocks classified by ABARES as 'overfished' have a biomass below a certain reference point. Stocks may be able to rebuild from an 'overfished' status. 'Subject to overfishing' is an assessment of whether current levels of fishing mortality (landed catch, discards and other sources of mortality) will cause the stock to become overfished or to fail to recover, if continued in the long term.

Independent evaluation of the biological and economic status of fish stocks managed solely by AFMA.

Target	No additional stocks evaluated as 'overfished'
Actual result	Result could not be confirmed at the time of publication due to the unavailability of ABARES data until October 2024
Previous year performance	In 2022–23, ABARES assessed three stocks as subject to overfishing

Analysis

This performance target cannot be assessed.

AFMA has revised this performance measure and target in our 2024–27 Corporate Plan. In future, the target will focus on our actions to address overfished stocks, which is deemed a better reflection of the discharge of AFMA's duties. It also provides for more real time reporting of progress than using the ABARES reports alone given the necessary time lag in compiling data and producing the reports.

Performance measure 4

Under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) the Australian Government, through the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, holds a legislative responsibility to ensure that all Commonwealth managed fisheries undergo strategic environmental impact assessment before new management arrangements are brought into effect, and all fisheries, from which fish are exported, undergo assessment to determine the extent to which management arrangements will ensure the fishery is managed in an ecologically sustainable way.

The assessments are conducted by the Sustainable Fisheries Section at the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). We assist in the assessment process by preparing submissions against the Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries. We contribute to managing in an ecologically sustainable way by complying with conditions imposed by the DCCEEW assessments.

Compliance with conditions imposed on fisheries assessments.

Target	100 per cent of fisheries assessments maintained
Actual result	Achieved: 100 per cent
Previous year performance	Achieved: 100 per cent (refer performance measure five)

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

As of 30 June 2024, we have ensured that EPBC approvals for all relevant Commonwealth fisheries have been maintained or renewed, according to DCCEEW's regular review schedule. This includes for fisheries managed under the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act 1984* (Cth).

Several fisheries recently received new Wildlife Trade Operation (WTO) accreditation, some of which have included updated conditions around identification of species listed under the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES) and *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (CMS). It is a 'business as usual' process for us to develop responses to these Conventions.

Approved fisheries' WTOs can be found on DCCEEW's [fisheries](#) internet page.

Corporate Goal No. 2: Maximise net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Commonwealth fisheries

AFMA pursues its economic objective by setting harvest level targets that seek to maintain each key commercial stock at a level that will support the Maximum Economic Yield (MEY) of that stock, as set out in the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy. This level is known as the Biomass that Maximises the Economic Yield (BMEY). In some cases, alternative targets to BMEY may be used by AFMA for a range of reasons, including to meet international arrangements, achieve ecological or stock recovery objectives, or seek fishery-wide (rather than species-specific) MEY.

Performance measure 5

This performance measure relates to the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy, which provides a framework that allows a precautionary, evidence-based approach to setting TAC levels in all Commonwealth fisheries on a fishery-by-fishery basis.

A target reference point is a benchmark or desired state for a fishery. The target reference point can be defined in several ways including maximum economic yield for a single species, biomass target for a single species, or multi-stock maximum economic yield for fisheries in which the same fishing gear may catch several species simultaneously.

We follow the implementation guidelines for the Harvest Strategy Policy when we make decisions about target reference points for our fisheries. We also set TACs at levels aimed at maximising net economic returns whilst maintaining stocks at sustainable levels.

The number of stocks with target reference points based on Maximum Economic Yield, an agreed proxy thereof, or a multi-stock harvest strategy.

Target	No change or an increase
Actual result	Achieved: No change
Previous year performance	Achieved: No change (refer measure six)

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

There have been no changes to target reference points in any fishery.

The Harvest Strategy Policy is required to be reviewed five years after commencement (in 2018). The review that is led by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, commenced in 2023, with final review reports expected to be released in late 2024.

Performance measure 6

The Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy requires AFMA to maximise NER to the Australian community from the management of a fishery. Where feasible, we achieve this by:

- specifying an appropriate catch or effort target for each of the key commercial stocks taken in that fishery, which together across the commercial stocks achieves MEY for the fishery, and
- implementing management measures which do not impede economic efficiency in the fishery.

Net Economic Return as assessed in the ABARES Fishery Status Reports.

Target	Positive trend over rolling three-year average
Actual result	Result could not be confirmed at the time of publication due to the unavailability of ABARES data until October 2024
Previous year performance	Achieved: No change

Analysis

This performance target cannot be assessed.

Attempts to simplify terms and concepts underpinning AFMA's economic objective have led to confusion concerning both the intent of the objective and ways to measure AFMA's performance against it. In 2023 we published a [paper](#) detailing how this objective is currently interpreted, measured and reported.

Previous ABARES' assessments have not provided sufficient quantitative information to determine whether the target has been met, and this is unlikely to change. Overall, economic conditions in most Australian fisheries are being challenged by a confluence of financial and environmental pressures, so NER is expected to be low and probably declining.

AFMA is working with key stakeholders to improve how we report against the NER objective. This work will be implemented through a new Fishery Management Paper on reporting against AFMA's economic objectives.

Corporate Goal No. 3: Compliance with Commonwealth fisheries laws and policies and relevant international fishing obligations and standards

AFMA applies the principles and strategies outlined in the Australian Fisheries National Compliance Strategy and AFMA's National Compliance and Enforcement Policy. It focuses on approaches encouraging voluntary compliance by domestic fishers while maintaining an enforcement capability and taking deterrence action against conscious non-compliance.

AFMA also leads responses and coordinates action with other government agencies to address threats caused by illegal foreign fishing in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ). AFMA engages with counterpart countries and international agencies, and actively participates in international forums, to combat foreign illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in areas on the high seas where Australia has an interest. AFMA also works alongside partners in building regional capacity to address IUU fishing.

AFMA's approach to international compliance is outlined in the International Compliance and Engagement Program (ICEP). The ICEP outlines five complementary components designed to effectively detect, deter and respond to IUU fishing in the Australian Fishing Zone and in waters where Australia has an interest.

Performance measure 7

Commonwealth domestic fisheries rules and regulations are designed to protect fish stocks (which are a public resource), NER to the Australian community, and the broader environment. The National Compliance and Enforcement Policy 2022 explains our compliance and enforcement role and our risk-based approach across Commonwealth fisheries. Consistent with the aim of this Policy, which is to effectively deter illegal fishing in Commonwealth fisheries and the Australian Fishing Zone, the National Compliance and Enforcement Program (NCEP) outlines our priorities and objectives for 2023–25.

There are four main components of the NCEP (education and engagement, general deterrence, targeted risks, and maintenance), which collectively represent 39 performance targets and threshold bands. Not all these targets have equal impact on deterrence, although we consider all targets to be important to the achievement of NCEP objectives. For example, we set a target of publishing monthly compliance feature articles on our website. We also set a target of re-inspecting 100 per cent of vessels and Fish Receiver Permit operators with adverse inspection outcomes within three months of the original adverse inspection.

Treatment of identified domestic compliance risks as outlined in the National Compliance and Enforcement Program.

Target	95 per cent of AFMA's National Compliance and Enforcement Program performance targets met or within threshold
Actual result	Achieved: 97.4 per cent (38/39)
Previous year performance	Not achieved: 55 per cent of NCEP performance targets met with a further 25 per cent within threshold (refer performance measure eight)

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

Of the 39 targets, 29 were met, and nine were within threshold.

During the past year, we addressed the shortfalls in performance reporting in 2022–23, (involving the publication of monthly compliance feature articles, re-inspection of Fish Receiver Permit operators with adverse inspection outcomes, undertaking baseline measurements for the Bycatch Discards and Torres Strait Fishery Compliance Risk Management Teams (CRMT) programs, and development and delivery of educational material on logbook and CDR requirements/benefits as part of the Torres Strait Fishery CRMT programs).

One target, increasing the rate of voluntary logbook compliance in the Traditional Inhabitant Boat (TIB) fisheries of the Torres Strait, was not met. This is not particularly surprising, and is why most commercial fisheries in Australia and around the world rely on compulsory reporting. Given the lack of any legislative means to compel fishers to report, work on improving voluntary reporting will continue in 2024–25. This will focus on the benefits to the fishery and therefore to individual members of the TIB sector itself. AFMA was successful in implementing a voluntary trial of vessel monitoring systems on a small number of TIB boats in 2024.

Performance measure 8

This measure recognises AFMA as the lead Commonwealth agency for fisheries regulation, which includes surveillance and patrol activities targeting illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing in the AFZ. Australia shares maritime boundaries with a number of countries and works closely with these neighbouring countries to detect and respond to fisheries incursions. For example, we share surveillance information relating to fishing activity with France (in the Pacific and Southern Oceans), Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Indonesia, and Timor-Leste, under bilateral and multilateral arrangements.

To address incidences of illegal foreign fishing in the AFZ, we undertake activities within the AFZ, the Torres Strait, the Southern Ocean and in areas of the high seas where Australia has an interest.

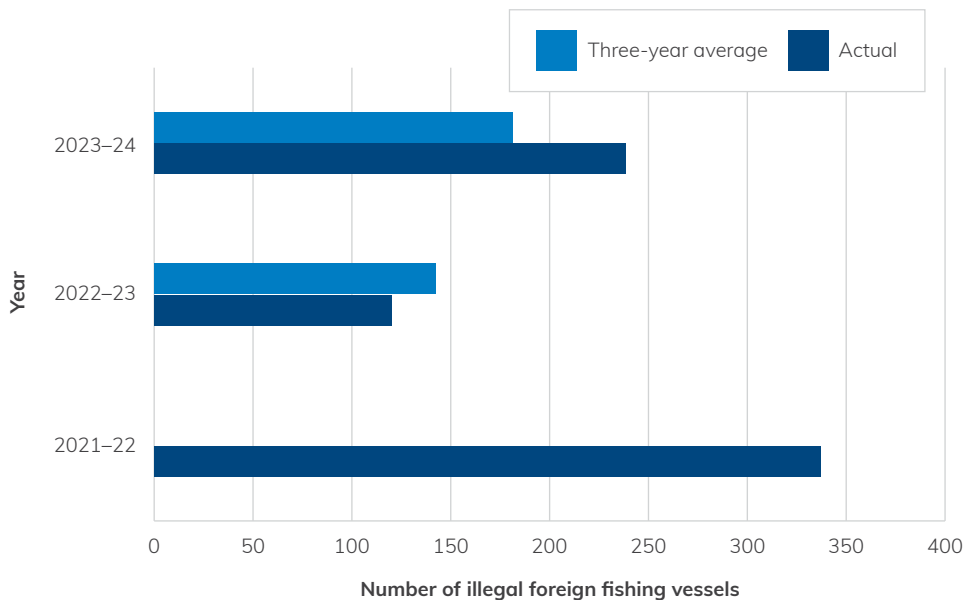
Incidence level of illegal foreign fishing vessels operating in the Australian Fishing Zone.

Target	Lower than the previous three-year average
Actual result	Not achieved: 237 vessels (215 legislative forfeitures and 22 apprehensions) Previous three-year average is 182
Previous year performance	Achieved: 125 vessels (119 legislative forfeitures and six apprehensions) (refer measure nine)

Analysis

The performance target has not been achieved.

Figure 3: Incidence level of illegal foreign fishing vessels operating in the Australian Fishing Zone



NOTE: The three-year average is omitted for 2021-22 because in that year the performance measure was based on a ten-year average, rather than a three-year average. The ten-year average reported in 2022-23 was 20.4 vessels.



Over the past year, there continued to be high levels of illegal foreign fishing in Australia's northern waters, particularly in the Kimberley Marine Park. Many of the drivers behind the increase in illegal foreign fishing are beyond the scope and control of AFMA.

To influence this measure, we take a multifaceted approach including cooperative enforcement operations, education, confiscation of vessels, and capacity building projects. Our success with enforcement operations is partly limited and impacted by the operational capability of other agencies, including Maritime Border Command (MBC) and Australian Border Force (ABF).

We have been making a significant contribution to the investigation and prosecution of illegal foreign fishing. We plan to increase our prosecution efforts under a new policy proposal (NPP) established during 2023–24, with access to funding to commence in the 2024–25 financial year.

Under the Combating IUU Fishing and Promoting Sustainable Fisheries in Southeast Asia Program, AFMA delivered the first part of a training course on fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) in Southeast Asia to fisheries officers from the Regional Plan of Action to promote responsible fishing practices including combating IUU Fishing (RPOA-IUU) member countries.

More information about the training course is available in the case study below. We have also delivered targeted MCS capacity building activities to partner agencies in Cambodia, Thailand, and Timor Leste. Currently, we are progressing further MCS capacity building activities with partner agencies in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Philippines.

To ensure this measure is realistic, achievable, and reflective of our role in positively impacting the incidence level of illegal fishing in the AFZ, AFMA plans to adjust the language of this measure while ensuring we still meet our legislative responsibilities.



CASE STUDY: Enhancing regional capacity to combat IUU fishing in Southeast Asia



In April 2024, the second year of the fisheries MCS in Southeast Asia training course commenced in Nha Trang, Vietnam. The training course is part of Australia's Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and Promoting Sustainable Fisheries in Southeast Asia Program.

Co-designed and co-delivered by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, and Nha Trang University, the training course provides fisheries officers from the region with a comprehensive and holistic understanding of fisheries MCS.

This intensive training is delivered in two three-week blocks with the support of MCS specialists from the International MCS Network, Southeast Asian Regional Plan of Action including Combating IUU Fishing, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Thailand's Department of Fisheries, Fisheries Oceans Canada, Starboard Maritime Intelligence, and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC).

A significant benefit of the training course is the opportunity for participants to network and build strong partnerships that will facilitate information sharing, enabling the implementation of strong MCS measures in the region.

Australia has a long history of working with our Southeast Asian partners to combat regional IUU fishing. Regional cooperation is essential for addressing IUU fishing challenges and ensuring fish stocks are managed sustainably to support the livelihoods of people in the region.

The 39 training participants will return to Nha Trang, Vietnam, in October 2024 to complete the training course.

Performance measure 9

Several fish stocks of commercial importance to Australia have ranges extending outside the AFZ into the high seas and the Exclusive Economic Zones of other countries. These stocks are important for Australia in providing economic benefits for the Australian fishing industry. They require regional cooperative action for effective management.

This measure recognises our part in shared management responsibility for compliance with international instruments (conventions and agreements), which are often implemented through an international fisheries management organisation (IFMO) or other international body. As a party to these international instruments, Australia implements measures agreed by the relevant body in managing its domestic fisheries.

Compliance rate with international obligations, implemented by AFMA, as assessed by international fisheries management organisations (implemented by AFMA).

Target	Greater than 90 per cent
Actual result	Achieved: 98.73 per cent
Previous year performance	Achieved: 98 per cent

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

The end of year result is 98.73 per cent compliance rate with international obligations during 2023–24 as assessed by international fisheries management organisations. AFMA's compliance with international obligations is well above the 2023–24 target reflecting a high level of compliance with relevant international fishing obligations and standards. While this is extremely positive, AFMA faces an ongoing challenge of ensuring all its substantive international reporting is completed (from which to assess Australia's compliance), while also ensuring AFMA's current regulation and management of fisheries complies with the large suite of international obligations.

During this reporting period, AFMA was assessed as partially compliant for four reporting obligations in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and non-compliant for four reporting obligations of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement. These reporting issues have been resolved. One case of non-compliance was recorded in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation for an Australian vessel that fished outside the designated management area. Australia issued the operator a Commonwealth Fisheries Infringement Notice and no further action was required.

We aim to achieve 100 per cent compliance with international obligations, though for practical reasons this might not be possible. For example, we have direct responsibility for only a subset of international requirements. ABARES and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry are responsible for the implementation of the remainder of obligations. Another caveat to our performance is that minor issues (such as reporting delays) are often treated in the same way as more significant non-compliance (such as exceeding catch limits). A further complexity is that the compliance assessment periods for various IFMOs do not always align with Australia's current fishing season and the dates those assessments are finalised varies throughout the year. The table below outlines the most recent fishing periods that were assessed in relation to AFMA's 2023–24 compliance rate.

IFMO	Date assessment was finalised	Fishing period assessed
Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)	31 July 2024	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024
Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)	30 October 2023	Fishing Season 1 December 2023 – 30 November 2024 Compliance Assessed from 1 January – 31 December 2022
Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)	13 May 2024	1 January – 31 December 2023
Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)	3–7 July 2023	1 January – 31 December 2022
South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO)	2 February 2024	1 October 2022 – 30 September 2023
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)	4–8 December 2023	1 January – 31 December 2022

Corporate Goal No. 4: Deliver effective, cost efficient and accountable management of Commonwealth fisheries resources

Minimising cost recovery charges to Commonwealth concession holders through the efficient implementation of cost recovered activities remains a key AFMA commitment. In 2010, AFMA made a commitment to industry that it would keep cost recovery at or below the rate applied in 2005–06 once adjusted for Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases. AFMA's cost recovered budgets for fisheries management have remained relatively consistent since 2005.

Pursuing initiatives to reduce regulation and administrative burden on those we regulate and applying the data we collect to better inform our stakeholders and support our science-based fisheries management decisions provides further opportunities to improve transparency and accountability. The Government committed to investment of \$20.1 million over four years, commencing 2021–22, to reduce regulatory burden, increase productivity, and improve environmental outcomes across Commonwealth fisheries.

AFMA works with key stakeholders to identify opportunities for additional, formal co-management arrangements, in line with *Fisheries Management Paper 17: Co-management in Commonwealth fisheries*. We ensure accountability to stakeholders and enhance our engagement with them through meaningful consultation processes with the Commonwealth Fisheries Association (CFA), our consultative process of MACs and RAGs, applying appropriate communication tools and increasing the level of public reporting.

Performance measure 10

This measure addresses our goal to deliver effective and cost-efficient fisheries management, which involves making proper use of available resources (people, money, and other supplies) to achieve government policy outcomes. Under the Cost Recovery Policy that AFMA is required to apply, the Commonwealth commercial fishing industry pays for costs directly attributable to the fishing industry while the Australian Government pays for any costs identified as more directly benefiting the broader community.

Cost recovery budget

Target	At or below 2005–06 once adjusted for CPI
Actual result	Achieved
Previous year performance	Achieved

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

As in previous years, our expenditure against cost recovered activities is well below the benchmark, which has driven efficiencies and the recent digitisation of some of our business processes. While we consistently meet the commitment to industry that levies will not rise above a certain point, there is a natural limit to the efficiencies which this benchmark will continue to drive. We are considering changes to this performance measure in the 2025–26 portfolio budget cycle.

Performance measure 11

Transparency is about openness, two-way communication and a willingness to explain activities and actions. It allows appropriate scrutiny of government activities, decisions, and processes by providing access to information. Our efforts to be a best practice accountable regulator involve being transparent, open, and responsive to feedback on how we operate.

The Commonwealth Fisheries Association is the peak body representing the collective rights, responsibilities and interests of a diverse commercial fishing industry in Commonwealth regulated fisheries.

Engagement with legislated peak body.

Target	Commonwealth Fisheries Association is satisfied that meaningful opportunity is given to contribute to planning, delivery and reporting
Actual result	Achieved
Previous year performance	Achieved

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

AFMA has continued its proactive engagement with the CFA through the same opportunities as were reported for 2022–23. We engage with the CFA on our priorities and strategic issues as we develop our corporate plan and annual operational plan. We provide guidance and information about our processes and requirements on our website. We also have a formal consultation mechanism in August/September each year to ensure fulsome consideration of respective obligations and responsibilities. When consulted on the effectiveness of this engagement, the CFA Chair provided the following feedback:

“I am pleased to provide you with a response to your request of feedback relating to AFMA and CFA member engagement and performance. The CFA is committed to working closely with AFMA, in line with our strategic goals for better managed and strengthened Commonwealth wild catch fisheries and a positive operating environment for CFA members. The CFA values the good relationships between the AFMA Commission, AFMA Management and the CFA and appreciates AFMA's overall support for and ongoing engagement with our industry.”

The CFA also highlighted suggestions for AFMA to consolidate and further improve its engagement, as well as recommendations for AFMA to continue to seek opportunities for reduced management costs. AFMA remains committed to working with CFA and other stakeholders on these, and other avenues for enhanced engagement and performance.

Performance measure 12

As part of the broader Data Transformation and Electronic Monitoring Program (DT&EM) AFMA proposed to increase the number of empirical data collection services offered electronically. This involved three projects:

- Industry Collected Data project: to develop an end-to-end solution for the digital capture, exchange, and integration of data from the industry led Shark Industry Data Collection Program, Western Orange Roughy Data Collection Program, and Great Australian Bight data collection program.
- e-logs and e-Catch Disposal Record project: to transition the remaining Logbook and Catch Disposal Records (CDR) methods to AFMA’s new Agency Data Collection platform enabling fishers to submit their logbook and CDR information to AFMA digitally.
- e-Observer project: to develop a tablet-based reporting application for the collection of data from AFMA field-based observers.

The core objectives of these projects were improving service delivery, reducing costs associated with double handling of data entry, improving data quality, and increasing the timeliness of data to end users.

Number of services offered digitally.

Target	Increase in the number of empirical data collection services offered electronically
Actual result	Achieved: Three additional data collections services were provided digitally
Previous year performance	Achieved: The electronic logbooks and Catch Disposal Records systems were expanded to new fishing methods

Analysis

The performance target has been achieved.

The three additional data collection services included Observer data, Port Sampling, and Industry Data Collection programs. These three projects that formed part of the broader Data Transformation and Electronic Monitoring Program (DT&EM) were all successfully completed this year.

We do not intend to retain this measure next year as we have achieved the results which the measure was intended to reflect.

Table 2: Summary of changes to AFMA's performance information

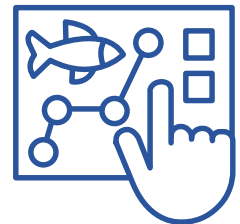
Performance measures in AFMA Annual Report 2022–23	Changes made in 2023	Performance measures in Corporate Plan 2023–26	Performance measure revisions in Corporate Plan 2024–27	Changes made in 2024	Rationale for changes in 2024
1. The number of stocks for which management measures are based on species-appropriate scientific assessment.	Amended.	1. Percentage of Total Allowable Catch (TAC) determinations which are based on resource assessment group/management advisory committee scientific assessments.	1. Percentage of TAC determinations or comparable measures that are based on resource assessment group/management advisory committee scientific assessments.	Amended.	Measure wording amended to reflect the full suite of information considered by resource assessment groups/management advisory committees.
2. The percentage of species assessed as 'residual High-Risk' under Ecological Risk Assessment.	Amended.	2. The number of new Environmental Risk Assessments (ERA) completed for regulated species.	2. The number of fisheries assessed in accordance with AFMA's published Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA) schedule.	Amended.	Measure wording amended to avoid imputation of self-reporting bias and to enhance transparency of the ERA schedule on which this measure is based.
3. The number of AFMA-only stocks assessed as 'subject to overfishing' in the ABARES Fishery Status Report.	Amended.	3. Independent evaluation of the biological and economic status of fish stocks managed solely by AFMA.	3. The number of stocks identified as overfished that have specific rebuilding actions in place.	Amended.	Measure wording amended to properly focus on the activity for which AFMA is responsible.
4. AFMA advocates measures in relevant negotiations to address stocks shared with states and territories that are assessed as 'overfished' or 'subject to overfishing' in the ABARES Fishery Status Report.	Amended.	4. Compliance with conditions imposed on fisheries assessments.	4. Fisheries that maintain accreditation through compliance with legislative requirements under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.	Amended.	Measure wording amended to clarify that the core outcome is maintenance of accreditation.

Performance measures in AFMA Annual Report 2022–23	Changes made in 2023	Performance measures in Corporate Plan 2023–26	Performance measure revisions in Corporate Plan 2024–27	Changes made in 2024	Rationale for changes in 2024
5. Status of Wildlife Trade Operations (WTOs) under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).	Removed.				Measure removed because it was not common to all fisheries.
6. The number of stocks with target reference points based on Maximum Economic Yield (MEY), an agreed proxy thereof or a multi-stock harvest strategy.	No change.	5. The number of stocks with target reference points based on Maximum Economic Yield (MEY), an agreed proxy thereof, or a multi-stock harvest strategy.	5. The number of stocks with target reference points based on Maximum Economic Yield (MEY), an agreed proxy thereof, or a multi-stock harvest strategy.	No change.	Not applicable.
7. Net Economic Return, as assessed in the ABARES Status of Fish Stocks Report.	No change.	6. Net Economic Return as assessed in the ABARES Fishery Status Reports.	6. Net Economic Return as assessed in the ABARES Fishery Status Reports.	No change.	Not applicable.
8. Treatment of identified domestic compliance risks as outlined in the National Compliance and Enforcement Program (NCEP).	No change.	7. Treatment of identified domestic compliance risks as outlined in the National Compliance and Enforcement Program.	7. Identification of priority national compliance risks and development of treatment programs for those priority risks.	Amended.	Measure wording changed to acknowledge our work to identify priority risks before we develop treatment programs.

Performance measures in AFMA Annual Report 2022–23	Changes made in 2023	Performance measures in Corporate Plan 2023–26	Performance measure revisions in Corporate Plan 2024–27	Changes made in 2024	Rationale for changes in 2024
9. Incidence level of illegal foreign fishing vessels operating in the Australian Fishing Zone.	No change.	8. Incidence level of illegal foreign fishing vessels operating in the Australian Fishing Zone.	8. Investigation of illegal foreign fishing in Australian waters to support prosecutions.	Amended.	Measure wording changed to focus on activities within our control.
10. Compliance rate with international obligations as assessed in Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (implemented by AFMA).	Amended.	9. Compliance rate with international obligations, implemented by AFMA as assessed by IFMOs (and implemented by AFMA).	9. Compliance rate with Australia's international fisheries obligations that AFMA implements as assessed by International Fisheries Management Organisations.	Amended.	Minor grammatical change to clarify respective obligations.
11. Cost Recovery Budget.	No change.	10. Cost recovery budget.	10. Cost recovery budget.	No change.	Not applicable.
12. Corporate overheads compared to total budget.	Removed.				Measure removed because it was recognised that corporate overhead is an internal measure.
13. Engagement with legislated peak body.	No change.	11. Engagement with legislated peak body.	11. Engagement with legislated peak body.	No change.	Not applicable.
14. Number of services offered digitally.	No change.	12. Number of services offered digitally.		Removed.	Measure removed because in 2023–24 we completed the work to increase digital services.



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Fishery reports

Introduction

Australia's Commonwealth fisheries are facing challenges on environmental and economic fronts. Changes in the marine environment are shifting species distribution, changing fish productivity, and altering habitats. Commercial fishing operations are also being impacted by offshore energy production, marine park reform and rezoning, oil and gas exploration, and space launches. The high fuel and freight costs, chronic systemic labour shortages, and competition from cheaper imported seafood that emerged during COVID-19 persisted for industry during 2023–24.

Gross Value of Production

The GVP is an indication of the economic value of fisheries. ABARES' most recent fishery statistics indicate that the annual gross value of Commonwealth fisheries production, that is the landed value of product, for 2023–24 has been maintained at around \$400 million.

Performance results discussed in fishery reports

Estimated catch totals for 2023–24

Estimated catch totals are taken from data compiled by AFMA from catch and effort logs and catch disposal records sourced from fishers in Commonwealth managed or jointly managed fisheries. These catch totals represent 'trunked' (processed) weight for the financial year July 2023 to June 2024.

Performance results

The sources of information presented in the fishery performance results shown are:

- Economic data presented in the reports are based on ABARES GVP data for Commonwealth fisheries and AFMA stock assessments.
- Data on fishing mortality and biomass are taken from Fishery Status Reports 2024 prepared by ABARES.

List of fishery reports

AFMA managed fisheries:

- Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery
- Coral Sea Fishery
- Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery
- Northern Prawn Fishery
- North West Slope Trawl and Western Deepwater Trawl Fisheries
- Small Pelagic Fishery
- Southern and Eastern Scalegfish and Shark Fishery
- Southern Squid Jig Fishery

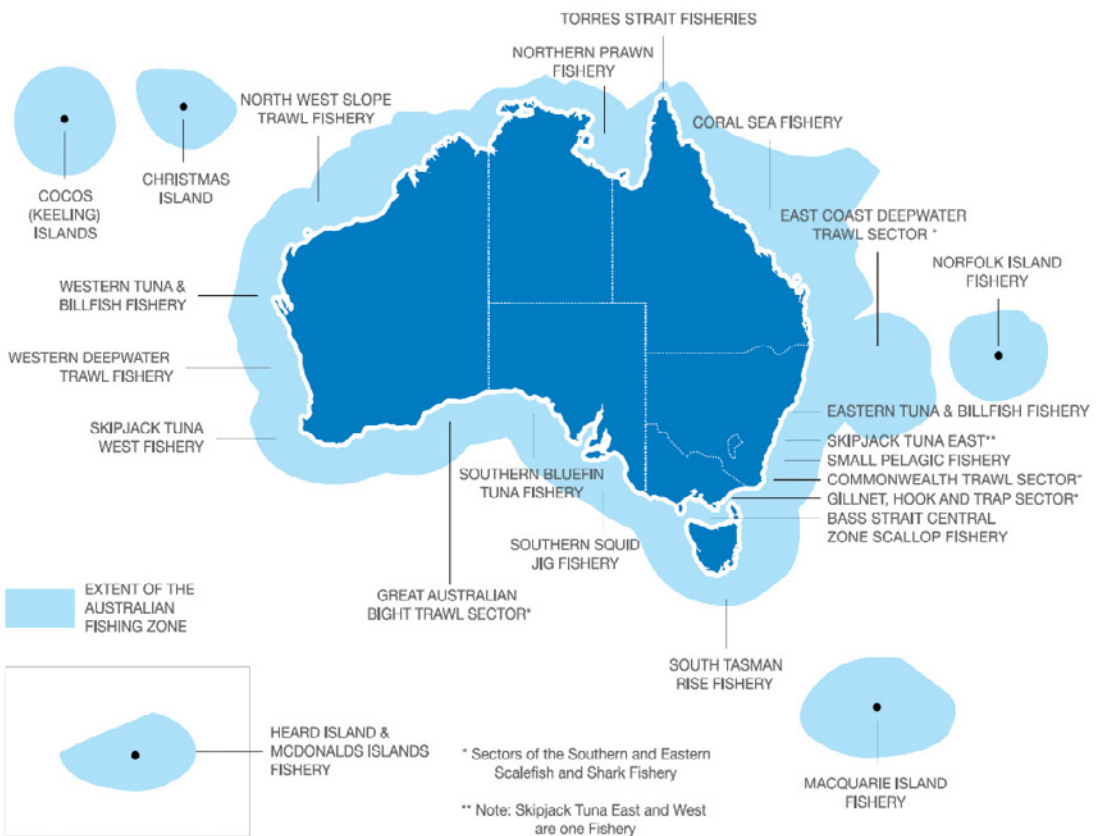
Joint managed fisheries:

- Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery
- Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery
- Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery

High seas permits

Non-operational fisheries:

- Norfolk Island Fishery
- Skipjack Tuna Fishery
- South Tasman Rise Fishery



Map of Commonwealth Fisheries
 Photo courtesy AFMA Media Library

Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
1,971 tonnes



Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Commercial Scallop (<i>Pecten fumatus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery continues to be managed in accordance with the *Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Plan 2002* and the *Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Harvest Strategy*. The management arrangements include open and closed seasons, area closures, catch limits, and size limits. There were no changes to the *Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Plan 2002* in 2023–24.

In consultation with the Scallop RAG and Scallop MAC, we are undertaking a review of the *Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Harvest Strategy*.

The review is focused on developing a strategy that better reflects the current state of the fishery, with decision rules that are scalable and can respond to changes in biomass, sustainability, and economic factors over time.

There are two species of scallop for which quota SFRs have been granted, the Commercial Scallop (*Pecten fumatus*), which is the main target species, and the Doughboy Scallop (*Chlamys (Mimachlamys) asperrimus*), which is common throughout Bass Strait but is rarely retained.

The 2023 fishing season opened on 8 July and closed on 31 December.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

Commercial Scallop abundance and recruitment is naturally variable and consequently they are not managed to a specific biomass target. Instead, the operational objectives of the Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Harvest Strategy are to:

- keep stocks at ecologically sustainable levels and, within that context, maximise the economic returns to the Australian community, and
- pursue efficient and cost-effective management.

The intent of the Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Harvest Strategy is to maintain stocks at sustainable levels by closing sufficient areas of the fishery that contain a high density of spawning size scallops (greater than 85 mm) to promote recruitment. This approach allows for the remaining areas to be fished within a TAC that represents a sustainable harvest. The pre-season biomass survey is the primary source of information to inform catch limits and closures.

A 3,892 tonne TAC for Commercial Scallop was set for the 2023 fishing season, of which 1,971 tonnes were caught. Four area closures were implemented to protect adult and juvenile Commercial Scallop, based on the outputs of the 2023 biomass survey and management arrangements within the fishery.

The TAC of 100 tonnes was set for Doughboy Scallop for the 2023 season, of which zero kilograms was landed.

Economic returns

The Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Harvest Strategy focuses on ensuring the sustainability of the stock by protecting areas of spawning biomass each season. This approach allows industry the flexibility to catch scallops from open beds, thereby improving economic returns while ensuring continued ecological sustainability.

To support the Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Harvest Strategy, we are considering developing an economic conditions index to inform management of the fishery, noting that it would not directly inform the TAC setting process but rather provide contextual information that can be considered by us when making management decisions.

Although undercaught, overall, it was viewed as a positive season with about four times the catch compared to 2022. Nine out of ten boats nominated to scallop licences fished in the Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery in the 2023 fishing season, compared with only seven in 2022. For both the 2022 and 2023 seasons, the undercaught TAC is attributed to operators opting to fish in the Tasmanian fishery due to the abundance of scallops closer to shore. The higher catch in 2023 is due to higher quality scallops occurring in the Commonwealth fishery that offset the longer steaming times.

Coral Sea Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:

3.04 tonnes

(excluding aquarium sector)



Stock status of target species

Common name (<i>scientific name</i>)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Sea Cucumber sector: Black Teatfish (<i>Holothuria whitmael</i>)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Sea Cucumber sector: Surf Redfish (<i>Actinopyga mauritiana</i>)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Sea Cucumber sector: White Teatfish (<i>Holothuria fuscogilva</i>)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Sea Cucumber sector: Prickly Redfish (<i>Thelenota ananas</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Sea Cucumber sector: Other Sea Cucumber species (11 spp.)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Line sector: Mixed reef fish and sharks	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Aquarium sector: Multiple species	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Lobster and Trochus sector: Tropical Rock Lobster (<i>Panulirus ornatus</i>) possibly other species	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

There is no statutory management plan for the Coral Sea Fishery. The Coral Sea Fishery is a multi-sector, multi-species fishery with four sectors: Sea Cucumber, Aquarium, Lobster and Trochus, and Line. These sectors are managed through input and output controls including limited entry, catch limits, spatial closures, move on provisions, size limits, and catch-and-effort triggers. Fishers must hold permits to fish in the fishery. In February 2024, the Coral Sea Fishery was reaccredited under parts 13 and 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) until 7 February 2027.

Analysis of performance

Catch and effort in the Coral Sea Fishery remains relatively low. No vessels were active in the Line or Trochus sectors in 2023–24, with one active vessel in the Aquarium Sector and one vessel active in the Sea Cucumber Sector.

There was a total of 785 dive-hours in the Aquarium Sector and 41 dive hours in the Sea Cucumber Sector recorded in 2023–24, a reduction from the 1,755 and 80 dive hours respectively in 2022–23.

Catch in the Coral Sea Fishery (excluding the Aquarium Sector which records number of individuals) decreased from 12.1 tonnes of fish products in the 2022–23 to 3.04 tonnes of fish products in the 2023–24 season, all from the Sea Cucumber sector as there was no effort in the Line or Trochus sectors of the fishery. Catches in the Aquarium Sector were 8,218 aquarium species individuals in the 2023–24 season, a significant decrease from the previous 31,292 individuals in 2022–23.

External reviews

The Coral Sea Fishery is an approved wildlife trade operation for the purposes of Parts 13 and 13A of the EPBC Act until 7 February 2027.

Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery

 **ESTIMATED CATCH:**
641 tonnes
 (Patagonian Toothfish)



Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Patagonian Toothfish (<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery is managed in accordance with the *Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery Management Plan 2006*. It is managed through a system of output controls in the form of individually transferable quotas, which are allocated as SFRs under the management plan. All operations conducted in the fishery were compliant with the performance criteria outlined in the management plan. There were no changes to the *Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery Management Plan 2006* during the 2023–24 fishing season.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

In November 2023, the AFMA Commission set the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery (MITF) TAC for Patagonian Toothfish at 468 tonnes for the 2024–25 and 2025–26 fishing seasons. The integrated stock assessment of toothfish in the MITF was updated in 2023 using data collected up to and including August 2022. The assessment uses a spatial model that fits to data from the entire MITF, and assumes a single reproductive stock, but takes into account spatial structuring of the population within the region. Two areas, northern and southern, are incorporated into the model, with movement of fish between areas, and recruitment to both areas.

The assessment estimates a lower female spawning stock biomass (SSB) (median of 0.73 (0.66–0.81 95 per cent credible intervals) than the 2021 assessment (median of 0.85 with 0.78–0.92 95 per cent credible intervals) but is still well above the target reference point of B50.

Status of bycatch

Bycatch is generally low in the Macquarie Island Toothfish Fishery. Catch limits of 50 tonnes for any one bycatch species were set for 2024–25 and 2025–26, consistent with previous years. These catch limits were not exceeded in 2023–24 and have never been exceeded for any one species in a season.

External reviews

The management of the fishery is certified as sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council. A surveillance audit was conducted in May 2022 and confirmed the fishery continues to meet the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Standard. The fishery also commenced reassessment under the Marine Stewardship Council's new more rigorous standard in 2022. The MITF was recertified as sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council in January 2023 and is set to expire 19 January 2028.



Northern Prawn Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
8,508 tonnes



Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
White Banana Prawn (<i>Fenneropenaeus merguensis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Brown Tiger Prawn (<i>Penaeus esculentus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Grooved Tiger Prawn (<i>Penaeus semisulcatus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Blue Endeavour Prawn (<i>Metapenaeus endeavouri</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Red Endeavour Prawn (<i>Metapenaeus ensis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Redleg Banana Prawn (<i>Fenneropenaeus indicus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The fishery continues to be managed through the *Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan 1995*. The NPF is a multi-species fishery managed through input controls including limited entry, season length, and individual transferable effort units – limiting the amount of fishing gear.

The fishery relies on a size and sex-based stock assessment model for Brown and Grooved Tiger Prawn, a Bayesian hierarchical biomass dynamic assessment model for Blue Endeavour Prawn, a quarterly age based biological stock assessment model for Redleg Banana Prawn, and the White Banana Prawn Harvest Strategy, for which the operational objective is to allow sufficient escapement to ensure an adequate spawning biomass and achieve MEY from the fishery. There is no formal stock assessment for the White Banana Prawn fishery.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

The assessment of prawn stock health is based on a five-year moving average of spawning stock abundance relative to a spawning stock abundance that produces maximum sustainable yield, which should not fall below the limit reference point of 50 per cent of BMSY. The management objective of MEY is also assessed against an annual target reference point, which is a spawning stock size equal to that which is estimated to produce MEY.

As a result of concerns for low recruitment in the Tiger Prawn stocks and issues with the 2022 stock assessment base case model which impacted the estimation of the total allowable effort, a pre-season decision was made to shorten the 2023 Tiger Prawn season, with the fishery closing early on 10 November 2023. An updated assessment for Brown and Grooved Tiger Prawn was completed in 2024 and determined that the stocks are not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring. Three stocks considered in the tiger prawn assessment, Brown Tiger, Red Endeavour, and Blue Endeavour Prawns, were above BMSY. Brown Tiger Prawns are below BMSY but well above the limit reference point.

Fifty-two boats fished during the 2023 Tiger Prawn season (1 August to 30 November). The total catch of Tiger Prawns increased from 940 tonnes in 2022 to 1,242 tonnes in 2023. The 2022 catches were the second lowest since 2010, with the 2023 catches slightly below the average catches since 2018.

Forty-eight boats fished used during the 2024 Banana Prawn season (1 April to 10 June 2024). The total catch of Banana Prawns increased from 3,955 tonnes in 2022 to 6,774 tonnes in 2023. These catch levels are the second highest since 2010, resulting from high rainfall across key catchments during 2022–23 wet season. The in-season catch-rate trigger for the 2024 Banana Prawn season was breached prompting the early closure of the fishery on 10 June 2024. This trigger is designed to pursue MEY within a season by triggering an early closure when catch rates drop below the annually agreed level.

Status of bycatch

The latest ecological risk assessments (ERAs) for the Tiger Prawn sub-fishery and the Banana Prawn sub-fishery were finalised in 2022. Under both ERAs there were four sawfish species assessed as potentially being at high risk for the period 2013–2017: Narrow Sawfish (*Anoxypristis cuspidata*), Dwarf Sawfish (*Pristis clavata*), Green Sawfish (*Pristis zijsron*), Freshwater Sawfish (*Pristis pristis*).

The latest report for long-term bycatch sustainability assessment project monitoring interactions with bycatch species was finalised in June 2024. Under the project there were 14 species that could be assessed (including 10 sea snake species, Narrow Sawfish, Straightstick Pipefish, Stephenson's and Brown-Striped Mantis Shrimp) for the period 2010 to 2022, no significant declines in catch rates were observed.

The latest Bycatch Strategy for the NPF was finalised in 2021 and is scheduled for review during 2024–25. The strategy focuses on improving information on interactions with sawfish species, including identifying how sawfish interact with the fishing gear, particularly around the Turtle Excluder Devices used in all fishing nets.

Economic returns

During the most recent financial year (2022–23) the NPF remained one of the highest valued Commonwealth managed fisheries with a GVP just under \$120 million. This was a significant increase in the 2021–22 GVP of \$91.7 million, driven by strong Tiger Prawn prices in 2022 and high Banana Prawn catches in 2023. The fishery is broadly managed, across the two key species groups – Banana and Tiger Prawn, to pursue MEY. Overall fishing effort limits (fishing gear and season lengths) are set on the result of outputs from the bio-economic model for Tiger and Endeavour Prawn. Additionally, the normal season length may be reduced using catch-rate triggers in the Banana and Tiger Prawn sub-fisheries to account for annual variability in these stocks.

Based on the preliminary economic analysis to date, the economic returns from the NPF have remained positive in recent years, although have been variable. Further economic assessment has been undertaken, although the results are not available for this report.

Priority issues

A key priority over the next few years is for the NPF to find ways to reduce the impact of fishing on the sawfish species, specifically Narrow Sawfish (*Anoxypristis cuspidata*).

The NPF interactions with sawfish species are predominantly with Narrow Sawfish (more than 90 per cent based on data from the ongoing NPF Bycatch Monitoring project). Further research and fieldwork is underway in cooperation with the NPF Industry, including using net mounted cameras to characterise the interaction between the animals and the fishing gear, and population analysis through close-kin mark-recapture (CKMR) techniques. It is hoped that this research can lead to fishing gear modification to prevent these animals from being caught and contribute to population estimates of the species.

Throughout 2023–24, a key focus for the NPF has been updating some key components of the NPF stock assessment, following the outcomes of the 2022 assessment. These included the incorporation of a revised minimum effort threshold, updated species distribution model and new endeavour prawn stock assessment into the 2024 bio-economic model.

External reviews

The NPF has held Marine Stewardship Council certification since 2012, with the most recent re-assessment occurring in 2023 (the fishery is currently certified until mid-2028).

North West Slope and the Western Deepwater Trawl Fisheries



ESTIMATED CATCH:
NWS
85.9 tonnes



ESTIMATED CATCH:
WDT
3.4 tonnes

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
North West Slope Trawl Fishery Scampi (<i>Metanephrops australiensis</i> , <i>M. boschmai</i> , <i>M. velutinus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Western Deepwater Trawl Fishery Bugs (<i>Ibacus</i> spp.)	Not subject to overfishing	Uncertain	Not subject to overfishing	Uncertain
Western Deepwater Trawl Fishery Ruby Snapper (<i>Etelis carbunculus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

There is no formal management plan for the North West Slope Trawl Fishery (NWSTF) or the Western Deepwater Trawl Fishery (WDTF). The fisheries are managed by granting a limited number of fishing permits under the FMA and the *Fisheries Management Regulations 1992*.

There are 11 permits allowed in the WDTF and seven in the NWSTF, all of which are valid for a maximum of five years. Fishers must adhere to a number of permit conditions aimed at protecting stocks and ecosystems. The permit conditions include move on provisions if fishing gear interacts with sponges or corals. The permit conditions in both fisheries were reviewed at the end of 2023–24 and permits re-granted for a further five years.

Analysis of performance

During the past five years, North West Slope Trawl and Western Deepwater Trawl fisheries have generally experienced relatively low levels of fishing effort.

In the 2023–24 fishing season, the NWSTF catch was 85.9 tonnes, equivalent to the 2021–22 and 2022–23 catches of 85.8 and 85.4 tonnes respectively. 2023–24 catches in the WDWTF were 3.4 tonnes, an increase from 2022–23 which saw no fishing effort in this fishery. The relatively limited levels of effort are due in part to permit holders accessing more lucrative fisheries in adjacent fishery areas.

A review of the North West Slope and Western Deepwater Trawl fisheries harvest strategy commenced in 2022, with the AFMA Commission approving the revised harvest strategy in May 2023, which is now in force.

External reviews

The North West Slope and Western Deepwater Trawl Fisheries were approved as a wildlife trade operation for the purposes of Parts 13 and 13A of the EPBC Act in November 2023 until 30 November 2026.

Small Pelagic Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
22,580 tonnes



Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Australian Sardine (<i>Sardinops sagax</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Blue Mackerel, east/west (<i>Scomber australasicus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Jack Mackerel, east/west (<i>Trachurus declivis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Redbait, east/west (<i>Emmelichthys nitidus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) is managed in accordance with the *Small Pelagic Fishery Management Plan 2009*. The management arrangements include SFRs, area based catch limits and rules governing the gear that may be used. There were no changes to the *Small Pelagic Fishery Management Plan 2009* in 2023–24.

Analysis of performance

Harvest strategy

The Small Pelagic Fishery Harvest Strategy was last reviewed in 2017, updating reference points and exploitation rates that are designed to meet the biological, ecological, and economic requirements of the fishery.

The harvest strategy uses Daily Egg Production Method (DEPM) surveys to estimate biomass for each of the seven SPF stocks. These surveys, along with an annual review of catch and effort data, are used to inform the catch limits set for commercially caught species in the fishery.

A research priority to further refine the Harvest Strategy commenced in 2023–24 and is expected to be completed in 2024–25.

Sustainability and economic returns

DEPM surveys continue to be updated for the eastern zone stocks, enabling TACs to remain at maximum levels. TAC determinations for all stocks in 2024–25 were informed by previous survey results and remain at the same tier level as 2023–24, except for Redbait (west) stock. Redbait (west) will fall to Tier 2 for the 2024–25 season, as the last DEPM survey for this stock was undertaken in 2017–18 and 2023–24 is the fifth season this stock has been at Tier 1 without a new DEPM. Results of the 2023–24 survey for Jack Mackerel (east) will inform the 2025–26 TAC for this stock. DEPM surveys for Blue Mackerel (east) and Sardine (eastern stock) for 2024–25 and are intended to inform the 2026–27 TAC for these stock.

Fishing effort in 2023–24 was focused in the eastern area of the fishery and was greater than the previous two years, with catches of Blue Mackerel (east) and Jack Mackerel (east) contributing to most of the increase in catch from the 2021–22 and 2022–23 fishing seasons. Notwithstanding these increases, the TACs for each of the seven target stocks remain undercaught. Over the last four seasons, catches have been between 13,000 and 23,000 tonne, indicating the incentives to fish in the SPF remain good.

Status of bycatch

Dolphin interactions are managed under the SPF Dolphin Mitigation Strategy. The strategy aims to mitigate the impacts of the midwater trawl sector of the fishery and minimise dolphin interactions by creating incentives for fishers to innovate and adopt best practice to minimise interactions.

The number of dolphin interactions remain at much lower levels compared to those in 2021–22.

We are currently reviewing the SPF Dolphin Strategy. Interim management arrangements implemented in 2021–22 remain in place while this review is underway. As part of the interim management arrangements, we have changed the way that the maximum interaction rate is implemented. The interaction rate is used as a performance indicator only while the SPF Dolphin Strategy is under review. The existing management arrangements associated with the number of dolphin interactions remain in place.

The CSIRO has recently undertaken an ERA for the purse seine sector of the SPF. This is due for completion in 2024 and will inform the SPF Bycatch and Discard Workplan.

External reviews

The SPF remains accredited and is approved as a wildlife trade operation under Part 13A of the EPBC Act.

The midwater trawl sector of the SPF has held Marine Stewardship Council Certification since 2019. The fishery is currently certified until 2025.

Southern and Eastern Scalegfish and Shark Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
16,691 tonnes

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Commonwealth Trawl and Scalegfish Hook sectors				
Blue Grenadier (<i>Macrurus novaezelandiae</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Blue Warehou eastern zone (<i>Seriolella brama</i>)	Subject to overfishing	Overfished	Final assessment pending	Overfished
Blue Warehou western zone (<i>Seriolella brama</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Final assessment pending	Overfished
Blue-eye Trevalla (<i>Hyperoglyphe antarctica</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Gemfish, eastern zone (<i>Rexea solandri</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Uncertain	Overfished
Gemfish, western zone (<i>Rexea solandri</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Gulper Shark (<i>Centrophorus harrissoni</i> , <i>C. moluccensis</i> , <i>C. zeehaani</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Uncertain	Overfished
Jackass Morwong eastern zone (<i>Nemadactylus macropterus</i>)	Subject to overfishing	Overfished	Subject to overfishing	Overfished
Jackass Morwong western zone (<i>Nemadactylus macropterus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Ocean Perch (<i>Helicolenus barathri</i> and <i>H. percoides</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Pink Ling (<i>Genypterus blacodes</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Ribaldo (<i>Mora moro</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Silver Trevally (<i>Pseudocaranx georgianus</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Uncertain
Commonwealth Trawl Sector				
Deepwater Shark, eastern zone (multiple spp.)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Deepwater Shark, western zone (multiple spp.)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Eastern School Whiting (<i>Sillago flindersi</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Flathead (<i>Neoplatycephalus richardsoni</i> and 3 other spp.)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
John Dory (<i>Zeus faber</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Uncertain	Overfished
Mirror Dory (<i>Zenopsis nebulosa</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Ocean Jacket, eastern zone (<i>Nelusetta ayraud</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Orange roughy, Cascade Plateau (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Orange Roughy, eastern zone (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Orange Roughy, southern zone (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Uncertain	Overfished
Orange Roughy, western zone (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>)	Uncertain	Overfished	Uncertain	Overfished
Oreodory – other: 3 spp. (<i>Neocyttus rhomboidalis</i> , <i>Allocyttus niger</i> , <i>A. verrucosus</i>)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Oreodory: smooth: (<i>Pseudocyttus maculatus</i>) Cascade Plateau	Not subject to overfishing	Uncertain	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Oreodory: smooth: (<i>Pseudocyttus maculatus</i>) Non-Cascade Plateau	Uncertain	Uncertain	Final assessment pending	Uncertain
Redfish, eastern (<i>Centroberyx affinis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Overfished	Uncertain	Overfished
Royal Red Prawn (<i>Haliporoides sibogae</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Silver Warehou (<i>Serirolella punctata</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
East Coast Deepwater Trawl Sector				
Alfonsino (<i>Beryx splendens</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector				
Bight Redfish (<i>Centroberyx gerrardi</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Deepwater Flathead (<i>Neoplatycephalus conatus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Ocean Jacket, western (<i>Nelusetta ayraud</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Orange Roughy (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Uncertain	Not subject to overfishing	Uncertain
Shark Gillnet and Shark Hook sectors				
Elephantfish (<i>Callorhinchus milii</i>)	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Gummy Shark (<i>Mustelus antarcticus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Sawshark (<i>Pristiophorus cirratus</i> , <i>P. nudipinnis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
School Shark (<i>Galeorhinus galeus</i>)	Subject to overfishing	Overfished	Subject to overfishing	Overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The SESSF continues to be managed in accordance with the *Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Management Plan 2003*. The fishery has seven sectors that are managed through a combination of input and output controls including limited entry, catch limits, spatial closures, size limits, and catch-and-effort triggers that are used to initiate further analysis and assessment.

The SESSF sectors include:

- Commonwealth Trawl Sector
- East Coast Deepwater Trawl Sector
- Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector
- Scalefish Hook Sector*
- Shark Hook Sector*
- Shark Gillnet Sector*
- Trap Sector*

* Collectively called the Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector (GHAT).

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

The table above shows that there are several SESSF stocks considered to be overfished. Most of these stocks overlap jurisdictional boundaries, meaning they are caught in a combination of Commonwealth and state fisheries, complicating management. We continue to work with state agencies to pursue complementary arrangements in overlapping fisheries.

Stock assessments were updated in 2023 for a number of SESSF species. The assessments for Deepwater Flathead, Deepwater Shark (west), and Gummy Shark estimated that the current biomass, or a proxy thereof, was above the target reference point.

Assessments for Blue-eye Trevalla (slope), Mirror Dory (east), Mirror Dory (west) and Silver Trevally, estimated that the current biomass, or a proxy thereof, is between the limit reference point and the target referent point.

For species assessed as being between the limit and target reference points, catches are set at a level that will allow the stock to build to the target. Smooth Oreodory (other) continues to be assessed based on the outputs of the 2019 ERA, as well as recent catch and effort data, which shows recent fishing mortality is sustainable.

Commonwealth rebuilding strategies are in place for Blue Warehou, eastern Gemfish, Redfish, School Shark and Orange Roughy. These strategies typically implement incidental TACs and management arrangements to prevent targeting and promote recovery of the stock to the limit reference point. The performance of the strategies is reviewed annually by the relevant RAG, and each undergoes a thorough review every five years. Five-year reviews of the Orange Roughy and Blue Warehou rebuilding strategies were completed in 2021, and the revised rebuilding plans were published in 2022.

School shark was assessed as 'subject to overfishing' in 2022 changing it from 'uncertain' in previous years as the annual mortality threshold estimated from the CKMR assessment was exceeded in the year prior, once state catches were taken into account. In both 2023 and 2024 AFMA reduced the TAC for school shark to comply with the mortality threshold. In 2024 AFMA also reduced the TAC of gummy shark to decrease effort in the fishery. We also wrote to South Australia and Western Australia seeking their cooperation in reducing school shark catch. Both have committed to reductions.

Jackass Morwong and John Dory were assessed as overfished in late 2021. Since then, we have implemented management arrangements to reduce the catch of both species, including significantly reduced TACs and a set of five spatial closures in the south east (which came into effect on 1 May 2023) aimed at constraining catches and discards of at-risk species.

The implementation of the spatial closures was accompanied by a structural adjustment package of \$24 million to reduce the number of trawl boat concessions, to manage the transfer of effort and ensure that the remaining fleet was economically viable. The structural adjustment process concluded in June 2023 and resulted in the voluntary surrender of 21 trawl boat concessions, leaving 36 trawl boat concessions in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector.

Rebuilding strategies are being developed for Jackass Morwong and John Dory and the rebuilding strategy for Redfish is due to be updated.

We will continue to review the relevant data for all rebuilding species on an annual basis to ensure the objectives of the strategies are met.

In 2023, SESSFRAG and South East Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC) supported the introduction of a 'trigger' species category in the SESSF Harvest Strategy as part of the transitional arrangements to a multi-species harvest strategy (MSHS). Under this approach, only key species are assessed regularly, while 'low risk' species are monitored and assessed less frequently unless a need to assess them outside of the schedule, is identified.

We are currently seeking funding for the second stage of the MSHS project entitled '*Evaluation and application of a preferred multi-species harvest strategy in the SESSF*'. The purpose of the work being to design, specify, and test a number of harvest strategies specifically tailored to the SESSF, using different combinations of the 'Pretty Good Maximum Sustainable Yield', 'Trigger Species' and 'Indicator Species' approaches, coupled with various data, monitoring and assessment regimes.

Reliability of information

Logbook reporting of retained and discarded catch by shark gillnet, shark hook, and scalefish hook boats continues to be monitored by comparing logbook recorded catch and discards against EM reviews for those vessels with EM.

In June 2021, we engaged ABARES to undertake an independent analysis comparing logbook data with EM collected data for retained and discarded commercial and bycatch as well as protected species interactions in the GHAT. The analysis showed that the congruence between logbook data and EM is good for retained catches of the main target species, but there was lower congruence for discarded catch, byproduct, and protected species. Additionally, vessel-level variability and species identification issues were flagged as possible drivers for lower congruence. The analysis provided us a better understanding of the reliability of both sources of information as an accurate representation of commercial fishing operations and will inform future consideration of the EM program. In 2022, based on the results of this analysis, the Shark Resource Assessment Group recommended the use of logbook data to determine discard estimates for shark species to be used in stock assessments.

We are undertaking trials of EM in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector and Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector. These trials will conclude in early 2025 and a decision on the potential roll-out of EM in each sector made thereafter.

The SESSF Resource Assessment Group (SESSFRAG) continues to review the available data in August each year, prior to stock assessments being undertaken.

Status of bycatch

The ERAs undertaken for the following methods and sectors of the SESSF were considered and accepted by the relevant resource assessment groups and management advisory committees between 2019 and 2021:

- otter board trawl method in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector
- Danish seine method in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector
- otter board trawl method in the Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector
- shark gillnet method in the Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector
- scalefish automatic longline, and
- various shark and scalefish hook methods in the GHAT.

Under the recently finalised ERAs there were 21 individual species assessed across the sectors as potentially being at high-risk for the period 2012–16. These consisted of 14 species in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector (otter board trawl and Danish seine), one in the Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector (also high risk in the CTS), and seven in the gillnet sector of the GHAT. There were no high-risk species identified for any of the hook methods in the GHAT.

A bycatch and discarding workplan has been developed for the Commonwealth Trawl Sector to mitigate the impact to species identified as high risk in this sector. The drafting of bycatch and discarding workplans for the Great Australian Bight and GHAT sectors have been flagged as priorities in 2024–25.

ERAs for the Danish seine and otter trawl fleets within the Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector have been identified as research priorities for 2025–26.

A number of management strategies remain in place and performance in relation to these strategies continues to be monitored. Strategies include:

- The Australian Sealion Management Strategy
- The Gillnet Dolphin Mitigation Strategy, and
- The Upper-slope Dogfish Management Strategy

In addition, a range of seabird mitigation measures apply across all sectors of the SESSF.

Internal reviews

No internal reviews were completed during 2023–24.

External reviews

Three operators within the Commonwealth Trawl Sector of the SESSF now have Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification. Two of these certificates apply the harvest of Blue Grenadier and one to the harvest of Royal Red Prawn.

The Orange Roughy Eastern Zone trawl fishery is currently in the final stages of assessment for MSC certification.

The Great Australian Bight Industry Association received MSC certification for the harvest of Bight Redfish, Deepwater Shark and Gummy Shark in August 2023.

AFMA management, observer, and compliance staff participate in the annual audits of MSC fisheries as and when they are convened.

Southern Squid Jig Fishery



 **ESTIMATED CATCH:**
692 tonnes

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Gould's squid (<i>Nototodarus gouldi</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The Southern Squid Jig Fishery is managed in accordance with the *Southern Squid Jig Fishery Management Plan 2005* and the *Southern Squid Jig Harvest Strategy 2022*. The management arrangements include regulating the type and amount of fishing gear able to be used. There were no changes to the *Southern Squid Jig Fishery Management Plan 2005* in 2023.

The Southern Squid Jig Fishery Harvest Strategy was reviewed in 2022 to simplify and include an additional catch and effort trigger that more closely reflects the current state of the Southern Squid Jig Fishery. A broader, more holistic review of the Southern Squid Jig Fishery Harvest Strategy will be considered once additional data has been collected to inform appropriate analyses.

External reviews

No external reviews were completed during 2023.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

Gould's Squid (also known as arrow squid) is a highly productive and relatively short-lived species. It is not managed to a target reference point. The Southern Squid Jig Fishery Harvest Strategy is based on a series of catch and effort triggers which, if reached, will trigger further analyses and management responses.

Effort and catch in the Southern Squid Jig Fishery continues to vary between seasons and has been relatively low in recent years. Estimated catch for the 2023 fishing season was 675 tonnes which was higher than 2022 but relatively consistent with catches in recent years. An ongoing challenge for the squid fishery is locating commercially viable aggregations of squid, an issue exacerbated by a small fleet size. Despite low catches, the price received remains high.

Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
3,768 tonnes



Striped Marlin (<i>Tetrapturus audax</i>) south-west Pacific	367 tonnes
Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>)	648 tonnes
Yellowfin Tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>)	1,735 tonnes
Bigeye Tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>)	260 tonnes
Swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) south-west Pacific	758 tonnes

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Striped Marlin (<i>Tetrapturus audax</i>) south-west Pacific	Not subject to overfishing	Overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Overfished
Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Yellowfin Tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Bigeye Tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>) south-west Pacific	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The fishery continues to be managed in accordance with the *Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery Management Plan 2010* and conservation and management measures mandated by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) of which Australia is a member.

The fishery is managed through output controls (total allowable commercial catches and individually transferable quotas) and input controls (e.g., limited entry). In 2021, the AFMA Commission agreed to manage Striped Marlin through a constant catch approach. This approach was used to inform the AFMA Commission when setting the 2023 Striped Marlin Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC).

At the eighty-sixth AFMA Commission meeting (November 2022), the Commission decided to modify the ETBF Swordfish Harvest Strategy. The Commission noted, when making the modification to the ETBF Swordfish Harvest Strategy, that the purpose of the modification is to explicitly account for recent low catch levels compared to the TAC. In doing so, we avoid unnecessary TAC reductions. The modification was recommended by the Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee (TTMAC) and Tropical Tuna Resource Assessment Group (TTRAG) and used to guide TACC setting for swordfish in 2023.

A further review of the Harvest Strategy commenced in 2024. Although originally designed and tested assuming the level of recent under catch ceases from 2025 onwards, in March 2024 TTRAG endorsed an extension of the application of the modified swordfish harvest strategy following additional testing which demonstrated it could still be appropriately applied for a further two years. TTMAC will consider extending the application of the harvest strategy in the second half of 2024. The modified decision rules are intended to remain in place until the review of the Harvest Strategy is complete, that is, assuming extreme under-catch continues, these rules are likely to guide TACC setting for the 2025 and 2026 seasons.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

Overall, ETBF catches of key commercial species have remained similar from 2022 and 2023. A relatively high proportion of the TACC was caught for Yellowfin Tuna, Swordfish, and Striped Marlin. There was a minor decrease of Albacore in 2023 and less than half the catch limit set for Bigeye Tuna was caught.

The ETBF is part of the broader Western and Central Pacific tuna fishery managed under the WCPFC. The most recent WCPFC assessments for each of the target stocks indicate that none of these stocks are overfished or subject to overfishing and one species (Striped Marlin) is likely overfished, but not subject to overfishing.

There are two major research projects underway in the fishery. The first is a FRDC funded tori line project (2020-041) with the objective to trial several new and/or modified protected species mitigation tools and processes to further reduce the rate of protected species interactions. The project has a dual focus of reducing TEP species interaction rates and improving workplace health and safety conditions on boats.

The second FRDC project (2021-078) aims to conduct research into the spatial and temporal variation of TEP species interactions with a view to improving the management of wildlife interactions in pelagic longline fisheries.

Fishery management arrangements

Since 2015, boats in the ETBF have been required to have a system of cameras and sensors installed to monitor all fishing operations. Footage is recorded when fishing operations are occurring to verify the logbook records. Ten per cent of all longline shots (minimum of one shot per boat, per month) are reviewed and compared to the logbook reports.

Regular feedback reports are provided to ETBF operators to inform them of their reporting performance. ABARES undertook a secondary evaluation of the reliability of electronic monitoring and logbook data for informing fisheries science and management (Emery et al 2023).

At a high level, the findings of the secondary evaluation indicate that the overall level of congruence (similarity between EM and logbook data) for the ETBF was:

- superior for key commercial species compared to byproduct/bycatch species
- higher for retained than discarded catch, and
- higher for TEP groups (i.e., seabirds, marine turtles, and marine mammals) than at a species taxonomic level.

External reviews

ETBF was declared an approved wildlife trade operation on 17 August 2022 for the purposes of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This declaration is valid until 19 August 2025.

Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
6,143 tonnes³



Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Southern Bluefin Tuna (SBT) (<i>Thunnus maccoyii</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The fishery continues to be managed in accordance with the *Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery Management Plan 1995*. It is managed through a system of output controls in the form of individually transferable quotas, which are allocated as SFRs under the management plan.

The Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) sets an annual global TAC. From the global TAC national allocations are provided to all members. Prior to the commencement of the fishing season (1 December to 30 November), we determine a TAC of SBT for the domestic fishery based upon Australia’s national allocation.

In October 2020, the CCSBT used a new management procedure to set global TACs for 2021–23. Australia’s share of the global TAC was 6,238.4 tonnes. The domestic TAC for the 2023–24 SBT fishing season was 6,930 tonnes, with 364.7 tonnes set aside to account for recreational fishing mortality.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

The CCSBT accepted a revised stock assessment for SBT in October 2023. All the key stock status statistics from the 2023 stock assessment are more optimistic than when the last assessment was completed in 2020 and it is estimated that the stock has continued to increase.

³ All weights in kilograms whole weight.

The results of the 2023 assessment were consistent with projections from the 2020 assessment. The relative Total Reproductive Output is estimated to be 23 per cent with an 80 per cent confidence interval between 20 to 28 per cent. The next full stock assessment will be undertaken in 2026.

The current estimated trends indicate that the stock has been rebuilding by approximately five per cent per year since the low point in 2009, and the Management Procedure to rebuild SBT stock to 30 per cent of unfished levels by 2035 appears to be on track.

Economic returns

The fishing season in the SBTF runs from 1 December each year to 30 November the following year. The majority of the SBT TAC continues to be taken by the purse seine sector in South Australia, for subsequent grow out. In the 2022–23 fishing season 4,701 tonnes were taken by the purse seine sector compared to 4,957 tonnes in the previous season.

The amount of SBT taken by longliners on the east coast depends primarily on access to available quota and the seasonal availability of fish. In the 2022–23 fishing season, 1,334 tonnes was caught compared to 1,015 tonnes in the previous season.

External reviews

SBTF was declared an approved wildlife trade operation on 7 November 2022 for the purposes of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This declaration is valid until 11 November 2025.



Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
209 tonnes



Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>)	6 tonnes
Yellowfin Tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>)	45 tonnes
Bigeye Tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>)	45 tonnes
Swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>)	113 tonnes
Striped Marlin (<i>Kajikia audax</i>)	1 tonne

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Albacore (<i>Thunnus alalunga</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not Overfished
Yellowfin Tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>)	Subject to overfishing	Not Overfished	Subject to overfishing	Not Overfished
Bigeye Tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>)	Subject to overfishing	Not Overfished	Subject to overfishing	Not Overfished
Swordfish (<i>Xiphias gladius</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not Overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not Overfished
Striped Marlin (<i>Kajikia audax</i>)	Subject to overfishing	Overfished	Subject to overfishing	Overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The fishery continued to be managed in accordance with the *Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery Management Plan 2005* and resolutions mandated by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) of which Australia is a member. In accordance with the *Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery Management Plan 2005 (WTBF Plan)* and after the Commission determined that the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) limits for Yellowfin Tuna of 2,000 tonnes remain. In making this decision the Commission noted that the TACC is consistent with Australia's current obligations to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). Efforts by IOTC this year to review the interim yellowfin tuna rebuilding plan 21/01 failed to reach any agreement.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

The Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) has continued to operate at low levels of effort. In 2023–24, catch levels for the main target species have generally been constant from year to year. Domestically, the current proportion of catches for all the key commercial species are not considered to be of concern to the regional stock status. We cooperate with DAFF to encourage the IOTC to implement robust catch controls and country-specific allocations to rebuild overfished stocks and manage all stocks into the future.

Fishery management arrangements

Since July 2015 active boats in the WTBF have been required to have EM installed to monitor all fishing operations. Footage is recorded when fishing operations are occurring to verify logbook records.

All fishing operations on active boats are now monitored, with ten per cent of all longline shots (minimum of one shot per boat, per month) reviewed and compared to the logbook reports. Regular feedback reports are provided to WTBF operators to inform them of their reporting performance. Since the implementation of EM, preliminary analysis has indicated an improvement in logbook reporting. Improved logbook reporting in fisheries with EM has enabled us to make better risk assessments and better focus resources to minimise the impact of fishing on the marine environment. We continue to monitor protected species interactions in the fishery, but these occur at a very low level, in part due to the low level of fishing effort.

External reviews

The WTBF was declared an approved wildlife trade operation on 11 November 2022 for the purposes of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This declaration is valid until 11 November 2025.

Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery



ESTIMATED CATCH:
2,179 tonnes
(Patagonian Toothfish)



ESTIMATED CATCH:
0 tonnes
(Mackerel Icefish)



Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Mackerel Icefish (<i>Champscephalus gunnari</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Patagonian Toothfish (<i>Dissostichus eleginoides</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

Management plans/arrangements

The Heard Island and McDonald Islands (HIMI) Fishery is managed in accordance with the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery Management Plan 2002* and the conservation measures mandated by CCAMLR. There were no changes to the *Heard Island and McDonald Islands Fishery Management Plan 2002* during 2023–24.

Analysis of performance

Status of fish stocks

The AFMA Commission set the HIMI Fishery TAC at 2,400 tonnes for Patagonian Toothfish and 714 tonnes for Mackerel Icefish for the 2023–24 fishing year based on the stock assessments results. The 2023 integrated stock assessment of Patagonian Toothfish at HIMI indicates that the Spawning Stock Biomass is lower than the 2021 assessment – currently B39 compared to B45 (2021) and B51 (2019).

The assessment of Mackerel Icefish at HIMI is based on results from an annual random stratified trawl survey (RSTS). Mackerel Icefish are short lived (four-plus years) and follow a boom-bust pattern of abundance resulting in considerable variation in TACs through time. Mean biomass estimates from the RSTS for the last 10 years have ranged from approximately 1,400t to 53,000t, with 2023 being slightly over 16,000t.

Status of bycatch

The core longline fishing season extends from 1 May to 14 September. Longline fishing to target Patagonian Toothfish is permitted during the longline season extension period 1 April to 30 April and 15 September to 30 November with additional seabird measures applying to the extension period. If three or more seabirds are caught and killed by fishing gear during the extension periods, that vessel can no longer fish by longline in the extension periods. These strict rules are in place around interactions with seabirds during the autumn and spring extension periods, when seabird activity is known to increase around HIMI.

External reviews

The management of the fishery is certified as sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). A surveillance audit was conducted in August 2021 and confirmed the fishery continues to meet the Marine Stewardship Council Fisheries Standard. The fishery also commenced reassessment under the MSC's new more rigorous standard in 2022 and was recertified as sustainable by the MSC in January 2023.



High Sea Permits



ESTIMATED CATCH:
203 tonnes

Major species:

- Yellowtail Kingfish
- Redthroat Emperor
- Blue-eye Trevalla
- King Morwong
- Jackass Morwong
- Sea Bream Snapper
- Reef Ocean Perch
- Flame Snapper
- Patagonian Toothfish

Management plans/arrangements

High Seas Permits allow Australian-flagged vessels to fish for non-highly migratory species in the areas of water covered under the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) and the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA). High Seas Permits are granted for up to five years, with a season running from 1 January to 31 December (1 December to 30 November for Williams Ridge). There are currently six High Seas Permits. Five vessels are permitted to fish in the SPRFMO area and five vessels are permitted to fish in the SIOFA area. The main gears used by High Seas Permit holders are midwater trawl, demersal trawl and automatic longline (demersal longline).

In 2023–24, a number of amendments to SPRFMO and SIOFA CMMs were adopted. These amendments were implemented domestically through changes to permit conditions.

With regards to SIOFA, permit conditions were last amended in December 2020 to allow fishing on Williams Ridge for Patagonian toothfish (SIOFA CMM2020/15 Management of Demersal Stocks) and to allow trap fishing for lobsters in accordance with Australia's updated Bottom Fishing Impact Assessment.

Strict fishing conditions are in place while fishing for toothfish on Williams Ridge including seabird mitigation measures, fishing in areas shallower than 500 metres is prohibited, fishing in 15' x 15' grid cell areas that have not been previously fishing in the season by another vessel and various other gear, catch and effort limitations.

With regard to SPRFMO, an Exploratory Toothfish Fishery was approved in the Macquarie Ridge Continuation Research Block to increase the scientific understanding and baseline data for the area. This approval is for a period of up to three years.

Analysis of performance

High Seas Permits continue to be managed consistent with SPRFMO and SIOFA CMMs.

Non-operational fisheries

Commercial operators did not operate in the following Commonwealth fisheries during 2023–24.

Norfolk Island Fishery

The Norfolk Island Inshore Fishery and the Norfolk Island Offshore Demersal Finfish Fishery do not have formal management plans and there are no commercial fishing concessions.

No stock assessments or biomass estimates for species taken within the Norfolk Island fisheries have been made. No stock status classifications have been given to this fishery as there are no defined stocks for management purposes.

Skipjack Tuna Fishery

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Indian Ocean Skipjack Tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished
Western and Central Pacific Ocean Skipjack Tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Not overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

The fishery is managed in accordance with the Skipjack Tuna Harvest Strategy, the statement of fishery management arrangements and fishing concession conditions.

There has been no annual effort in either the Eastern or Western Skipjack Tuna fishery since 2008 for economic reasons. There were no new management arrangements implemented in the fishery in 2023–24. There are 12 current Eastern Skipjack Tuna Fishery permits and nine Western Skipjack Tuna Fishery permits, however no Australian vessels are currently targeting Skipjack Tuna.

South Tasman Rise Fishery

Stock status of target species

Common name (scientific name)	Latest available status assessment			
	2022		2023	
	Fishing mortality	Biomass	Fishing mortality	Biomass
Orange Roughy (<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>)	Not subject to overfishing	Overfished	Not subject to overfishing	Overfished

Source: Butler, I, Patterson, H, Bromhead, D, Galeano, D, Timmiss, T, Woodhams, J and Curtotti, R 2024, *Fishery status reports 2024*, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra. CC BY 4.0.

The South Tasman Rise Fishery forms part of Australia's fishing footprint under the SPRFMO. New Zealand has not fished the South Tasman Rise since the end of the 2000–01 fishing season, and the area has been closed since 2007. The area was previously subject to a memorandum of understanding for cooperative management between Australia and New Zealand established in 1998, which was terminated in 2020. In 2019, the SPRFMO adopted revised conservation and management measures concerning bottom fishing in the Convention Area, which imported a number of the elements contained within the memorandum of understanding, including a zero tonnes TAC for Orange Roughy in the South Tasman Rise area, which will remain in place until the SPRFMO determines otherwise on the basis of scientific advice.

The South Tasman Rise Orange Roughy stock is the only high-seas stock that has been assigned a status classification by ABARES. Insufficient information is available to enable the fishery-wide determination of stock status for any of the high-seas demersal fish stocks in the SPRFMO and SIOFA areas of competence.

A number of stock assessments were undertaken for Orange Roughy stocks in the SPRFMO and SIOFA areas of competence. These assessments have been accepted by both regional fisheries management organisations.





Report on financial performance



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Overview of financial performance

Departmental operating results

For the year ended 30 June 2024, the overall financial result for AFMA is a deficit of \$1.611 million which is \$0.519 million higher than the budgeted deficit of \$1.092 million. The Minister for Finance approved a \$1.100 million cash operating loss for AFMA for 2023–24 to accommodate several unforeseen budget pressures. AFMA's actual cash operating loss is \$0.897 million.

During 2023–24, revenue from government increased by twenty two per cent to \$26.910 million (\$22.066 million in 2022–23) primarily due to an approved movement of funds for the DT&EM Program into the 2023–24 financial year from prior years. Revenue from levies and license fees increased by 6 per cent to \$13.882 million (\$13.079 million in 2022–23) for supporting management and research priorities across the fisheries. Revenue from contracts with customers increased by 28 per cent to \$4.740 million (\$3.705 million in 2022–23) primarily due to higher VMS revenues from the States.

During 2023–24, AFMA's operating expenses increased to \$47.299 million (from \$42.378 million in 2022–23). Employee expenses increased by \$1.554 million to \$23.700 million mainly due to a higher Comcare premium than anticipated, increases to staff salaries as a result of the public service-wide enterprise bargaining process, and an increase in leave provisions arising from the impact of bond rate increases. Supplier expenses increased by \$3.445 million, primarily as a result of increases in consultant and contractor services to support the DT&EM Program.

Departmental assets and liabilities

As at the 30 June 2024, AFMA's total assets decreased by \$3.942 million to \$34.938 million (\$38.880 million in 2022–23). Cash and cash equivalents increased by \$0.299 million to \$13.309 million (\$13.010 million in 2022–23). Trade and other receivables decreased by \$3.541 million to \$4.740 million (\$8.281 million in 2022–23). This was consistent with Budget and primarily related to appropriations. Non-financial assets decreased by \$0.700 million to \$16.889 million (\$17.589 million in 2022–23) due to depreciation and amortisation of AFMA's assets.

Total liabilities increased by \$0.193 million to \$16.100 million (\$15.907 million in 2022–23) that primarily related to an increase in the leave provision from the impact of the increase in the bond rate.

Administered income and expenses

During 2023–24, AFMA administered expenses on behalf of the Commonwealth Government amounted to \$2.581 million, an increase of \$2.024 million from the prior year reflecting an increase in the activities relating to the caretaking and disposal of illegal foreign fishing vessels. This result was \$3.450 million lower than budget due to fewer vessel apprehensions than anticipated.

Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) audit report



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2024:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2024 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2024 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and their delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Chief Executive Officer is also responsible for such internal control as the Chief Executive Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result

of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Chief Executive Officer is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting, unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Naveed Nisar
Senior Director
Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
19 September 2024

**Australian Fisheries
Management Authority**

Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

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**Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Statement by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer**

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.



Wez Norris
Chief Executive Officer
18 September 2024



Jo Hobson
Chief Financial Officer
18 September 2024

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	1.1A	23,700	22,146	24,749
Suppliers	1.1B	20,843	17,398	16,516
Depreciation and amortisation	2.2A	2,601	2,562	2,547
Finance costs	1.1C	80	84	76
Write-down and impairment of other assets	1.1D	62	170	-
Impairment loss on financial instruments		5	1	-
Foreign exchange losses		8	18	-
Total expenses		47,299	42,378	43,888
Own-source income				
Own-source revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	1.2A	4,740	3,705	4,119
Rental income	1.2B	111	76	135
Levies and licence fees	1.2C	13,882	13,079	14,988
Total own-source revenue		18,733	16,860	19,242
Gains				
Resources received free of charge		45	45	45
Total gains		45	45	45
Total own-source income		18,778	16,905	19,287
Net (cost of)/contribution by services		(28,521)	(25,473)	(24,601)
Revenue from Government	1.2D	26,910	22,066	23,509
Surplus/(Deficit) of continuing operations		(1,611)	(3,407)	(1,092)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassifications to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation reserve		-	2,831	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss)		(1,611)	(576)	(1,092)

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Budget variances commentary

All variances above 10% of the relevant category are considered significant and explained below.

Employee expenses were lower than the Original Budget by \$1.0 million due to lower average staffing levels throughout 2023-24. This was partially offset by the new Enterprise Agreement increase of 4% effective March 2024.

Supplier expenses were higher by \$4.3 million primarily due to Data Transformation and Electronic Monitoring (DT&EM) Program costs classified as operational expenditure rather than capital. This was not anticipated in the Original Budget.

Own-source revenues were lower than the Original Budget by \$0.5 million primarily due to lower levy revenues of \$1.1 million, which were partially offset by higher recognition of revenue from contracts with customers of \$0.6 million.

Revenue from Government was higher due to *Appropriation Act (No.3) 2023-24*, reflecting a movement of funds from unspent prior year appropriation (return of \$7.1 million unspent capital budget appropriation, and recognition of \$3.4m appropriation revenue and \$0.6 million capital budget in 2023-24).

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	2.1A	13,309	13,010	13,372
Trade and other receivables	2.1B	4,740	8,281	4,845
Total financial assets		18,049	21,291	18,217
Non-financial assets				
Land	2.2A	2,475	2,475	1,775
Buildings	2.2A	10,423	12,248	7,973
Plant and equipment	2.2A	925	928	2,441
Computer software	2.2A	2,569	1,649	8,307
Other non-financial assets	2.2B	497	289	301
Total non-financial assets		16,889	17,589	20,797
Total assets		34,938	38,880	39,014
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	2.3A	4,368	3,269	1,604
Other payables	2.3B	645	581	1,241
Total payables		5,013	3,850	2,845
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	2.4A	5,319	6,596	5,042
Total interest bearing liabilities		5,319	6,596	5,042
Provisions				
Employee provisions	5.1A	5,579	5,274	5,174
Other provisions	2.5A	189	187	185
Total provisions		5,768	5,461	5,359
Total liabilities		16,100	15,907	13,246
Net assets		18,838	22,973	25,768
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		20,337	22,861	26,759
Reserves		6,395	6,395	3,564
(Accumulated deficit)		(7,894)	(6,283)	(4,555)
Total equity		18,838	22,973	25,768

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Budget variances commentary

All variances above 10% of the relevant category are considered significant and explained below.

Non-financial assets were \$4.1 million lower than the Original Budget primarily due to additions being lower than expected from the DT&EM Program which was partially offset by increase in Buildings of \$0.170 million. The DT&EM Program costs were reclassified from capital to operational expenditure.

Suppliers were higher than the Original Budget due to an increase in contract liabilities from new contracts with customers relating to service agreements with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Total Equity was \$6.9 million lower primarily due to a return of \$7.1 million in unspent capital budget appropriations.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	22,861	18,138	22,861
Adjustment for errors	-	1	-
Adjusted opening balance	22,861	18,139	22,861
Transactions with owners			
Return of equity	(7,053)	-	-
Contributions by owners			
Departmental capital budget	4,529	4,722	3,898
Total transactions with owners	(2,524)	4,722	3,898
Closing balance as at 30 June	20,337	22,861	26,759
RETAINED EARNINGS			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	(6,283)	(2,875)	(3,463)
Adjustment for errors	-	(1)	-
Adjusted opening balance	(6,283)	(2,876)	(3,463)
Comprehensive income			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	(1,611)	(3,407)	(1,092)
Total comprehensive income/(loss)	(1,611)	(3,407)	(1,092)
Closing balance as at 30 June	(7,894)	(6,283)	(4,555)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	6,395	3,564	3,564
Adjusted opening balance	6,395	3,564	3,564
Comprehensive income			
Other comprehensive income	-	2,831	-
Total comprehensive income	-	2,831	-
Closing balance as at 30 June	6,395	6,395	3,564
TOTAL EQUITY			
Opening balance			
Balance carried forward from previous period	22,973	18,827	22,962
Adjusted opening balance	22,973	18,827	22,962
Comprehensive income/(loss)			
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	(1,611)	(3,407)	(1,092)
Other comprehensive income/(loss)	-	2,831	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss)	(1,611)	(576)	(1,092)
Transactions with owners			
Return of equity	(7,053)	-	-
Contributions by owners			
Departmental capital budget	4,529	4,722	3,898
Total transactions with owners	(2,524)	4,722	3,898
Closing balance as at 30 June	18,838	22,973	25,768

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Accounting policy

Equity injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental capital budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

Budget variances commentary

All variances above 10% of the relevant category are considered significant and explained below.

Equity was \$6.9 million lower than the Original Budget primarily due to the recognition of a movement of funds from unspent prior year appropriation through the return of \$7.1 million of unspent capital budget appropriations.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Cash Flow Statement

As at 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations	26,910	22,066	23,509
Sales of goods and rendering of services	5,476	4,116	4,641
Net GST received	1,886	1,490	1,180
Levies and licence fees	13,832	13,075	14,988
Total cash received	48,104	40,747	44,318
Cash used			
Employees	23,331	21,935	24,749
Suppliers	22,653	18,861	18,038
Interest payments on lease liabilities	78	82	76
Total cash used	46,062	40,878	42,863
Net cash from/(used by) operating activities	2,042	(131)	1,455
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	1,494	882	4,198
Total cash used	1,494	882	(4,198)
Net cash from/(used by) investing activities	(1,494)	(882)	(4,198)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Contributed equity - departmental capital budget	1,292	1,238	3,898
Total cash received	1,292	1,238	3,898
Cash used			
Principal payments of lease liabilities	1,541	1,268	1,455
Net cash used	1,541	1,268	(1,455)
Net cash from/(to) financing activities	(249)	(30)	2,443
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	299	(1,043)	(300)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	13,010	14,054	13,672
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	13,309	13,010	13,372

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Budget variances commentary

All variances above 10% of the relevant category are considered significant and explained below.

Operating activities

Appropriations received were higher than the Original Budget due to *Appropriation Act (No.3) 2023-24*, reflecting a movement and reclassification of funds from unspent prior year appropriation (return of \$7.1 million capital budget appropriations, and recognition of \$3.4 million appropriation revenue and \$0.6 million capital budget in 2023-24).

Suppliers cash used were higher than the Original Budget by \$4.6 million primarily due to DT&EM Program costs being classified as operational expenditure rather than capital expenditure.

Sales of goods and rendering of services were higher than the Original Budget by \$0.8 million relating to service agreements with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Cash Flow Statement

As at 30 June 2024

Investing activities and financing activities

Total purchases of property, plant and equipment were lower than the Original Budget by \$2.7 million as a result of lower than anticipated capital costs relating to delays and classification of costs as operational expenditure for the DT&EM Program.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income

As at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Suppliers		2,581	557	6,031
Total expenses		2,581	557	6,031
Income				
Revenue				
Non-taxation revenue				
Fees and fines		38	154	-
Total non-taxation revenue		38	154	-
Total revenue		38	154	-
Gains				
Reversal of write-downs and impairments		-	10	-
Total gains		-	10	-
Total income		38	164	-
Net (cost of)/contribution by services		(2,543)	(393)	-
Surplus/(deficit)		(2,543)	(393)	(6,031)

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Budget variances commentary

All variances above 10% of the relevant category are considered significant and explained below.

Suppliers expenses solely related to the caretaking and disposal of illegal foreign fishing vessels. These were \$3.5 million lower than the Original Budget due to fewer vessel apprehensions than anticipated.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities

As at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Trade and other receivables	3.1A	184	66	185
Total financial assets		184	66	185
Total assets administered on behalf of Government		184	66	185
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	3.2A	1,644	24	254
Total payables		1,644	24	254
Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government		1,644	24	254
Net assets/(liabilities)		(1,460)	42	(69)

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Budget variances commentary

All variances above 10% of the relevant category are considered significant and explained below.

Administered receivables were lower than the Original Budget by \$0.1 million due to write-offs following an annual assessment.

Administered payables were higher than the Original Budget by \$1.42 million due to an increase in payables from prior year and budget due to an increase in vessel activity leading up to June 2024.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Administered Reconciliation Schedule

As at 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July	42	(69)
Net (cost of)/contribution by services		
Income	38	164
Expenses	(2,581)	(557)
Closing balance as at 30 June	<u>(2,543)</u>	<u>(393)</u>
Transfers (to)/from the Australian Government		
Appropriation transfers from Official Public Account		
Annual appropriations	1,088	755
Appropriation transfers to Official Public Account		
Transfers to Official Public Account	(47)	(251)
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June	<u>(1,460)</u>	<u>42</u>

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Accounting policies

Administered cash transfers to and from the Official Public Account

Revenue collected by AFMA for use by the Government rather than AFMA is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under Parliamentary appropriation on behalf of Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by AFMA on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the Administered Cash Flow Statement, the Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income and in the Administered Reconciliation Schedule.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Administered Cash Flow Statement

As at 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 Original Budget \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Fees	53	303	-
Net GST received	(25)	70	-
Total cash received	<u>28</u>	<u>373</u>	<u>-</u>
Cash used			
Suppliers	1,069	877	6,031
Total cash used	<u>(1,069)</u>	<u>877</u>	<u>(6,031)</u>
Net cash flows from/(used by) operating activities	<u>(1,041)</u>	<u>(504)</u>	<u>(6,031)</u>
Cash from Official Public Account			
Appropriations	1,088	755	6,031
	<u>1,088</u>	<u>755</u>	<u>6,031</u>
Cash to Official Public Account			
Appropriations	(47)	(251)	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Note to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Overview

Objectives of AFMA

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) is an Australian Government controlled entity. It is a not-for-profit entity. The objectives of AFMA are to pursue the implementation of efficient and cost-effective fisheries management consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development and maximising the net economic returns for the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries for which the Commonwealth has legislative responsibilities.

AFMA has a single outcome: The ecologically sustainable development of Commonwealth fisheries for the benefit of the Australian community, through understanding and monitoring Australia's marine living resources and regulating and monitoring commercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal foreign fishing. All the financial information contained in these financial statements were incurred in pursuit of this outcome.

The activities contributing toward this outcome are classified as either departmental or administered. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, income, and expenses controlled or incurred by AFMA in its own right. Administered activities involve the management or oversight by AFMA, on behalf of the Government, of items controlled or incurred by the Government.

Administered activities for AFMA involve the caretaking and disposal of illegal foreign fishing vessels on behalf of the Government.

AFMA is located at Level 3, 15 Lancaster Place, Majura Park, ACT 2609.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the PGPA Act.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015 (FRR); and
- b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 Entities under AASB 1060 issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars.

Cost recovery

Each financial year AFMA, in accordance with the Australian Government Cost Recovery Policy, prepares a cost recovery budget to recover the costs of Commonwealth fisheries management from fishing concession holders through the imposition of levies. AFMA's Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) outlines what cost recoverable activities AFMA provides and how those activities are implemented in managing Commonwealth fisheries. AFMA levies are calculated based on the cost recovered budget for the coming financial year, plus or minus any under or over-spend in the previous financial year and considering any revenue collected through fee-for-service charges.

AFMA collects levy amounts prescribed under the Fishing Levy Amendment (2023-24 Levy Amounts) Regulations 2024 (Fishing Levy) and the Fisheries Levy (Torres Strait Prawn Fishery) Amendment (Levy Amount) Regulations 2023 (TSPF Levy). Amounts prescribed in the 'fishing levy regulations' are collected in three equal instalments in January, April and May, while amounts prescribed in the TSPF levy is collected in one instalment in April.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

New accounting standards

All new/revised/amending standards and/or interpretations that were issued prior to the sign-off date and are applicable to future reporting periods are not expected to have a future material impact on AFMA's financial statements.

Taxation

AFMA is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Reporting of administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities, and cash flows are disclosed in the schedules of administered items and related notes.

Except where otherwise stated, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

Events after the reporting period

There have been no significant events after the reporting period that impact on the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

Financial performance

This section analyses AFMA's financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Note 1.1: Expenses

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 1.1A: Employee benefits		
Wages and salaries	18,053	16,638
Superannuation:		
Defined contribution plans	2,344	2,164
Defined benefit plans	1,498	884
Leave and other entitlements	1,805	2,460
Total employee benefits	23,700	22,146

Accounting Policy

Accounting policies for employee-related expenses is contained in the People and relationships section.

Note 1.1B: Suppliers

Goods and services supplied or rendered

Research	4,542	4,766
Surveillance and compliance	1,905	1,562
Consultants and contractors	7,250	5,017
Travel and meetings	2,121	1,981
Information technology and communications	2,144	1,728
Training and development	323	383
Building repairs and outgoings	585	319
External audit fees provided free of charge	45	45
General administrative	1,160	1,186
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	20,075	16,987
Goods supplied	214	136
Services rendered	19,861	16,851
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	20,075	16,987

Other suppliers

Workers compensation expenses	734	388
Short-term leases	34	23
Total other suppliers	768	411
Total suppliers	20,843	17,398

AFMA does not have any short-term lease commitments as at 30 June 2024.

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 1.1C, 1.2B, 2.2A and 2.4A.

Note 1.1C: Finance costs

Interest on lease liabilities	78	82
Unwinding of discount	2	2
Total finance costs	80	84

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 1.1B, 1.2B, 2.2A and 2.4A.

Note 1.1D: Write-down and impairment of other assets

Assets write-downs and impairments from:

Impairment of property, plant and equipment	62	132
Revaluation decrements	-	38
Total write-down and impairment of assets	62	170

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 1.2: Own-source revenue and gains

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 1.2A: Revenue from contracts with customers		
Rendering of services	4,740	3,705
Total revenue from contracts with customers	<u>4,740</u>	<u>3,705</u>
Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers		
Major product/ service line		
Regulatory services	3,134	2,898
Other revenue	1,606	807
Total revenue from contracts with customers	<u>4,740</u>	<u>3,705</u>

Accounting policy

Revenue from contracts with customers

The following is a description of principal activities from which the AFMA generates its revenue:

- Regulatory activities delivered through deployment of observers, logbooks and licensing services, vessel monitoring services as well as other regulatory compliance services provided to both industry and State Governments. Fee for service activities and compliance services are recognised over time based on actual costs incurred.
- Other revenues primarily consist of service contracts with related Commonwealth Government entities for enforcement and research activities. Other revenue enforcement activities are recognised over time as expenses are incurred for each project. Research services are recognised at a point in time when milestones have been met.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30-day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Note 1.2B: Rental income

Operating lease:

Sub-lease right-of-use assets	111	76
Total rental income	<u>111</u>	<u>76</u>

Leasing commitments receivable

AFMA, in its capacity as a lessor, sub-leases office accommodation on Thursday Island. As at 30 June 2024, there is one sub-lease arrangement that expires in January 2032 and rental income is paid one year in advance. This note should be read in conjunction with Note 2.2.

Maturity analysis of operating lease income receivables

Within 1 year	116	113
One to two years	120	116
Two to three years	123	120
Three to four years	127	123
Four to five years	131	127
More than 5 years	416	547
Total undiscounted lease payments receivables	<u>1,033</u>	<u>1,146</u>

Note 1.2C: Levies and licence charges

Levies and licencing charges	13,882	13,079
Total levies and licence charges	<u>13,882</u>	<u>13,079</u>

Levies and licencing charges comprise of cost recovered amounts credited to the AFMA Special Account in accordance with section 94C of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*. For further information on AFMA's cost recovery arrangements refer to Note 4.3.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 1.2D: Revenue from Government		
Appropriations		
Departmental appropriations	<u>26,910</u>	<u>22,066</u>
Total revenue from Government	<u>26,910</u>	<u>22,066</u>

Accounting policy

Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as revenue from Government when AFMA gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined, and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Financial position

This section analyses AFMA's assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result. Employee-related information is disclosed in the People and relationships section.

Note 2.1: Financial assets

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 2.1A: Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in special accounts	13,093	12,137
Cash on hand or on deposit	<u>216</u>	<u>873</u>
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>13,309</u>	<u>13,010</u>

The closing balance of cash in special accounts does not include amounts held in Trust: \$0 in 2024 (\$27,000 in 2023). See Note 4.2 Special Accounts and Note 7.2 Assets held in Trust for more information.

Accounting policy

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents includes:

- a) cash on hand
- b) funds in bank accounts, and
- c) cash in special accounts.

Note 2.1B: Trade and other receivables

Goods and services receivables:

Goods and services	<u>602</u>	<u>518</u>
Total goods and services receivables	<u>602</u>	<u>518</u>

Appropriation receivables:

Appropriation receivable	<u>3,237</u>	<u>7,053</u>
Total appropriation receivables	<u>3,237</u>	<u>7,053</u>

Other receivables:

GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	458	430
Accrued revenue	304	186
Statutory receivables	<u>139</u>	<u>94</u>
Total other receivables	<u>901</u>	<u>710</u>
Total trade and other receivables (net)	<u>4,740</u>	<u>8,281</u>

Credit terms for Goods and Services were within 30 days for 2024 (2023: 30 days)

Accounting policy

Financial assets

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that are held for the purpose of collecting the contractual cash flows where the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, that are not provided at below-market interest rates, are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method adjusted for any loss allowance.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 2.2: Non-financial assets

Note 2.2A: Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment, and intangibles

Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment, and intangibles					
	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000	Plant and equipment \$'000	Computer software \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2023					
Gross book value	2,475	17,000	947	7,958	28,380
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	-	(4,752)	(19)	(6,309)	(11,080)
Total as at 1 July 2023	2,475	12,248	928	1,649	17,300
Additions:					
By purchase	-	54	151	-	205
Internally developed	-	-	-	1,289	1,289
Right of use assets	-	257	42	-	299
Impairments recognised in net cost of services	-	(39)	(2)	(59)	(100)
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(675)	(298)	(176)	(1,149)
Depreciation on right of use assets	-	(1,422)	(30)	-	(1,452)
Reclassification of assets	-	-	134	(134)	-
Total as at 30 June 2024	2,475	10,423	925	2,569	16,392
Total as at 30 June 2024 represented by:					
Gross book value	2,475	16,976	1,270	9,047	29,768
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation and impairment	-	(6,553)	(345)	(6,478)	(13,376)
Total as at 30 June 2024	2,475	10,423	925	2,569	16,392
Carrying amount of ROU assets	-	4,802	85	-	4,887

The above table discloses all property, plant and equipment including those subjects to operating leases. AFMA owns one building which is partially sublet to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Rent for 2023-24 was \$111,194 indexed at 3% per annum. This asset incurred depreciation of \$44,137 during 2023-24.

Revaluations of non-financial assets and intangible assets

All revaluations are conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy stated at Note 7.4. No revaluations were undertaken as at 30 June 2024.

Contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant, equipment, and intangible assets

As at 30 June 2024 AFMA has contractual capital commitments of \$95,045 which relate to intangible asset development.

Accounting policy

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Asset recognition threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the Statement of Financial Position, except for purchases costing less than \$5,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located. This is particularly relevant to 'make good' provisions for AFMA's Canberra office. These costs are included in the value of AFMA's buildings with a corresponding provision for the 'make good' recognised.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Leased Right of Use (ROU) Assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise the initial lease liability amount, initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

On initial adoption of AASB 16 AFMA has adjusted the ROU assets at the date of initial application by the amount of any provision for onerous leases recognised immediately before the date of initial application. Following initial application, an impairment review is undertaken for any right of use lease asset that shows indicators of impairment and an impairment loss is recognised against any right of use lease asset that is impaired. Lease ROU assets continue to be measured at cost after initial recognition.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment (excluding ROU assets) are carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets do not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depended upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reversed a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date was eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset was restated to the revalued amount.

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to AFMA using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	2024	2023
Buildings on freehold land	40 to 45 years	40 to 45 years
Leasehold improvements	Lease term	Lease term
Plant and Equipment	4 to 13 years	4 to 13 years

The depreciation rates for ROU assets are based on the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the ROU asset or the end of the lease term.

Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2024. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated, and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if AFMA were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Intangibles

AFMA's intangibles comprise purchased and internally developed software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful lives of AFMA's software assets are 3 to 10 years (2023: 3 to 10 years). All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2024.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Fair value measurement

AFMA deems transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy to have occurred at the end of the reporting period. No transfers between levels occurred during 2023-24.

Accounting judgements and estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, AFMA has made judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements with respect to the fair value of land and buildings. The fair value of land and buildings has been taken to be the market value of similar properties as determined by Jones Lang Lasalle Advisory Services Pty Ltd in June 2023. In some instances, AFMA buildings are purpose-built and may in fact realise more, or less, in the market.

No accounting assumptions and estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next accounting period.

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 2.2B: Other non-financial assets		
Prepayments	497	289
Total prepayments	<u>497</u>	<u>289</u>

No indicators of impairment were found for other non-financial assets.

All other non-financial assets are expected to be recovered within the next 12 months.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 2.3: Payables

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 2.3A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors	227	-
Accrued expenses	2,611	2,392
Contract liabilities from contracts with customers	1,530	877
Total suppliers	4,368	3,269

Settlement is usually made within 20 days.

Note 2.3B: Other payables		
Wages and salaries	645	581
Total other payables	645	581

Note 2.4: Interest bearing liabilities

Note 2.4A: Leases		
Lease liabilities	5,319	6,596
Total leases	5,319	6,596

Total cash outflow for leases for the year ended 30 June 2024 was \$1,618,769.

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows		
Within 1 year	1,269	1,549
Between 1 to 5 years	4,077	4,824
More than 5 years	-	429
Total leases	5,346	6,801

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 1.1B, 1.1C, 1.2B and 2.2A.

Note 2.5: Other provisions

	Provision for restoration \$'000	Total other provisions \$'000
Note 2.5A: Other provisions		
As at 1 July 2023	187	187
Unwinding of discount or change in discount rate	2	2
Total as at 30 June 2024	189	189

AFMA currently has 1 (2023: 1) agreement for the leasing of premises which have provisions requiring AFMA to restore the premises to their original condition at the conclusion of the lease. AFMA has made a provision to reflect the present value of this obligation for the 15 Lancaster Place, Majura Park office in Canberra.

Accounting policy

Please refer to Note 6 Managing uncertainty for accounting policies for financial liabilities.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024

Assets and liabilities administered on behalf of the Government

This section analyses assets used to conduct operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result that AFMA does not control but administers on behalf of the Government. Unless otherwise noted, the accounting policies adopted are consistent with those applied for departmental reporting.

Note 3.1: Administered - financial assets

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 3.1A: Trade and other receivables		
Fees and charges		
Fees and charges receivables - external parties	33	74
Total fees and charges receivable	<u>33</u>	<u>74</u>
Other receivables		
GST receivable from Australian Taxation Office	151	24
Total other receivables	<u>151</u>	<u>24</u>
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	<u>184</u>	<u>98</u>
Less impairment allowance		
Fees and charges	-	(32)
Total impairment allowance account	<u>-</u>	<u>(32)</u>
Total trade and other receivables (net)	<u>184</u>	<u>66</u>

Receivables are expected to be recovered within 12 months.

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2023: 30 days).

Note 3.2: Administered - liabilities

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 3.2A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	1,641	-
GST payable	3	24
Total suppliers	<u>1,644</u>	<u>24</u>

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Funding

This section identifies AFMA's funding structure.

Note 4.1: Appropriations

Note 4.1A: Annual appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

Annual appropriations for 2024

	Annual appropriation \$'000	Adjustments to appropriation ² \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriations applied in 2024 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance ¹ \$'000
Departmental					
Ordinary annual services	23,509	3,401	26,910	26,910	-
Capital budget	3,898	631	4,529	1,292	3,237
Total departmental	27,407	4,032	31,439	28,202	3,237
Administered					
Ordinary annual services					
Administered items	6,031	-	6,031	1,088	4,943
Total administered	6,031	-	6,031	1,088	4,943

Notes:

- The variance of \$4,943,000 for Administered funds remained as unspent and will be returned to consolidated revenue.
- DCBs are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No 1, 3, 5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts. In 2023-24 \$7,053,075 of DCB's was subject to a movement of funds whereby unspent 2022-23 and 2021-22 funds were reduced and reappropriated to 2023-24 by *Appropriation Act (No.3) 2023-24* (DCB Capital Budget - \$631,000 and operating - \$3,401,000) and the remaining amount reappropriated in 2024-25 *Appropriation Act (No.1) 2023-24*.

Annual appropriations for 2023

	Annual appropriation \$'000	Adjustments to appropriation ² \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriations applied in 2023 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance ¹ \$'000
Departmental					
Ordinary annual services	22,066	-	22,066	22,066	-
Capital budget	4,748	(26)	4,722	1,238	3,484
Total departmental	26,814	(26)	26,788	23,304	3,484
Administered					
Ordinary annual services					
Administered items	5,839	-	5,839	755	5,084
Total administered	5,839	-	5,839	755	5,084

Notes:

- The variance of \$5,084,000 for Administered funds remained as unspent and will be returned to consolidated revenue.
- DCBs are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No 1, 3, 5). They form part of ordinary annual services and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts. During 2022-23 \$26,000 was withheld under section 51 of the PGPA Act.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 4.1B: Unspent annual appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')		
Departmental		
Cash and Cash equivalents	216	873
Appropriation Act (No.1) 2023-24 (Capital Budget - DCB) - Non Operating	2,606	
Appropriation Act (No.3) 2023-24 (Capital Budget - DCB) - Non Operating	631	
Supply Act (No.1) 2022-23 (Capital Budget - DCB) - Non Operating	-	1,978
Supply Act (No.3) 2022-23 (Capital Budget - DCB) - Non Operating	-	2,744
Appropriation Act (No.1) 2021-22 (Capital Budget - DCB) - Non Operating	-	2,331
Total departmental	3,453	7,926
Administered		
Appropriation Act (No.1) 2023-2024	4,943	-
Supply Act (No.1) 2022-2023	1,678	1,678
Supply Act (No.3) 2022-2023	3,406	3,406
Appropriation Act (No.1) 2021-2022	-	4,640
Appropriation Act (No.1) 2020-2021	-	2,363
Supply Act (No.1) 2020-2021	-	3,127
Total administered	10,027	15,214

Note 4.2: Special accounts

	AFMA Special Account (Departmental) ¹		AFMA Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys Special Account (Special Public Money) ²	
	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Balance brought forward from previous period	13,010	14,054	27	55
Increases				
Appropriation for the reporting period	28,202	23,304	-	-
Levies and licensing charges (<i>Fisheries Administration Act 1991 - section 94C</i>)	13,832	13,075	-	-
Other increases	7,362	5,605	-	17
Total increases	49,396	41,984	-	17
Available for payments	62,406	56,038	27	72
Decreases				
Employee payments	(23,331)	(21,935)	-	-
Supplier payments	(22,653)	(18,861)	-	-
Interest payments on lease liabilities	(78)	(82)	-	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(1,494)	(882)	-	-
Principal repayments on lease liabilities	(1,541)	(1,268)	-	-
Repayments debited from the special account	-	-	(27)	(45)
Total decrease	(49,097)	(43,028)	(27)	(45)
Balance carried forward to the next period	13,309	13,010	-	27
Balance represented by:				
Cash - held in the Official Public Account	13,093	12,137	-	-
Cash - held in AFMA bank accounts	216	873	-	27
Total balance carried to the next period	13,309	13,010	-	27

¹ Appropriation: PGPA Act section 80. Establishing Instrument: *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*; section 94B. Purpose: Payment or discharge of the costs, expenses or other obligations incurred in the performance or exercise of the functions and powers of the Authority.

² Appropriation: AFMA Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys Special Account (Special Public Money) Establishing Instrument: PGPA Act section 78. Purpose: For amounts that are held on trust or otherwise for the

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth. The closing balance of AFMA Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys Special Account represents amounts held in trust. See 7.2A Assets Held in Trust for more information.

Note 4.3: Regulatory charging summary

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Amounts applied		
Departmental		
Special appropriations (including special accounts)	14,610	13,970
Total amounts applied	<u>14,610</u>	<u>13,970</u>
Expenses		
Departmental		
Total expenses	<u>15,030</u>	<u>13,794</u>
Revenue		
Departmental	14,610	13,970
Total revenue	<u>14,610</u>	<u>13,970</u>

Cost recovered activities:

AFMA undertakes cost recovered activities for the provision of fisheries management functions within the Commonwealth fisheries sector, including the following activities:

- Management of domestic commercial fisheries
- Data collection and management
- Research
- Licensing/registration and revenue collection
- Policy support

AFMA's CRIS describes how AFMA will charge fishing concession holders for the management of Commonwealth fisheries. The AFMA CRIS can be found at www.afma.gov.au.

Note 4.4: Net cash appropriation arrangements

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 4.4: Net cash appropriation arrangements		
Total comprehensive income/(loss) - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income	(1,611)	(576)
Plus: depreciation/amortisation of assets funded through appropriations (departmental capital budget funding and/or equity injections) ¹	803	759
Plus: depreciation of right-of-use assets	1,452	1,443
Less: lease principal repayments	<u>(1,541)</u>	<u>(1,268)</u>
Net Cash Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>(897)</u>	<u>358</u>

¹ Depreciation and amortisation expenditure represented above refers to the Government funded portion of AFMA's total depreciation and amortisation charges. In 2023-24 AFMA received \$346,000 (2022-23: \$360,000) in funding for depreciation and amortisation through cost recovery arrangements. The inclusion of depreciation/amortisation expenses related to ROU leased assets and the lease liability principal repayment amount reflects the impact of AASB 16 Leases, which does not directly reflect a change in appropriation arrangements.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

People and relationships

This section provides a range of employment and post-employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

Note 5.1: Employee provisions

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 5.1A: Employee provisions		
Leave	5,579	5,274
Total employee provisions	<u>5,579</u>	<u>5,274</u>

Accounting policy

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 Employee Benefits) and termination benefits wholly settled due within twelve months of end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated based on employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including AFMA's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to the work of an actuary as at 30 June 2024. The estimate of the present value of the liability considers attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Separation and redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. AFMA recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations.

Superannuation

Staff of AFMA are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS) or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap) and other member funds external to the Public Sector.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes.

AFMA makes employer contributions to the employees' superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. AFMA accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June 2024 represents outstanding contributions.

Accounting judgements and estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, AFMA has made the judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements with respect to the liability for employee provisions. The liability for long service leave has been estimated using present value techniques in accordance with the shorthand method as per FRR 24.1 (a). This considers expected salary growth, attrition and future discounting using Commonwealth bond rates.

No accounting assumptions and estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next accounting period.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 5.2: Key management personnel remuneration

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of that entity.

AFMA has determined the key management personnel to be Commissioners, the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Officers. Key management personnel remuneration is reported in the table below:

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 5.2: Key management personnel remuneration		
Short-term employee benefits	1,483,671	1,470,340
Post-employment benefits	204,658	230,633
Other long-term employee benefits	29,832	33,354
Termination benefits	-	70,000
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses	1,718,161	1,804,327

Total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table are:

2024	2023
11	14

The above key management personnel remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by AFMA. The number of KMP was 11 (2022-23: 14) which is three lower than the prior year and is primarily due to three officials undertaking acting roles for part of the 2022-23 financial year.

Note 5.3: Related party disclosures

Related party relationships

AFMA is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to AFMA are key management personnel including the Portfolio Minister and Executive, and other Australian Government entities.

Transactions with related parties

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of a Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions have not been separately disclosed in this note.

Significant transactions with related parties can include:

- the payments of grants or loans
- purchases of goods and services
- asset purchases, sales transfers, or leases
- debts forgiven, and
- guarantees.

Considering relationships with related entities, and transactions entered during the reporting period by AFMA, it has been determined that there are no related party transactions to be separately disclosed.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Managing uncertainty

This section analyses how AFMA manages financial risks within its operating environment.

Note 6.1: Contingent liabilities and contingent assets

AFMA has no quantifiable or unquantifiable contingent liabilities or contingent assets for departmental or administered.

Note 6.2: Financial instruments

AFMA's financial assets consist of cash and cash equivalents, accrued revenues and both statutory receivables and goods and services receivables. Receivables for statutory charges are not financial instruments. Examples of statutory charges include GST (receivable from or payable to the ATO), levies, rates and fines. However, the initial recognition and measurement of statutory receivables is treated as if they are financial instruments under AASB 9. Receivables from statutory charges are assessed annually for impairment in accordance with AASB 136.

AFMA's financial liabilities include trade creditors and accrued expenses.

Accounting policy

Financial assets

In accordance with AASB 9 Financial Instruments, AFMA classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- a) financial assets at fair value through profit or loss
- b) financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income, and
- c) financial assets measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on both AFMA's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when AFMA becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Comparatives have not been restated on initial application.

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets included in this category need to meet two criteria:

1. the financial asset is held in order to collect the contractual cash flows, and
2. the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest (SPPI) on the principal outstanding amount.

Amortised cost is determined using the effective interest method.

Impairment of financial assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on Expected Credit Losses, using the general approach which measures the loss allowance based on an amount equal to lifetime expected credit losses where risk has significantly increased, or an amount equal to 12-month expected credit losses if risk has not increased.

The simplified approach for trade, contract and lease receivables is used. This approach always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses.

A write-off constitutes a derecognition event where the write-off directly reduces the gross carrying amount of the financial asset.

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or 'other financial liabilities'. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Financial liabilities at amortised cost

Financial liabilities, including borrowings, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective interest basis.

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

Other information

Note 7.1: Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 7.1A: Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities		
Assets expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months		
Cash and cash equivalents	13,309	13,010
Trade and other receivables	4,740	8,281
Other non-financial assets	497	289
Total no more than 12 months	18,546	21,580
More than 12 months		
Land	2,475	2,475
Buildings	10,423	12,248
Plant and equipment	925	928
Computer software	2,569	1,649
Total more than 12 months	16,392	17,300
Total assets	34,938	38,880
Liabilities expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months		
Suppliers	4,368	3,269
Other payables	645	581
Leases	1,289	1,452
Employee provisions	1,550	1,449
Total no more than 12 months	7,852	6,751
More than 12 months		
Leases	4,030	5,144
Employee provisions	4,029	3,825
Other provisions	189	187
Total more than 12 months	8,248	9,156
Total liabilities	16,100	15,907

Note 7.1B: Current/non-current distinction for administered assets and liabilities

Assets expected to be recovered in:

No more than 12 months

Trade and other receivables	184	66
Total no more than 12 months	184	66
Total assets	184	66

Liabilities expected to be settled in:

No more than 12 months

Suppliers	1,644	24
Total no more than 12 months	1,644	24
Total liabilities	1,644	24

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

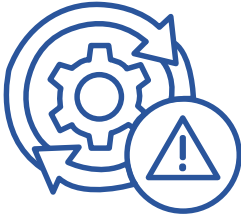
Note 7.2: Assets held in trust

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Note 7.2A: Assets held in trust		
Monetary assets		
Financial assets held in trust are also disclosed in Note 4.2: Special Accounts in the table titled AFMA Service for Other Entities and Trust Monies.		
Cash at bank - monetary asset		
As at 1 July	27	55
Receipts	-	17
Payments	<u>(27)</u>	<u>(45)</u>
As at 30 June	<u>-</u>	<u>27</u>
Total monetary assets held in trust	<u>-</u>	<u>27</u>





Management and accountability



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Management and accountability

Governance structure

The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry appoints the chair, part-time Commissioners and the CEO. Following advice from the chair, the minister appoints a part-time commissioner as deputy-chair. The minister is also the approving authority for AFMA's Corporate Plan, Annual Operational Plan and all Fishery Management Plans determined by AFMA.

Our CEO is responsible for performing and exercising AFMA's foreign compliance functions and powers and assisting the Commission, including giving effect to the decisions of the Commission. Our staff are responsible for supporting the CEO to meet the CEO's responsibilities as AFMA's accountable authority under the PGPA Act and the agency head for the purposes of the *Public Service Act 1999*. The Commission is subject to limited government policy direction as stated in section 91 of the FAA.

The Commission is responsible for performing and exercising the domestic fisheries management functions and powers of AFMA. The AFMA Commission oversees AFMA's domestic fisheries management functions including the determination of TACs and TAEs, and domestic compliance and monitoring programs. The Commission comprises six independent Commissioners with expertise in natural resource management, economics, legal and governance matters, research, and fishing industry operations and the CEO.

Committees

To support AFMA's Executive to ensure organisational accountability and transparency, AFMA has a range of committees to oversee specific areas of risk. The committees document their considerations and report to the Executive through summary reports and meeting minutes and their terms of reference are reviewed every one to two years. During 2023–24, the Risk Management Committee and Strategic Delivery Committee were upgraded and strengthened through the creation of the AFMA Governance & Risk Forum, and an expanded DT&EM Program Board, with both bodies attended by all of the AFMA Executive and Senior Manager representation.

Audit and Risk Committee provides independent advice to the CEO on the appropriateness of AFMA's:

- financial reporting including the annual audited financial statements
- performance reporting including the framework for developing, measuring, and reporting
- systems of risk oversight and management including AFMA's risk management and fraud control framework, and
- systems of internal controls associated with governance, risk management, compliance, and business continuity management arrangements.

The Committee meets at least four times per year and arrangements are in place for out of session consideration of matters throughout the year. The Committee is authorised, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:

- obtain any information it requires from any employee or external party (subject to any legal obligation to protect information)
- discuss any matters with the external auditor, or other external parties (subject to confidentiality considerations)
- request the attendance of any employee, including the CEO, at Committee meetings, and

- obtain legal or other professional advice, as considered necessary to meet its responsibilities.

The AFMA Audit and Risk Committee comprised three independent members throughout 2023–24.

The AFMA Audit and Risk Committee Charter is available at: <https://www.afma.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-03/AFMA%20Audit-and-Risk-Committee-Charter-2024.pdf>

Member name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (include formal and informal as relevant)	Number of meetings attended	Total number of meetings held	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.)	Additional Information (including role on committee)
Mr Geoff Knuckey	<p>Significant Board and Audit Committee experience in the private and public sector.</p> <p>Strong financial reporting and management skills attained through professional and management roles.</p> <p>Highly developed appreciation of business, financial and reputational risk and appropriate governance frameworks.</p>	4	4	\$8,250	Chair
Ms Diana Hamono	<p>Involved in the profession of internal audit, specialising in IT audit, for 36 years, both in the public and private sector.</p> <p>Former Internal Audit Partner of a professional services firm in Canberra.</p> <p>Master's degree in Information Studies (Knowledge Management), Diploma in Security (Risk Management), certified in the governance of enterprise ICT, a Certified Information Systems Auditor, and Professional Member of the Institute of Internal Auditors (Australia).</p>	4	4	\$4,584	Member

Member name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience (include formal and informal as relevant)	Number of meetings attended	Total number of meetings held	Total annual remuneration (GST inc.)	Additional Information (including role on committee)
Ms Susan Ryan	<p>Specialises in information, knowledge, and data management and improving data and information management practices to allow for more efficient decision making and use of government resources.</p> <p>Accredited Department of Finance Gateway Assurance Reviewer having conducted numerous reviews of major and complex Government programs in recent years.</p> <p>More than 25 years' experience in risk and advisory firms, including as a Principal in a Big 4 accounting firm and as a Managing Director of a global consulting firm.</p> <p>Held positions in the Senior Executive Service in two Australian Government agencies.</p> <p>Strong background in internal audit, risk advisory and assurance services to a range of public and private sector organisations, including in the natural resource management sector.</p> <p>Chartered Accountant, Diploma of Fraud Control, member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and a member of the Institute of Internal Auditors (Australia).</p> <p>Specialises in risk management, fraud prevention and detection and internal control redesign.</p>	4	4	\$4,584	Member

Fishery specific Electronic Monitoring Business Reference Groups (BRG)

provide advice, guidance, and support to EM trials. BRGs provide expertise to guide EM trials and support the development of plans and strategies that will inform recommendations on all matters relevant to the development and implementation of the EM program.

Data Transformation Business Reference Group provides advice and recommendations to the Data Transformation Program Manager on relevant projects to ensure they are aligned to business needs and consistent with the overall program objective.

Information Management Governance Committee provides a strategic approach to the management of all AFMA information assets, such as records and data to support the achievement corporate goals and objectives.

Management Advisory Committees are statutory committees established by AFMA under section 56 of the FAA. Each fishery is covered by a Management Advisory Committee:

- Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector Management Advisory Committee
- Northern Prawn Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- South East Management Advisory Committee
- Southern Bluefin Tuna Management Advisory Committee

- Sub-Antarctic Fisheries Management Advisory Committee
- Tropical Tuna Management Advisory Committee

The Management Advisory Committees provide advice to AFMA and the AFMA Commission on the preparation of management arrangements, the operation of the relevant fishery, and reporting to AFMA on scientific, economic, and other information on the status of fish stocks, sub stocks, species (target and non-target species), and the impact of fishing on the marine environment. This advice is required to be evidence-based and address biological, economic, and wider ecological factors affecting the performance of the fishery. Committee advice assists AFMA and the AFMA Commission in its role to regulate commercial fishing in Commonwealth fisheries, particularly the setting of catch limits and conditions.

The membership of Management Advisory Committees is available on AFMA's website.

Research Committee advises the AFMA Commission on the strategic directions, priorities and funding for monitoring and research relevant to meeting AFMA's objectives.

Economics Working Group provides advice to the AFMA Commission on economic issues affecting Commonwealth fisheries. It consists of economist members of RAGs and other invited experts and convenes on an as-needs basis.

Ecological Risk Management Steering

Group provides strategic advice to the AFMA Commission and AFMA Management on implementation of AFMA's approach to ecological risk assessment and management.

Governance Forum comprises the Senior Managers and the Executive cohort, providing a cross-agency perspective on the various governance practices. The forum creates an opportunity for feedback on implementing AFMA's performance measures, risk management framework, and other governance measures.

Security Governance Committee reviews and monitors AFMA's security governance arrangements against the security threats and vulnerabilities identified by the Australian government and faced by AFMA in delivering its objectives.

Work Health and Safety Committee provides comprehensive advice and guidance to the AFMA decision makers on managing hazards and risks in the workplace to meet the AFMA obligations outlined in the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* and AFMA's Health and Safety Management Arrangements (HSMAs).

Workplace Consultative Committee

reviews and monitors the implementation of the AFMA's Enterprise Agreement and associated guidelines and policies. The committee is represented by employees, agency and union workplace delegates and AFMA management. At the commencement of the enterprise bargaining process in 2023, the Workplace Consultative Committee was dissolved. A new Workplace Consultative Committee was established following the Enterprise Agreement 2024–27 coming into effect in April 2024.

Strategic planning framework

Corporate plan

AFMA's corporate plan is the primary planning document that sets out how we will achieve our purpose over a four-year period. The corporate plan is complemented by the annual operational plan, section plans, and individual performance agreements. Performance reviews and reporting are consistent with our obligations under the FAA, and whole-of-government requirements under the PGPA Act and Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014. The contribution of these plans and reports to achieving our outcome and objectives is shown on the next page.

Legislation

Fisheries Administration Act 1991

Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013

Portfolio Budget Statement

The PBS describes the financial resources that AFMA expects to use over the next four years. The PBS also details AFMA's strategic direction and the manner in which AFMA will measure performance over the next four financial years.

Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan describes, in greater detail than the PBS, AFMA's corporate goals, strategies and focus over the next four financial years.

Annual Operational Plan

The AOP explains the actions that AFMA will undertake over the next 12 months to pursue the areas of focus and deliver on the goals and strategies identified in the Corporate Plan.

Annual Report / Annual Performance Statement

The Annual Performance Statement is included as part of AFMA's Annual Report. The statement provides an assessment of the extent to which AFMA has succeeded in achieving its purpose.

REGULATOR PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

AFMA Commission

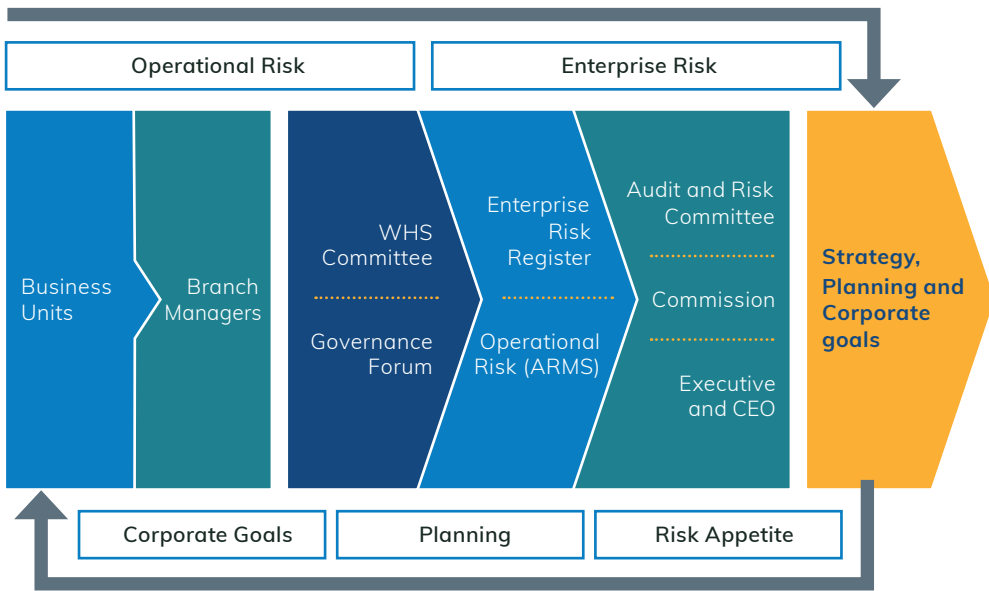
Quarterly Reports

Section Plans

Risk management

The effective management of risk is integral to achieving our objectives and overarching outcome. Our Risk Management Framework comprises policy, guidance, business processes, and organisational culture which promotes effective risk management. To support the framework, we developed a statement of Risk Appetite. This statement articulates our position with regards to specific risk categories, enabling staff to assess and monitor risks within agreed parameters for official activities.

AFMA's management of risk is embedded into business-as-usual processes, with all staff able to contribute risks to a register at enterprise level. The register uses consistent language and refers to the Risk Appetite statement. Entries in the enterprise risk register are overseen by a Governance Forum comprised of senior and executive representatives from across AFMA, and AFMA's Audit and Risk Committee.



Internal audit

AFMA's Strategic Internal Audit Plan sets out AFMA's internal audit strategy for the coming three calendar years and is updated annually based on emerging risks and areas of focus. In determining the 2023–25 program, covering the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025, AFMA's executive considered portfolio priorities, prior-year audits and areas for improvement, as well as emerging risks. AFMA's Audit and Risk Committee also reviews the program and suggests areas for audit attention.

The internal audit service provider role involves providing independent and objective assurance to add value and improve AFMA's operations. AFMA's Audit and Risk Committee reviews all finalised internal audit reports and so informed, provides advice to the CEO.

In 2023–24, our internal auditor, BellchambersBarrett, completed the following reviews:

- credit cards and use of delegations
- performance statement audit, and
- procurement and contract management.

The three completed internal audits made 17 recommendations in total. Following the Audit and Risk Committee meeting in May 2024, there were seven recommendations outstanding from 2023–24.

Control environment

All AFMA staff are required to comply with the APS Values and Code of Conduct as set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*. AFMA employees are expected to maintain the highest standards of business and personal ethics. We have in place compulsory annual training, staff policies and guidelines to help our staff to understand their obligations, and support good workplace behaviour.

Conflicts of interest and probity

We require new starters to complete declarations of real or apparent conflicts of interest as part of their onboarding procedures. Each year we require our staff to complete refreshed declarations of real or apparent conflicts of interest. In 2023–24, 80 per cent of employees completed declarations in which 30 disclosures were made.

When conducting procurements, staff involved in assessing procurements are required to follow the principles and processes on our procurement intranet site. Complex or high value procurements require the completion of probity and conflict of interest declarations from staff involved in evaluating the responses before they assess responses. Complex procurements have access to probity advice from our procurement team or specialised external probity (legal) advisers.

Fraud control and prevention

As a non-corporate Commonwealth entity, AFMA complies with section 10 of the PGPA Rule by establishing and maintaining an effective Fraud Control Framework. Our Fraud Control Framework establishes a foundation to prevent, detect, respond to, and report fraud affecting AFMA. The framework is enhanced by plans, policies and procedures, systems and internal controls, financial management and assurance activities, and the Risk Management Framework.

We are committed to nurturing and promoting an anti-fraud culture, adhere to the 'Fraud Rule' in the Australian Government's Fraud Control Framework 2017 and endeavour to apply the Fraud Policy and Control Plan including guidance material, in line with best practice.

There were no incidents of fraud in 2023–24. We conducted a fraud risk assessment and concluded that all identified fraud risks were accurately assessed, and appropriate controls were in place.

We are planning to enhance fraud awareness among staff through various mechanisms in the coming financial year.

Gifts and benefits

Our staff are asked to think carefully before accepting gifts, especially where there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest. AFMA's Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy requires our staff to report all gifts or favours received in the course of their work for AFMA using a gifts and benefits declaration form.

Where possible, staff are encouraged to simply decline a gift in the first place. There are instances where the giving and receiving of gifts is an accepted and culturally necessary part of doing business (for example with traditional fishers or international representatives), but these gifts must still be reported.

To report these gifts, our staff are required to submit a request to the Manager, People, Capability for consideration and approval by the relevant delegate. Depending on the value and nature of the gift, a decision will then be made, by the Senior Manager, People, Capability and Engagement and/or the Chief Executive Officer, as to whether or not the staff member can keep the gift.

In 2023–24, one gift was declared.

Compliance with finance law

We maintain a register of PGPA compliance breaches, including breaches of 42-day AusTender reporting requirements, Whole-of-Australian Government contract breaches, credit card misuse, and any other PGPA breaches. Breaches are reported in monthly Executive governance reports so that appropriate action can be taken to remedy the non-compliance. Remedial actions include managerial caution, further training, and additional quality assurance measures.

In 2023–24, there were no significant non-compliance issues with finance law that warranted reporting to the Minister.

External scrutiny

There were no significant developments in external scrutiny of AFMA during 2023–24.

Business continuity

To address the risk of significant disruption to business operations, AFMA has a Business Continuity Plan, which provides guidance to AFMA Management in establishing alternative arrangements, enabling the priority allocation of resources to ensure continuation of critical business processes following a disaster.

The Business Continuity Plan includes emergency contacts, cyclone response procedures for our Darwin and Thursday Island offices, bushfire response procedure for Lakes Entrance office, and information and communications technology disaster recovery protocols. The Business Continuity Plan includes procedures for all phases of recovery as defined in the Business Continuity Strategy document. This plan is separate from AFMA ICT Disaster Recovery Plan, which focuses on the recovery of our technology facilities and platforms, such as critical applications, databases, servers or other required technology infrastructure. The Business Continuity Plan is tested, reviewed, and updated annually, and monitored by the AFMA Audit and Risk Committee.

Management of human resources

Managing and developing employees

Employee profile

As at 30 June 2024, AFMA employed 170 employees. Of these 136 were ongoing and 34 were non-ongoing employees.

Our geographic footprint extends beyond Canberra. We have offices in Darwin, Thursday Island, and Lakes Entrance. Nineteen (19) staff were engaged as casual field observers who undertake duties on Commonwealth commercial fishing vessels and are based at various locations around Australia.

At the end of the reporting year, 53 per cent of our workforce were 45 years of age or under, 47 per cent were women and the highest proportion of employees were at the APS Level 6 classification. Women comprised 50 per cent of the Executive Level cohort and the percentage of employees who have self-reported as having a disability is 2.4 per cent and 3.53 per cent identifying as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Strategic Workforce Plan

AFMA's Strategic Workforce Plan 2022–25 provides the framework for initiatives supporting AFMA staff. The implementation of this four-year plan aims to ensure we continue to have a workforce that is equipped to meet future priorities and demands.

During this second year of implementation, the following action items were progressed including:

- Scoping and planning works for refreshing the induction and onboarding experience for new hires.
- Ongoing development of a talent and succession planning model addressing core capability shortages.
- Review of policy and procedure, in particular ongoing improvements to existing policies and development of new ones. This work escalated in support of AFMA's Enterprise Agreement 2024–27 and its associated implementation.

Employment programs

We partnered with the Australian Public Service Commission in the recruitment and delivery of the annual Graduate Development Program. The program includes a combination of on-the-job-training, mentoring, and a formal training program. We engaged two graduates in the 2023 and 2024 intakes. We have continued our partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) in enabling AFMA graduates to complete a rotational placement at DAFF, and offering DAFF graduates the opportunity to complete a placement at AFMA.

We continue to support and participate in a variety of whole-of-government career pathways. These include the Australian Government Graduate Program, Indigenous Graduate Program, and Indigenous Australian Government Program.

Diversity and inclusion

AFMA is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace free from bullying, discrimination, and harassment, an environment that recognises and values the individual differences of employees, and fosters the contributions of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

The commitment extends to attracting and recruiting people from diverse backgrounds and wherever possible, participation in whole of APS programs.

In the 2024 APS Census, 71 per cent of employees believe that AFMA supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture.

During 2023–24, AFMA supported several Diversity initiatives including:

- hosting various events to raise awareness of diversity, such as National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, Harmony Day, Wear it Purple Day and International Day of People with Disability
- AFMA Enterprise Agreement 2024–27 (EA) increases provisions available to support employees' caring responsibilities, religious commitments, and attendance at cultural events, and
- development of AFMA's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to further drive progress and implement commitments to whole of APS Diversity and Inclusion strategies.

Training and development

We continue to build a culture of continuous learning and resilience to adapt to change and meet the challenges of our environment, stakeholders, and agency objectives.

The focus and investment for agency-wide training and development is identified in AFMA's annual Corporate Training Program. This year's program aligned with AFMA's Strategic Workforce Plan 2022–25, which identified future skills and capabilities required of the workforce to foster a high-performance culture and included access to a range of training opportunities including eLearning, external opportunities, and studies assistance.

During 2023–24, all employees were required to undertake AFMA's 'Essentials' annual mandatory training program that focuses on building foundational capability skills for APS employees. The program modules include:

- Work Health and Safety obligations and requirements, including psychosocial health and safety in the workplace
- Privacy and Fraud awareness
- Finance and Security fundamentals, and
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviours, including requirements and responsibilities under the *Fair Work Act 2009* and *Respect@Work Positive Duty*.

In 2023–24, all new starters completed the 'Induction to AFMA' program which includes an orientation to the workplace, the 'Essentials' eLearning program and continuous support and guidance during their commencement within AFMA.

AFMA also provided employees with access to further development opportunities including:

- support for professional development and qualifications through the Study Assistance Program, five staff accessed study assistance and 63 hours of study leave were approved in 2023–24
- successful sponsorship of two employees into the National Seafood Industry Leadership program, and
- two employees' attendance at the Fisheries Management course at the University of Wollongong in May 2024.

Staff engagement – APS Employee Census

In 2023–24, AFMA publicly released the 2023 Australian Public Service Employee Census survey (the Census) agency-level report and for the first time a Census action plan, which detailed priority action areas for further improvement with significant progress made across all areas.

In 2024, AFMA employees participated in the Census and achieved an employee participation rate of 71 per cent.

AFMA's engagement level results revealed that 93 per cent of employees are willing to go the extra mile for the agency and 89 per cent feel committed to AFMA's goals. The agency's wellbeing index increased from previous years to 76 per cent, and the agency's innovation index stands at 66 per cent. Employees' responses to the survey indicated that further work needed to be done in relation to communication of change, management of employees, internal administrative processes, and work pressures.

Rewards and recognition

AFMA recognises building a culture that values its employees, recognises performance, and celebrates the achievements and success of its employees is critical to employee engagement and retaining the best people.

As part of AFMA's Strategic Workforce Plan, AFMA's Reward and Recognition guidelines help managers and employees identify different ways in which AFMA can recognise, acknowledge and reward its employees. It demonstrates ways in which appreciation can be shown for the contributions made by staff at all levels and how to incorporate reward and recognition activities into everyday management practices. In 2023–24 AFMA recognised and rewarded:

- Twenty-eight employees through branch recognition awards
- Ten employees through formal AFMA Achievement Awards across six categories, and
- Eight Length of Service Awards, including three 30 years' Service in AFMA.

Work Health and Safety

AFMA recognises its responsibility and obligations as outlined in the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*, *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act) and *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* (WHS Regulations), and is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all its employees, contractors, consultants, and visitors.

Health and wellbeing are considered to be of utmost importance and the need to integrate health and safety into all aspects of our work, whether in the office or in the field, is paramount.

AFMA's Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee is a joint committee comprising management representatives and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) that:

- assists with the development, implementation, review, and update of internal policies and procedures in relation to WHS
- reviews all incident reporting
- oversees the implementation of preventive measures, and
- assists in the distribution and awareness of WHS information to staff.

The WHS Committee met four times during 2023–24.

We maintain a network of several specialist roles delegated to professionally trained employees, including HSRs, First Aid Officers, Mental Health First Aid Officers, Harassment Contact Officers, and Fire Wardens.

During 2023–24, AFMA underwent a Proactive Engagement Inspection by Comcare which monitored compliance with the *WHS Act* and *WHS Regulations*, ensuring AFMA have systems and/or arrangements in place to enable us to meet our duties under the *WHS Act* in relation to incident management.

The inspection identified seven areas of non-conformance which have been rectified through consultation with the WHS Committee.

During the reporting year aligned with the *Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Respect at Work) Act 2022*, AFMA continued to review and update relevant agency policies and procedures to incorporate the Positive Duty requiring employers to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate sex discrimination, sexual and sex-based harassment, hostile work environments, and victimisation. The 'Essentials' eLearning course, and *Appropriate Workplace Behaviours*, provided employees with additional resources and information with respect to the amendments and Positive Duty requirements.

In 2023–24, there were no Provisional Improvement Notices (PINs) issued by health and safety representatives under the WHS Act. Further, there were no PINs issued by Comcare (the regulator) under the WHS Act during this period.

Health and safety initiatives:

During 2023–24, AFMA's annual Health and Wellbeing program included:

- annual Health Week – during the week employees had the opportunity to participate in various social physical activities as well as information and awareness sessions promoting and encouraging mental and nutritional health
- Healthy Lifestyle Initiative – this is offered in recognition of the mutual benefits for both employees and AFMA. Through the initiative, financial assistance was offered to employees to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing
- annual Influenza (flu) vaccinations – all employees and contractors offered opportunity to be vaccinated, and
- monthly promotion of a range of webinars and other services on offer and accessible for employees through AFMA's employee assistance provider.

The program is further supported by a range of available resources on AFMA's intranet including information on the employee assistance program, online mental health training, and work health and safety fact sheets.

Incidents and hazards:

AFMA is required under the WHS Act to create and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for all workers and record WHS data relating to incidents and hazards.

In 2023–24, we recorded twelve incidents relating to accidents or near-misses (see Figure 4). The agency monitors and assesses all incidents and hazards and reports to the Commission and the WHS Committee. Where identified, modifications and changes to work practices and training and awareness programs are implemented.

Figure 4: AFMA Work Health and Safety incidents reports for 2023–24

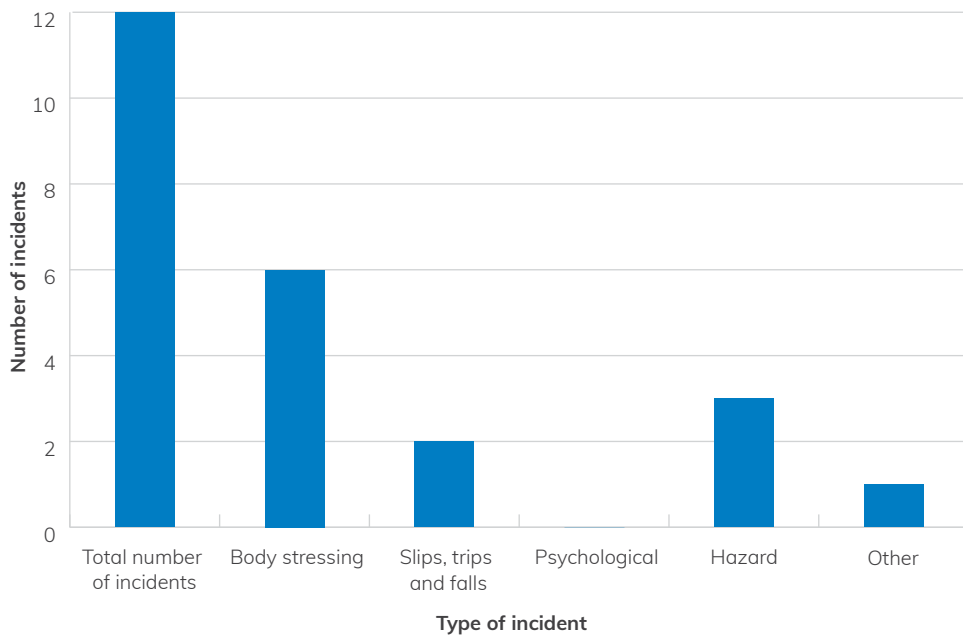
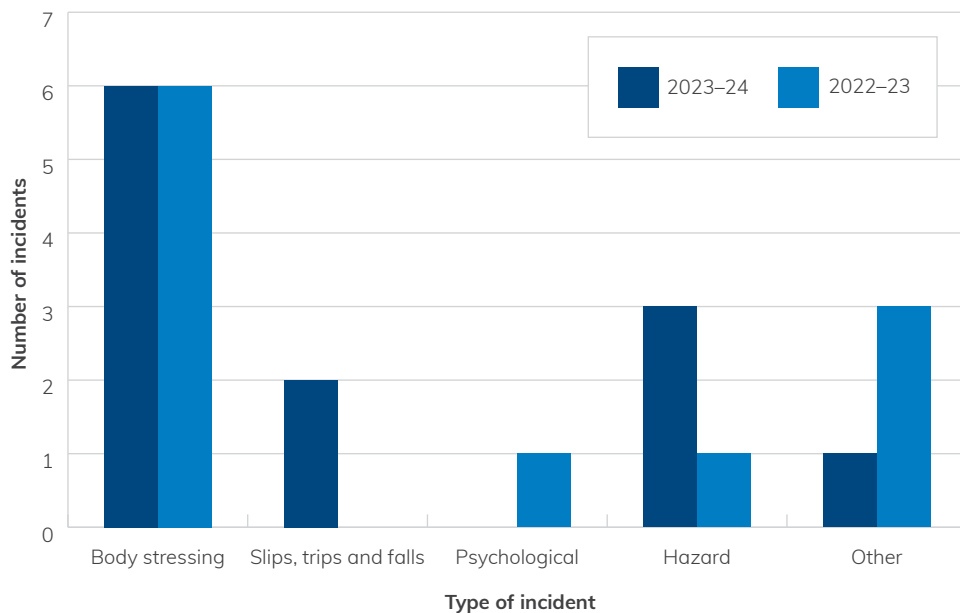


Figure 5: AFMA Work Health and Safety incidents reports comparison



Notifiable incidents in 2023–24:

In accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, AFMA is required to report all notifiable incidents that occur in the course of conducting AFMA business. A notifiable incident can include death of a person, serious injury or illness, or a dangerous incident which arises out of AFMA conducting its business. In 2023–24, there were no notifiable incidents to report.

Workplace arrangements

In 2023–24, AFMA's non-SES employees were covered by the AFMA's Enterprise Agreement 2016, and its successor, AFMA's Enterprise Agreement 2024–27, which took effect on 3 April 2024. SES remuneration and employment conditions are determined under subsection 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Flexible working arrangements

Prior to the adoption of AFMA's Enterprise Agreement 2024–27, AFMA offered employees a flexible working arrangement option to work three days per week in the office and two days per week at home. The take up of employees opting in this flexible working arrangement is 68 per cent across the agency.

To more accurately reflect entitlements provided by AFMA's Enterprise Agreement 2024–27, reviews are currently underway into AFMA's flexible working arrangement policy and processes.

Individual flexibility arrangements

Individual Flexibility Arrangements were made with non-SES employees where they met the genuine needs of AFMA and the employee. The terms of employment that may be varied under the Enterprise Agreement include (but are not limited to) hours of work, overtime rates, penalty rates, allowances, remuneration, and leave.

AFMA entered 21 Individual Flexibility Arrangements with employees during 2023–24.

Carer Recognition Act 2010

AFMA complies with its responsibilities and obligations under the *Carer Recognition Act 2010* through working conditions set out in AFMA's Enterprise Agreement such as:

- special incorporated leave provisions which include carers leave, concessional leave, purchased leave, and allocation of long service leave which can all be utilised with or without pay, and
- flexible working arrangements which include part-time employment, compressed hours, working from home or remote localities.

This enables managers to consider and implement flexible work practices and to respond appropriately to the needs of employees with caring responsibilities, in a way that also complements and supports AFMA's business goals while encouraging work/life balance.



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APPENDIX 1: Entity resource statement and expenses for outcomes

Entity resource statement 2023–24

	Current available appropriation (a)	Payments made (b)	Balance remaining (a)-(b)
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Departmental			
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services	31,439	28,202	3,237
Prior year appropriations available – ordinary annual services	216	0	216
Total departmental annual appropriations	31,655	28,202	3,453
Total departmental special appropriations	0	0	0
Opening balance – special accounts	13,010	0	13,010
Special account receipts	49,396	49,097	299
Total special accounts	62,406	49,097	13,309
less departmental appropriations drawn from annual/special appropriations and credited to special accounts	-28,202	-28,202	0
Total departmental resourcing	65,859	49,097	16,762
Administered			
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services	6,031	1,088	4,943
Total administered annual appropriations	6,031	1,088	4,943
Total administered special appropriations	0	0	0
Total special accounts receipts	0	0	0
less administered appropriations drawn from annual/special appropriations and credited to special accounts	0	0	0
less payments to corporate entities from annual/special appropriations	0	0	0
Total administered resourcing	6,031	1,088	4,943
Total resourcing and payments for AFMA	71,890	50,185	21,705

Expenses for outcomes

Expenses for outcome 1

Outcome 1: Ecologically sustainable and economically efficient Commonwealth fisheries, through understanding and monitoring Australia's marine living resources and regulating and monitoring commercial fishing, including domestic licensing and deterrence of illegal foreign fishing	Budget* 2023–24 \$'000	Actual expenses 2023–24 \$'000	Variation 2023–24 \$'000
Program 1.1: Australian Fisheries Management Authority	(a)	(b)	(a) – (b)
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No. 1)	6,031	2,581	3,450
Administered total	6,031	2,581	3,450
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No. 1)	26,910	26,910	0
Special accounts	19,287	19,541	-254
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the Budget year ¹	1,092	848	244
Departmental total	47,289	47,299	-10
Total expenses for Program 1.1	53,320	49,880	3,440
Total expenses for Outcome 1	53,320	49,880	3,440
	2023–24	2023–24	
Average staffing level (number)	177	159	

* Full-year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2023–24 budget at Additional Estimates.

¹ Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year are made up of make good expenses, audit fees, and can include depreciation / amortisation expenses not requiring an appropriation.

APPENDIX 2: Employee statistics and workplace agreements

PGPA Rule Section 17AG (4)(aa) – Management of Human Resources

All Ongoing Employees (2023–24)

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
NSW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
QLD	3	0	3	3	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VIC	3	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
WA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	50	1	51	51	7	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	109
NT	11	0	11	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
External Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	67	1	68	60	8	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	136

All Non-Ongoing Employees (2023–24)

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
NSW	0	9	9	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
QLD	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
SA	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TAS	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
VIC	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
WA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	3	0	3	9	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
NT	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
External Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	17	21	9	4	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(b) – Management of Human Resources

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(b)(i)–(iv) Australian Public Sector (APS) Classification and Gender

Australian Public Service Act Ongoing Employees (2023–24)

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
SES 1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
EL 2	10	0	10	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
EL 1	12	1	13	13	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
APS 6	36	0	36	27	6	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69
APS 5	4	0	4	5	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
APS 4	4	0	4	7	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
APS 3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
APS 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	67	1	68	60	8	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	136

Australian Public Service Act Non-Ongoing Employees (2023–24)

	Man/Male			Woman/Female			Non-binary			Prefers not to answer			Uses a different term			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	
SES3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EL2	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
EL1	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
APS6	4	0	4	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
APS5	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
APS4	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
APS3	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
APS2	0	12	12	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
APS1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	17	21	9	4	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(b)(i)–(iii) Employment type by Full time and Part time Status

Australian Public Service Act Employees by Full time and Part time Status (2023–24)

	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Total
	Full time	Part time	Total Ongoing	Full time	Part time	Total Non-Ongoing	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
SES 1	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
EL 2	15	0	15	1	1	2	17
EL 1	25	2	27	1	1	2	29
APS 6	63	6	69	7	0	7	76
APS 5	9	1	10	2	0	2	12
APS 4	11	0	11	2	0	2	13
APS 3	1	0	1	0	5	5	6
APS 2	0	0	0	0	14	14	14
APS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	127	9	136	13	21	34	170

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(b)(v) – Employment type by Location

Australian Public Service Act Employment type by location (2023–24)

	Ongoing	Non-Ongoing	Total
NSW	0	10	10
QLD	7	4	11
SA	0	1	1
TAS	0	3	3
VIC	4	1	5
WA	0	0	0
ACT	109	14	123
NT	16	1	17
External Territories	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0
Total	136	34	170

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(b)(vi) Indigenous Employment

Australian Public Service Act Indigenous Employment (2023–24)

	Total
Ongoing	6
Non-Ongoing	0
Total	6

Workplace agreements

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(c)(i) Employment Arrangements of SES and Non-SES employees

Australian Public Service Act Employment arrangements (2023–24)

	SES	Non-SES	Total
Enterprise Agreements	0	167	167
S24(1) Determinations	3	0	3
Total	3	167	170

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(c)(ii) Salary Ranges by Classification level

Australian Public Service Act Employment salary ranges by classification level (Minimum/Maximum) (2023–24)

	Minimum Salary	Maximum Salary
SES 3	0	0
SES 2	0	0
SES 1	\$214,142	\$239,404
EL 2	\$139,998	\$163,216
EL 1	\$119,329	\$132,627
APS 6	\$97,004	\$107,269
APS 5	\$86,746	\$91,877
APS 4	\$78,711	\$84,156
APS 3	\$69,645	\$75,692
APS 2	\$63,625	\$67,910
APS 1	\$52,000	\$59,347
Other	-	-
Minimum/Maximum range	\$52,000	\$239,404

PGPA Rule Section 17AG(4)(c)(iii) Non-salary benefits

In 2023–24, AFMA did not provide performance pay to any employees.

Appendix 3: Key management personnel remuneration

PGPA Rule Section 17AD(da) – Executive Remuneration

Information about remuneration for key management personnel

Name	Position title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits			Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Base salary	Bonuses and allowances	Other benefits	Superannuation contributions	Long service leave	Other long-term benefits		
Wez Norris	Chief Executive Officer	404,620	0	4,805	43,446	11,200	0	0	464,071
Anna Willock	Executive Manager	307,511	0	4,805	46,846	7,331	0	0	366,493
Mira Bacej	Chief Operating Officer	262,595	0	4,805	38,492	6,102	0	0	311,994
Justin Bathurst	General Manager	203,028	0	4,608	32,383	5,199	0	0	245,217
Helen Kroger	Commissioner (Chair)	82,695	0	0	12,743	0	0	0	95,437
Will Zacharin	Commissioner	23,218	0	0	3,567	0	0	0	26,785
Catherine Cooper	Commissioner	18,772	0	0	2,909	0	0	0	21,682
Brett McCallum	Commissioner	40,552	0	0	5,516	0	0	0	46,068
Scott Spencer	Commissioner	40,552	0	0	6,194	0	0	0	46,746
Sevaly Sen	Commissioner	40,552	0	0	6,194	0	0	0	46,746
David Smith	Commissioner	40,552	0	0	6,369	0	0	0	46,922
		1,464,647	0	19,023	204,659	29,832	0	0	1,718,161

Note: The remuneration of the AFMA Chief Executive and AFMA Commissioners is made under subsections 7(3) and 7(4) of the Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973.

Information about remuneration for senior executives

Total remuneration bands	Number of senior executives	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits			Other long-term benefits			Termination benefits		Total remuneration
		Average base salary	Average bonuses	Average other benefits and allowances	Average other superannuation contributions	Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits	Average termination benefits	Average total remuneration				
\$0–\$220,000	7	40,985	0	0	6,213	0	0	0	0	0	0	47,198	
\$220,001–\$245,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$245,001–\$270,000	1	203,028	0	4,608	32,383	5,199	0	0	0	0	0	245,217	
\$270,001–\$295,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$295,001–\$320,000	1	262,595	0	4,805	38,492	6,102	0	0	0	0	0	311,994	
\$320,001–\$345,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$345,001–\$370,000	1	307,511	0	4,805	46,846	7,331	0	0	0	0	0	366,493	
\$370,001–\$395,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$395,001–\$420,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$420,001–\$445,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$445,001–\$470,000	1	404,620	0	4,805	43,446	11,200	0	0	0	0	0	464,071	
\$470,001–\$495,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$495,001–....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Information about remuneration for other highly paid staff

Total remuneration bands	Number of other highly paid staff	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits			Other long-term benefits			Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Average base salary	Average bonuses	Average other benefits and allowances	Average superannuation contributions	Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits	Average termination benefits	Average total remuneration			
\$250,000-\$270,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$270,001-\$295,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$295,001-\$320,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$320,001-\$345,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$345,001-\$370,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$370,001-\$395,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$395,001-\$420,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$420,001-\$445,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$445,001-\$470,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$470,001-\$495,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
\$495,001-....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

APPENDIX 4: Purchasing

In 2023–24, we continued to keep our staff well-informed about procurement rule changes including through intranet updates, internal communication, such as intranet news stories, updated templates, and training across the organisation.

To facilitate procurement and contract management activities, we have adopted a self-service model, empowering staff at all organisational levels to carry out these tasks within a well-defined framework. Our intranet provides easy access to all relevant policies, procedures, tools, and process maps for the convenience of our employees.

Consultancy and non-consultancy contract expenditure reporting

During 2023–24, 16 new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$1.498 million (inclusive of GST). In addition, 16 ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$2.257 million (inclusive of GST).

The main category of purpose for which consultants were selected and engaged was research.

AFMA's policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants are based on the Commonwealth procurement rules. AFMA's procurement process for goods, services, and consultancy services (or combinations of these) generally involves four core steps.

These steps are: planning, approaching the market, evaluating, approving, and entering into an arrangement, and managing the arrangement.

To procure research, we identify research needs through our Resource Assessment Groups and Management Advisory Committees after reviewing AFMA's five-year strategic research plan and specific fishery research plan. AFMA's Research Committee evaluates proposals and recommends projects for funding to the AFMA CEO. Selection and engagement of research consultants is through a limited tender process because of the small pool of qualified providers for these specialised services.

More details about the research process and timeline are available on AFMA's website at <https://www.afma.gov.au/afmas-research/advice-researchers>

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.

During 2023–24, 73 new reportable non-consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$5.368 million (inclusive of GST). In addition, 52 ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$7.072 million (inclusive of GST).

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website.

PGPA Rule Section 17AGA(2)-(3) – Additional information about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts

Organisations receiving a share of reportable consultancy contract expenditure (2023–24)

Name of organisation	Organisation ABN	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
CSIRO (Division of Fisheries)	41 687 119 230	3,071
University of Tasmania	30 764 374 782	452
Fish Ageing Services Pty Ltd	77 134 707 145	257
Avail Information Management	17 125 677 401	151
Fishwell Consulting	62 569 313 345	145

Organisations receiving a share of reportable non-consultancy contract expenditure (2023–24)

Name of organisation	Organisation ABN	Expenditure \$'000 (GST inc.)
Ventia Property Pty Ltd	16 618 028 676	2,084
Archipelago Marine Research Ltd	33 169 201 192	1,066
MTP Services Pty Ltd	61 610 143 863	678
NPF Industry Pty Ltd	32 126 584 727	673
Bhagwan Marine Pty Ltd	81 009 154 349	624

APPENDIX 5: Other management issues

Australian National Audit Office Access Clauses

All contracts valued at \$100,000 or more (GST inclusive) that were executed during 2023–24 included standard Auditor-General access clauses.

Exempt contracts

The CEO did not exempt any contracts entered during 2023–24 from being published on AusTender on the basis that publication would disclose exempt matters under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Small business

AFMA supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website.

To ensure fair treatment and ample opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), AFMA implements procurement policies that uphold non-discrimination during competitive procurement processes.

In our day-to-day interactions with the fishing industry and the wider community, we recognise the importance of engaging with SMEs.

To support their involvement in procurement activities, we encourage our officials to prioritise value for money considerations and take into account the following factors:

- Benefits of engaging with competitive SMEs when specifying requirements and assessing value for money.
- Identification and mitigation of barriers to entry that may hinder SMEs from competing, such as costly preparation of submissions.
- Dividing large projects into smaller packages, providing more competitive opportunities for SMEs.
- Evaluating SMEs' capabilities and their commitment to local or regional markets.
- Commitment to improving on-time payment capabilities through the use of payment cards and implementing electronic invoicing, enabling five-day payment terms for suppliers who submit e-invoices.

By adopting these practices, we aim to foster increased participation of small and medium enterprises in procurement activities, contributing to a thriving and diverse business ecosystem. The statistics on small and medium enterprise participation in our procurement processes are accessible on the Department of Finance's website, demonstrating our commitment to transparency and accountability in supporting small businesses.

Advertising and market research

During 2023–24, we did not conduct any advertising campaigns reportable to or by the Department of Finance, or any advertising under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

AFMA attended the Hooked on Lakes event, hosted by the Victorian Fisheries Authority, in Lakes Entrance in March 2023. AFMA purchased some marketing collateral for attendance at events by AFMA staff. AFMA's promotional merchandise stocks are used by the agency for events and programs each year.

AFMA sponsors conferences and has a presence at events, career days, and conferences around Australia, including exhibition stands where promotional merchandise is required.

Grants

Information on grants is available at [Grant Awards: GrantConnect \(grants.gov.au\)](https://www.grants.gov.au).

AFMA does not administer any grants under the *Commonwealth Grants Rule and Guidelines 2017*.

Disability reporting mechanism

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (the Strategy) is the overarching framework for inclusive policies, programs, and infrastructure that will support people with disability to participate in all areas of Australian life. The Strategy sets out where practical changes will be made to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia. It acts to ensure the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated into Australia's policies and programs that affect people with disability, their families, and carers.

All levels of government have committed to deliver more comprehensive and visible reporting under the Strategy. A range of reports on progress of the Strategy's actions and outcome areas will be published and available at <https://www.disabilitygateway.gov.au/ads>.

Disability reporting is included the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service reports and the APS Statistical Bulletin. These reports are available at <http://www.apsc.gov.au>.

Freedom of information

Entities subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) are required to publish information to the public as part of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). This requirement is in Part II of the FOI Act and has replaced the former requirement to publish a section 8 statement in an annual report. Each agency must display on its website a plan showing what information it publishes in accordance with the IPS requirements.

Further information about the IPS is available on our website at [Information publication scheme | Australian Fisheries Management Authority \(afma.gov.au\)](https://www.afma.gov.au/information-publication-scheme).

Remediation of information published in previous annual reports

The previous annual report did not contain any significant statement on a matter of fact that has proved to be wrong in a material respect.

APPENDIX 6: Information required by other legislation

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) requires that Australian Government entities include a section detailing their environmental performance and contribution to ecologically sustainable development in their annual report.

The EPBC Act requires Commonwealth agencies to report against:

- how the agency accords with and contributes to the principles of ecologically sustainable development, and
- the environmental performance of the agency, including the impact of its activities on the natural environment, how these are mitigated, and how they will be further mitigated.

Contribution to ecologically sustainable development

AFMA is responsible for the efficient management and sustainable use of Commonwealth fisheries on behalf of the Australian community. AFMA's legislated objectives are prescribed in the FAA and the FMA, and these objectives, along with those of the EPBC Act, are given effect by a number of subsequently developed fisheries policies and guidelines, principally the:

- Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy 2018 (BP) and Guidelines for the Implementation of the Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy 2018 (BP Guidelines),

- Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy 2018 and Guidelines for the Implementation of the Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy 2018 (HSP Guidelines), and
- Guidelines for the Ecologically Sustainable Management of Fisheries (ESMF Guidelines).

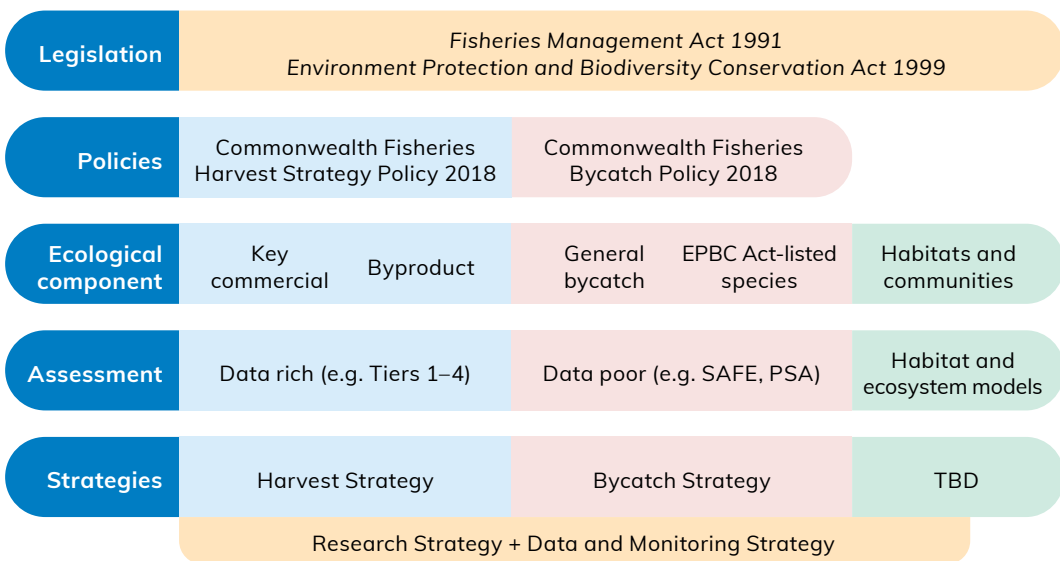
Commonwealth legislation requires that we pursue Ecologically Sustainable Development and as one part of this, ensure the ecological sustainability of species, populations, and ecosystems with which our fisheries interact. This requirement sits alongside other legislative objectives that we pursue, as outlined above.

In collaboration with the fishing industry, we pursue ecological sustainability through the implementation of:

- Ecological Risk Management (ERM) responses which provides for the management of fishing interactions with commercial species, bycatch species, habitats and communities, as well as supporting strategies for research, data and monitoring, and
- a scientific risk assessment process (within ERM) referred to as the Ecological Risk Assessment for the Effects of Fishing (ERAEF) to identify and quantify these risks to ecological sustainability.

The figure below outlines the linkages between legislation, policy, assessment, and management processes covered by ERM. ERM has multiple components and processes.

Figure 6: AFMA's ERM and its relationship with fisheries legislation and policies, ecological components and risk assessment tools which address ERM and other fisheries management objectives.



To ensure that AFMA meets objectives relating to ecological sustainability in a changing climate, AFMA commenced a program of work in 2021–22 to more strategically incorporate climate impacts into the management of Commonwealth fisheries. This program of work includes more explicit and structured integration of information on climate change into AFMA's decision-making processes and pursuing climate adaptive management arrangements across Commonwealth fisheries. More information is available on our website.

Outcome contributing to Ecological Sustainable Development

AFMA's outcomes are directed at Commonwealth fisheries being ecologically sustainable, improving the net economic returns from Commonwealth fisheries, and managing efficiently and effectively. This approach reflects our commitment to pursuing management of Commonwealth fisheries in accordance with our legislative objectives and in partnership with others who also have an interest in sustainable management.

Effect of actions on the environment

All of AFMA's managed fisheries are currently accredited under three parts of the EPBC Act.

Part 10 of the EPBC Act requires that all Commonwealth and Torres Strait Fisheries must be strategically assessed before a management plan is determined (Section 148) or where a determination is made that a management plan is not required for a Commonwealth fishery (Section 149). If a management plan is amended or replaced, or management arrangements change significantly in a fishery without a management plan, then a further assessment is required (Section 152). If a management plan remains unchanged no further strategic assessment is required. This process involves assessment of the impact of the fishery on matters of national environmental significance with particular emphasis on the impact on the Commonwealth marine environment. Without this approval a management plan cannot take effect.

Part 13 of the EPBC Act defines a number of offences in relation to listed threatened species and ecological communities, and also provides for accreditation of management plans or regimes (Sections 208A, 222A, 245, 265). The effect of accreditation is that certain actions are not offences if they are carried out in accordance with management plans or regimes. There is no requirement to remake the accreditation decisions unless the management plans or regimes change.

These accreditations impose a requirement on fishers to report any interactions with protected species to AFMA through our logbooks, which we in turn provide regular reports to the Department of Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water on fishers' behalf, thus reducing unnecessary duplication of reporting.

Part 13A of the EPBC Act covers the international movement of wildlife specimens. It provides for controls over the movement of regulated native specimens that are not on the list of exempt native specimens. Currently products from all assessed Commonwealth fisheries are on the list of exempt native specimens, although some are subject to the condition that the listing applies only while a wildlife trade operation is in force. This allows exports of marine species to be carried out while ensuring that they have been taken sustainably.

Actions to minimise impact on the environment

We take an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management to minimise the impact of commercial fisheries on the marine environment. The ERM Policy, and accompanying Ecological Risk Management Guide, provide a science and evidence-based structure for managing the impact of fishing on the marine environment. The framework uses ERA for the Effects of Fishing as the primary means of assessing the risks that fisheries may pose and provides a mechanism for the identification and management of any identified risks.

Revised methodologies in the ERA for the Effects of Fishing framework are being applied to fisheries as they are reassessed. The results of these assessments are reported in the performance section.

Mechanisms for reviewing

A number of mechanisms exist for reviewing the effect of fishing on the environment. AFMA reviewed its ERM Framework and the Commission approved the ERM Guide and ERM Policy in April and June 2017 respectively and is currently part way through another review of the framework. We also regularly review individual elements of the ERM Framework through the ERM Steering Committee. This group of expert risk assessment fisheries scientists and fishery managers is tasked with providing strategic advice to the AFMA Commission and AFMA management on the direction, development, coordination, and implementation of AFMA's risk management framework. We are also subject to reassessment of all AFMA fisheries under Part 13A of the EPBC Act. The Department of Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water undertake the reassessments on a regular basis, ranging from a ten-year review cycle for fisheries granted exemptions to a more regular review process for fisheries granted wildlife trade operations.



Australian Public Service Net Zero 2030

Greenhouse gas emissions reporting has been developed with methodology that is consistent with the Whole-of-Australian Government approach as part of the APS Net Zero 2030 policy.

Greenhouse gas emissions inventory

2023–24 Greenhouse gas emissions inventory – location-based method

Emission Source	Scope 1 t CO ₂ -e	Scope 2 t CO ₂ -e	Scope 3 t CO ₂ -e	Total t CO ₂ -e
Electricity (Location Based Approach)	N/A	106.742	14.980	121.722
Natural Gas	0.000	N/A	0.000	0.000
Solid Waste*+	N/A	N/A	0.000	0.000
Refrigerants*†	0.000	N/A	N/A	0.000
Fleet and Other Vehicles	6.001	N/A	1.482	7.483
Domestic Commercial Flights	N/A	N/A	274.221	274.221
Domestic Hire Car*^	N/A	N/A	6.411	6.411
Domestic Travel Accommodation*	N/A	N/A	96.926	96.926
Other Energy	0.000	N/A	0.000	0.000
Total t CO₂-e	6.001	106.742	394.020	506.763

Note: the table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method. CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

- * indicates emission sources collected for the first time in 2023-24. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures.
- + solid waste data was unavailable at the time of the report and amendments to data may be required in future reports.
- ^ emissions from hire cars for 2023-24 have been sourced from a third party and may be incomplete due to a lack of robust data. The quality of data is expected to improve over time as emissions reporting matures as we are only including data from Hertz Rent-A-Car in 2023-24.
- † indicates optional emission source for 2023-24 emissions reporting.

2023–24 Electricity greenhouse gas emissions

Emission Source	Scope 2 t CO ₂ -e	Scope 3 t CO ₂ -e	Total t CO ₂ -e	Percentage of electricity use
Electricity (Location Based Approach)	106.742	14.980	121.722	100%
Market-based electricity emissions	50.699	6.259	56.958	41.24%
Total renewable electricity	-	-	-	58.76%
Mandatory renewables ¹	-	-	-	18.72%
Voluntary renewables ²	-	-	-	40.04%

Note: the table above presents emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods. CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

- 1 Mandatory renewables are the portion of electricity consumed from the grid that is generated by renewable sources. This includes the renewable power percentage.
- 2 Voluntary renewables reflect the eligible carbon credit units surrendered by the entity. This may include purchased large-scale generation certificates, power purchasing agreements, GreenPower and the jurisdictional renewable power percentage (ACT only).

APPENDIX 7: Litigation outcomes

The following table identifies civil litigation outcomes associated with matters open in 2023–24.

Matter	Fishery	Outcome/Status
Federal Court		
Nil		
Statutory Fishing Rights Allocation Review Panel		
Nil		
Administrative Appeal Tribunal		
Nil		
Fair Work Commission		
Nil		

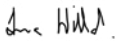
APPENDIX 8:
Northern Territory Fisheries Joint Authority Annual Report

**Northern Territory Fisheries Joint Authority
Annual Report**

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Fisheries Management Act 1991
(Commonwealth)

Fisheries Act 1988
(Northern Territory)



Anna Willock, Executive Manager,
Fisheries, Australian Fisheries
Management Authority

Deputy to the Commonwealth Member,

The Hon. Julie Collins MP, Minister for
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Matthew Osborne, Senior Executive
Director Fisheries, Northern Territory
Department of Industry, Tourism and
Trade

**Deputy to the Northern Territory
Member,**

The Hon. Mark Monaghan MLA, Minister
for Agribusiness and Fisheries

Introduction

This is the annual report of the Northern Territory Fisheries Joint Authority (NTFJA) and details the activities undertaken during the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 as well as information on the status of the fisheries.

The NTFJA has responsibility for the management of the Timor Reef Fishery, Demersal Fishery and Offshore Net and Line Fishery in waters adjacent to the Northern Territory.

Enabling legislation

The NTFJA was established in February 1983, under the then Commonwealth legislation (*Fisheries Act 1952*) to provide for the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory to jointly manage declared fisheries and fisheries resources in waters adjacent to the Northern Territory.

On 3 February 1995, the NTFJA, subject to the provisions of the Commonwealth [Fisheries Management Act 1991](#) and the Northern Territory [Fisheries Act 1988](#), assumed responsibility, in waters adjacent to the NT, for the Demersal, Timor Reef, Offshore Net and Line and Finfish Trawl Fisheries (the Finfish Trawl Fishery merged with Demersal Fishery in 2012). Day to day administration of these fisheries is provided by the Fisheries Division of the NT Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (DITT).

Report on the status of fisheries managed by the Joint Authority

Tables 1 and 2 present a summary of the catches and status of the fisheries managed by the NTFJA. Detailed catch, effort and status information for each fishery are compiled regularly and published in the Status of Key Australian Fish Stocks Reports at: <http://fish.gov.au/reports/species>

The **Demersal Fishery** targets mainly red snappers (*Lutjanus malabaricus*, *L. erythropterus*) and goldband snappers (*Pristipomoides spp.*). Painted sweetlips (*Diagramma pictum*) and cods (Family *Serranidae*) are key byproduct species. Fish traps and finfish trawl gear are the main fishing methods used in the fishery.

The **Timor Reef Fishery** primarily targets the higher-valued goldband snapper (*P. multidentis*) and other *Pristipomoides* species. Significant quantities of red snappers (*L. malabaricus*, *L. erythropterus*), red emperors (*L. sebae*) and cods (Family *Serranidae*) are also harvested. The main fishing method used is fish traps, however between 2014 and 2018, a finfish trawl trial in the Timor Reef Fishery resulted in an increase in red snapper catch (Table 1).

The **Offshore Net and Line Fishery** targets black-tip sharks (*Carcharhinus tilstoni* and *C. limbatus*), spot-tail sharks (*C. sorrah*) and grey mackerels (*Scomberomorus semifasciatus*). A variety of other sharks and pelagic finfish are also caught as byproduct.

Exploitation by the Fishing Tour Operator and recreational sectors is considered to be low across all three fisheries.

NTFJA Annual Report 2023-2024

In the TRF and DF there are 3 stocks of Saddletail Snapper, 3 stocks of Crimson Snapper and 4 stocks of Goldband Snapper. The stock assessment update published in 2024 on the Status of Key Australian Fish Stocks Reports, classified all stocks of the target snapper species as sustainable. The ONLF target species (Grey Mackerel, Australian and Common Blacktip Shark, and Spot-tail Shark) were also classified as 'sustainable', with the exception of the Gulf of Carpentaria Australian and Common Blacktip Shark stocks, which were classified as 'undefined'.

Table 1 Commercial catches (tonnes) of finfish from 2014-2023 by calendar year for DF- Demersal Fishery; TR- Timor Reef Fishery; ONLF- Offshore Net and Line Fishery.

Species/stock	Fishery	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Goldband snappers	DF	349	280	324	341	291	223	230	194	283	252
	TR	257	305	222	194	382	256	254	423	334	156
Red snappers (<i>L. malabaricus</i> , <i>L. erythropterus</i>)	DF	2160	2300	2518	2397	2526	2685	2653	2097	2489	2325
	TR	182	250	408	337	391	136	62	149	143	106
Group (other) species	DF	456	527	724	729	672	621	825	751	756	783
	TR	154	250	268	262	202	123	91	128	108	65
Blacktip sharks (<i>C. tilstoni/ limbatus</i>)	ONLF	66	37	36	63	30	44	138	112	69	27
Spot-tail sharks (<i>C. sorrah</i>)	ONLF	18	10	4	15	12	23	40	37	19	12
Grey mackerel (<i>S. semifasciatus</i>)	ONLF	503	407	330	496	499	361	420	494	349	514
Other shark spp	ONLF	61	28	49	18	9	65	144	114	35	30
Other fin fish spp	ONLF	50	18	44	48	45	54	45	41	41	18

Table 2 Summary of status of assessed stocks in NTFJA Fisheries for DF - Demersal Fishery; TR- Timor Reef Fishery; ONLF- Offshore Net and Line Fishery.

Species/stock	Stock Status
Goldband snappers (DF/TR)	Sustainably fished (2023)
Red snappers (<i>L. erythropterus</i>) (DF/TR)	Sustainably fished (2023)
Red snappers (<i>L. malabaricus</i>) (DF/TR)	Sustainably fished (2023)
Blacktip sharks (<i>C. tilstoni</i> , <i>C. limbatus</i> , <i>C. sorrah</i>) (ONLF)	Sustainably fished (2023)
Grey Mackerel (ONLF)	Sustainably fished (2023)

NTFJA Annual Report 2023-2024

Report on activities of the Joint Authority during the reporting period

An annual meeting of the NTFJA is aimed to be held each financial year (reporting period), or as required. At each meeting key issues within the NTFJA fisheries are discussed and decisions regarding these issues may be made. No formal NTFJA meeting was held in 2023/24, with previous NTFJA meeting minutes and decision record at: <https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/joint-authority-fisheries>. The Commonwealth and Territory members of the NTFJA for the 2023/24 reporting period, along with the deputies for both members, are listed in Table 3.

Table 3 NTFJA Members and Deputies for the period 2023/24

Role	Commonwealth	Northern Territory
Member	Senator the Hon. Murray Watt, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	[1 July – 30 October 2023] The Hon. Paul Kirby MLA, NT Minister for Agribusiness and Fisheries [1 November – 21 December 2023] The Hon. Nicole Manison MLA, NT Minister for Agribusiness and Fisheries [From 21 December 2023] The Hon. Mark Monaghan MLA, NT Minister for Agribusiness and Fisheries
Deputy	Anna Willock, Executive Manager, Fisheries, Australian Fisheries Management Authority	[1 July 2023 – 3 January 2024]: Ian Curnow, Senior Executive Director Fisheries, Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade [3 January – 19 June 2024]: Dr Bryan McDonald, Director Fisheries, Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade [From 20 June 2024]: Matthew Osborne, Senior Executive Director Fisheries, Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade

NTFJA Annual Report 2023-2024

Relevant OCS for the Northern Territory Joint Authority Fisheries

The links to the OCS for the NTFJA are below:

- Northern Shark Fishery (ONLF)
 - o <https://www.afma.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-07/Arrangement-Between-the-Commonwealth-and-NT-for-the-Northern-Shark-Fishery.pdf>
- Demersal and Timor Reef Fishery
 - o <https://www.afma.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-07/Arrangement-Between-the-Commonwealth-and-NT-for-the-Demersal-and-Timor-Reef-Fishery.pdf>

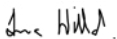
**APPENDIX 9:
Western Australia Fisheries Joint Authority Annual Report**

**Western Australia Fisheries Joint Authority
Annual Report**

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

*Fisheries Management Act 1991
(Commonwealth)*

*Fish Resource Management Act 1994
(Western Australia)*



Anna Willock, Executive Manager,
Fisheries, Australian Fisheries
Management Authority

Deputy to the Commonwealth Member,

The Hon. Julie Collins MP, Minister for
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



Nathan Harrison, Executive Director,
Department of Primary Industries and
Regional Development, Western
Australia

**Deputy to the Western Australian
State Member,**

The Hon. Don Punch, Western
Australian Minister for Regional
Development; Disability Services;
Fisheries; Seniors and Ageing;

WAFJA Annual Report 2023-2024

Introduction

This is the 22nd annual report of the Western Australia Fisheries Joint Authority (WAFJA). This report details the activities undertaken during the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 and information on the status of the fisheries in the most recently available reporting period.

The WAFJA has responsibility for the management of the Joint Authority Northern Shark Fishery.

Enabling legislation

Sections 61-70 of the Commonwealth [Fisheries Management Act 1991](#) set out the establishment, functions, administration and reporting requirements for Joint Authorities.

Part 3 of the Western Australia [Fish Resources Management Act 1994](#) sets out complementary State legislation and other matters relating to the establishment, functions, administration and reporting requirements of the Joint Authority and the management of Joint Authority fisheries in Western Australia (WA).

Report on the status of fisheries managed by the Joint Authority

Table 1 presents a summary of the status of the fisheries managed by the WAFJA. Note the Joint Authority Northern Shark Fishery has been inactive since 2008/2009.

Table 1: Species status and catch for the Joint Authority Northern Shark Fishery

Species	Status	Catch (2023/24)	Tonnes
Sandbar shark	Recovering	Total Sharks	0
Blacktip shark	Adequate		0
Fishing level	Acceptable		

Report on activities of the Joint Authority during the reporting period

An annual meeting of the WAFJA is aimed to be held each financial year (reporting period), or as required. At each meeting key issues within the WAFJA fisheries are discussed and decisions regarding these issues may be made. No formal WAFJA meeting was held in 2023/24, with previous WAFJA meeting minutes and decision record at: <https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/joint-authority-fisheries>. The Commonwealth and State members of the WAFJA for the 2023/24 reporting period, along with the deputies for both members, are listed in Table 2.

WAFJA Annual Report 2023-2024

Table 2 WAFJA Members and Deputies for the period 2023/24

Role	Commonwealth	Western Australia
Member	Senator the Hon. Murray Watt, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	The Hon. Don Punch MLA, Minister for Regional Development; Disability Services; Fisheries; Seniors and Ageing; Volunteering
Deputy	Anna Willock, Executive Manager, Fisheries, Australian Fisheries Management Authority	Rick Fletcher (July 2023 – October 2023), Nathan Harrison (November 2023 – June 2024), Executive Director, Fisheries and Agriculture Resource Management, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia

Relevant OCS for the Western Australia Joint Authority Fisheries

Following the transition of the Southern Demersal Gillnet and Demersal Longline Managed Fishery to sole WA jurisdiction in 2018, only one fishery remains under the WAFJA. The OCS for the Western Australian Joint Authority Northern Shark Fishery can be found on the AFMA website at: <https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries/joint-authority-fisheries>.

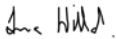
APPENDIX 10:
Queensland Fisheries Joint Authority Annual Report

**Queensland Fisheries Joint Authority Annual
Report**

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Fisheries Management Act 1991
(Commonwealth)

Fisheries Act 1994
(Queensland)



Anna Willock, Executive Manager,
Fisheries, Australian Fisheries
Management Authority



Dallas D'Silva, Executive Director,
Fisheries and Forestry, Department of
Agriculture and Fisheries

Deputy to the Commonwealth Member

The Hon. Julie Collins MP, Minister for
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

**Deputy to the Queensland State
Member**

The Hon. Mark Furner MP, Queensland
Minister for Agricultural Industry
Development and Fisheries and Minister
for Rural Communities

Report on activities of the Joint Authority during the reporting period

This report of the Queensland Fisheries Joint Authority (QFJA) meets the legislative requirements for Joint Authorities to report on the activities undertaken and decisions made during the relevant period, in this case 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. The Commonwealth and State members of the QFJA for the 2023/24 reporting period, along with the deputies for both members, are listed in Table 1 below.

The Commonwealth and the State of Queensland have been working to abolish the QFJA. The termination agreements for the Gulf of Carpentaria Grey Mackerel Fishery and the Gulf of Carpentaria Northern Demersal and Pelagic Finfish Fishery and new OCS agreements were signed by both parties during 2021 resulting in no fisheries being under the authority of the QFJA. Due to this change, no meeting was held during the 2023/2024 financial year.

The termination agreements for the Gulf of Carpentaria Northern Demersal and Pelagic Finfish Fishery and the Gulf of Carpentaria Grey Mackerel Fishery appeared in the Commonwealth Gazette on 19 November 2021 and 22 November 2021 and can be found at:

- Grey Mackerel Fishery: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021G00880>
- Northern Demersal and Pelagic Finfish: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021G00876>

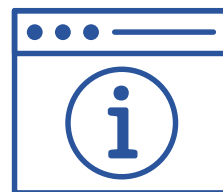
Table 1 QFJA Members and Deputies for the period 2023/24

Role	Commonwealth	Queensland
Member	Senator the Hon. Murray Watt, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	The Hon. Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries
Deputy	Anna Willock, Executive Manager, Fisheries, Australian Fisheries Management Authority	Dallas D'Silva, Executive Director, Fisheries Queensland





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List of requirements

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AD(g)		Letter of transmittal	
17AI	Page iii	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by accountable authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report.	Mandatory
17AD(h)		Aids to access	
17AJ(a)	Page v-vii	Table of contents (print only).	Mandatory
17AJ(b)	Page 193	Alphabetical index (print only).	Mandatory
17AJ(c)	Page 188	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms.	Mandatory
17AJ(d)	Pages 176–183	List of requirements.	Mandatory
17AJ(e)	Inside cover	Details of contact officer.	Mandatory
17AJ(f)	Inside cover	Entity's website address.	Mandatory
17AJ(g)	Inside cover	Electronic address of report.	Mandatory
17AD(a)		Review by accountable authority	
17AD(a)	Page 2	A review by the accountable authority of the entity.	Mandatory
17AD(b)		Overview of the entity	
17AE(1)(a)(i)	Pages 10, 11	A description of the role and functions of the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	Pages 13, 14	A description of the organisational structure of the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	Pages 11, 18–19	A description of the outcomes and programmes administered by the entity.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	Page 11	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan.	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(i)	Page 15–17	Name of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority	Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AE(1)(aa)(ii)	Page 15–17	Position title of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority	Mandatory
17AE(1)(aa)(iii)	Page 17	Period as the accountable authority or member of the accountable authority within the reporting period	Mandatory
17AE(1)(b)	N/A	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity.	Portfolio departments - mandatory
17AE(2)	N/A	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AD(c)	Report on the Performance of the entity		
	Annual performance Statements		
17AD(c)(i); 16F	Pages 22–43	Annual performance statement in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule.	Mandatory
17AD(c)(ii)	Report on Financial Performance		
17AF(1)(a)	Page 84	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance.	Mandatory
17AF(1)(b)	Pages 140, 141	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity.	Mandatory
17AF(2)	N/A	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results.	If applicable, Mandatory.
17AD(d)	Management and Accountability		
	Corporate Governance		
17AG(2)(a)	Page 130	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud systems)	Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AG(2)(b)(i)	Page iv	A certification by accountable authority that fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	Page iv	A certification by accountable authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	Page iv	A certification by accountable authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the entity.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(c)	Pages 122–131	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance.	Mandatory
17AG(2)(d) – (e)	N/A	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to non-compliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy non-compliance.	If applicable, Mandatory
Audit Committee			
17AG(2A)(a)	Page 123	A direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(b)	Pages 123–124	The name of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(c)	Pages 123–124	The qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(d)	Pages 123–124	Information about the attendance of each member of the entity's audit committee at committee meetings.	Mandatory
17AG(2A)(e)	Pages 123–124	The remuneration of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory
External Scrutiny			
17AG(3)	Page 131	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AG(3)(a)	N/A	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AG(3)(b)	N/A	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor-General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AG(3)(c)	N/A	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period.	If applicable, Mandatory
Management of Human Resources			
17AG(4)(a)	Pages 131–134	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(aa)	Pages 142–143	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) statistics on full-time employees; (b) statistics on part-time employees; (c) statistics on gender; (d) statistics on staff location. 	Mandatory
17AG(4)(b)	Pages 144-147	Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and non-ongoing basis; including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics on staffing classification level; • Statistics on full-time employees; • Statistics on part-time employees; • Statistics on gender; • Statistics on staff location; • Statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous. 	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)	Page 148	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the Public Service Act 1999.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(i)	Page 148	Information on the number of SES and non-SES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c).	Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	Page 148	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	Page 148	A description of non-salary benefits provided to employees.	Mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(i)	N/A	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	N/A	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	N/A	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AG(4)(d)(iv)	N/A	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments.	If applicable, Mandatory
Assets Management			
17AG(5)	N/A	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities	If applicable, mandatory
Purchasing			
17AG(6)	Page 152	An assessment of entity performance against the <i>Commonwealth Procurement Rules</i> .	Mandatory
Reportable consultancy contracts			
17AG(7)(a)	Page 152	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory
17AG(7)(b)	Page 152	A statement that "During [reporting period], [specified number] new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]".	Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AG(7)(c)	Page 152	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged.	Mandatory
17AG(7)(d)	Page 152	A statement that "Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website."	Mandatory
Reportable non-consultancy contracts			
17AG(7A)(a)	Page 152	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable non-consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory
17AG(7A)(b)	Page 152	A statement that "Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website."	Mandatory
17AD(daa) Additional information about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts			
17AGA	Page 153	Additional information, in accordance with section 17AGA, about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts.	Mandatory
Australian National Audit Office Access Clauses			
17AG(8)	Page 154	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100 000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor's premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract.	If applicable, Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
Exempt contracts			
17AG(9)	Page 154	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10 000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusT ender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters.	If applicable, Mandatory
Small business			
17AG(10)(a)	Page 154	A statement that “[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance’s website.”	Mandatory
17AG(10)(b)	Page 154	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.	Mandatory
17AG(10)(c)	N/A	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature – a statement that “[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury’s website.”	If applicable, Mandatory
Financial Statements			
17AD(e)	Page 87–118	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act.	Mandatory
Executive Remuneration			
17AD(da)	Pages 149–151	Information about executive remuneration in accordance with Subdivision C of Division 3A of Part 2– 3 of the Rule.	Mandatory

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement
17AD(f)	Other Mandatory Information		
17AH(1)(a)(i)	N/A	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that "During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity's website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance's website."	If applicable, Mandatory
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	Page 154	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect.	If applicable, Mandatory
17AH(1)(b)	N/A	A statement that "Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity's website]."	If applicable, Mandatory
17AH(1)(c)	Page 155	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information.	Mandatory
17AH(1)(d)	Page 155	Website reference to where the entity's Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found.	Mandatory
17AH(1)(e)	Page 155	Correction of material errors in previous annual report	If applicable, mandatory
17AH(2)	Pages 156–161	Information required by other legislation	Mandatory

Abbreviations and acronyms

The following table describes the abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the report.

Abbreviation	Explanation
ABARES	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences
ACSC	Australian Cyber Security Centre
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
AFV	Australian Fishing Vessel
AFZ	Australian Fishing Zone
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
Bmey	Stock biomass required to produce maximum economic yield from the fishery
Bmsy	A proxy of 0.48 times the unfished biomass, or 1.2 times the biomass at maximum sustainable yield
BSCZSF	Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery
CBA	Competency-based assessment
CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
CCTV	Closed circuit television
CDR	Catch disposal records
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFA	Commonwealth Fisheries Association
CFHSP	Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy
CKMR	Close-kin mark-recapture
CMM	Conservation and management measure
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRIS	Cost Recovery Implementation Statement
CSBT	Commission for the Southern Bluefin Tuna

Abbreviation	Explanation
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CTS	Commonwealth Trawl Sector
DTEMP	Data Transformation and Electronic Monitoring Program
eCDRs	electronic catch documentation records
eLogs	electronic logbooks
eObserver	electronic observer data collection
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EM	Electronic Monitoring
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ERA	Ecological Risk Assessment
ERM	Ecological Risk Management
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
ETBF	Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery
FAA	<i>Fisheries Administration Act 1991</i>
FAD	Fish aggregation device
FFV	Foreign fishing vessel
FMA	<i>Fisheries Management Act 1991</i>
FOB	Fisheries Operations Branch
FRDC	Fisheries Research Development Corporation
GHAT	Gillnet Hook and Trap Sector
GVP	Gross Value of Production
HIMI	Heard Island and McDonald Islands
HSP	Harvest Strategy Policy
ICEP	International Compliance and Engagement Program
ICO	International Compliance Operations
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFMO	International Fisheries Management Organisations

Abbreviation	Explanation
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated
MAC	Management Advisory Commission
MBC	Maritime Border Command
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MEY	Maximum Economic Yield
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSHS	Multi-Species Harvest Strategy
NCEP	National Compliance and Enforcement Program
NER	Net Economic Returns
NPF	Northern Prawn Fishery
NWSTF	North West Slope Trawl Fishery
OCS	Offshore Constitutional Settlement
OMC	Operational Management Committee
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PSMA	Port State Measures
PSPF	Protective Security Policy Framework
PZJA	Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority
QWP	Queensland Water Police
RAG	Resource Assessment Group
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisations
ROU	Record of Understanding
SBT	Southern Bluefin Tuna
SBTF	Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery
SESSF	Southern and Eastern Scale fish and Shark Fishery
SFRs	Statutory Fishing Rights
SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement

Abbreviation	Explanation
SMP	Seabird Management Plan
SPC	South Pacific Community
SPRFMO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
TAC	Total allowable catch
TACC	Total allowable commercial catch
TAE	Total allowable effort
TDS	Technology and Digital Services team
TEP	Threatened, Endangered and Protected species
TI	Thursday Island
TSFF	Torres Strait Finfish Fishery
TSPZ	Torres Strait Protected Zone
USP	University of the South Pacific
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WDTF	Western Deepwater Trawl Fishery
WTBF	Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery
WTO	Wildlife Trade Operations

Glossary

Australian Fishing Zone

Under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*, the Australian fishing zone means:

- (a) the waters adjacent to Australia within the outer limits of the exclusive economic zone adjacent to the coast of Australia, and
- (b) the waters adjacent to each external territory within the outer limits of the exclusive economic zone adjacent to the coast of the external Territory

but does not include:

- (c) coastal waters of, or waters within the limits of, a State or internal Territory, or
- (d) waters that are excepted waters.

Biomass

Total weight of a stock or a component of a stock.

Biomass limit reference point

The point below which the risk to the stock is regarded as unacceptably high.

Bycatch

Species taken incidentally in a fishery where other species are the target, and which are always discarded.

Byproduct

Any part of the catch that is kept or sold by the fisher but is not the target species.

Demersal

Found on or near the sea floor (c.f. Pelagic).

Discard

Any part of the catch returned to the sea, whether dead or alive.

Effort

A measure of the resources used to harvest a fishery's stocks. The measure of effort appropriate for a fishery depends on the methods used and the management arrangements. Common measures include the number of vessels, the number of hooks set or the number of fishing days.

Electronic monitoring

Electronic monitoring uses sensors and cameras to monitor and record information on fishing activity in a targeted way. Sensor data and video footage is analysed retrospectively to provide information and verify logbooks according to the needs identified for that fishery.

Fisheries Management Act 1991

One of the two main pieces of legislation (along with the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991*) that detail AFMA's responsibilities and powers.

Fishing concession

A Statutory Fishing Right, or a fishing permit, or a foreign fishing boat licence granted under the provisions of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*.

Fishing permit

A type of fishing concession granted under Section 32 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991* to a person, authorising the use of a specified Australian boat by that person, or a person acting on that person's behalf, for fishing in a specified area of the Australian Fishing Zone or a specified fishery for specified species, using specified equipment.

Fishing season

The period during which a fishery can be accessed by fishers.

Gillnet

Type of passive fishing gear consisting of panels of net held vertically in the water column, in contact with the seabed, such that fish attempting to swim through the net are entangled. The mesh size of the net determines the size range of fish caught, as smaller fish can swim through the meshes and larger fish are not enmeshed.

GoFish

GoFish is AFMA's online business facility for fishers to submit their applications, view their record of fishing concessions as held by us, keep their contact details up to date, view quota and catch information, receive messages from AFMA, and monitor progress of applications lodged with AFMA.

Harvest strategy

Strategy outlining how the catch in a fishery will be adjusted from year to year depending on the size of stock, the economic or social conditions of the fishery, conditions of other interdependent stocks or species, and uncertainty of biological knowledge. Well-managed fisheries have an unambiguous (explicit and quantitative) harvest strategy that is robust to the unpredictable biological fluctuations to which the stock may be subject.

Incidental catch

Any part of the catch that is not the target species, including bycatch and by-product.

Individual transferable quotas

Individual portions of a total allowable catch – units of quota – that allow the holder to catch that portion of the total allowable catch each season. The weight value of the individual transferable quotas changes in proportion to changes in the total allowable catch set for a species each season. Individual transferable quotas are fully tradeable and can be sold or leased to other fishers.

Key commercial species

A species that is, or has been, specifically targeted and is, or has been, a significant component of a fishery.

Logbook

Official record of catch-and-effort data completed by fishers. In many fisheries, a licence condition makes the return of logbooks mandatory.

Longline

Fishing gear in which short lines (branch lines or droppers) carrying hooks are attached to a longer main line at regular intervals. Pelagic longlines are suspended horizontally at a predetermined depth with the help of surface floats. The main lines can be as long as 100 kilometres and have several thousand hooks. Droppers on demersal longlines (set at the seabed with weights) are usually more closely spaced.

Maximum economic yield

The sustainable catch or effort level for a commercial fishery that allows net economic returns to be maximised. Note that for most practical discount rates and fishing costs maximum economic yield will imply that the equilibrium stock of fish is larger than that associated with maximum sustainable yield. In this sense maximum economic yield is more environmentally conservative than maximum sustainable yield and should in principle help protect the fishery from unfavourable environmental impacts that may diminish the fish population.

Maximum sustainable yield

The maximum average annual catch that can be removed from a stock over an indefinite period under prevailing environmental conditions.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) box

The area of the Australian Fishing Zone where traditional fishing by Indonesian nationals is permitted.

Nautical mile

A unit of distance derived from the angular measurement of one minute of arc of latitude but standardised by international agreement as 1852 metres.

Net economic returns

A fishery net economic returns over a particular period are equal to fishing revenue less fishing costs.

Non-target species

Species that are unintentionally taken by a fisher or not routinely assessed for fisheries management. See also Bycatch.

Offshore Constitutional Settlement

An agreement between one or more states and the Australian Government giving individual or joint jurisdiction for a particular fishery that is in both coastal waters and the Australian Fishing Zone. When no Offshore Constitutional Settlement agreement has been reached, the fishery remains under the jurisdiction of the state out to three nautical miles, and of the Australian Government from three nautical miles to 200 nautical miles.

Output controls

Restrictions imposed on the quantity of fish that can be taken from a fishery within a specified period of time. This can be by either a competitive total allowable catch or a total allowable catch allocated to participants as individual transferable quotas.

Overfished

A fish stock with a biomass below the biomass limit reference point. 'Not overfished' implies that the stock is not below the threshold, and is now used in place of the status classification of 'fully fished' or 'underfished'.

Overfishing

A fish stock that is subject to fishing mortality that exceeds the fishing mortality reference point.

Pelagic fish

Inhabiting surface waters rather than the sea floor: usually applied to free swimming species such as tunas and sharks.

Precautionary principle

A principle asserting that a degree of scientific uncertainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation in situations where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage.

Quota

Amount of catch allocated to a fishery as a whole (total allowable catch) or to an individual fisher or company (individual transferable quota).

Quota management

A method of management based on output controls that allocates the total allowable catch among eligible operators as shares in the annual total allowable catch.

Reference point

An indicator of the level of fishing (or stock size), used as a benchmark for interpreting the results of an assessment.

Statutory Fishing Rights

Rights granted under Section 21 of the Fisheries Management Act 1991. The nature of Statutory Fishing Rights in a fishery is detailed in the plan of management that creates those rights. A Statutory Fishing Right may be a right to use a boat, a unit of fishing gear or a quantity of catch, or other rights as identified in the management plan.

Species

Members of a species of fish that can breed with one another and produce fertile (capable of reproducing) offspring. In this way, a species maintains its 'separateness' from other species. For example, the Yellowfin Tuna and Bigeye Tuna are two distinct tuna species whereas the general term 'tuna' includes all tuna species.

Stock

A functionally discrete population of a species that is largely distinct from other populations of the same species. Such a population may be regarded as a separate entity for management or assessment purposes. Some species form a single stock (e.g., Southern Bluefin Tuna) while others form several stocks (e.g., Albacore Tuna in the Pacific Ocean are divided up into separate Northern Pacific and Southern Pacific stocks).

Targeting

Fishing selectively for particular species or sizes of fish.

Target species

The species being actively sought by fishers.

Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority

An authority comprising the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources (Chairperson), the Queensland Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Chair of the Torres Strait Regional Authority. The authority is responsible for monitoring the condition of the jointly managed fisheries in the Torres Strait and the formulation of policies and plans for their management.

Total allowable catch

The amount of fish of a particular species that can be taken from a fishery in a prescribed period. Total allowable catches are set for fish species managed either through individual transferable quotas or through competitive total allowable catches.

Uncertain

Status of a fish stock for which there is inadequate or inappropriate information to make a reliable assessment.

Undercatch and overcatch

Undercatch and overcatch provide for 'carry over' or 'carry under' of an amount of end of season quota between fishing seasons thereby allowing fishers the flexibility to catch a certain amount of fish over or under their quota, and debit or credit this to or from the following season's quota.

Vessel monitoring system

Electronic device that transmits the identity and location of a vessel.

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