Fisheries Management (Inshore and Offshore Prawn Trawl Nets) Order 2024

under the

Fisheries Management Act 1994

I, DARREN REYNOLDS, Acting Director, Fisheries & Aquaculture Management, with delegated authority, make the following order under section 37 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

Dated this 5 day of December 2024

DARREN REYNOLDS
Acting Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Management
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Name of Order

This Order is the *Fisheries Management (Inshore and Offshore Prawn Trawl Nets) Order 2024*.

2 Commencement and Duration

This Order commences on the date it is published on the website of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and will remain in force for 5 years commencing on the date of publication.

3 Definitions

In this Order:

body of a net has the same meaning as in the OT Plan, clause 2.

centre-trawl length means the measured length between the centre of the head line of a net and the point where the tapered part of the net ends (that is, where the tapered part of the body of the net is joined to the extension piece if fitted, or otherwise, the codend of the net).

codend of a net has the same meaning as in the OT Plan, clause 2.

endorsement holder means a person who holds an inshore prawn endorsement or an offshore prawn endorsement.

inshore prawn endorsement has the same meaning as in the OT Plan, clause 5.

net means an otter trawl net (prawns) as described in the OT Plan, clause 7A.

offshore prawn endorsement has the same meaning as in the OT Plan, clause 5.

OT Plan means the appendix to the *Fisheries Management (Ocean Trawl Share Management Plan) Regulation 2006*.

school prawns means eastern school prawns (*Metapenaeus macleayi*)

Supporting Plan means the appendix to the *Fisheries Management (Supporting Plan) Regulation 2006*.

the Act means the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

Note. Unless otherwise specified words in this Order have the same meaning as in the Act (*Interpretation Act 1987,* section 11).

Part 2 Special approva,l for authorised purposes

4 Soft-brush ground gear

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net to which, instead of a single line of ground chain, multiple short lengths of chain are attached to the foot rope provided that:

(a) the links are not more than 13 millimetres in diameter, or

(b) the chain is not more than 10 links in length.

5 Gauge of chain

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net to which is attached a ground chain with links of not more than 13 millimetres in diameter.

6 Spreading mechanism (beam or frame with sleds)

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net which has, instead of otter boards, a beam or frame between two sleds to spread one or more nets (or try net), if:

(a) the sleds are no greater than 150 millimetres wide at the base (shoe), and

(b) the head line and footrope are attached to the beam or frame and are no more than 1 metre apart.

7 Diamond-mesh body of net not exceeding 100mm

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net that has a body constructed of diamond-shaped mesh of a size more than 75 millimetres but less than 100 millimetres.

8 Square-mesh wings and side panels

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net that has wings and side panels constructed of mesh of a size more than 38 millimetres and less than 40 millimetres but only if the mesh is hung on the bar so that the meshes are square-shaped.

9 Codend mesh sizes

Despite the OT Plan, clauses 7A(5), (6), (7) and (8), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net with a codend that is constructed of mesh:

(a) in the case of a diamond-mesh codend – of a size more than 50 millimetres but less than 60 millimetres, and

(b) in the case of a square-mesh codend – of a size more than 45 millimetres but less than 50 millimetres.

10 Strengthening ropes

Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(b) and the Supporting Plan, clauses 11E(1) and (2), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish in circumstances where one or more strengthening ropes are fixed to a net or a bycatch reduction device, or the meshes of a net or bycatch reduction device, including by stitching the strengthening rope to the net or bycatch reduction device, if the strengthening rope is orientated vertically in the net and not around the net.

11 Modified Big-eye bycatch reduction device

Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(c), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a Big-eye bycatch reduction device as described in the *Instrument of Bycatch Reduction Devices and Specifications* dated 21 July 2010 published in the Government Gazette No 94 of 23 July 2010 at pages 3573 to 3578 that is fitted with rigid material or a frame to keep the escape gap open instead of fitting floats to the rear panel and chain to the front panel of the device.

12 Novel bycatch reduction devices

Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(c), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net with any type of bycatch reduction device, if:

(a) the device includes an opening or escape hole that is not less than 300 millimetres wide (with a single rigid or soft support for strength if needed), and

(b) the posterior most part of the device is positioned not more than 1.5 metres forward of the codend drawstring.

13 Large-mesh panel bycatch reduction device

Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(c), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net with a bycatch reduction device consisting of a panel of square-shaped mesh constructed of any type of hard or soft material if:

(a) the panel is of a size not less than 350 millimetres wide and 500 millimetres long,

(b) the posterior most part of the panel is positioned not more than 1.5 metres forward of the codend drawstring,

(c) if the panel comprises soft netting material,

(i) the mesh is not less than 85 millimetres in size,

(ii) the mesh is hung on the bar so that it is square-shaped,

(iii) the twine diameter of the netting is not more than 5 millimetres, and

(iv) the panel is sewn into the net using the bating rates (top and bottom only) for mesh sizes set out in Table 1,

Table 1

Bating rate	Mesh size
At least 4 points to each bar on the panel	85–125 millimetres
At least 6 points to each bar on the panel	>125 millimetres

(d) if the panel comprises rigid mesh material:

(i) the mesh is not less than 50 millimetres in size (inside mesh measurement) from one bar to the opposite bar in both directions, and

(ii) the diameter of the bars of the rigid mesh panel are not more than 5 millimetres, and

(e) if a rigid frame is applied to the outside of the bycatch reduction device, the rigid frame is not less than 350 millimetres wide and 500 millimetres high along the inside edge of the rigid frame.

14 Diamond-mesh body of net (school prawn fishers only)

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an inshore prawn endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess school prawns using a net that has a body constructed of diamond-shaped mesh of a size more than 34 millimetres and less than 40 millimetres, if:

(a) the net is used to target school prawns in waters within 2 nautical miles from the natural coastline,

(b) the depth of the wings is not more than 3 metres measured in a straight line from the inside edge of the top knot (along the top seam) to the inside edge of the bottom knot (at the bottom seam) along any single line (or row) of meshes when stretched, and

(c) the centre-trawl length divided by the head line length does not exceed the ratio specified for the net configuration set out in Table 2.

Table 2

Ratio	Net configuration
0.60	Single gear (1 net)
0.60	Double or dual gear (2 nets)
0.75	Triple gear (3 nets)
0.90	Quad gear (4 nets)

15 Square-mesh wings and side panels (school prawn fishers only)

Despite the OT Plan, Table to clause 7A, an inshore prawn endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess school prawns in waters within 2 nautical miles from the natural coastline using a net that has wings and side panels constructed of mesh of a size more than 34 millimetres and less than 40 millimetres but only if the mesh is hung on the bar so that the meshes are square-shaped.

16 Shrinkage affected ocean square-mesh panel bycatch reduction device

Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(c), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net with a shrinkage affected ocean square-mesh panel bycatch reduction device that complies with the compulsory specifications in Annexure A.

17 Smaller-mesh ocean square-mesh panel bycatch reduction device

Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(c), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net with a smaller-mesh ocean square-mesh panel bycatch reduction device that complies with the compulsory specifications in Annexure B.

18 Rigid-mesh ocean square-mesh panel bycatch reduction device

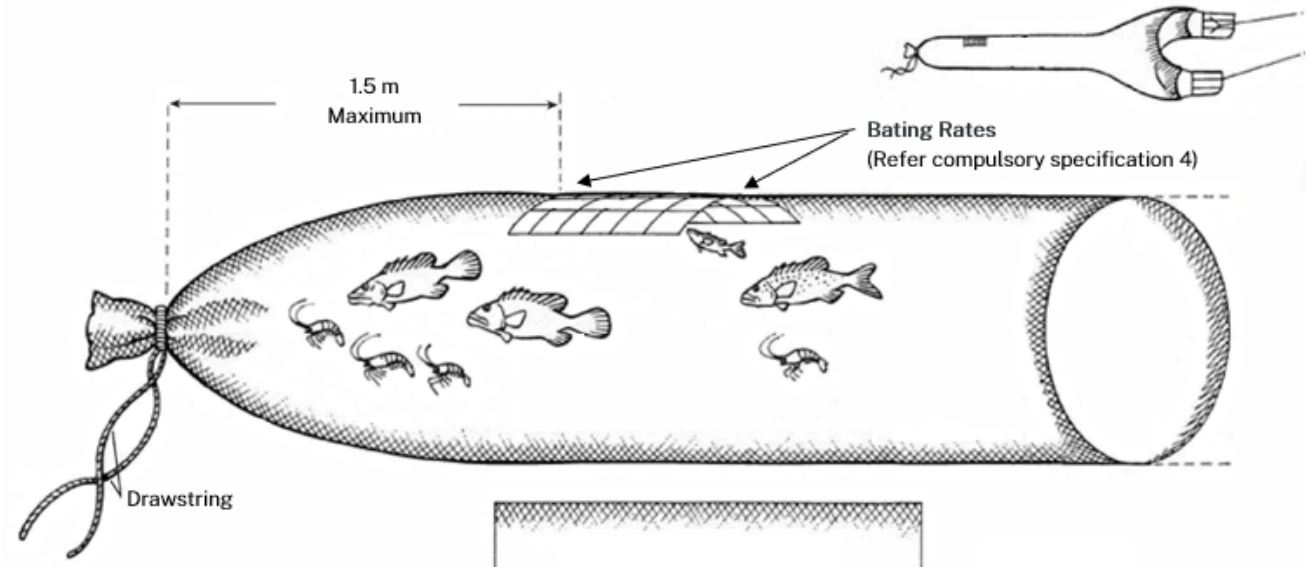
Despite the OT Plan, clause 7A(1)(c), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a net with a rigid-mesh ocean square-mesh panel bycatch reduction device that complies with the compulsory specifications in Annexure C.

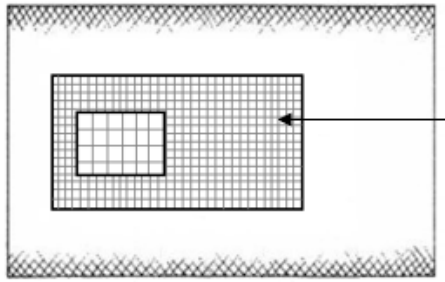
Annexure A

NSW Ocean Trawl Fishery

Shrinkage affected Ocean Square-Mesh Panel Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD)

(for use in NSW Ocean Waters)





Compulsory specifications:

1) Maximum distance from drawstring 1.5m (stretched when not in use)
2) **Panel A (surrounding panel):**
   a. Minimum 30 mm mesh hung on the bar (i.e., hung square)
   b. Minimum 45 cm wide and 70 cm long
   c. Maximum diameter twine of 6 mm
3) **Panel B (centre panel):**
   a. Minimum 55 mm mesh hung on the bar (i.e., hung square)
   b. Minimum 25 cm wide and 30 cm long
   c. Maximum diameter twine of 5 mm
   d. Maximum 1.6m forward of codend drawstring and inserted into Panel A
4) **Bating Rates** (top and bottom of Panel A only)
   a. If square-mesh panel 30-60 mm mesh - at least 2 points to each bar on the panel
   b. If >60-75 mm mesh - at least 3 points to each bar on the panel
   c. If >75 mm - at least 4 points to each bar on the panel

Purpose of approval (for information only):

This BRD is now approved for use. The purpose of this approval is to authorise the high number of BRDs in use in the NSW Ocean Trawl Fishery with a surrounding panel (Panel A) known to be subject to extraordinary shrinkage and sediment induced increased twine diameters. Refer compulsory specifications underlined for the variations made in response to these issues. **If making a new BRD, do not build it to these specifications.**

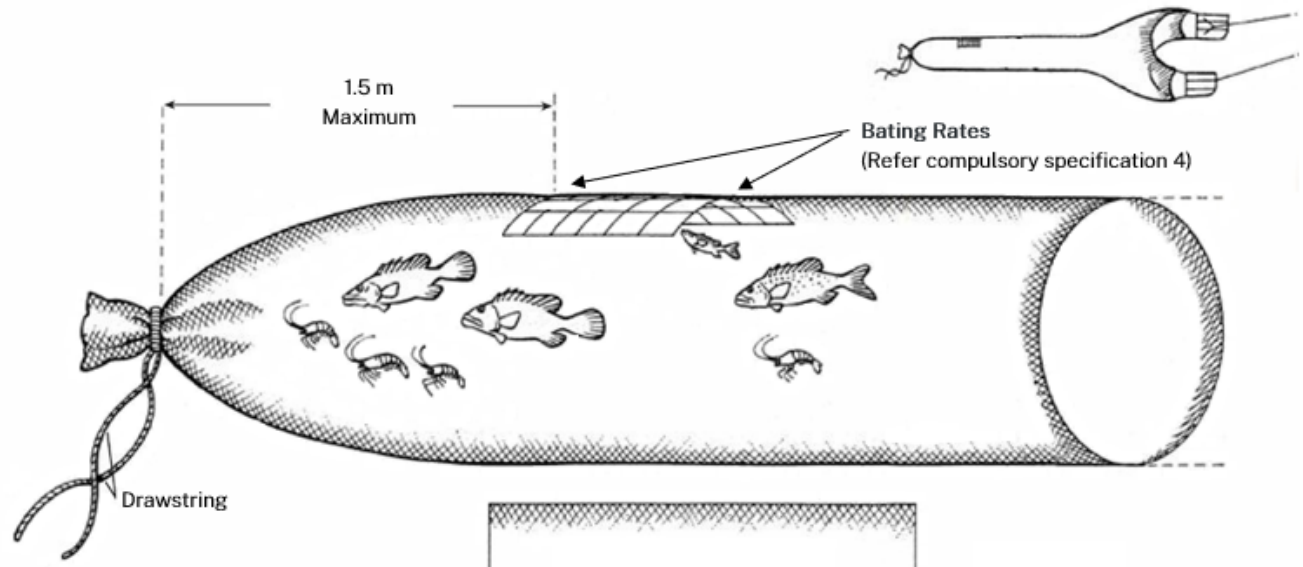
Diagram provided by QLD Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries

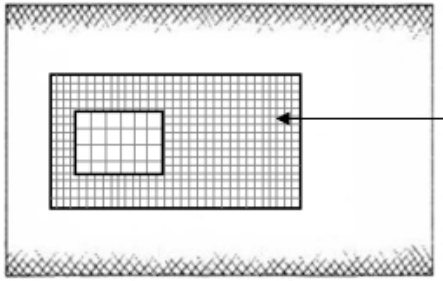
Annexure B

NSW Ocean Trawl Fishery

Smaller-mesh Ocean Square-Mesh Panel Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD)

(for use in NSW Ocean Waters)





Panel A
(Refer compulsory specification 2)

Compulsory specifications:

1) Maximum distance from drawstring 1.5m (stretched when not in use)
2) **Panel A (surrounding panel):**
   a. Minimum 38 mm mesh hung on the bar (i.e., hung square)
   b. Minimum 50 cm wide and 65 cm long
   c. Maximum diameter twine of 5 mm
3) **Panel B (centre panel):**
   a. Minimum 55 mm mesh hung on the bar (i.e., hung square)
   b. Minimum 30 cm wide and 30 cm long
   c. Maximum diameter twine of 5 mm
   d. Maximum 1.6m forward of codend drawstring and inserted into Panel A
4) **Bating Rates** (top and bottom of Panel A only)
   a. If square-mesh panel 38-60 mm mesh - at least 3 points to every two consecutive bars on the panel
   b. If >60-75 mm mesh - at least 3 points to each bar on the panel
   c. If >75 mm - at least 4 points to each bar on the panel

Purpose of approval (for information only):

This BRD is now approved for use. The purpose of this approval is to authorise the use of a modified version of the ocean square-mesh panel BRD consisting of smaller mesh to the surrounding panel (Panel A) due to material availability issues, subject to the centre panel (Panel B) being larger in overall surface area. Refer compulsory specifications underlined for the variations made in response to this issue.

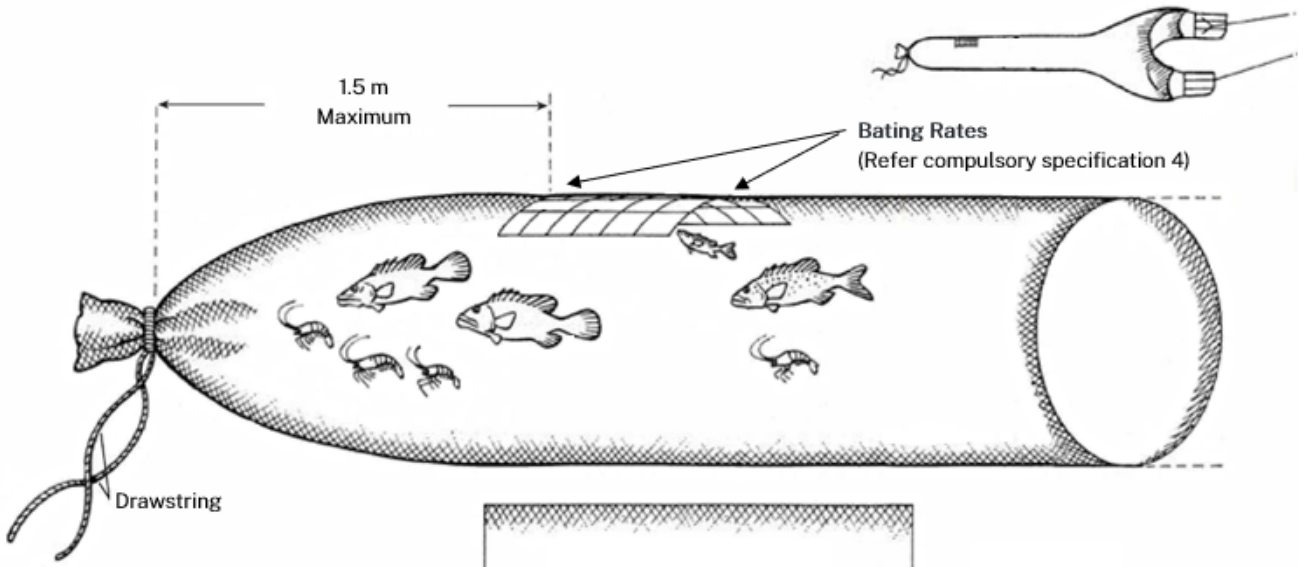
Diagram provided by QLD Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries

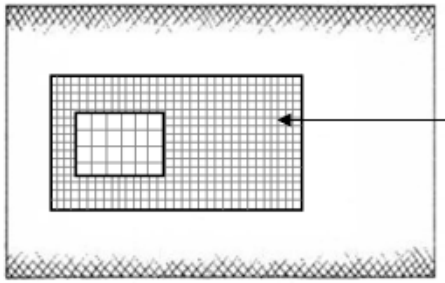
Annexure C

NSW Ocean Trawl Fishery

Rigid-mesh Ocean Square-Mesh Panel Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD)

(for use in NSW Ocean Waters)





Compulsory specifications:

1) Maximum distance from drawstring 1.5m (stretched when not in use)
2) **Panel A (surrounding panel):**
   a. Minimum 20 mm bar length (i.e., inside bars)
   b. Minimum 55 cm wide and 70 cm long
   c. Maximum diameter bars of 5 mm
3) **Panel B (centre panel):**
   a. Minimum 28 mm bar length (i.e., inside bars)
   b. Minimum 25 cm wide and 30 cm long
   c. Maximum diameter bars of 5 mm
   d. Maximum 1.6m forward of codend drawstring and inserted into Panel A
4) **Bating Rates** (top and bottom of Panel A only)
   a. If square-mesh panel 20-30 mm bar length - at least 2 points to each bar on the panel
   b. If >30-38 mm bar length - at least 3 points to each bar on the panel
   c. If >38 mm bar length - at least 4 points to each bar on the panel

Purpose of approval (for information only):

This BRD is now approved for use. The purpose of this approval is to authorise the use of a modified version of the ocean square-mesh panel BRD consisting of rigid mesh material (e.g., stainless steel) in lieu of soft-mesh netting material due to material availability issues. Refer compulsory specifications underlined for the variations made in response to this issue.

Diagram provided by QLD Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries