

# Fisheries Management (Estuary 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 (Estuary 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 EPT 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).

**Clarence River endorsement** has the same meaning as in the EPT Plan, clause 6.

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

**endorsement holder** means a person who holds a Clarence River endorsement, Hunter River endorsement or a Hawkesbury River endorsement as described in the EPT Plan, clause 6.

**head line** means the cork line or head line of a net.

**head line length** means the length of a net measured as provided for in the Supporting Plan, clause 11H.

**Hawkesbury River (downstream)** means the waters of the Hawkesbury River downstream from a line drawn between Juno Point and Eleanor Bluff.

**Hawkesbury River (upstream)** means the waters of the Hawkesbury River upstream from a line drawn between Juno Point and Eleanor Bluff.

**net** means an otter trawl net (prawns) as described in the EPT Plan, clause 17A.

**square-shaped mesh** means mesh not less than 27 millimetres nor more than 40 millimetres, constructed of single twine knotless polyamide or polyethylene material not more than 2.5 millimetres in diameter and hung on a bar so that the meshes are square shaped.

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

**the Act** means the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

**the EPT Plan** means the Appendix to the Fisheries Management (Estuary Prawn Trawl Share Management Plan) Regulation 2006.

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

## Part 2 Special approval for authorised purposes

### 4 Net length of double or dual-rigged, triple-rigged and quad-rigged nets

Despite the EPT Plan, clauses 17A(1)(b) and (c), and the Table to clause 17A, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using 2, 3 or 4 nets of any head line length at any one time if the total head line length of all of the nets combined does not exceed the total head line length specified in Column 1 of the Table below when used in the waters specified opposite in Column 2 of the Table.

Column 1	Column 2
Total head line length	Waters
15 metres	Clarence River
11 metres	Hunter River
11 metres	Hawkesbury River (upstream)
22 metres	Hawkesbury River (downstream)

## **5 Spreading mechanism (beam or frame with sleds)**

Despite the EPT Plan, Table to clause 17A, 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, 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.

## **6 Try net (rectangular frame)**

Despite the Act, section 24, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a try net that:

- (a) is constructed of diamond-shaped mesh not less than 32 millimetres or square-shaped mesh,
- (b) is attached to a frame not exceeding 0.6 metres in width and 0.5 metres in height, and
- (c) has a total length not exceeding 2 metres from the centre of the frame to the extremity of the net.

## **7 Try net (beam or frame with sleds)**

Despite the Act, section 24, an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a try net that is constructed of diamond-shaped mesh not less than 32 millimetres or square-shaped mesh attached to a beam or frame with sleds, if:

- (a) the sleds are no greater than 150 millimetres wide at the base (shoe), and
- (b) the points of attachment of the head line and footrope (located on the same side of the beam or frame) are no more than 1 metre apart.

## **8 Square-mesh wings and side panels**

Despite the EPT Plan, Table to clause 17A, 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 34 millimetres and less than 40 millimetres, but only if the mesh is hung on the bar so that the meshes are square-shaped.

## **9 Diamond-mesh body of net**

Despite the EPT Plan, Table to clause 17A, 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 34 millimetres and less than 40 millimetres, if:

- (a) 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
- (b) 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**

<b>Ratio</b>	<b>Net configuration</b>
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)

**10 Square-mesh codends constructed of conventional netting material**

Despite the EPT Plan, clause 17A(4A)(a), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a square-shaped mesh codend constructed of material that is:

- (a) knotted, but only if the material consists of mesh of a size that is not less than 29 millimetres and is hung on the bar so that the meshes are square-shaped,
- (b) polyethylene-based, or
- (c) has a twine diameter greater than 2.5 millimetres but not more than 3 millimetres.

**11 Base plate**

Despite the EPT Plan, clauses 17A(2) and (4A), an endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a square-shaped mesh codend that is fitted with a 'base plate' constructed of diamond-shaped mesh if:

- (a) the base plate is sewn to the last row of bars of the square-shaped mesh codend,
- (b) the base plate is constructed of mesh not less than 40 millimetres nor more than 50 millimetres,
- (c) the base plate does not consist of a greater number of meshes in circumference than the number of bars in the circumference of the square-shaped mesh codend,
- (d) the net is fitted with only one draw or closing string that is positioned (with or without a secondary string) within 9 meshes of where the base plate is sewn to the square-shaped mesh codend, and
- (e) the net is fitted with only one frill or skirt that is attached not more than 3 meshes forward of the draw or closing string.

**12 Diamond bycatch reduction device (Clarence River only)**

Despite the EPT Plan, clause 17A(1)(e), a Clarence River endorsement holder is authorised to take and possess fish using a diamond bycatch reduction device consisting of a single diamond-shaped hole in the net if:

- (a) each side of the diamond is not less than 11 bars long, and
- (b) the point of the diamond closest the codend draw or closing string is within 3 meshes of where the square shaped mesh codend is joined to the body of the net, and
- (c) the square shaped mesh codend is not more than 80 bars long.

### **13 Strengthening ropes**

Despite the EPT Plan, clause 17A(1)(d) and 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.