



Department of
Primary Industries

Public Consultation Paper

**Transitioning the NSW Southern Fish Trawl
Restricted Fishery to Commonwealth
management**

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Transitioning the NSW Southern Fish Trawl Fishery to Commonwealth management

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More information

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Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (March 2018). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser

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Glossary

ABARES	Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences
AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CTS	Commonwealth Trawl Sector
DPI	New South Wales Department of Primary Industries
FB	New South Wales Fishing Business
IAP	New South Wales Independent Allocation Panel
MLL	Minimum Legal Length
NCW	New South Wales Coastal Waters
nm	nautical mile
NSW	New South Wales
OCS	Offshore Constitutional Settlement
RBC	Recommended Biological Catch
SESSF	Commonwealth Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery
SFR	Statutory Fishing Right
SFTF	New South Wales Southern Fish Trawl Fishery
SFTTWG	Southern Fish Trawl Transitioning Working Group
SMP	Seabird Management Plan
TAC	Total Allowable Catch
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

Introduction

The New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI), Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) and the Southern Fish Trawl Transition Working Group (SFTTWG) are seeking your comments on the proposed transition of the NSW Southern Fish Trawl Restricted Fishery (SFTF) to Commonwealth management.

The proposed arrangements in this paper have been developed with advice from the SFTTWG consisting of commercial fishers, commercial fishing industry representatives, and fishery managers from NSW and the Commonwealth.

AFMA will become the new fishery manager after the proposed transition is complete. The areas available to fish will not be affected by this proposal and NSW will retain control over all other activities allowed inside NSW waters.

AFMA must pursue the following objectives under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*:

- a) implementing efficient and cost-effective fisheries management on behalf of the Commonwealth;
- b) ensuring that the exploitation of fisheries resources and the carrying on of any related activities are conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development (which include the exercise of the precautionary principle), in particular, the need to have regard to the impact of fishing activities on non-target species and the long term sustainability of the marine environment;
- c) maximising the net economic returns to the Australian community from the management of Australian fisheries;
- d) ensuring accountability to the fishing industry and to the Australian community in AFMA's management of fisheries resources; and
- e) achieving government targets in relation to the recovery of the costs of AFMA.

This means that catches of some species will be limited by Total Allowable Catches (TACs). There will be some immediate operational changes such as the requirement to use Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), carry observers and use seabird mitigation devices.

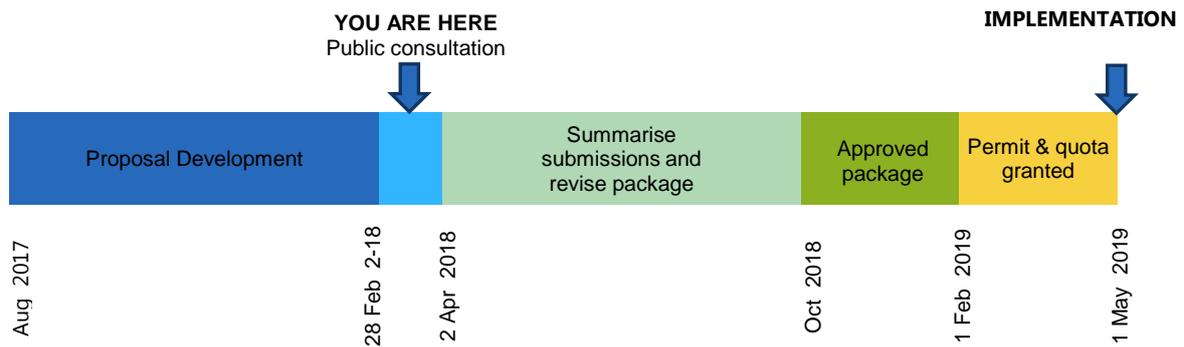
Benefits of transitioning the SFTF may include:

- fish trawling activities in south-east Australia will be managed by a single jurisdiction and many fish species will have a cap on how much can be caught each year;
- increased consistency of data collection will allow for an improved understanding of stock status, ensuring sustainable fish stocks and continued supply of local seafood;
- fishers currently operating under two sets of rules will be managed by only one jurisdiction, removing duplication and administrative burden for those fishers, and, where the required concessions are held, fishers will be able to complete a single trip when fishing inside and outside NSW waters;
- security of access for NSW fishers will be increased due to the granting of valuable species-based statutory fishing rights; and
- trip limits that have constrained efficiency and profitability will be removed.

Feedback on the proposed transitional package is now sought from the public. Submissions are to be received by close of business 2 April 2018. Submissions can be made via email to:

sft.comment@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Please note that submissions will be published on the NSW Department of Primary Industries' website. Indicate clearly in your submission if there is information that you wish to remain confidential.



Scope of transition

The New South Wales Southern Fish Trawl Restricted Fishery (SFTF) operates in waters south of Barrenjoey Head to the Victorian border and eastwards to 3 nautical miles (nm) from the NSW coastline. Permitted methods are an otter trawl net (fish) or a Danish seine trawl net (fish). These waters and methods will be ceded to the Commonwealth for the taking of certain species under the proposal. Former operators in the SFTF will be managed as part of the Commonwealth Trawl Sector (CTS) (colloquially the South East Trawl Fishery) of the Commonwealth Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF).

The Commonwealth South East Trawl Fishery is a multi-species otterboard trawl and Danish seine fishery that runs from Barrenjoey Head in NSW through Victoria and Tasmania to Cape Jervis in South Australia. The fishery operates in both Commonwealth and some state waters under different Offshore Constitutional Settlement (OCS) arrangements with state governments. Off NSW, south of Barrenjoey Head, the SESSF operates east of the 3 nm line out to 200 nm. The scope of this transition is therefore only for waters within 3 nm of the NSW coast south of Barrenjoey Head. There are currently 23 NSW fishing business owners that are eligible for a SFT endorsement, around half of which also operate currently in the SESSF under a separately held Commonwealth concession.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the NSW and Commonwealth governments will be developed to outline the intent of the changes to the OCS and articulate a transition package. This will include co-operation between jurisdictions for information on fishing activities to determine how best to manage transitioned activities in NSW inshore waters.

Governance arrangements in the area for all activities other than the SFTF, including remaining commercial fisheries, recreational fishing, and Marine Estate planning, will remain unchanged and under NSW jurisdiction.

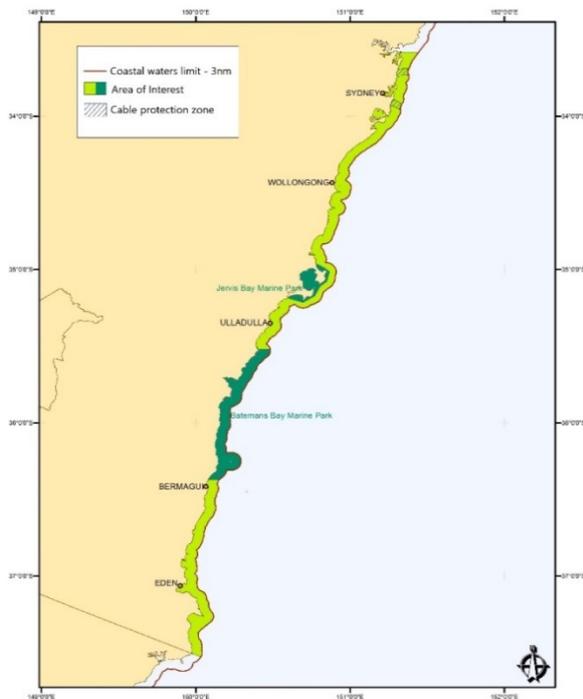


Figure 1 – NSW coast showing area south of Barrenjoey Head and 3 nautical mile limit.

It is proposed that the transition of the SFTF to Commonwealth management will take effect on **1 May 2019**, which is the start of the SESSF fishing season.

Current access and proposed access to the SESSF

Operation in the SFTF currently requires operators to hold, among other things, a NSW commercial fishing licence, a NSW Fishing Business (FB), and a Southern Fish Trawl endorsement. The Southern Fish Trawl endorsement is annually renewable, transferable (subject to transfer rules), and can be suspended or cancelled by the Minister in specified circumstances. Compensation is not payable on behalf of the state if the fishery ceases to be a restricted fishery.

People operating in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector (CTS) of the SESSF require, among other things, a CTS Boat Statutory Fishing Right (SFR) or other boat permit, and must have sufficient quota to land species that are subject to quota management.

The Southern Fish Trawl Transitioning Working Group (SFTTWG) has considered the issues involved and has proposed the following transition arrangements for feedback.

NSW Coastal Waters (NCW) Permit

It is proposed that all NSW FB owners that are eligible for a SFT endorsement on 1 February 2019 will be able to apply for a Commonwealth NSW Coastal Waters (NCW) Permit (Table 1). This will allow permit holders continued access to NSW inshore waters (i.e. within 3 nm of the NSW coast). The NCW Permit will be transferable (i.e. it can be sold). It cannot be leased.

Table 1 – Proposed access right for SFT entitlement holders when integrated into the SESSF

Current access right	Proposed access right when SFT integrated into the SESSF
SFT endorsement	New South Wales Coastal Waters (NCW) Permit

Fishers who currently have SESSF fishing rights in addition to an SFT endorsement will continue to hold those Commonwealth rights after transition (unless they choose to sell or lease-out their rights). This transition will not affect access to waters outside 3 nm.

Relevant species and quantum of quota allocation

Management of some species caught in the South East Trawl (within the SESSF) is by quota which represents a share or percentage of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC). The TAC, which is set each year, limits how much of that species can be caught in a fishing season. TACs are set using the best available science to determine a sustainable amount of catch allowed each season without subjecting the fishery to overfishing. A proportion of this TAC is allocated to individual fishers based on the number of quota SFRs they hold. SFTF fishers transitioning into the SESSF will be required to hold quota to cover their landed catch.

Quota SFRs can be bought, sold and leased.

Any non-quota fish species that is caught lawfully will still be able to be landed unless it is subject to a separate arrangement (for instance AFMA has other arrangements for upper slope dogfish, mako and porbeagle sharks).

Amount of quota allocation to SFTF entitlement holders

It is proposed that SFTF fishers transitioning to the SESSF will receive quota SFRs for certain SESSF quota species (see Table 2). There are two processes to determine the number of SFRs that will be granted:

- A determination of the overall allocation of catch to NSW SFTF fishers.

Stock assessments and harvest control rules are used to determine a sustainable catch or Recommended Biological Catch (RBC) for each quota stock in the SESSF. All other fishing mortality including discarded catch and catch taken by other sectors or jurisdictions (e.g. state and recreational sectors or scientific surveys) is then deducted from the RBC to determine the commercial TAC for that species.

Quota will be available under the transition for allocation to NSW SFTF fishers transitioning to the SESSF based on the proportion of the RBC represented by the SFTF state catch and discards in Table 2. The amounts to determine the NSW allocation in Table 2 are the average NSW state catches and discards (for some species) attributable to the SFTF over recent years (2010–16 calendar years).

This means that the allocation would not impact materially on the volume of quota available to Commonwealth operators, because what is available for allocating to NSW SFTF represents the approximate amount that has been deducted under existing arrangements to determine the Commonwealth TAC.

There have been a few species (flathead, silver trevally and jackass morwong) where regulatory differences (size and trip limits) between the jurisdictions have prevented SFTF operators from landing catch that would have been possible under Commonwealth management. As such the discard may also be included in calculations (Table 2).

- An allocation of quota to individual transitioning fishers.

Initially, a NSW Independent Allocation Panel (IAP) (see section below - 'NSW Independent Allocation Panel') will provide advice on the method to distribute quota to individuals. The NSW Primary Industries Minister, IAP and DPI will provide advice to AFMA that reflects NSW operators' portions of the total NSW allocation. The AFMA Commission will be responsible for granting quota SFRs.

Under the proposed transition, quota will initially be attached to NCW Permits until the grant of quota SFRs is made. The NCW permits and attached quota will be transferable.

Table 2 – Proposed species list and quantum of quota allocation SFTF quota species/species groups

Common name	Scientific name	Total tonnage to determine SFTF allocation (ave 2010-2016)	Total SFTF + SFTF TAC (t) (ave 2010-2016)	Proportion of SFTF of total tonnage	Estimated capital value (\$) per tonne ¹	Estimated total value (\$)
Blue warehou	<i>Seriolella brama</i>	0.53	139.25	0.38%	3,000	1,590
Eastern school whiting	<i>Sillago flindersi</i>	116.56	918.85	12.69%	6,000	699,360
Elephantfish	Families Callorhynchidae and Rhinochimaeridae	0.21	102.78	0.21%	5,000	1,050
Flathead species combined: Bluespotted flathead Southern bluespotted flathead Southern sand flathead Tiger flathead Toothy flathead	<i>Platycephalus caeruleopunctatus</i> <i>Platycephalus speculator</i> <i>Platycephalus bassensis</i> <i>Platycephalus richardsoni</i> <i>Platycephalus aurimaculatus</i>	52.10 ^{2a}	2,850.39	1.83%	24,000-31,000	1.25M - 1.62M
Gummy shark	<i>Mustelus antarcticus</i>	3.54	1,771.54	0.20%	30,000-35,000	106,200 - 123,900
Jackass morwong	<i>Nemadactylus macropterus</i>	0.18 ^{2b}	521.89	0.03%	3,000	540
John dory	<i>Zeus faber</i>	6.35	215.50	2.95%	6,000	38,100
Ocean perch species combined: Reef ocean perch Bigeye ocean perch	<i>Helicolenus percoides</i> <i>Helicolenus barathri</i>	0.10	255.81	0.04%	6,000-8,000	600-800
Redfish	<i>Centroberyx affinis</i>	2.10	329.96	0.64%	1,000	2,100
Sawshark species combined: Common sawshark Southern sawshark	<i>Pristiophorus cirratus</i> <i>Pristiophorus nudipinnis</i>	1.86	330.29	0.56%	4,000-5,000	7,440 - 9,300
School shark	<i>Galeorhinus galeus</i>	0.12	203.98	0.06%	40,000-60,000	4,800 - 7,200
Silver trevally	<i>Pseudocaranx georgianis</i>	62.86 ^{2c}	625.15	10.06%	1,000	62,960
Total		246	8,265.37	1.59%		\$2.17M - \$2.57M

¹Estimated capital values provided by SETFIA: - sales value per tonne based on recent marginal trades. Values are highly variable and are provided as an indication only. Values should not be used as an assurance of future earnings.

²A proportion of discards has been included in the average tonnage due to regulatory differences between NSW and Commonwealth rules:

^aflathead - 48.35 tonnes were landed in the SFTF, to which 3.75 tonnes was added (average discard rate 2010-2016 – 7.76 %)

^bjackass morwong - 0.16 tonnes were landed in the SFTF, to which 0.02 tonnes was added (average discard rate 2010-2016 – 12.14 %)

^csilver trevally - 60.9 tonnes were landed in the SFTF, to which 1.97 tonnes was added (average discard rate 2010-2016 – 3.23%)

Treatment of discards

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is contracted by AFMA to undertake stock assessments of the SESSF quota species. These assessments take all NSW fisheries' landings (kgs) of these species into consideration, including those taken by the SFTF where applicable. In the absence of reliable estimates of discard rates for each NSW fishery AFMA has applied a discard rate to all NSW landings of relevant species based on long term estimates in the Commonwealth Trawl Sector.

DPI undertook a scientific observer survey of fish trawling activities from August 2014 to July 2016 that provided, among other things, information on the discarding of fish in the SFTF. Field surveys in the SFTF were over 18 months in the above period. Discards during the survey were mainly due to catches exceeding trip limits and fish below NSW size limits.

It was recognised by the SFTTWG that flathead, silver trevally and jackass morwong, could have been landed if the fishery had been under Commonwealth jurisdiction where there were no trip limits, or there was no size limit or a smaller size limit for a species.

The SFTTWG considered, at length, the issue of whether discards in the SFTF that related to tiger flathead, bluespotted flathead and silver trevally, that would otherwise be able to be retained under Commonwealth rules could be included in the quantum of quota initially allocated to SFTF operators during the transition to Commonwealth management.

The information collected as part of the NSW observer survey that related to discards was reviewed by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES). ABARES concluded that the survey was sound, well conducted and carefully analysed. There were uncertainties in the data, however, with the lack of multi-year sampling and because of differences in detail between normal fishing logbook data and the more detailed information collected from the observer survey.

The observer survey results provided the best available indication of discarding of fish in the SFTF but there was too much uncertainty around general catch information collection to apply those observed discard rates straightforwardly to the calculation of proposed quota allocation.

The SFTTWG was uncertain about using fish that were not landed or reported to determine a NSW SFT allocation and were mindful that any allocation above that deducted from the RBC would impact on SESSF quotas.

The SFTTWG therefore recommended that the average discard rates deducted from the RBC to determine the TAC be applied to the SFTF landings of the relevant species, and that these quantities be applied to determine the proportion of quota available for NSW SFTF allocation. The discard rate has been applied to the SFT tonnage for relevant species as shown in Table 2.

Feedback – Your feedback is sought on the proposed access arrangements, quantum of quota and treatment of discards.

NSW Independent Allocation Panel process

The IAP will provide advice to the NSW Minister for Primary Industries and the DPI on the basis for the allocation of quota for the species in Table 2 to the owners of NSW FB owners that are eligible for a SFT endorsement. NSW will be advising the Commonwealth on the apportionment of these quota rights so that the Commonwealth can make decisions about the allocation of species quota SFRs to individuals or businesses for the integration of the NSW SFT into the SESSF.

It is important to note that the IAP will be providing advice on how the quantum of quota for each species or species group may be allocated to each SFT FB. The AFMA Commission will be responsible for granting the quota SFRs. The proportion of the TAC available to an operator will not change subsequently unless they trade the SFRs. However, the TAC available each season can and do go up and down and therefore the amount of quota (kilograms) all SESSF fishers have can change depending on the level of the TAC determined by the stock assessment and harvest control rule processes.

Proposed arrangements for the transition

A summary of some key changes required for operators if they wish to commence fishing using their NCW Permit from 1 May 2019 are provided below. Operators also should read the complete list of SESSF management arrangements which can be found at:

www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/SESSF-Management-Arrangements-Booklet-2017.pdf

Note that fishery management arrangements may change over time in response to new information and in pursuit of AFMA's objectives.

What stays the same on the transition date?

Areas of waters

No changes to the areas available to fish are proposed as part of the transition.

Fishing gear used

Fishers transitioning from the SFTF will need to be compliant with the SESSF fishing gear conditions which are available on the AFMA website (see SESSF Trawl Boat SFR General Conditions at: www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/concession-holders-conditions/). This includes:

- Demersal otter trawl when fishing for fish other than prawns:
 - Mesh size in the wings and the net mouth (shoulders, belly and veranda) not less than 115 mm (4 ½ inch).
 - A codend mesh size of:
 - at least 90mm single twine mesh; or
 - double twine mesh of at least 102mm (4 inch) or greater; or

- at least 90mm double twine mesh with one or more bycatch reduction devices.
- Danish seine trawl: a mesh size of not less than 38 millimetres at any part.

However, SFTF fishers will be able to continue to use gear to target eastern school whiting:

- Otter trawl net (fish) with not less than 90 mm single twine in the wings and not less than 90 mm double braided mesh (200 round) in the codend.
- A bycatch reduction device is not required to be fitted.

The SFTTWG recognised, however, that environmental stewardship is important and that AFMA's legislative objective of ecologically sustainable development means that it will endeavour to decrease discards balancing other objectives. Gear requirements may change in the future in line with these objectives for the SESSF.

No new methods

Pair-trawling and mid-water trawling are not permitted currently in NSW inshore waters and will not be permitted in NSW inshore waters under the proposed transition package.

Feedback – Your feedback is sought on the proposed area and gear arrangements.

What are the key changes?

Trip limits

NSW fishers operating in the NSW SFTF, NSW Ocean Trawl Fishery, and NSW Ocean Trap and Line Fishery are subject to a range of trip limits for many SESSF quota species. This is enforced by section 8 closures which can be found at:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/639737/Trip-limits-for-Southern-Fish-Trawl.pdf

and at:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/621265/Gemfish-closure.pdf

The purpose of these trip limits – to assist in the integrity of the Commonwealth quota system – becomes redundant for SFTF operators following the SFTF transition given the progress in quota management arrangements in the Commonwealth over time, including single jurisdiction trips, and the requirement for all Commonwealth boats to have a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). Trip limits will be removed on the date of transition (1 May 2019) for all transitioning operators as the SFTF then will be integrated into the SESSF and species previously subject to trip limits will be managed by quota.

The NSW Business Adjustment Program for commercial fisheries also will see some of these species be under quota management in the Ocean Trawl and Ocean Trap and Line fisheries. These, plus other arrangements, will provide for improved management across these commercial fishing sectors so the trip limits will be removed from those fisheries also.

Size limits

In NSW some fish species are subject to a minimum legal length (MLL) which applies to both commercial and recreational fishers.

The primary management tool for target species in the SESSF is the setting of an annual sustainable TAC. This limits the amount of catch that can be landed and means that the need for size limits are generally unnecessary. Gear restrictions, such as minimum mesh size, also minimise the amount of small fish taken or discarded. Recognising this, and the fact that trawl caught fish generally have low survival rates upon release, there are few size limits in the SESSF.

The only size limits that would apply in the SESSF, and therefore relevant to transitioning SFTF operators, are:

- school shark and gummy shark must be at least 450mm from the rearmost gill slit to the ventral insertion of the caudal fin (Figure 2), and all fins must be attached to the shark's carcass;
- tiger and bluespotted flathead must be larger than 280mm in length from point of snout to tip of tail.

Table 3 lists the relevant species MLLs in NSW for fish species reportedly landed in the SFTF and corresponding MLL in the Commonwealth. Most of the listed species are caught in small quantities in the SFTF — less than 5 tonnes landed for each species in a total of seven years across the whole SFT fleet.



Figure 2 – Measuring sharks in the SESSF (diagram from the Victorian Fisheries Authority website)

Maximum boat length

The current maximum size limit for boats in the SFTF is 20 metres but there are some boats with an exemption. To simplify management rules by removing exemptions, and constrain boat size, it is proposed that a new maximum boat length of 25 metres will be introduced for NSW inshore waters.

It was the general view of the SFTTWG that the larger boats operating in the SESSF should not be able to access NSW inshore waters.

Table 3 – NSW Minimum Legal Length (MLL) for each species reportedly landed in the SFTF and corresponding MLL in the SESSF

Species reportedly landed in the SFTF	NSW MLL	Commonwealth MLL
Bluespotted flathead	33 cm	28 cm
Dusky flathead	36 cm	
Flounder (<i>Bothidae</i> spp & <i>Pleuronectidae</i> spp)	25 cm	
Grey morwong	30 cm	
Gummy shark	N/A	45 cm ¹
Jackass morwong	30 cm	
Mulloway	70 cm	
Red morwong	30 cm	
Sand whiting	27 cm	
School shark	91 cm	45 cm ¹
Sea mullet	30 cm	
Silver trevally	30 cm	
Snapper	30 cm	
Spotted mackerel	60 cm	
Tailor	30 cm	
Tarwhine	20 cm	
Teraglin	38 cm	
Tiger flathead	33 cm	28 cm
Yellowfin bream	25 cm	
Yellowtail kingfish	65 cm	

¹when measured from the rearmost gill slit to the ventral insertion of the caudal fin

Inshore gear stowed and secured when fishing outside

The SFTTWG sought advice from AFMA regarding whether gear used to target eastern school whiting which, on transition to the SESSF would still be allowed to be used inside NSW inshore waters only (see above under Fishing Gear Used), could be carried on board boats when fishing outside these waters, where the gear is not allowed to be used. AFMA proposes that gear may be carried whilst fishing outside NSW coastal waters only if it is stowed and secured on board the boat, consistent with arrangements for other state coastal waters.

Feedback – Your feedback is sought on above key changes of the transition.

Seabird management plans

AFMA approved seabird management plans (SMPs) are compulsory for all Commonwealth otter board trawl boats in the SESSF and will be for all transitioning SFTF operators.

SMPs identify and set out individually tailored mitigation measures that help reduce seabird interactions with warp wires. SMPs include physical devices to reduce seabird interaction and measures to manage the discharge of biological waste from boats to reduce seabird attraction and interaction.

Trawl fishers in the SESSF must comply with one of the following mitigation measures:

- bird bafflers
- water sprayers
- pinkies with zero offal discharge.

The use of bird bafflers is considered by AFMA to be the most efficient and cost effective mitigation approach and has been adopted by 95% of the existing South East Trawl fleet. Please see the Management Arrangements Booklet for further information:

www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/SESSF-Management-Arrangements-Booklet-2017.pdf.

Estimated cost of bird bafflers is approximately \$4,000.

Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS)

Boats fishing in the SESSF, including transitioning SFTF operators, must have a VMS of a category specified in the register of AFMA approved units. This register can be found on the AFMA website under "List of approved units":

www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/AFMA_VMS_Type_Approved.pdf.

The VMS unit must remain switched on at all times that the boat is nominated to a Commonwealth concession, including when in port or engaged in State fishing. The concession holder must ensure the VMS is reporting correctly before going out to sea for the first time and that no interference occurs with the correct operation of the VMS unit.

Estimated initial cost of VMS is \$2,000 and the ongoing direct costs are recovered through the levy base. Note that the initial cost of a VMS can be substantially cheaper (\$200) but this will depend on the boat and how it is set up.

Electronic logbooks

Operators transitioning from the SFTF to the SESSF will be required to submit logbook information using an approved electronic logbook (e-log) program. E-logs are computer programs provided by third parties that allow fishers to enter and submit their catch information on the boat in real time.

Estimated costs of an e-log software subscription is \$500-\$600 per year. A laptop will cost \$500-\$1,000.

Levies payable by NSW fishers entering the SESSF

Levies are recovered for the costs of managing Commonwealth fisheries in accordance with the cost recovery implementation statement:

www.afma.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/AFMA-Cost-Recovery-Implementation-Statement-2017.pdf.

The levy amount charged for each year may vary substantially dependent upon several factors including:

- changes in management and research priorities for each fishery;
- adjustment for prior year over or under collections;
- changes in priorities through the financial year that alter the amount of resources required to administer the fishery.

Levies in the SESSF are applied to the boat SFR or permit and quota SFRs (tier 2) based on the principle that costs of activities should be allocated to the individual or groups that receive the activity or create the need for the activity. The most recent annual amounts levied on the Victorian Inshore Trawl permit (the permit most similar to the proposed NCW permit), trawl boat SFRs and relevant quota species are included at Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4 – SESSF 2016-17 boat concession levies

Item in the South East Trawl Sector	Annual Levy
Victorian Coastal Waters permit	\$395.70
Trawl boat SFR	\$9,476.07

Table 5 – SESSF 2016-17 quota SFR levies (\$/quota or kg)

Item	Levy – per quota SFR	Levy – per kg
Blue warehou	\$0.005550000	\$0.11216898
Elephant fish	\$0.216400000	\$0.175346764
Flathead	\$0.297070000	\$0.322069345
Gummy shark	\$0.446690000	\$0.563073312
Jackass morwong	\$0.036050000	\$0.095975933
John dory	\$0.064200000	\$0.075167194
Ocean perch	\$0.106330000	\$0.167281714
Redfish	\$0.030530000	\$0.144680753
Saw shark	\$0.135500000	\$0.10617533
School shark	\$0.393210000	\$0.848814192
School whiting	\$0.086190000	\$0.17666338
Silver trevally	\$0.047700000	\$0.036084178

Table 6 is an example calculation for the total levies for a hypothetical fishery endorsement holder with a NSW Coastal Waters permit and CTS SFR. The total that the hypothetical SFR holder would pay for the year is \$11,550.83.

Table 6: Hypothetical NSW coastal waters permit levy charge (from 2017-18 TAC to 2016-17 levies)

Item	Cost per unit or kg	Kgs or unit	Total cost
NSW Permit – coastal waters ¹	\$396.00	1 permit	\$396.00
elephant fish	\$0.18	10 kg	\$1.75
Flathead	\$0.32	2 265 kg	\$729.49
John dory	\$0.08	275 kg	\$20.67
Ocean perch	\$0.17	100 kg	\$16.73
Redfish	\$0.14	92 kg	\$13.31
School whiting	\$0.18	5 067 kg	\$895.15
Silver trevally	\$0.04	46 kg	\$1.66
Total payable			\$11 550.83

¹Assuming that the NSW coastal water permit costs will be equivalent to a Victorian coastal waters permit

Potential transitional assistance measures

The SFTTWG discussed the benefits and costs of the transition package. There will be some initial costs associated with implementing the above requirements for those SFTF operators that wish to continue fishing in NSW inshore waters once the transition is complete. The SFTTWG developed the following potential options for assistance to be considered by the NSW government:

- Provide a portion of fee relief in the first year of new arrangements for former SFTF entitlement holders; and/or
- Provide some financial assistance to SFTF entitlement holders for the cost of hardware to become compliant with Commonwealth rules.

The SFTTWG recognised that all SFTF entitlement holders would receive some benefit from the assistance offered under the first option. The SFTTWG noted that about half SFTF operators are dual-endorsed currently and so should already be compliant with Commonwealth rules. Therefore, only a few operators would benefit from the second option.

No decision has been made by the NSW Government as to whether assistance is needed and, if so, in what form. Additional potential assistance measures by commercial fishing stakeholders and the public may be suggested as part of this consultation process.

It should be noted that NSW DPI will be moving to a cost recovery framework for all NSW fisheries in the future.

Feedback – Your feedback is sought on potential assistance measures for SFTF operators as part of the transition package.