



Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Client Service Charter

June 2016

Approval

This Client Service Charter has been considered and approved by

ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY	DR JAMES FINDLAY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
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Revision history

Date	Change Type	Author	Version

1 Client Service Charter

This Charter expresses our ongoing commitment to providing you with quality service.

It outlines the standard of service you can expect from officers of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

If you believe this standard is not being met please comment on our performance – see ‘How to make a Complaint section’.

Your feedback enables us to continually improve our service and shape our communications to better meet your needs.

Our service commitments accord with the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct and we report annually on our performance against this Charter in our Annual Performance Statement in the Annual Report.

2 Scope of our Client Service Charter

This Charter is for all of AFMA’s clients. This includes anyone we provide a service to or who works with us in delivering results, as well as the general public.

This Charter applies to all of AFMA’s fisheries administration and corporate services including our licensing function. Our compliance, surveillance and enforcement activities are outside the scope of this charter.

3 Who we are

AFMA is the Australian Government agency responsible for the efficient management and sustainable use of Commonwealth fish resources on behalf of the Australian community.

AFMA manages commercial fisheries from generally three nautical miles out to sea to the extent of the Australian Fishing Zone. The states and territories look after recreational, commercial coastal and inland fishing and aquaculture.

Detailed information about our operations is provided in our [Corporate Plan](#) and [Annual Operational Plan](#) on AFMA's website.

4 How we work

In managing Commonwealth fisheries resources on behalf of the Australian community we:

- ensure that each fishery is scientifically assessed on a continuing basis and make regulatory and other decisions to pursue sustainability and economic returns
- collect catch, effort and other information from operators in all Commonwealth managed and Torres Strait Protected Zone fisheries to provide an understanding of the characteristics of each fishery
- provide professional observer services to domestic fishing vessels operating within the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ), including sub-Antarctic territories and other waters as required
- process licensing and fisheries data transactions for all Commonwealth fisheries to give effect to fisheries management arrangements
- collect licence fees and management levies from fishers to contribute to the cost of managing Commonwealth fisheries
- detect and investigate illegal fishing activity by both domestic and foreign fishing boats in the AFZ and Commonwealth fisheries
- participate in an advisory capacity to Australian delegations in international fisheries forums including the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission.

5 Principles and practices

In carrying out our work we will:

- conduct all functions in accordance with Australian Public Service Values, Code of Conduct and Australian law
- use plain English to improve engagement with persons of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- use open and transparent processes
- respond promptly to messages and inquiries
- provide information that is complete and accurate
- give stakeholders an opportunity for direct input into the fisheries management decision making process
- inform you about decisions that will affect you
- ensure that you are able to discuss the decisions which affect you with someone who is able to understand and respond to your concerns
- impartially apply relevant legislation, policy and guidelines.

NOTE: AFMA cannot provide legal or financial advice. If you have concerns about your individual legal or financial position, you should seek independent professional advice.

6 Our service standards

Where possible we encourage stakeholders to utilise digital channels of communications with AFMA, particularly for our licensing and logbook transactions. AFMA's online services GOFish and e-Logs are almost instantaneous and more cost effective than manual transactions.

Service delivery	What you can expect from us
All clients	
General correspondence and inquiries:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We aim to give you a response within 10 business days of receipt in AFMA. The exact timing and content of our response will depend on each case and the complexity of the request.• If your inquiry is likely to take longer to deal with we will contact you within the 10 day time-frame to advise you of progress and the reasons for the delay.

Service delivery	What you can expect from us
Industry clients	
Processing Commonwealth licensing and entitlements transactions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will process routine applications for leases, transfers and other dealings affecting fishing concessions within five business days of receipt. This is subject to being supplied with everything we need to complete the transaction. • Where applications are more complex, we will write back within five business days to confirm receipt of the application and to advise an expected response date. We will maintain contact and continue to advise you of the status of the application.
In collecting and disseminating catch, effort and other information through our logbook, observer and e-monitoring programs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will send new logbooks within five business days of receiving a request to do so. • We will protect the confidentiality of information recorded and not disclose that information unless authorised, or required to do so by law.
When providing professional Observer services to domestic fishing vessels operating within the AFZ and subject to arrangements for the nature of the observer's functions being satisfactorily addressed beforehand:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide trained, competent observers for vessels in domestic ports within 72 hours of a request to do so and within 21 business days of requests for vessels intending to land product in foreign ports.

7 Your rights

As a client of AFMA, you are entitled to:

- equitable access to our services
- have your privacy respected in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*
- access information that we hold about you under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- bring any deficiencies in AFMA's administration to the attention of the Commonwealth Ombudsman
- have certain fisheries management decisions reviewed - most of our fisheries management decisions have statutory rights of review under the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*.

8 Your responsibilities

You can help us to help you by:

- providing your queries to us clearly in writing
- giving us accurate information within a reasonable timeframe
- ensuring that forms and documents are completed clearly, fully and in required detail
- giving us advance notice of any request for information or assistance so that we can plan to meet your request on time
- treating our staff courteously.

9 How to provide feedback

We value all feedback. If you would like to provide feedback on the service you receive, we encourage you to:

ATTN: FEEDBACK

Executive Secretary

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Telephone: (02) 6225 5555

Fax: (02) 6225 5300

Email: feedback@afma.gov.au

10 How to make a complaint

We value all feedback. If you are not satisfied with the service you receive or the behaviour of our staff, we encourage you to:

- *Step 1:* Tell the employee with whom you are dealing the nature of your dissatisfaction or concern.
- *Step 2:* If you are not satisfied with their response, you may ask to contact the staff member's supervisor with a view to resolving your concerns immediately.
- *Step 3:* If you are still not satisfied or would like to provide suggestions or comments, please contact:

ATTN: COMPLAINTS

Executive Secretary

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Telephone: (02) 6225 5555

Fax: (02) 6225 5300

Email: complaints@afma.gov.au

NOTE: There is no financial charge for making a complaint. All complaints will be dealt with confidentially, impartially and effectively. Where appropriate, complaints will be fully investigated and in doing so we will use our best endeavours to preserve the confidentiality of all information collected as well as the confidentiality of all parties concerned in the process.

In addressing your concerns we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint in writing within five business days
- where appropriate, ensure that a full, impartial, and timely investigation of your complaint is undertaken by someone who has not previously been involved in the matter
- within 20 business days of receipt of your formal complaint, provide you with a full and detailed explanation of how and why any decision was made or a response indicating where the investigation is up to and the expected time for completion.

11 Review and evaluation of the Client Service Charter

We will review this Charter regularly to ensure that it remains relevant.

Every year, we evaluate our service delivery against the standards we have set in this Service Charter and report on our performance in our Annual Performance Statement in the Annual Report.

12 AFMA contacts

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