



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

INFORMATION PUBLICATION PLAN

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BACKGROUND

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (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's responsibilities are shared between a Commission and the Chief Executive Officer.

AFMA is an agency subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) and is required to comply with the Information Publication Scheme (IPS) requirements. This Information Publication Plan (the Plan) describes how AFMA proposes to do this, as required by s 8(1) of the FOI Act.

The Plan describes how AFMA proposes to implement and administer the IPS in respect of the information held by the agency. The Plan covers:

- the information required to be published;
- other (optional) information to be published;
- accessibility of information published; and
- a timeframe for AFMA's immediate and ongoing compliance with the IPS

The purpose of the IPS is to promote a culture of proactive disclosure and more openness of Government. AFMA intends to pursue these objectives.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of the Plan, in accordance with subsection 8(1) of the FOI Act, is to show the Australian public:

- a) what information AFMA proposes to information under the IPS;
- b) how, and to whom, AFMA proposes to publish information under the IPS; and
- c) how AFMA otherwise proposes to comply with the IPS.

INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE PUBLISHED UNDER THE IPS

Under subsection 8(2) of the FOI Act, AFMA is required to publish certain information about the agency and how it makes decisions and recommendations that impact on the Australian public. Much of the information required is already published on the AFMA website. Where this is so, a link is included to the relevant page of the AFMA website.

Although some information may already be available, AFMA is aware of the requirement to ensure the information is accurate, up-to-date and complete and therefore intends to review and add to the information available as detailed in this Plan.

Structure

AFMA is divided into four Branches. Its organisational structure can be found here:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/organisational-structure/>

Functions

AFMA is established under section 5 of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* (the Administration Act). Its functions are prescribed in section 7 of the Administration Act. AFMA has a number of powers under the Fisheries Management Act 1991 (the Management Act), and under the Administration Act. See:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/functions-and-powers/>

Appointments

The Administration Act provides for a number of appointments outside the *Public Service Act 1999*. Details can be found below:

Commissioners

There are currently nine Commissioners comprising the AFMA Commission, each bring a different specialisation to AFMA's management of Australia's domestic fisheries:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/the-commission/>

Management Advisory Committee Members

Management Advisory Committees (MACs) are established under section 54 of the *Fisheries Administration Act 1991* and form an integral part of AFMA's fisheries management. Each MAC consists of a chair, an AFMA representative as well as industry, environment and State Government stakeholders:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-our-fisheries/consultation/management-advisory-committees/>

Section 83 of the *Management Act* also provides for AFMA to appoint officers and employees of the Commonwealth, a State, the Northern Territory or the ACT to perform compliance functions. Their powers are specified in section 84 of the Act.

Annual Reports

At the end of each financial year ending 30 June, AFMA compiles and publishes its Annual Report. The Annual Report details AFMA's performance during the year across AFMA four Branches and includes other information required to be laid before the Parliament:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/resource-centre/publications-and-forms/corporate/annual-report/>

Consultation

Consultation is an integral part AFMA's management of Australia's fisheries. A number of Management Advisory Committees and Resource Assessment Groups are established to assist AFMA in the performance of its functions. There are also a number of avenues for public consultation, most being legislated. The following are some examples of consultation conducted by AFMA:

- Making or amending Management Plans: AFMA is required to notify the public and seek comments on draft Management Plans and on significant amendments to Management Plans by publishing notices in both the Australian Government Gazette and in Australia-wide newspapers.
- Determining Total Allowable Catches: Each fishery's Management Plan provides for consultation to be undertaken with the relevant Management Advisory Committee and, where applicable, Resource Assessment Group before the AFMA Commission may determine the Total Allowable Catch for the fishery.
- Directions to close fisheries: Before AFMA may close a fishery, or part of a fishery, it must consult with the relevant Management Advisory Committee as prescribed by section 41A of the *Fisheries Management Act 1991*.
- Commission meetings: Once a year, the AFMA Commission convenes a public meeting as part of its regular scheduled meeting. Both industry and the general public are able to attend this meeting, which is held at a different location each year, and provide their comments directly to the AFMA Commission.

Further to the specific legislated requirements to consult with stakeholders and the public, AFMA routinely convenes 'port visits'.

More information on consultation, in particular on Management Advisory Committees and Resource Assessment Groups can be found here:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-our-fisheries/consultation/>

Information Routinely Provided under FOI Requests

Currently, AFMA receives few requests for information under FOI. There is therefore no pattern of information and consequently no information 'routinely' granted access to. Should this change, AFMA will make this information available as required by paragraph 8(2)(g) of the FOI Act.

Information Routinely Provided to the Parliament

In addition to the information provided to the Parliament in the Annual Report, AFMA also provides information required by external Departments and agencies and other pieces of legislation. Some of the information provided to the Parliament includes:

- Portfolio Budget Statements: These Statements inform the Parliament of the proposed allocation of resources to AFMA's outcomes for the coming financial year. These Statements are combined with all those agencies falling

under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry portfolio and can be found on the portfolio Department's website (www.daff.gov.au).

- AFMA Contracts Listing: Pursuant to the Senate Order on departmental and agency contracts, AFMA provides to the Parliament a list of contracts entered into with external parties for amounts exceeding \$100,000. AFMA publishes bi-annual lists on its website at the address below:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/resource-centre/publications-and-forms/corporate/external-reporting/#contracts>

- AFMA's File Lists: Each six months, in accordance with the Senate Continuing Order No. 8, AFMA provides to the Parliament a list of files created by AFMA in that six month period:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/resource-centre/publications-and-forms/corporate/external-reporting/#file>

Contact Details for FOI Officers

The Legal Services Section of AFMA coordinates Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. For information on this Plan, the IPS or FOI requests please use the following contact details:

Freedom of Information Officer
Australian Fisheries Management Authority
Box 7051
CANBERRA BUSINESS CENTRE ACT 2610

Phone: (02) 6225 5555
Email: foi@afma.gov.au

Operational Information

Operational information is that information held by AFMA to assist it to perform or exercise AFMA's functions or powers in making decisions or recommendations affecting members of the public, or any particular person or entity, or class of persons or entities.

AFMA currently makes its Fisheries Management Papers available which detail various policies which apply to AFMA in carrying out its statutory functions.

Fisheries Management Papers

- [Paper 1 – Management Advisory Committees](#)
- [Paper 3 – Disposal of fishing catch and gear](#)
- [Paper 5 – Exploration of fish resources](#)
- [Paper 6 – Procedure for handling unpaid and overdue levy or charge for Commonwealth domestic fishing concessions](#)

- [Paper 8 – Allocation of fishing concessions where management arrangements change](#)
- [Paper 10 – Undercatch/overcatch of quota principles](#)
- [Paper 11 – Scientific permits](#)
- [Paper 12 – Information disclosure](#)

AFMA plans to assess its operational information to ensure that all such information that can be published is identified and published.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION TO BE PUBLISHED

AFMA plans to assess whether it holds other information that, consistent with the purpose of the FOI Act, could be published.

INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

The Department of Finance and Deregulation requires all Australian Government websites to transition to the new Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) at the minimum level ('single A') by the end of 2012 and to the medium ('double A') by the end of 2014.

AFMA's current website conforms to 'single A' standard, though the content is subject to regular review to ensure it continues to meet accessibility standards set out in WCAG 2.0.

AFMA will seek to ensure all information published under the IPS is compliant with the WCAG 2.0.

Charges

Under subsection 8D(4), AFMA may impose a charge for accessing information that is not accessed directly via the AFMA website. AFMA may only charge fees to reimburse the reproduction costs or other specific incidental costs incurred by AFMA.

The following charges may be applied when information is not accessed via the AFMA website:

Task	Cost to Applicant
Photocopying or reprinting of information	\$0.10 per page
Postage	As incurred from Australia Post etc.
Other costs e.g. reproduction on CDs, other materials	As incurred by AFMA

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

The following table outlines AFMA’s intended publication of further information under the IPS not already included in this Plan. The indicative ‘date of availability’ refers to the date by which AFMA intends to make the information available. The IPS is an ongoing obligation and AFMA will if possible make information available before the dates specified.

NO.	DOCUMENT CATEGORY	DATE OF AVAILABILITY
1.	Operational information	1 October 2011
2.	Optional information	1 May 2012
3.	Update information already included in this Plan	1 October 2011 and ongoing
4.	Review of AFMA’s IPS compliance	Annually