



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

## Pre-season Briefing Guide

Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery

Farm Sector

2025 – 2026 Fishing Season



# Contents

---

|                                                              |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Contents .....                                               | i  |
| Purpose .....                                                | 1  |
| 1. Contacting AFMA .....                                     | 1  |
| 2. Total Allowable Catch Setting and Value of SBT SFRs ..... | 2  |
| 3. Checklists .....                                          | 2  |
| 3.1 Before you LEAVE port – Catcher Vessel .....             | 2  |
| 3.2 Reporting – Catcher Vessel .....                         | 2  |
| 3.3 Before you LEAVE port – Tow Vessel .....                 | 3  |
| 3.4 Reporting – Tow Vessel .....                             | 3  |
| 4. General Obligations – All Vessels .....                   | 3  |
| 4.1 Quota .....                                              | 3  |
| 4.2 Vessel Monitoring System .....                           | 4  |
| 4.3 Critical Incident Reporting .....                        | 5  |
| 4.4 Emergency Contact .....                                  | 5  |
| 4.5 Recording SBT Mortalities .....                          | 5  |
| 4.6 Endangered Threatened and Protected Species (ETPs) ..... | 6  |
| 4.7 Taking Bait (South Australian Waters) .....              | 6  |
| 4.8 Recreational Fishing .....                               | 7  |
| 5. General Obligations – Catching Vessels .....              | 7  |
| 5.1 Release of Fish – Immediately after capture .....        | 7  |
| 5.2 Secondary Fishing Vessels .....                          | 7  |
| 5.3 Logbook Requirements – Catching Vessels .....            | 7  |
| 5.4 E-Log Requirements .....                                 | 8  |
| 5.5 Completing e-Logs .....                                  | 8  |
| 6. General Obligations – Tow and Auxiliary Vessels .....     | 9  |
| 6.1 Carrier Boat Permits .....                               | 9  |
| 6.2 Identification of tow cages .....                        | 9  |
| 6.3 Pre-departure reports for tow vessels .....              | 9  |
| 6.4 Transferring tow cages between vessels .....             | 10 |

|      |                                                                                         |    |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 6.5  | Logbook requirements – Tow Vessels.....                                                 | 10 |
| 6.6  | Observers.....                                                                          | 10 |
| 7.   | Contract Catching.....                                                                  | 10 |
| 8.   | Consolidating tow cages in the field .....                                              | 11 |
| 9.   | Two or more companies fishing into the one tow cage.....                                | 12 |
| 10.  | Returning to port and disposing of fish .....                                           | 13 |
| 10.1 | Prior landing reporting .....                                                           | 13 |
| 10.2 | Verified count – fish sample and video count .....                                      | 13 |
| 10.3 | Disposal of fish to a fish receiver - SBT04B or eSBT04 farm catch disposal record ..... | 13 |
| 11.  | CCSBT Catch Documentation Scheme .....                                                  | 13 |
| 11.1 | Electronic CDS. ....                                                                    | 13 |
| 11.2 | CDS Reminders – PLEASE READ .....                                                       | 14 |
| 11.3 | Ongoing CDS Requirements .....                                                          | 14 |
| 12.  | More information.....                                                                   | 17 |
|      | ATTACHMENT A-Overcatch .....                                                            | 18 |
|      | ATTACHMENT B-Undercatch .....                                                           | 20 |
|      | ATTACHMENT C-Transfer weighing procedure .....                                          | 21 |

## Purpose

---

This booklet summarises the management arrangements for the Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery (SBTF) during catching, towing and transfer operations. The season will run from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026. This booklet is intended as a **guide only**. The complete requirements for operators in the SBTF are detailed in several key documents. It is the responsibility of the concession holder to familiarise themselves with these documents:

- *Fisheries Management Act 1991*
- *Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery Management Plan 1995* (the Plan) and associated amendments, directions, determinations and temporary orders
- Fisheries Management Regulations 2019, and
- Conditions on Statutory Fishing Right (SFR) certificates and Extracts of Register.

If there is anything that you do not understand in this booklet, if you need further information, or have any comments or suggestions for this booklet please contact Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) using the contact details below.

## 1. Contacting AFMA

---

AFMA has a direct number **1300 723 621** which enables anyone to contact AFMA from any landline in Australia for the cost of a local call.

| Name                        | Section                                              | Phone                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Jeremy Smith                | Manager, SBTF                                        | 02 6225 5407<br>0404 370 566 |
| Robert Wood                 | Senior Management Officer                            | 02 6225 5598<br>0439 193 321 |
| Josh Froggatt               | Manager, National Compliance Planning and Operations | 02 6225 5467                 |
| Duty Officer                | Compliance                                           | 0419 205 329                 |
| Henry Oak                   | Manager, Observer program                            | 02 6225 5332<br>0429 275 894 |
| Anne Shepherd               | Manager, Licensing and Data Services                 | 02 6225 5361                 |
| Licensing and Data Services | SBT Registrar, Logbooks or CDS books                 | 1300 723 621                 |

|                |                                        |                                              |
|----------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Eric Appleyard | Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Contact | 02 6225 5454                                 |
| Adam Kemp      | Seatec Ltd (Seatec) Fax number         | 08 8682 2181<br>08 8682 2181<br>0429 438 329 |
| Rob Wilson     | Seatec Fax number                      | 08 8682 2181<br>08 8682 2181<br>0438 867 123 |

## 2. Total Allowable Catch Setting and Value of SBT SFRs

AFMA determined the Australian National Catch Allocation<sup>1</sup> (ANCA) as 6,930,250 kilograms for the 2025/26 season. AFMA must also calculate the actual live weight value for SBT SFRs. The actual live weight value for the 2025/26 season has been set at **1.30159668 kg/SFR**.

## 3. Checklists

### 3.1 Before you LEAVE port – Catcher Vessel

| Item                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Vessel is nominated to a SBT quota SFR                                                                                                                                                            |
| Master of the vessel is an authorised agent                                                                                                                                                       |
| VMS is operating                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| AFMA observer – ensure you carry an observer if requested by AFMA                                                                                                                                 |
| Ensure an emergency contact number for vessel has been provided to AFMA                                                                                                                           |
| Ensure you have the Catch and effort logbook (TPB03A) and Farm Catch Disposal Record (SBT02) or Electronic Logbooks (e-Logs) including the electronic Catch Disposal Record (eSBT02) are on board |
| Ensure appropriate Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS) documents are on board – Tags, Catch Monitoring Forms (CMF) and Catch Tagging Forms (CTF)                                                     |

### 3.2 Reporting – Catcher Vessel

| Event                    | Details                                                             |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All Mortalities          | Report daily record in logbook TPB03A, SBT02 or their e-Log, eSBT02 |
| Mortalities to be landed | Fill in CMF and CTF                                                 |
| Wildlife interactions    | Record in logbook TPB03A or in their e-Log                          |
| Critical incidents       | Report immediately to AFMA duty officer 0419 205 329                |

<sup>1</sup> ANCA = the commercial catch allocation to SBT SFR holders as agreed by the AFMA Commission for the season commencing on 1 December 2025

| Event                            | Details                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Notify AFMA of tow cage contents | <b>Submit SBT02 or eSBT02 within 24hrs from the last transfer to a tow boat and cage begins to return to port</b> |
| Release of fish after capture    | Report details in logbook (TPB03A) or e-Log                                                                       |
| Emergency contact                | Ensure an emergency contact number for vessel has been provided to AFMA                                           |

### 3.3 Before you LEAVE port – Tow Vessel

| Item                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Vessel is nominated to a fishing Concession (Carrier Permit)                                                                 |
| <b>Ensure master of the vessel is an authorised agent</b>                                                                    |
| Check VMS operating                                                                                                          |
| AFMA observer – ensure you carry an observer if requested by AFMA                                                            |
| Logbooks or e-log- SBT Farm transit log (SBT03B)                                                                             |
| Ensure an emergency contact number for vessel has been provided to AFMA                                                      |
| Ensure appropriate CDS documents are on board – Tags, CMF and CTF                                                            |
| <b>Departure report including tow cage number submitted to AFMA within 1 hour of navigating south of Lat 34°53'17 South.</b> |

### 3.4 Reporting – Tow Vessel

| Event                                                          | Details                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All Mortalities                                                | Record in logbook (SBT03B) or eSBT03                                    |
| Mortalities to be landed                                       | Fill in CMF and CTF                                                     |
| Endangered Threatened and Protected (ETP) Species interactions | Record in logbook (SBT03B) or eSBT03                                    |
| Critical incidents                                             | Report immediately to AFMA duty officer 0419 205 329                    |
| Prior landing                                                  | Notify Seatec 08 86822181 or mobile 0429 438 329                        |
| Emergency contact                                              | Ensure an emergency contact number for vessel has been provided to AFMA |

## 4. General Obligations – All Vessels

### 4.1 Quota

To fish in the SBTF the vessel used must be nominated to SBT quota SFR

Overcatch is allowed subject to specific conditions see **Attachment A**.

Undercatch is allowed subject to specific conditions see **Attachment B**.

## 4.2 Vessel Monitoring System

It is the concession holder's responsibility to ensure that any vessel nominated to their concession is fitted with a VMS of a category specified in the register of AFMA approved units. This register can be found at: [Updated approved VMS units for Commonwealth fisheries | Australian Fisheries Management Authority \(afma.gov.au\)](https://www.afma.gov.au/updated-approved-vms-units-for-commonwealth-fisheries)

The VMS unit must be switched on at all times, including when the boat is 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. On becoming aware of a problem with the VMS functioning, the concession holder must advise AFMA as soon as practicable via:

Phone: 02 6225 5369 (if prompted, follow instructions on the voice mail); or

Mobile: 0419 205 329; or

Email: [VMSreporting@afma.gov.au](mailto:VMSreporting@afma.gov.au)

If the VMS is not operating or is malfunctioning the boat must remain in port until the VMS is inspected, repaired if necessary and AFMA has received confirmation from an authorised technician that the Automatic Location Communicator is functioning normally.

Please refer to the VMS conditions on your permit for more information.

If a nominated vessel's VMS unit stops reporting, the concession holder will be required to manually report the vessel's position at a frequency specified by AFMA.

The manual position reports should include:

- the vessel's name;
- the vessel's distinguishing symbol;
- the vessel's present latitude and longitude (in degrees and minutes); and
- the date and time.

Manual position reports are to be made by:

Phone: 02 6225 5369 (if prompted, follow instructions on the voice mail); or

Email: [VMSreporting@afma.gov.au](mailto:VMSreporting@afma.gov.au)

Depending on the circumstances, and in accordance with its enforcement decision principles as outlined in the Domestic Compliance and Enforcement Policy, if a nominated boat's VMS unit stops reporting AFMA may determine that it is appropriate to issue a Direction under section 69 of the *Maritime Powers Act 2013*. This Direction will require the boat to immediately return to, and remain in, port until such time as AFMA is satisfied the problems with the VMS unit have been rectified.

A Temporary Switch Off Order (TSO) is a formal arrangement that allows a unit to be

legitimately switched off. If a nominated vessel is undergoing maintenance, berthed for an extended period or in other exceptional circumstances that render VMS operation impractical, the concession holder can apply for a TSO by filling out an 'Application for VMS Temporary Switch Off' form and sending it to AFMA via:

Email: [VMSreporting@afma.gov.au](mailto:VMSreporting@afma.gov.au); or

Mail: VMS Reporting

AFMA

PO Box 7051

CANBERRA BC

ACT 2610

Further information can be found on the AFMA website at:

<http://www.afma.gov.au/industry/vms/default.htm>

### 4.3 Critical Incident Reporting

All critical incidents or unusual circumstance affecting the fish during the catching process, transfer into the tow cage or towing must be immediately reported to the AFMA duty officer. This includes but is not limited to, higher than normal mortality rates, tow cage damage or loss of fish from a towing pontoon.

### 4.4 Emergency Contact

The concession holder must provide to AFMA a current emergency contact facility for the nominated boat. An emergency contact facility must enable AFMA to contact the boat immediately and directly at any time when the boat is at sea, including in the event of an emergency.

AFMA must be notified immediately of any change in contact details, by email, [licensing@afma.gov.au](mailto:licensing@afma.gov.au), or by calling AFMA Licensing 1300 723 621; and the boat must not depart on a fishing trip unless AFMA has been so notified of the change in contact details.

Note: The emergency contact facility may take the form of a satellite phone number, or skipper or crew member's mobile phone number - any number that may be used by AFMA to contact the boat while it is at sea at any time, including in the event of an emergency.

### 4.5 Recording SBT Mortalities

Each day during fishing, transferring and towing the number of SBT mortalities that occurred must be recorded in the AFMA SBT02, SBT03B logbook or in their electronic equivalent. To ensure that fish are not double counted under the CDS scheme the

number of mortalities tagged and retained for landing must also be filled out in SBT03B or eSBT03. If you are going to retain any mortalities they must be tagged under the CDS and a CMF and CTF completed.

## 4.6 Endangered Threatened and Protected Species (ETPs)

Operators must take all reasonable steps to avoid interactions with ETPs. If an interaction occurs:

- record details of the interaction in the relevant AFMA logbook;
- if there is a fishery observer onboard immediately tell the observer about the interaction and give whatever assistance is necessary for the observer to collect any data, or make any observations requested by AFMA;
- if the interaction results in an injury to the ETP, do everything that can practicably be done to give aid to it; and
- if the interaction results in death to the ETP and it is necessary to discharge the carcass from the boat, do so in a way that does not attract birds or mammals to the boat.

## 4.7 Taking Bait (South Australian Waters)

In waters relevant to South Australia the holder of a Commonwealth fishing concession to take tuna may use the boat specified on that concession to take:

- a) Unlimited amounts of the following genera/species *Emmelichthyes*, *Trachurus*, *Sardinops*, *Clupea*, *Scomber australasicus* and *Engraulis* for use as live bait for their tuna operations on the boat used for taking the bait; and
- b) Up to three tonnes per trip in total of the following genera/species *Emmelichthyes*, *Trachurus*, *Sardinops*, *Clupea*, *Scomber australasicus* and *Engraulis* for use as dead bait for their tuna operations on the boat used for taking the bait.

Catches of the bait described above must be for the operators own use as bait and not for sale or for tuna farm feed and can only be taken using one or more of the following gears

- a) Lampara net
- b) Lift net; and
- c) Small scale purse seine.

AFMA is aware that during the capture of live bait some non-permitted species may inadvertently be taken. AFMA and PIRSA have agreed that where the presence of non-permitted species within live bait tanks is detected, compliance action would only be considered where it is clear that the contents of the bait tanks is outside the intent of the terms of the MoU. For example, where the volume of non-permitted species is believed to be substantially greater than permitted species or where large individuals of non-permitted species are present.

**Please note all catches of bait/chum need to be estimated daily in the Purse Seine Daily Fishing Log – TPB03A, PS01A or e-Log.**

## 4.8 Recreational Fishing

Recreational fishing cannot be conducted on a boat nominated to a concession granted under the Plan.

## 5. General Obligations – Catching Vessels

### 5.1 Release of Fish – Immediately after capture

SBT may be released alive and vigorous at the place they were taken immediately after capture, and before any transfer of the fish to a tow cage or another place and will not be deducted from quota if the following details of the release are noted in the AFMA logbook for the vessel:

- the weight of fish released;
- the location at which the fish were released; and
- the reason the fish were released.

No devices or net configurations are allowed to be used that allow SBT to be released from the tow cage without assistance.

### 5.2 Secondary Fishing Vessels

During the course of fishing operations some chum boats/tow boats may use troll lines/rod and reel to determine the size and availability of fish in an area. These vessels are deemed to be secondary fishing vessels. **To ensure that these boats are fishing legally SBT SFRs must be nominated to the vessel at all times.**

All mortalities from fishing activities undertaken by secondary fishing vessels must be recorded on the operator's purse seine vessel TPB03A logbook.

### 5.3 Logbook Requirements – Catching Vessels

| Logbook                     | TPB03A - Australian Purse Seine and Pole Daily Fishing Log - for SBT only or e-Log          | SBT02- SBT Farm Catch Disposal Record – Purse Seine Boat or eSBT02                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| When should it be completed | Daily                                                                                       | Completion of each transfer from purse seine net to tow cage                                                                                                                      |
| When to first submit        | Hand relevant pages to Seatec Pty within 3 business days of the boat arriving back in port. | <b>Within 24 hrs</b> from the last transfer to a tow cage and tow begins to return to port, Email AFMA a copy to <a href="mailto:licensing@afma.gov.au">licensing@afma.gov.au</a> |

## 5.4 E-Log Requirements

Electronic logbooks have been developed and are available from 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors for use during the 2025/26 season. Due to delays with finalising e-logs they **will not** be mandatory for the 2025/26 season. However, the use of electronic logbooks will be **mandatory** for **all SBTF operators** from 01 December 2026 and will replace the paper version of the TPB03A and SBT02. E-Logs will be distributed by 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors.

An electronic version of the SBT03B (eSBT03) is available from AFMA for those wishing to complete the SBT03B by electronic means. However, the use of the electronic version of the SBT03B will be voluntary and the paper version will continue to be available for use.

An electronic version of the SBT04B (eSBT04) using the AFMA purpose-built system was used in 2024/25 fishing season. This form will continue to be completed in the first instance by Seatec, and then the authorised agent for the SFR holder and FRP holder will be required to approve the eSBT04 before submission. Detailed information, including an e-log user guide and a list of suitable e-Log service providers can be found on the AFMA website at <https://www.afma.gov.au/fisheries-services/logbooks>

For further information and requirements for eLogs or eCDRs contact AFMA on 1300 723 621 option 2, or email [licensing@afma.gov.au](mailto:licensing@afma.gov.au)

## 5.5 Completing e-Logs

### *Prior to departure*

As with paper logbooks, only fishing concession holders may use the electronic logbook lodgement service. You are required to authorise persons (the master of the boat) to complete and submit an electronic logbook on your behalf, you may do so by completing and submitting a Registered Authorised Agents Nomination Form (RA) form to AFMA Licensing and Data services. Please note new nominations will not take effect until AFMA has sent you written confirmation of the nomination. Further information on the RA forms can be obtained from AFMA Licensing and Data Services on 1300 723 621.

If you have already nominated an authorised person under the paper logbook system, that nomination is also valid for electronic logbooks and eCDRs. However, the authorised person must have a valid GoFish user ID and password to use the electronic lodgement. To use electronic submissions of logbooks and CDRs you need to:

- Purchase e-log software
- Register for GoFish and e-logs

### *Completing an e-log*

All logbook information must be recorded on a shot-by-shot basis and details for the last day of the trip must be recorded before the boat docks at the end of each trip. AFMA will need a record from you to cover every day that the fishing concession is in force.

*Paper logbook must be kept as back-up*

If using e-logs, you must keep a copy of the paper-based daily fishing log for your fishery on board your boat at all times to account for system failure. In the event a system failure, operators must:

- complete the paper TPB03A logbook (Australian Purse seine Daily Fishing Log) and record details of each shot.
- ensure the master of the boat (skipper) is nominated as an authorised agent for the concession holder **before** going fishing.
- ensure that the authorised agent signing the TPB03A logbook page was the master of the boat at the time the recorded fishing operation took place.
- sign the TPB03A logbook page if you were the master of the boat and a registered authorised agent when the recorded fishing operation took place.
- ensure that each master, if multiple are on board the boat, completes and signs separate TPB03A logbook pages for each fishing operation they had control over.

## 6. General Obligations – Tow and Auxiliary Vessels

---

### 6.1 Carrier Boat Permits

Carrier boat permits are granted for 5 years. Current permits will expire on 30/11/2027. AFMA will contact concession holders prior to this date about renewal.

### 6.2 Identification of tow cages

All tow cages must be marked with a unique tow cage identification number allocated by an AFMA agent. This number must only be used once during the fishing season. Seatec is an agent of AFMA for this purpose and can supply operators with an identification number.

The identification number must:

- be displayed prior to the tow cage leaving port;
- highly visible, in a legible form and in contrasting colours;
- in a position that is not hazardous to working personnel;
- securely attached and not be removed until the tow cage no longer contains SBT; and
- must be reported to AFMA on the pre-departure report or transfer report and all logbooks completed.
- the number must only be used once during the fishing season.

### 6.3 Pre-departure reports for tow vessels

Carrier boat permit holders must report to AFMA within one hour of a nominated boat navigating south of latitude 34°53'17" South. The information may be sent via email to [sbtmonitoring@afma.gov.au](mailto:sbtmonitoring@afma.gov.au) and contain:

- a) Boat name
- b) Name of port, date and time of departure from a port or place in Australia

- c) If towing cage/s, cage identification
- d) If not towing a cage state 'no cage'

## 6.4 Transferring tow cages between vessels

Transfers between tow cages (holding fish) and carrier (tow) boats must be reported to AFMA within 24 hours of the transfer. Cage and boat details must be sent by email to [sbtmonitoring@afma.gov.au](mailto:sbtmonitoring@afma.gov.au).

- Carrier vessel name;
- Date and time of transfer;
- Tow cage identification number;
- Carrier vessel name that the tow cage was transferred to.

## 6.5 Logbook requirements – Tow Vessels

| SBT03B – SBT Farm Transit Log |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Step                          | Timing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Completing logbook            | Daily & separate log sheet for each tow cage.<br>An SBT03B must be <b>completed by all vessels</b> holding a tow cage from the <b>first</b> fish transferred to a cage until the <b>last fish in the cage is transferred to a farm</b> .                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| When to first submit          | Within 24 hrs of the cage being transferred to another carrier boat, submit the copy to Seatec via SMS or email.<br>OR:<br>Hand white copy to Seatec before the transfer to the farm commences.<br>OR:<br>If using the eSBT03 it must be completed the same as a paper form, and by all vessels holding a tow cage, and submitted once the cage is transferred to another carrier boat or to a farm site, then there are no further requirements. |

## 6.6 Observers

Independent monitoring by observers provides verified fishery information vital to the overall management of the fishery, meets important environmental requirements and is a source of validating the management processes for the community. The observer coverage target in the SBT fishery is 10 percent for purse seine and 10 percent for towing. Operators must, if requested by AFMA, allow an AFMA nominated fishery observer and safety and monitoring equipment to be carried on board vessels operating in the fishery.

## 7. Contract Catching

Contract catching occurs when one entity catches fish and transfers them to a tow cage controlled by another entity. It is essentially a two stage operation where ownership of the fish is split between the catching and towing components of the operation. The catcher

company is responsible for all aspects of the catching process and any risk associated with critical incidents or compliance breaches during that phase. In the towing phase the contracting company becomes responsible for any compliance issues.

Following the completion of the catching process and transfer to the tow cage, a completed SBT02 logbook must be provided for quota reconciliation purposes. For the process to work operationally the SBT02 must be completed by the contracting company (the SFR holder or person acting for that holder). In the past companies have usually nominated the skipper of the purse seine vessel as an agent of the contracting company.

The following process is required for contract catching operations:

1. The SFR holder must ensure the agent signing the SBT02 or completing the eSBT02 is an agent for the contracting company/s prior to the trip. This requires the contracting company/s to ensure the AFMA approved form; Registered Authorised Agent Nomination Form (RA) has been completed,
2. Before finalising the SBT02 or completing the eSBT02, the SFR holder or their agent needs to denominate the boat from the catcher company concessions and nominate the catcher boat to the contracting company's entity,
3. The SFR holder or their agent must then finalise the SBT02 or completing the eSBT02, sign, date and submit it to AFMA,
4. Once the SBT02 or completing the eSBT02 is submitted to AFMA the SFR holder or their agent must then denominate the concessions from the contracting company and either nominate the boat to another contracting company or back to the catcher company.
5. The SBT04B or completing the eSBT04 must be completed by the contracting company as the SFR holder.

Note: a separate SBT02 or completing the eSBT02 must be completed for transfers to each individual contracting company tow cage or transfers to the catcher boat tow cages.

The above process ensures that only one entity is nominated to the catching boat at the one time. There is no cost to nominate and denominate vessels through GOFish.

The advantages of this system are that the risk associated with critical incidents and compliance breaches is shared equitably amongst entities according to their involvement in the process. The added advantage of this system is that the quota owner (described above as the contracting company) would also be able to access both undercatch and overcatch.

## **8. Consolidating tow cages in the field**

---

On occasions in the past industry have approached AFMA requesting the ability to consolidate two tow cages into one whilst at sea. These requests are usually to free up a cage so catching can continue. To provide some structure around this process going

forward the following process will need to be followed noting that each application will be assessed by AFMA on a case-by-case basis.

- At least 24 hours prior to the consolidation notify AFMA in writing via email of the event [SBTMonitoring@afma.gov.au](mailto:SBTMonitoring@afma.gov.au) and its approximate location.
- The notice must contain both cage numbers and clearly identify the cage number that the fish will be consolidated into.
- Details of SBT02s or completing the eSBT02 for both cages being consolidated must be provided to AFMA prior to consolidation.
- Any relevant copies of SBT03Bs or completing the eSBT03 must be given to the tow vessel skipper towing the consolidated cage.
- Contact Seatec to get a new unique number for the cage that is returning to sea. AFMA understands that it may not be possible to physically change the number whilst at sea however the new number provided by Seatec should be used on all relevant AFMA documentation.

## **9. Two or more companies fishing into the one tow cage**

---

In previous seasons there have been examples when separate companies have caught fish and transferred them into a single tow cage. The contents of these individual tow cages have subsequently been distributed to several other companies.

While AFMA understands the reasons for these operations, it creates significant issues for the AFMA quota decrementation system.

To provide a more structured approach AFMA is requesting the following process be undertaken when such an event occurs in the future.

1. Submit all relevant SBT02s or eSBT02 within 24hrs from the last transfer to a tow boat and cage beginning to return to port
2. AFMA will deem the concession holder nominated to the vessel towing the cage to port as the concession holder responsible for all quota related issues for that cage. Note: This means that the tow boat concession holder must sign off as the quota holder for all SBT04 documents for all transfers out of that tow cage.
3. If the companies involved would like to nominate an alternate quota holder please do so in writing to [SBTMonitoring@afma.gov.au](mailto:SBTMonitoring@afma.gov.au) prior to the tow cage beginning to return to port.

**Only one company can be the quota holder for all fish in the cage in this fishing situation.**

## **10. Returning to port and disposing of fish**

---

### **10.1 Prior landing reporting**

Seatec must be notified of the date and estimated time of arrival of tow cages in port and the day the transfer is to commence. This notification should be made by faxing 08 8682 2181 or mobile 0429 438 329 preferably 3 days prior to arrival.

### **10.2 Verified count – fish sample and video count**

SBT must not be transferred from a tow cage to a farm without a verified count of the fish conducted by AFMA or an agent of AFMA.

Detailed procedures for conducting the fish sample are attached in Attachment C.

### **10.3 Disposal of fish to a fish receiver - SBT04B or eSBT04 farm catch disposal record**

SBT must not be transferred to a farm or otherwise disposed of unless the farm owner or person in Australia is a holder of a Commonwealth Fish Receiver Permit (FRP).

An SBT04B form must be completed by the FRP holder or their authorised agent immediately on completion of the verified count of fish into the receiver's farm cage. The SBT04B should be completed as follows:

1. Part 1 must be completed by fish receiver permit holder or their authorised agent.
2. Part 2 must be completed by quota holder or their authorised agent.
3. Part 3 must be complete by AFMA's Authorised Representative (AAR)(currently Seatec).

Or

If using the eSBT04, the form must be completed by a Seatec Pty Ltd representative in the first instance along with the FRP holder or their authorised agent immediately on completion of the verified count of fish into the receiver's farm cage.

Once the eSBT04 is completed, then both the FRP holder and SFR holder will be required to review the form and approve the form before its final submission to AFMA. More information on this process can be obtained by calling AFMA licensing on 1300 723 621.

## **11. CCSBT Catch Documentation Scheme**

---

### **11.1 Electronic CDS.**

Please note: In October 2025, CCSBT agreed the eCDS system will be a mandatory requirement from April 2027, pending final stages of system development and testing. All CCSBT member countries are participating in system testing.

AFMA is requesting farming companies to participate in testing throughout 2025/26 season and inform AFMA of any issues/comments/suggestions. This will provide valuable insight into the development of the system. AFMA will supply farm companies with a link to the test site and including a log on etc. Feedback will be collated and provided to CCSBT.

## 11.2 CDS Reminders – PLEASE READ

When completing CDS forms please ensure:

- every form completed has the year (2 digits 2024 is 24) written in the Document Number box i.e CMAU02C the number is required to be recorded in the top right hand corner between the printed CMAU02C and the pre-printed book number and on the CTAU02A form between the CTAU02A and pre-printed book number.
- a domestic shipment and an export shipment CANNOT be recorded on the same CMAU form.
- the correct product definitions (Processing Codes) are used on all forms including the CTAU forms.
- the correct CMAU number is recorded against each individual fish on the corresponding CTAU form.
- if CTAU forms are submitted electronically, you use and record correctly a different CTAU page number each season or each submission. Remember to submit the signed paper copy of the CTAU form once you have submitted the tagging data electronically.
- the correct Farm Stocking Number are used when completing CMAU forms, if you are unsure of the correct number please contact the catcher company or AFMA licensing and Data Services.
- the person validating the form is registered on the CCSBT website, if they are not please make sure that you register them BEFORE they sign any form, to register the person contact AFMA Licensing and Data services.
- the title of the person validating the CMAU form is written as it is registered on the CCSBT website.
- forms are completed fully and accurately e.g.; the farm name must be exactly written as the farm name is registered on the CCSBT website
- the person who certifies on any CDS form must be a client of AFMA or a nominated Authorised Agent of an AFMA client. An Authorised Agent Nomination (RA) form can be obtained by calling the Licensing & Data Services on 1300 723 621.

## 11.3 Ongoing CDS Requirements

CCSBT CDS requires all SBT taken and subsequently sold in either domestic or foreign markets to be tagged and accompanied by forms documenting the history of the product from capture to first sale. No SBT will be accepted by Japan and other CCSBT countries without a tag and the correct accompanying documentation.

### ***When a fish is killed (farmed, towing mortality, or poling operation)***

When an SBT is killed the following **must** happen:

- a) Each fish must be tagged before the fish is frozen or unloaded from the boat (for poling operations and towing mortalities) or within 30 hours (for farmed SBT).
- b) Each fish must be weighed and measured before being frozen and recorded on the **Catch Tagging Form (CTAU02A)**. The Catch Tagging Form is to be certified and returned to AFMA by the fisher/farmer **within 3 days** of landing/harvest. If using electronic means to compile the CTAU02A required data, this may be submitted along with a certified paper copy to AFMA **within 3 days** of all harvesting for the season been completed.
- c) All catch must be landed through a FRP holder licensed to accept SBT.
- d) A **Catch Monitoring Form (CMAU02C)** must be filled out and signed by the Fish Receiver. The original copy of this form is to go with the fish whether it is exported or sold domestically. A copy of the Catch Monitoring Form is to be sent to AFMA **within 3 days** of it being completed, even where the CMAU02C has been completed through GoFish, a signed and stamped copy must be sent to AFMA **within 3 Days**.
- e) In the event that there are not enough tags on board AFMA must be notified of how many fish have been landed without tags within 2 hours of landing via email [sbtmonitoring@afma.gov.au](mailto:sbtmonitoring@afma.gov.au). Tags must be obtained and these fish must be tagged before they are landed to a FRP holder licensed to accept SBT.
- f) In the event that a tag is lost and has to be replaced AFMA is to be notified via email (see above) within 24 hours of the incident. The email should include the following details: the old tag number (if known), the new tag number, the old CTF document number (if known) and the new CTF number and the reason for the replacement.

### ***Transferring fish between farms***

If you intend to transfer live SBT from your farm to another concession holder, contact AFMA or Seatec for a Farm Transfer Form. The form will need to be completed and signed by both parties and returned to AFMA within 3 days of the transfer.

### ***Re Export***

In the event that a fish is landed for domestic sale (i.e. the final product destination section of the CMF has been filled out) and it is then decided to export the fish or is imported and then re-exported a Re-Export/ Export After Landing of Domestic Product Form is to be filled in. Please note that this form is not to be used for fish landed where the primary intent is to export and the intermediate section of the CMF (CMAU02C) has been filled out as such.

A copy of the completed form is to be sent back to AFMA within 3 days of export and the original is to travel with the SBT along with a copy of the original CMF (CMAU02C).

### ***Fish receivers licensed to receive SBT***

In order to comply with the CDS all licensed FRP holders will be required to have completed three key actions before they can accept SBT, these include:

- obtaining an Australian FRP stamp which includes your current FRP number;
- registering with AFMA using the Validation of SBT CDS Documents form, (and each validator is required to read, understand and sign the requirement and responsibilities document, for further details see Validation section); and
- obtain the relevant CDS forms, tags and instructions

### ***Validation***

Licensed FRP holders who have registered with AFMA to receive SBT have the authority to validate CDS documents, see Validator Obligations for more information. It should be noted that in situations such as on the Catch Monitoring Form (CMAU02C) where certification and validation are required, the person who certifies the document must not be the same person that validates the document.

### ***Validator obligations***

As part of the SBT CDS AFMA as an official of the flag state, has delegated authority to validate CDS forms to registered AFMA FRP holders. In doing so there are minimum performance requirements that validators need to meet.

All validators are required to read and understand their obligations as a validator and sign and lodge an acknowledgement with AFMA before signing any CDS forms.

### ***Requirements and responsibilities for Validators***

The validator should inspect and check SBT products against the associated CDS documentation that they validate. This may require the validator to;

- (a) To physically inspect the tagging and recording process, and
- (b) Observe the packing of the SBT for shipment, to validate that the information is recorded correctly and accurately on each of the required CDS documents
- (c) Ensure each CDS form is fully completed.
- (d) Ensure that the required information such as Validators details, Catching boat or Farm site is registered with CCSBT before the shipment is sent.
- (e) Ensure that all relevant fields on the CDS documents are accurately completed, for example; the farm name recorded on the CDS form/s is an exact match to the name recorded on the CCSBT register.

Notify AFMA of any inconsistencies or inaccuracies found in the CDS documentation.

### ***Requirements and responsibilities for Fish Receiver Permit Holders;***

As the FRP holder please ensure your SBT validator's are fully aware of the conditions attached to your FRP and they abide by them.

A validator is required to be an AFMA registered agent for the FRP Holder. Please ensure that your validator/s are registered with AFMA as an agent for your company, if they are

not, you must complete a Registered Authorised Agent Nomination (RA) form and lodge the completed form with AFMA before the validator signs any CDS forms.

### ***Tag distribution***

Tags are provided and distributed by ASBTIA. Please ensure that you have sufficient tags before fishing commences. For tags please call ASBTIA on (08) 8682 3257.

To better reconcile tags used during the season AFMA may be requiring the return of all unused tags at the end of the season. These tags may be returned to ASBTIA.

## **12. More information**

---

If you are unsure or require assistance when completing CDS paperwork please call Licensing and Data Services section on the numbers below and we will assist you.

- ***AFMA Licensing and Data Services – 1300 723 621***
- ***Karen Cullen – Senior licensing Officer, Licensing & Data Services – 02 6225 5452***

Or the Tuna Section;

- ***Jeremy Smith– Manager, SBT Fishery – 0404 370 566.***
- ***Selina Stoute-Senior Manager, Tuna and International Fisheries- 0428 513 635***

## ATTACHMENT A-Overcatch

---

### Take in excess of quota (overcatch)

#### *Within season*

A fishing concession holder does not contravene the management arrangements for the fishery when fish are taken in excess of their quota holdings if the Holder obtains sufficient quota to cover that take within the following period:

- if a transfer weighing has been undertaken - 14 days from the time that the relevant weight is entered against the holders quota;
- if no transfer weighing is undertaken within 30 days of the commencement of the tow operation – 58 days after the tow operation commenced; or
- if no transfer weighing is undertaken within 30 days of the take being transferred to a tow cage and AFMA was not notified of the commencement of the tow operation – 58 days after the date the take was transferred to the tow cage.

Being in an over quota situation beyond the reconciliation period is an offence.

You cannot continue to fish whilst in an over caught quota position.

#### *Season End*

The following overcatch parameters apply for the 2025/26 fishing season:

- the overcatch **determined percentage at 5%**;
- the overcatch **determined amount at 100 tonnes**; and
- the overcatch **determined additional weight at 2 tonnes**.

Below is an explanation of each parameter and how they work under the SBT Fishery Management Plan.

- The 'determined percentage' (5%) is the amount of quota that you can catch in one season, but will be deducted from your quota in the following season at a rate of 1:1.
- The 'determined amount' (100 tonnes) is the maximum quota amount that can be taken in excess of your holdings regardless of the percentage, or size of your holding.
- It should be noted that the 'determined percentage' and 'determined amount' are used to work out the 'calculated excess' for the holder of an SFR. The 'calculated excess' must always be the lesser of either the 'determined percentage' or the 'determined amount'.

- The 'determined additional weight' (2 tonnes) is the weight of SBT quota that can be taken above the 'calculated excess'. This is deducted in the following season at a rate of 2:1.

Practical examples of how the agreed **overcatch** arrangements work are below:

### **Example A**

A concession holder holds 1,500 tonnes of caught SBT quota at the end of the fishing season. According to the rules that entity would have to access to the lesser of the 'determined percentage' or the 'determined amount'. In this case the determined percentage would amount to 75 tonnes. This amount is less than the determined amount of 100 tonnes so therefore the concession holder would have access to 75 tonnes of overcatch. This would be repaid in the following season at a rate of 1:1. Under this scenario the holder would also have access to a further 2 tonnes of overcatch. However, this would have to be repaid in the following year at a rate of 2:1 (ie. a maximum of 4 tonnes).

### **Example B**

If you hold 10 tonnes of SBT quota at the end of the season, you would have access to the lesser of either the 'determined percentage' or the 'determined amount'. In this case, the 'determined percentage' would amount to 500kg. As this is less than the 100 tonnes 'determined amount', you would have access to 500kg of overcatch. This 500kg amount would be taken off your quota holdings in the following season at a rate of 1:1. Under this scenario, you would still have access to an additional 2 tonnes of overcatch, or the 'determined additional weight'. This additional amount would still need to be repaid in the following season at a rate of 2:1 (i.e. 4 tonnes).

### ***Restricted overcatch – End of season release approved by AFMA***

An SFR holder, subject to application and approval by AFMA, may release alive and vigorous SBT after the fish have been towed away from the fishing grounds but prior to their transfer to a farm. The purpose is to allow a single release of fish for the season in an alive and vigorous state to avoid exceeding Australia's National Catch Allocation.

### ***Dates Overcatch process will be run***

#### ***2024/25 Fishing Season***

For the 2024/25 season overcatch will be run on 16 December 2025. All operators in an over quota position at the end of the 2024/25 season should ensure they have sufficient 2025/26 quota holdings on this date to cover any overcatch amount. Operators who are unsure of their current situation can view their quota position on GoFish or contact the Licensing & Data Services for an update.

## 2025/26 Fishing Season

For the 2025/26 season overcatch will be run on 15 December 2026. All operators in an over quota position at the end of the 2025/26 season should ensure they have sufficient 2026/27 quota holdings on this date to cover any overcatch amount. Operators who are unsure of their current situation can view their quota position on GoFish or contact the Licensing & Data Services for an update.

## ATTACHMENT B-Undercatch

---

### Undercatch

Undercatch is when you catch less than your quota holdings in a season and you are allowed to carry a limited amount of the uncaught quota into the following year.

The undercatch percentage in the SBTF to be conditional upon the total commercial catch in the fishery (at the end of the season) being either above or below **Australia's Effective Commercial Catch Limit**<sup>2</sup> minus 20 per cent of the **ANCA** (for that season).

If the total commercial catch is above the catch threshold, all concession holders would be allowed to carry forward 100 per cent of their uncaught holdings into the next season. If the total commercial catch is below the catch threshold, then concession holders would only be allowed to carry forward a maximum of 20 per cent of their total holdings that remain uncaught.

The catch threshold for the 2024/25 fishing season was calculated as 6,624 tonnes. This threshold was not reached meaning the 20% undercatch rule applies.

Concession holders with uncaught SBT quota (for the 2024/25 fishing season) will be able to take those uncaught amounts into the 2025/26 fishing season up to a maximum of 20% of a concession holders total holdings at the time of the undercatch calculation.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Undercatch is not transferable to other concession holders. This means that it must be caught by the entity that generates it.**

Practical examples of how **undercatch** works for the **current season** is below:

### **Example A**

If you own 5 tonnes of SBT quota at the beginning of the 2024/25 season and lease in 5 tonnes of quota during the season, without any outgoing leases, you are deemed to hold 10 tonnes of SBT quota at the end of the season. If you only catch 6 tonnes of that quota you can carry 20% of your total holdings (=2 tonnes), into the 2025/26 fishing season.

---

<sup>2</sup> Effective Commercial Catch Limit = ANCA for the season commencing on 1 December 2024 plus the total undercatch amount for the fishery (if any) from the previous fishing season.

## **Example B**

If you own 5 tonnes of SBT quota at the beginning of the 2024/25 season and do not catch any of it in the current season you are deemed to hold 5 tonnes of quota at the end of the season. You are then entitled to carry 20% of those holdings, 1 tonne, into the 2025/26 fishing season.

### ***Upcoming 2025/26 fishing season***

As undercatch is calculated 14 days after the end of the fishing season AFMA is unable to provide the commercial catch threshold figure that will apply in 2025/26 until mid-December as it relies on the undercatch carried forward from 2024/25 season. Once the total undercatch from the previous season is known, AFMA will calculate the catch threshold and communicate this in a letter to concession holders.

### ***Dates Undercatch process will be run:***

#### ***2024/25 Fishing Season***

For the 2024/25 season undercatch will be run on 16 December 2025. Operators who are unsure of their current situation can view their quota position on GoFish or contact the Licensing & Data Services for an update.

#### ***2025/2026 Fishing Season***

For the 2025/26 season undercatch will be run on 15 December 2026. Operators who are unsure of their current situation can view their quota position on GoFish or contact the Licensing & Data Services for an update.

For updates through the season in relation to total catch in the fishery please call the SBT Manager, Jeremy Smith on 0404 370 566.

## **ATTACHMENT C-Transfer weighing procedure**

---

### **AFMA Procedures for Transfer Weighing – 100 Fish Sample**

***1 December 2025***

The AAR (currently Seatec) verifies the weight sample on behalf of AFMA and must be present at all transfers.

To ensure consistency of application of these rules, all weight samples must be supervised by the principal or one of the two second in charge officers of the AAR. If these officers are unavailable an alternative person may be agreed on between AFMA and the Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association (ASBTIA).

The weight sample will be conducted as follows:

1. The AAR will supervise the company's representative catching the fish;
2. The AAR has complete say over the taking of the weight sample, and all company representatives will follow their instructions at all times;
3. The AAR will make and supply the standard catching gear for the sample;
4. The standard catching gear will be: 300 mm leader, 25 mm gape barbless hook, and 8 millimetre diameter rope;
5. All divers must be out of the water 10 minutes prior to the start of weight sample, and must remain out of the water until the sample is completed;
6. The company is to supply at least two tonnes of thawed bait for the sampling. The bait used for the sample must be whole fish;
7. The company is to supply at least 4 people to assist the AAR in the sampling;
8. The company catches the fish under the direction of the AAR until they have weighed and measured at least 100 fish that each weigh 8 kilograms or more and the average weight of those fish is determined to two decimal places;
9. If 150 fish have been taken from the tow pontoon and the number of fish that weigh 8 kilograms or more each is less than 100 then the average weight shall be calculated to two decimal places from the 150 fish taken regardless of the individual weight of each fish;
10. The AAR may trial different scales which have the capacity to measure accurately within 0.1 of a kilogram. These scales will be recalibrated before each sampling;
11. Only whole bait can be used in the chum for the sampling. A full shovel of chum must be thrown prior to the release of each hook. The chum must be thrown at least two (2) meters in front of the catcher. The catcher must not throw the hook until instructed by the AAR. The catcher must throw the baited hook into the centre of the chum. Once the individual fish is recorded, the weight is final with no recourse by the AAR or the company;
12. To assist with minimising the time taken to complete the sample, two fish cradles may be used during the sample; and
13. In the advent of the cessation of the weight sample due to weather, safety, operational or unforeseen circumstance, the company and AAR will agree when the

sampling is to recommence. In such circumstances the fish already caught and weighed in the sample prior to stopping the sample will still be part of the sample.

### ***Resolving interference in the 100 fish sampling procedures***

If the AAR observes any interference with fish selection in the catching process the sampling is to be stopped and AFMA management is to be advised immediately.

If the sample is stopped and AFMA management advised, the company is to be issued with a first warning. At this stage:

1. The AAR will advise the company why the sampling has been stopped and record the reason on the sampling form;
2. The AAR may instruct the company to use different sampling equipment, or techniques to address the concerns in the sampling process;
3. Sampling will not continue until the issue is resolved to the AAR's satisfaction;
4. The fish already caught and weighed in the sample prior to stopping the sample will still be part of the sample;
5. Once the issue is resolved sampling will continue in line with the agreed sampling procedures; and
6. Should the AAR have concerns with the continued sample, they will again cease to supervise the sampling making any further sampling void. The AAR will return to port and AFMA management are again advised by phone at this point.

If the sample is stopped a second time AFMA will contact the company directly and issue a second warning. The AAR will then return to the tow pontoon at an agreed time and continue to supervise the sample in line with the agreed sampling procedures. The fish already caught and weighted in the sample prior to stopping the sample will still be part of the sample.

Should the AAR have any further concerns with the continued sample, then they will terminate the sample. AFMA management is to be advised of the terminated sample. If the sample is terminated AFMA will:

1. Send a senior officer to Port Lincoln and assist the AAR to conduct a new 100 fish weight sample to replace the terminated weight sample;
2. None of the weights collected in the terminated sample will count in the new sample;
3. No company representative will participate in the new sample but is entitled to be present for the new sample. The AAR will conduct all aspects of the new weight sample;
4. The AAR will conduct all future weight samples for the company involved for the remainder of the season: and
5. All costs associated with conducting the new sample and subsequent samples will be paid by the company involved.

### ***Procedures for video count of fish transferred from the tow pontoon to the fish farm***

Two AAR representatives **must** be present when fish are transferred from the tow pontoon to the fish farm and oversee the operation of the video.

The Holder of the SFR under which the SBT in the tow pontoon were taken must ensure that sufficient equipment and personnel to facilitate the transfer are provided. The transfer should be conducted as follows:

- the video should show a side view covering the opening between the tow pontoon and the farm in order that all SBT transferred will appear on the video recording;
- there must be a 'drop down' net above the transfer gate that completely covers the opening in the net;
- the drop down must extend at least a metre either side of the opening and at least one metre below;
- the bottom of the net must be heavily weighted to ensure it hangs as vertically as possible to prevent any fish moving through the transfer gate opening and to stop the net being blown away from the opening by current caused by the movement of fish in the cage;
- an attendant must stay for the duration of the transfer directly over the transfer gate to ensure the immediate release of the drop down net; and
- where the fish farm is to be positioned at a site where turbid water occurs, the fish count is to be done prior to the fish farm being positioned at that site.

The use of bait to move fish from tow pontoon to farm is **not permitted** except where authorised to do so by the AAR.