



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Southern Squid Jig Fishery Resource Assessment Group (SquidRAG) Meeting 20

Teleconference Minutes

Date: 20 October 2015

Attendance

Name	Membership (type i.e. chair etc.)
Lianos Triantafillos	Chair
Sally Weekes	AFMA member
Debbie-Lee Wisby	Industry member
Lisa Stevenson	Executive officer, AFMA
Apologies	
Ian Knuckey	Research member
Robert Curtotti	Economics member, ABARES

Minutes

1. Preliminaries

1.1. Introduction and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting at 08:11am and welcomed the participants.

The RAG noted that Robert Curtotti and Ian Knuckey were not in attendance, and that Lisa Stevenson would be acting Executive Officer for Matthew Piasente (SquidRAG Executive Officer).

1.2. Declaration of interests

The RAG followed the conflict of interest declarations as outlined in the revised Fisheries Administration Paper 12 (FAP12). A list of the full conflicts of interest declarations made by the SquidRAG for the teleconference is provided at **Attachment 2**. The Chair advised SquidRAG that he would be providing contact details for his new role in Darwin in the next few weeks and would be continuing as SquidRAG Chair.

The RAG noted conflicts of interest declared by Debbie Wisby and that Ms Wisby would be participating in the discussion on the TAE for 2016.

1.3. Adoption of Agenda

The draft agenda (**Attachment 1**) was adopted with no additional items.



1.4. Actions arising from previous meetings

AFMA advised the RAG of the status of actions arising from SquidRAG 19 held in October 2014. A summary of these actions is provided in **Attachment 3**.

The Chair additionally summarized the *Annual Research Statement for 2016-17* and the *Southern Squid Jig Fishery Five Year Research Plan 2015-2019* for the RAG. The Chair sought the views of the Industry Member, Ms Wisby, on priorities for the research projects that had been proposed by the RAG. Ms Wisby supported the projects and order of priority as had been identified in the research plan:

- 1) Improving the location and targeting of economically viable aggregations of squid available to the squid jigging method
- 2) Improving the SSJF fishing fleets ability to catch squid. (i.e. light colour, jig placement and angle)
- 3) Obtain up-to-date information and alignment of management frameworks between Commonwealth and State arrangements

Action item 20.1

Robert Curtotti to send ABARES squid price series data to the RAG (continued from SquidRAG19).

Action item 20.2

AFMA to circulate the final *Annual Research Statement for 2016-17* and the *Southern Squid Jig Fishery Five Year Research Plan 2015-2019* to the RAG members.

Action item 20.3

Chair to send out research thesis by Dr Corey Green to the RAG members, with option to contact Dr Green with any questions.

Action item 20.4

Chair to circulate the NZ squid fishery characterization document (continued from SquidRAG19, pending resolution of access issues).



2. Business

2.1. Manager's report

The AFMA member, Ms Sally Weekes, provided the RAG with an update on:

- Staffing changes at AFMA
- The new Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Senator Anne Ruston replacing Senator Richard Colbeck
- The three government policies being reviewed or under development by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources: the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy, the Commonwealth Policy on Fisheries Bycatch and a new overarching Fisheries Policy. The policies were still under consultation within government but expected to be released for public comment in the next few months
- Observer market testing -

“On 8 January 2015 AFMA called for expressions of interest to market test the AFMA Scientific Observer Program. On 29 June 2015, AFMA advised that it had shortlisted a number of applicants from that process.

In light of the market test AFMA has decided to conduct a limited tender process with those applicants who have been shortlisted. AFMA will now prepare the request for tender documents, evaluation criteria and associated material, prior to approaching the shortlisted applicants to submit their tenders.

AFMA will advise of the outcomes of the limited tender process in due course.”

In terms of the fishery, catch and effort are still relatively low in the SSJF compared to historic levels, with no issues of bycatch or concern for squid stock sustainability. It was noted that catches and catch rates were higher than those of the previous year (2014), with prices at \$3 per kilo. While there was still latent effort in the fishery, the RAG was comfortable with the current level, in that the costs associated with managing the fishery are spread across a reasonable number of quota holders and allowed for the fishery to respond to a sudden increase in squid abundance.

2.2. Industry report

Ms Debbie Wisby updated the RAG on industry matters in the fishery. Ms Wisby noted the good catches and a generally good stable market (\$3 per kilo achieved by the majority of active fishers for the entire season) for the 2015 season. There were also requests to export product internationally. Ms Wisby was highly optimistic about the potential for the fishery to expand in the near future, particularly with the interest from overseas markets such as China in products from ‘clean environments’.

Ms Wisby stated that current conversations on export opportunities for squid would be beneficial for the entire industry, particularly in terms of encouraging fishers to target multiple species (including squid). Dr Triantafillos added that having more boats in the water (>15-20 boats) would be beneficial for the fishery in terms of finding squid. The RAG



discussed the benefits of liaising with the trawl industry in finding squid and the potential for an association to be formed to represent the fishery.

Ms Wisby emphasised the importance of collaboration and information sharing within small fisheries such as the SSJF, particularly for being effective in finding and targeting squid. She highlighted the importance of the RAG having clear research projects (and costings), so that research submissions are in a position to proceed when opportunities for funding arise (see Section 1.4).

2.3 TAE recommendation for 2016 season

In recommending the TAE the RAG considered information circulated by AFMA in the *Agenda Item 2.3: Total Allowable Effort for the 2016 season*.

No sustainability issues were identified for the fishery, with current catches for both the SSJF and Trawl sectors of the SESSF being below the catch triggers specified in the Arrow Squid Harvest Strategy. The improved catches and catch rates, combined with stable market prices were regarded as an encouraging sign and likely to result in the increased targeting of squid in the future. With no sustainability concerns identified, the RAG recommended that the number of SFRs in the SSJF remain the same as 2014, as none had been surrendered during 2015. While this leaves latent effort in the fishery, the RAG agreed that this is outweighed by the benefits of allowing for management costs to be distributed across a reasonable number of concession holders and for the fishery to quickly respond to an increase in squid abundance, availability and price, or the development of new markets.

SquidRAG recommended that the 2016 TAE be set at 550 squid jig machines and that the number of SFRs required per jig machine remain at the current level of 9.25 SFRs per machine.

3. Other business

No other business.

The Chair thanked the SquidRAG and the meeting concluded at 09:20am.

Signed (Chairperson): 

Date: 26 October 2015

List of Attachments

- 1) SquidRAG 20 Annotated Agenda
- 2) SquidRAG 20 Declared conflicts of Interest
- 3) SquidRAG 19 Action Items



Attachment 1



Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority

Southern Squid Jig Fishery Resource Assessment Group (SquidRAG)

Draft Agenda – SquidRAG 20

8:00 – 10:00am AEST, Tuesday 20 October 2015
Teleconference

To join the teleconference, please dial in by:
Dialing – **1800 153 721** (free call); and,
Entering your participant pass code – **420178 #**

Chair Lianos Triantafillos
Participants Sally Weekes, AFMA
 Debbie-Wisby, Industry
 Ian Knuckey, Scientific member

Observers Robert Curttoti, ABARES

Executive Officer Matt Piasente

1. Preliminaries

- 1.1. Welcome, apologies and membership
- 1.2. Declaration of interests
- 1.3. Adoption of Agenda
- 1.4. Actions arising from previous meetings

2. Business

- 2.1. Manager's Report
- 2.2. Industry Report
- 2.3. TAE recommendation for 2016 season

3. Other business



Attachment 2

SquidRAG Declared Conflicts of Interest

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
Lianos Triantafillos	Chair	No interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise. Involved in broad research projects though none specifically squid related.
Debbie Wisby	Industry Member	Commercial squid fisher. Financial interest in the fishery declared.
Ian Knuckey	Scientific Member	Range of SESSF research interests declared. Member of several AFMA committees. Interest in electronic logbooks declared; one of two approved companies providing e-log services for AFMA clients.
Sally Weekes	AFMA Member	No interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise.
Lisa Stevenson	Acting Executive Officer	No interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise.



Attachment 3



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 Southern Squid Jig Fishery
SquidRAG 20

Agenda item 1.4: Actions arising from last SquidRAG meeting

Actions arising from SquidRAG 19

Action No.	Action required	Responsibility	Completion status	Further comments
SquidRAG 19.1	Robert to send around ABARES squid price series data to the RAG	Robert Curtotti		To be followed up before the next RAG (Action Item 20.1)
SquidRAG 19.2	AFMA to provide the RAG with a summary of recent research projects relevant to the SSJF.	AFMA member	Completed	AFMA to circulate the <i>Annual Research Statement and Five Year Research Plan</i> (Action Item 20.2)
SquidRAG 19.3	EO to invite relevant PhD students with squid expertise to present their findings to the RAG at next in person meeting.	AFMA EO	Ongoing	Chair to send out research thesis by Corey Green (PhD) to RAG members, with option to contact Mr Green with any questions (Action item 20.3)
SquidRAG 19.4	Chair to circulate the NZ squid fishery characterization document that was prepared.	Chair		Chair noted technical issues preventing access to be resolved and Action Item ongoing
SquidRAG 19.5	EO to send out recent economic research on SSJF conducted in 2010 by consultant.	AFMA	Completed	
SquidRAG 19.6	AFMA to work with SquidRAG to develop initial research priority points into a five year research plan.	AFMA	Complete – Five year strategic research plan developed	To be circulated to the RAG (Action Item 20.2)

