



# Southern Squid Jig Fishery Resource Assessment Group Meeting

**SQUIDRAG MEETING 18  
20 SEPTEMBER 2013  
TELECONFERENCE  
FINAL MINUTES**

**CHAIR:** Lianos Triantafillos

## 1. PRELIMINARIES

### 1.1 Welcome

The meeting opened at 1:30pm with the Chair welcoming participants.

It was noted that Phil Sahlqvist was leaving ABARES and would be unable to accept the role of Research member; and a process will soon commence to offer the position to another suitable candidate.

Mr Sahlqvist and Mr Curtotti attended the meeting as an observer to provide continuity of ABARES input to the RAG.

**Table 1 Participants present and declared interests in the fishery**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Interest declared</b>
Lianos Triantafillos	Chair, PIRSA	Employed by Primary Industries and Resources South Australia (PIRSA). No pecuniary interests.
David Power	AFMA member	SSJF manager. No pecuniary interests.
Charlene Trestrail	Acting Executive Officer, AFMA	AFMA employee. No pecuniary interests.
Debbie-Lee Wisby	Industry member	Active in the fishery. Holds Commonwealth and Tasmanian squid licences, and a processing license.

Ian Knuckey	Research member	Distributor of electronic logbook equipment in Australia. No pecuniary interests.
<b>Observers</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Interest declared</b>
Phil Sahlqvist	Former SquidRAG Research member. ABARES employee.	No pecuniary interests.
Robert Curtotti	ABARES employee.	No pecuniary interests.
Maggie Skirtun	ABARES employee.	No pecuniary interests.

## **1.2 Declaration of Interests**

Participants declared their interests (see Table 1.1).

## **1.3 Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted without amendments.

## **1.4 Actions arising from previous meeting**

There were no actions arising from SquidRAG 17 in 2012.

The RAG noted that the AFMA website does not have available the SquidRAG meeting minutes since 2009.

### **Action item 18.1**

AFMA to update the SquidRAG webpage with Minutes from 2010 – 13.

## **2. Business**

### **2.1 Managers Report**

Mr Power advised the RAG that the Harvest Strategy may need to be reviewed in the coming years.

The RAG noted that with the current fishing effort, the SJF was unlikely to reach the Harvest Strategy trigger limits, but this could change if fishing effort increases. The RAG noted that:

- The units of effort used in the Harvest Strategy and the TAE were inconsistent with the way effort is defined in the fishery, making it hard for people new to the fishery to understand how the fishery is performing in relation to reference points.
- There can be delays in entering catch and effort data of up to 6 months which jeopardies the effectiveness of the harvest strategy given that squid live for less than a year. This problem is compounded in Tasmania where the delay in acquiring catch and effort data can be over a period of years. This is significant issue when the catch taken in Tasmania was 5x the catch taken in commonwealth waters this year.

**Action item 18.2**

AFMA to write to the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment to arrange timely access to squid data in the future.

Mr Power advised that AFMA has engaged the company Archipelago Marine Research (AMR) to implement electronic monitoring for collecting independent fisheries data in selected Commonwealth fisheries. Alongside the adoption of EM, some fisheries are also moving to electronic logbooks as it reduces the time and costs for logbook data to be incorporated into the AFMA database. It was noted that the use of electronic logbooks would be beneficial in the squid fishery and Ms Wisby advised that most fishers have laptops and electronic logbooks were unlikely to pose a problem. AFMA has moved to fee for service arrangements for logbooks and the ongoing costs of e-logbooks are likely to be cheaper than paper records.

Real time catch and effort data will ensure the effectiveness of the harvest strategy and the RAG recommended getting info on the costs to implement real time catch and effort data.

**Action Item 18.3**

AFMA to circulate papers regarding the proposal of electronic logbooks to SquidRAG.

**2.2 Industry Report**

Ms Wisby noted that approximately 8 vessels had recently had good fishing success in Storm Bay. However, processors' limited capacity prevented more fishing occurring. Ms Wisby advised that introducing snap freezing into the SSJF would require larger vessels, but would be more fuel efficient as it allows vessels to stay at sea for longer periods. Other advantages include the ability to harvest squid from the west coast of Tasmania, which is isolated from processing facilities. However, this option requires a large amount of start-up capital. Ms Wisby suggested that mother-shipping in the SSJF could also be a possibility.

Ms Wisby is collating records of catch location, depth and size to see if there are any trends that can assist catches in the fishery.

Ms Wisby advised the RAG that her company is looking to export squid products. Other industry members have expressed their interest to her and successful exporting may increase effort in the fishery.

It was noted that processors set the price for squid caught and historically they have set the price at a level that is too low to promote more effort in the fishery. The export of squid product is likely to break this price barrier to expansion of effort and could lead to increase effort to supply new markets.

**2.3 Research report**

Mr Sahlqvist advised that there has been no ABARES research or economic surveys conducted in the SSJF since the last RAG meeting. The Fishery Status Reports, which includes a chapter on the SSJF, will continue to be published annually.

Dr Knuckey commented that there are several squid research publications, including PhD theses, that could be made available to RAG members.

**Action item 18.4**

AFMA to consult with the Chair to collate and distribute relevant research to SquidRAG members.

## **2.4 TAE recommendation for 2013**

In the absence of new research, the RAG deferred to the information circulated by AFMA in the paper "Total Allowable Effort for the 2014 Season". This document included catch and effort data for the SSJF and the South East Trawl sector of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. Total Squid catch by the Tasmania commercial sector was also considered.

During the discussion there was clarification that the RAG is responsible for setting the total allowable effort as measured through the number of squid jigging machines. Mr Power consulted the Management Plan to clarify and assist RAG discussions.

Key points:

1. The RAG had no sustainability concerns for the fishery. Squid catch in the SSJF and the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery are both well below the trigger points of the Harvest Strategy for jig, trawl and combined catch.
2. Ecosystem impacts resulting from this fishery were considered minimal.
3. There is a large amount of latent effort in the SSJF. While this is not ideal, the cost of management is spread across a larger number of concession holders, reducing the average cost per concession holder. Latent effort will also enable the fishery to take advantage of future developments.
4. The RAG was unable to comment on how the TAE related to maximising the economic efficiency of the SSJF.
5. Since there is no biological or economic reason to change the TAE, the RAG recommend to the AFMA Commission that the TAE remain at the same level as 2013 at 550 jigging machines. The RAG also recommended the number of SFRs required to operate one machine should be set at 10 SFRs, the same as in 2013.

The RAG sought clarification as to the maximum number of standard jigging machines allowed per boat. The RAG was unable to find an answer in the Management Plan.

**Action item 18.5**

AFMA member to check with the AFMA licensing section about the maximum number of squid jigs allowed per boat.

## **3. Other Business**

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked all participants for attending and closed the meeting.

**Meeting Closed at 3:30pm.**

**Actions arising from current meeting – SquidRAG 18**

Action No.	Action required	Responsibility	Completion status
SquidRAG 18.1	AFMA to update the SquidRAG website with Minutes from 2010–13.	AFMA member	
SquidRAG 18.2	AFMA to write to the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment to arrange timely access to squid data in the future.	AFMA member	
SquidRAG 18.3	AFMA to circulate papers regarding the proposal of electronic logbooks to SquidRAG.	AFMA EO	
SquidRAG 18.4	AFMA to consult with the Chair to collate and distribute relevant research to SquidRAG members.	AFMA EO, Chair	
SquidRAG 18.5	AFMA to check the maximum number of squid jigs allowed per boat.	AFMA member	