



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority



**Bass Strait Central Zone
Fishery Management Advisory
Committee (ScallopMAC) Meeting
24**

Meeting Minutes

Date: 3 March 2015

**Venue: The Old Woolstore
Apartment Hotel, Hobart**

Attendance

Name	Membership
Mr John Pollock	Chair
Mr Bill Talbot	Scientific member
Mr Steve Shanks	AFMA member
Mr Allan Barnett	Industry member
Mr Stuart Richey	Industry member
Mr John Hammond	Industry member
Mr Steve Mantzaris	Industry member
Mr Jon Bryan	Environment member
Ms Claire Taylor	Executive Officer
Mr James Parkinson	Invited Participant, Tasmania
Ms Kate Simpson	Invited Participant, Victoria
Mr John Cull	Observer (industry)
Mr Peter Mellios	Observer (processor)
Mr Andy Watts	Observer (industry)
Ms Debbie Wisby	Observer (industry)
Mr Tim Emery	Observer (IMAS) for agenda item 12 only

Apologies

Name	Membership
Mr Bob Lister	Observer (Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania)

Minutes

1. Preliminaries

1.1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.00am and noted an apology from Bob Lister.

1.2 Declarations of interest

ScallopMAC agreed no agenda items raise conflicts of interest. A list of the conflicts of interest declarations made by ScallopMAC for the meeting is provided at [Attachment 2](#).

1.3 Adoption of Agenda

ScallopMAC adopted the agenda at [Attachment 1](#), and agreed to discuss items 7 and 8 at agenda item 2.



2. Meeting Administration

2.1 Confirmation of record of previous meeting

ScallopMAC noted the finalised minutes of the previous teleconference meeting in July 2014.

2.2 Actions arising from previous meetings

ScallopMAC noted that the research project *Determining when and where to fish: Linking scallop spawning, settlement, size and condition to collaborative spatial harvest and industry in-season management strategies* (FRDC 2012/027) is still in progress and that the researchers will hold a stakeholder workshop in May 2015.

2.3 Correspondence

ScallopMAC noted the correspondence AFMA had received since the last ScallopMAC meeting. AFMA outlined that if there is any intention to extend the 2015 fishing season beyond 31 December, then a strong case needed to be put forward well in advance in order for ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC to be consulted and any advice provided to the AFMA Commission.

ScallopMAC agreed that AFMA's plan to collect data on the price of transferred or leased Statutory Fishing Rights would be useful for the BSCZSF.

The AFMA Commission last met 25-26 February 2015 and agreed on the new ScallopMAC membership. AFMA advised applicants will soon be informed of the outcome.

3. Fishery update

3.1 AFMA management

The final BSCZSF catch for the 2014 season was 1417.906 tonnes of the 1500 tonne Total Allowable Catch (TAC). AFMA received feedback from industry that the quality of the scallops was good at 60-65 meats per kilo, the new Harvest Strategy promoted trading of quota and it was beneficial for concession holders to search for scallop beds. Steve Shanks met with stakeholders the last week of November 2014 to discuss issues. He provided a summary of the discussions and issues raised about the fishery to the AFMA Commission.

3.2 Tasmanian management

The final 2014 catch for the Tasmanian fishery was 489 tonnes of the 1200 tonne TAC. An area off Stanley and an area near White Rock were open to fishing. However, the scallop quality from White Rock was not as high, resulting in no scallops taken from this area. A total of six vessels participated in the season. The state wide survey period will commence on 1 April in preparation for the 2015 fishing season. During the survey period 300 tonnes of scallops spread over six areas will be available, which aims to encourage exploration. Fishers record measurement and catch data for each location. This is collected by IMAS and will be provided to the Scallop Fishery Advisory Committee for their consideration.

3.3 Victorian management

The final catch for the 2014 Victorian fishery season was approximately 30 tonnes. The Victorian Government is currently consulting with stakeholders to set the 2015 TAC before the season opening on 1 April. Victoria has several proposals for industry, which include a 0 tonne, 135 tonnes or 522 tonnes Total Allowable Commercial Catch with different conditions that include data collection on size, condition, discard rates and effort data. Victoria is aiming to have a decision by the end of March. Victoria will also be reviewing the management arrangements for the fishery in 2015.



3.4 Industry

Industry reported the 2014 BSCZSF season had good catch rates and quality scallops, and that GoFish worked well, which enabled trading of quota in real time. A maximum of 10 vessels fished in the BSCZSF. The scallop price was \$13-\$14/kg, but it was noted in 1986 it was \$16/kg. The BSCZSF scallops from King Island were a better size compared to scallops in the Tasmanian fishery, so most of the effort was in the BSCZSF.

The Tasmanian Minister agreed to a request from some fishers to increase the Tasmanian TAC, and there was a mixed view on this from ScallopMAC and ScallopRAG members. The same fishers have Commonwealth, Victorian and Tasmanian fishing quota, and they go fishing where the scallops are of the highest quality. There were no administrative impediments to trading Tasmanian quota, however, when fishing started at King Island it was unknown how long the fishing would last, so no one traded their Tasmanian quota. Market demand is a greater influence on what is caught compared to the TAC, and industry prefers to have an option to move to other jurisdictions depending on market demands. All of the scallops were good quality, but King Island scallops were bigger so there was an ongoing strong demand for them. Tasmanian fishers asked for the Tasmanian TAC to be increased for several reasons. They could not achieve the 80% catch to increase the TAC because other fishers were holding the quota and were not prepared to trade it. It affected regional employment, they had markets for both 60 meats/kg and 80 meats/kg and the scallops were getting thicker.

Industry agreed they needed to find new scallop beds in 2015 and they can't leave the King Island scallops for long or they will die.

4. Completing CDRs at the wharf

AFMA presented a paper suggesting Part C of Catch Disposal Records (CDRs) could be completed by fish receivers within 100 metres of the point of unloading on the wharf, based on advice from industry (fishers and processors) and AFMA compliance officers. This was in response to concerns that quota evasion was occurring or could occur in the future. Most industry members were not supportive of this idea and did not consider there is a problem with undeclared catch. Industry members were happy with the current system and did not want it to be complicated by additional regulatory requirements. They suggested that Victorian fisheries management officers could ensure CDRs are completed correctly when AFMA compliance officers cannot be in the same location. Some industry members asked if concession holders could complete Part C of CDRs and if AFMA could simplify administration to allow this to happen. Alternatively, they also asked if the weight recorded by skippers in Part B of CDRs could be used as the final weight. ScallopMAC agreed for AFMA to research if this type of arrangement was possible.

Action 1. AFMA to inform ScallopMAC if it is possible for concession holders to complete Part C of Catch Disposal Records as opposed to a fish receiver.

5. Increasing the TAC mid-season (and Harvest Strategy discussion)

ScallopMAC discussed that concession holders could go over quota during the time when the initial TAC is about to be increased from 150 tonnes to the Tier 1 TAC of 1000 tonnes. Concession holders have 28 days to reconcile quota, however, it could be an issue in the future if the initial TAC is not increased above 150 tonnes. ScallopMAC agreed that concession holders should have a minimum quota holding before they go fishing. The risk of going over quota is not as high in between Tier 1 and Tier 2 because under the Harvest



Strategy guidelines, if 80% of the Tier 1 TAC is caught then the Harvest Strategy states that the TAC is increased to 1500 tonnes.

Industry discussed there is an issue of uncertainty at the beginning of the season because no one knows what the TAC will be. During the start of the season industry would like to have business continuity, make educated decisions and not have the uncertainty of waiting for the AFMA Commission to decide if the initial TAC will be increased above 150 tonnes. Concession holders need to keep their processor in supply as they usually have increasing demand. Most concession holders organise their quota three months ahead. Industry suggested that if the initial TAC is 500 tonnes, there would be a buffer for industry to keep fishing while a decision to increase the TAC is made.

Bill Talbot presented a summary of the ScallopRAG meeting held the day before on 2 March 2015. The ScallopRAG:

- were concerned about the quality and density of the scallop bed that was closed for the 2014 fishing season.
- agreed that concession holders should be required to hold 1 kg of quota before they can go fishing.
- discussed that the initial 150 tonnes was mainly used at King Island and not for exploring other scallop beds.
- were concerned that during the initial period with a 150 tonne TAC, industry did not implement controls to ensure no more than 50 tonnes were caught from one bed as detailed in the Harvest Strategy.
- noted that scallop density is the major factor for recruitment success.
- scientists could not define a number for density required, because density is generally low over the whole BSCZSF. ScallopRAG suggested comparing the relative density of possible beds to close.
- noted in 2014 there was no capacity to compare scallop beds because only one bed was proposed for closure.
- agreed to change the terminology 'commercially viable bed'.
- suggested the fishery could open early, except for the area primarily fished in 2014 and the bed closed in 2014. During this time concession holders could look elsewhere in the fishery. After one month the other areas could open to fishing. ScallopRAG would like logbook data and some measuring data for discussions about increasing the TAC. Research quota could be used for exploration of beds but there would be management costs for industry.
- agreed to refine closed bed criteria and report to MAC.
- noted a portion of the King Island bed could be locked up to survey.
- discussed that research quota could be allocated to look everywhere.

Industry members advised ScallopMAC that the quality of scallops in dense beds is not as high compared to beds of lower density. Therefore, it would be difficult to find a potential scallop bed to close that has a high biomass as well as high quality scallops at a high density. At their meeting, ScallopRAG had discussed the possibility of closing a scallop bed with a smaller biomass if the density is relatively higher.

The view of some ScallopMAC members was that the initial TAC be increased from 150 to 500 tonnes, and that the Commission should decide if the TAC will be increased before 150



tonnes is caught. This will provide a smoother transition from the initial opening to the Tier 1 TAC in the Harvest Strategy.

Some industry members advised ScallopMAC that they are unlikely to look for new beds using their own quota. They suggested that research quota could be an effective incentive to search for new scallop beds.

ScallopMAC discussed the quality of the scallops in the bed closed in 2014, off Flinders Island. A ScallopRAG scientist had reported the scallops were not of good quality and another bed should have been closed. Industry members advised ScallopMAC that the scallops in the closed bed were of good quality, however, they were smaller than the scallops at King Island and so there was no demand from processors and no market for them.

Industry requested to do the biomass estimate survey at the beginning of the fishing season using 10 tonnes of research quota. It was agreed that AFMA would consult with Bob Lister on who would undertake the research survey. Consistent with the Harvest Strategy, ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC will look at the data from the surveys to determine if the biomass estimate of 1500 tonnes has been reached in a scallop bed and which bed should be closed. It was agreed industry would use the 150 tonnes nominal quota to search for beds if the 1500 tonnes biomass is not found during the research survey. ScallopMAC noted the biomass survey could be completed in April and the season open on 1 May if a surveyed scallop bed contains a biomass of 1500 tonnes.

Industry agreed to and understood that the cost of conducting biomass estimate surveys prior to the commencement of the season (under 10 tonnes of research quota used in areas that AFMA deems appropriate) would be higher than the cost of the default opening of the 150 tonnes TAC. AFMA stated the cost of moving to Tier 1 in the Harvest Strategy (conducting biomass estimate surveys) is approximately \$250 000, but needed to verify this and inform industry members.

Action 2. AFMA to update BSCZSF concession conditions and management arrangements to ensure concession holders have at least 1 kg quota before they go fishing.

Action 3. Steve Shanks to provide the ScallopMAC the cost of undertaking a biomass estimate survey.

Action 4. AFMA to propose to the AFMA Commission that a biomass estimate survey is conducted at known beds prior to the start of the season using 10 tonnes of research quota. ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC will use this information to decide which bed should be closed to fishing (if it has a biomass estimate of 1500 tonnes) and if the TAC will be increased to Tier 1 for the start of the 2015 season.

6. Paralytic Shellfish Toxin (PST) testing protocols

Following the PST outbreaks in the BSCZSF in 2013, AFMA is consulting with Tasmania and Victoria to verify the procedures for collecting BSCZSF samples and testing for PST. AFMA plans to streamline procedures between jurisdictions to ensure appropriate protection is in place. Currently the Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania organises testing of scallops landed in Tasmania, and members pay for the testing. There could be an inequality issue and possibly an information gap in the future if fishing occurs in different locations. AFMA is awaiting response from PrimeSafe Victoria following a request for information on



their monitoring system and the possibility of developing standard protocols between jurisdictions. ScallopMAC noted that PrimeSafe currently levy Victorian fishers and that AQIS accredit PrimeSafe and require processors to test once per year. ScallopMAC noted that it would be more equitable if funding came from the AFMA levy base.

Action 5. AFMA to advise ScallopMAC of PrimeSafe's response to AFMA's request for information about PST testing in Victoria.

7. Sharepoint – MAC external access

ScallopMAC noted AFMA's intention to provide access to an online system to access ScallopMAC resources.

8. MAC advice from AFMA

ScallopMAC agreed that meeting minutes are sufficient and there is no need to have a Chair's Summary of each meeting.

9. Harvest Strategy

The key points of the ScallopRAG meeting were outlined under agenda item 5 and ScallopMAC also discussed the Harvest Strategy at agenda item 5. Further discussion on the 2015 Harvest Strategy is outlined below.

ScallopRAG will continue to review the Harvest Strategy out of session and will send their comments to ScallopMAC and AFMA commission. ScallopRAG is unable to change the Harvest Strategy mid-season and recommended the current Harvest Strategy is used for the 2015 season.

ScallopRAG noted that the term 'commercially viable scallops' is confusing. ScallopRAG agreed to change the term to 'biologically viable' or 'viable recruitment bed'. ScallopRAG also discussed developing a clear definition of a 'scallop bed'. ScallopRAG discussed criteria for scallop bed density. However, a number could not be defined and ScallopRAG have suggested that relative density be considered. ScallopMAC could not guarantee that several scallop beds would be found and considered for closure. ScallopRAG and ScallopMAC both discussed using research quota as an incentive to search for beds.

ScallopMAC noted that industry would like to do the biomass survey for 1500 tonnes straight away using research quota. This addresses the RAG's concern that 150 tonnes will only be used at King Island, as well as the MAC's concern that 150 tonnes is not enough to supply on a continuous basis.

ScallopMAC noted that PST testing is not relevant for the Harvest Strategy, however, in the future it could be used as a 'meta rule' to close scallop beds.

ScallopMAC and industry observers would like to know how the scallop biomass is determined for the BSCZSF. ScallopMAC agreed it would be beneficial for industry to understand this and Jayson Semmens (IMAS) could present this information to the MAC in layman's terms.

ScallopMAC agreed that the collection of baseline economic data for the BSCZSF would be useful. Stuart Richey sent a lot of economic information to Sevaly Sen as part of their review: *Options for improving management of the commercial scallop resource in southeast*



Australia (2011). ScallopMAC agreed that the Harvest Strategy should include information on economics of the fishery. ScallopMAC agreed that economic information could be collated annually out of session via email.

Action 6. AFMA to ask IMAS to explain to ScallopMAC how the scallop biomass is calculated for the BSCZSF.

Action 7. Stuart Richey to circulate economic indicators that could be measured annually by ScallopMAC.

12. Fishing industry economic research survey

Tim Emery, a research fellow at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, surveyed industry members about individual transferable quotas. Tim Emery will provide the results of the surveys to ScallopMAC once they are complete (May 2015).

Action 8. AFMA to send Tim Emery's economic research survey to Stuart Richey and Allan Barnett.

13. Other business

ScallopMAC suggested it would be useful to combine future ScallopMAC and ScallopRAG meetings, or for the ScallopRAG scientists to present their suggestions to ScallopMAC.

The meeting closed at 2:30pm.

Signed (Chairperson):



Date: 14 April 2015

List of Attachments

- 1) ScallopMAC 24 Annotated Agenda
- 2) ScallopMAC 24 Declared conflicts of Interest



Attachment 1

Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery Management Advisory Committee (Scallop MAC)

Meeting 24

Agenda

Roberts Boardroom, the Old Woolstore Apartment Hotel, Hobart

Tuesday 3 March 2015

8.30am – 4.00pm (EST)

Approximate time	Agenda item
8.30am	1. Preliminaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Welcome and apologies 1.2. Declaration of interests 1.3. Adoption of agenda
8.50am	2. Meeting Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Confirmation of record for previous meeting 2.2. Actions arising from previous meetings 2.3. Correspondence
9.10am	3. Fishery update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. AFMA management 3.2. Tasmanian management 3.3. Victorian management 3.4. Industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Industry to provide an update on the fishery, including an economic update.</i>
9.50am	4. Completing CDRs at the wharf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>AFMA to provide compliance advice on completing CDRs at the wharf instead of at the processing factory.</i>
10.30am	Morning tea
10.45am	5. Increasing the TAC mid-season <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Scallop MAC to discuss possible management arrangements to reduce the risk of concession holders catching in excess of their quota on the assumption that the TAC will increase mid-season.</i>
11.30am	6. Paralytic Shellfish Toxin testing protocols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Scallop MAC to agree on ongoing protocols for testing for Paralytic</i>



Approximate time	Agenda item
	<i>Shellfish Toxin in the BSCZSF. AFMA to update MAC on recommendation from the July 2014 meeting for AFMA to write to PrimeSafe Victoria to clarify who has responsibility for Paralytic Shellfish Toxin testing of scallops that are caught in Bass Strait and landed in Victoria.</i>
12.00pm	7. Sharepoint – MAC external access
12.30pm	Lunch
1.00pm	8. Advice from Scallop RAG on amendments to the Harvest Strategy <i>Scallop RAG Chair to present the outcomes of the ScallopRAG meeting. AFMA to present proposal, including consultation undertaken and reasoning for positions included. Scallop MAC to consider the outcomes of the ScallopRAG including the application of scallop density and/or meat weight information to harvest strategy.</i>
2.00pm	9. Development of a revised harvest strategy <i>Scallop MAC to potentially revise Harvest Strategy and develop advice to the AFMA Commission on changes to management arrangements.</i>
2:45pm	Afternoon tea
3:00pm	10. Revised harvest strategy information to AFMA Commission for consideration <i>Potential adoption of a revised harvest strategy for the 2015 season.</i>
3.30pm	11. Fishing industry economic research survey (Tim Emery IMAS) 12. Other business
4.00pm	Close



Attachment 2

ScallopMAC Declared Conflicts of Interest

Participant	Membership	Interest declared
John Pollock	Chair	No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Bill Talbot	Research Member	ScallopRAG Chair. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Steve Shanks	AFMA Member	AFMA Manager for the BSCZSF. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Claire Taylor	Executive Officer	Management officer. No pecuniary interest in the fishery.
Steve Mantzaris	Industry Member (Victoria)	Operates a scallop processing plant.
Allan Barnett	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions, a Commonwealth fish receiver permit and operates a scallop processing plant.
Stuart Richey	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
John Hammond	Industry Member (Tasmania)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Jon Bryan	Conservation Member	Tasmanian Conservation Trust, all Tasmanian Fishery Advisory Committees, Tasmanian Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee and TARFish (peak Tasmanian recreational fishing body), AFMA SPF RAG and South MAC. No pecuniary interests in this fishery.
James Parkinson	Invited Participant (Tasmanian government)	Fisheries Management Officer in Tasmania. No pecuniary interests in the fishery.
Kate Simpson	Invited Participant (Victorian government)	Manager of the scallop fishery in Victoria. No pecuniary interests in the fishery.
Bob Lister	Observer	Chief Executive Officer, Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania
John Cull	Observer (industry)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Peter Mellios	Observer (processor)	Operates a scallop processing plant.
Andy Watts	Observer (industry)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.
Debbie Wisby	Observer (industry)	Holds Commonwealth and State concessions.

