



**Australian Government**

**Australian Fisheries Management Authority**

 **Shark Resource Assessment  
Group (SharkRAG)**

 **Out of session teleconference**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Date: 28 January 2016  
2:30-3:30pm AEDT**

### Attendance

Name	Membership
Dr Brendan Kelaher	Chair
Mr Ryan Keightley	AFMA member
Mr Clayton McCloud	Observer (AFMA)
Ms Claire Taylor	A/g Executive Officer
Mr Jason Pettit	Industry member
Mr David Stone	Industry member
Mr Kyri Toumazos	Industry member
Dr Robin Thomson	Scientific member
Dr Jeremy Prince	Scientific member
Ms Anissa Lawrence	Environment member
Mr Nic Marton	Invited participant – scientific (ABARES)
Dr Miriana Sporcic	Invited participant – scientific (CSIRO)

### Apologies

Name	Membership
Dr Malcolm Haddon	Invited participant – scientific (CSIRO)
Professor Colin Simpfendorfer	Scientific member

### Minutes

Item No.	Discussion	Action Items / Rec's
<b>1. Preliminaries</b>		
1.1. Welcome & apologies	Dr Brendan Kelaher (Chair) welcomed members and invited participants and opened the meeting at 2:47 pm. The Chair noted an apology from Dr Malcom Haddon. The Chair noted that until Dr Prince and/or Professor Simpfendorfer joined the teleconference the RAG would not be a quorum.	
1.2 Agenda	The Chair introduced the draft agenda noting the 6000 m net review was the only item for advice.	

SharkRAG out of session teleconference January 2016 Meeting Minutes

Item No.	Discussion	Action Items / Rec's
	The RAG adopted the agenda as final.	
1.3 Declaration of interests	<p>The RAG followed the declaration of interest procedures as outlined in <a href="#">AFMA's Fisheries Administration Paper 12</a>, noting the standing list of declared conflicts of interests at <b>Attachment 1</b>.</p> <p>Mr Stone, Mr Toumazos and Mr Pettit declared potential interests in agenda item 2 as active members in the fishery or as an industry representative. These members separately left the teleconference while the RAG deliberated on their participation. The RAG agreed that the industry members have valuable experience and should participate in discussions for agenda item 2 and noted their declared interests.</p>	
<b>2. 6000 m net review</b>		
2.1 Proposal to remove net length restrictions	<p>Mr Keightley presented the agenda item noting that at its November 2015 meeting, the RAG recommended that Drs Haddon and Sporcic (CSIRO) reanalyse the 6000 m net trial data and produce a report for RAG consideration out of session. The draft report was provided to the RAG and AFMA is seeking RAG advice on the removal of net length restrictions in the GHAT. Mr Keightley stated that the RAG is asked to consider the results of the CSIRO report and provide scientific advice on sustainability risks of using 6000 m nets, and/or removing net length restrictions altogether.</p> <p>Dr Sporcic introduced the report, stating that there were some important limitations with the data, and it was not sufficient to conclusively say that there is, or is not, a sustainability risk in using longer nets (&gt;4200 m). The RAG noted that the results of this report are inconclusive.</p> <p>Mr Stone noted that his association is not supportive of any net length increase above 4200 m. He suggested that a very low number of boats are using 6000 m and considers there is a higher sustainability risk with longer nets, particularly for increased greening of marketable species and increased bycatch of school shark. He noted that in the past the gummy shark total allowable catch was reduced significantly due to school shark, and industry does not want this to happen again. He noted that he has evidence that greening can increase from 10 to 30 per cent when using 6000 m nets, which reduces the market price making less efficient compared to 4200 m.</p> <p>Mr Toumazos stated that since the fishery is an output controlled fishery there is no need for</p>	

SharkRAG out of session teleconference January 2016 Meeting Minutes

Item No.	Discussion	Action Items / Rec's
	<p>input controls like net length restrictions. He noted that the Western Australian gillnet fishery has no net length restrictions and they do not have any sustainability issues. In the GHAT there is individual accountability for threatened, endangered and protected species (TEPs), and operators must cover their catch under quota. He suggested that operators should be able to use what works best and most efficiently for them. Mr Toumazos provided an example of a vessel that has used 6000 m nets the past three years. He stated that while the total catch is higher, the catch per unit effort is lower. He also noted that TEP interactions are low and with electronic monitoring it is possible for discards to be accounted for if required. It is at the operator's discretion of where and when to use longer nets. He has not seen evidence to support the negative reputation of longer nets. Mr Toumazos noted that there may not be enough data to make a scientific decision, but the MAC will look at management and efficiency gains.</p> <p>Ms Lawrence noted that the RAGs role is to provide scientific advice, not management advice. She suggested the RAG should consider any sustainability impacts on TEPs, school shark and discards (including of quota species). She suggested that if the RAG identifies any risks then the RAG should consider what controls could be put in place. Mr Keightley agreed and asked the RAG to consider if any recommendations could be made in terms of whether net length restrictions were removed.</p> <p><i>Dr Prince joined the teleconference and the Chair noted there was now a quorum of members. Dr Prince indicated he had no conflicts of interest for the agenda and the Chair provided a brief summary of what had been discussed.</i></p> <p>The Chair suggested that the RAG would not be able to make any robust scientific decision or recommendation to the MAC based on the current data. The Chair asked Dr Sporcic if it would be possible to continue the trial to collect sufficient data, and if so what timeframe would it be possible to collect enough data to make robust statistical conclusions. Ms Sporcic noted she was unable to provide a definitive answer and would have to review and/or refine the trial methodology. She noted that approximately 16 out of 39 vessels have used both length classes of nets (i.e. &lt;4200 m and &gt;4200 m) with low sampling intensity which has been a limiting factor in sufficient data for the trial. Also, there were approximately only seven out of 39 vessels that used 6000 m nets with low sampling intensity during the trial.</p> <p>The RAG discussed continuing the trial with a refined methodology and to reassess the data in</p>	

SharkRAG out of session teleconference January 2016 Meeting Minutes

Item No.	Discussion	Action Items / Rec's
	<p>one or two years. Electronic monitoring may provide a higher rate of observed shots, resulting in more data.</p> <p>Ms Lawrence suggested the RAG provide one of the following recommendations to the MAC:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue with a trial with a refined design until enough data on 6000 m nets has been collected, or,</li> <li>2. Recommend to the MAC to not remove net length restrictions entirely on the basis of inconclusive results from the trial.</li> </ol> <p>The RAG agreed it could not make an evidence based decision about sustainability risks of net lengths longer than 6000 m because there is no data that could be analysed. Ms Lawrence and Mr Stone stated that the net length should not be increased above 6000 m.</p> <p>The RAG supported continuing net lengths at 6000 m with the intent of collecting and reviewing data in future. They agreed that the trial should be continued in consultation with CSIRO to refine the trial and determine a timeframe for when sufficient data could be available.</p>	<p><b>Action 1</b> – CSIRO to provide quantitative advice on how the 6000 m net trial should continue to get more conclusive results, and a possible timeframe for when this data could be available.</p>
<b>3. Other business and close of meeting</b>	<p>Mr Keightley thanked everyone for their contribution and the Chair closed the meeting at 3:45pm. Shortly after the meeting Dr Prince sent his views to the RAG via email (<b>Attachment 2</b>). Dr Prince had been in attendance for the remainder of the meeting, however his phone connection did not allow him to contribute to discussions.</p>	

**Signed (Chairperson):**

**Date:**

**List of Attachments**

- 1) Standing list of declared conflicts of interest

- 2) Correspondence post RAG meeting – Dr Prince’s views

**Attachment 1 - Standing list of declared conflicts of interest - as of 28 January 2016**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Interest declared</b>
Brendan Kelaher	SESSFRAG member. No other interests declared.
Robin Thomson	Undertakes CSIRO stock assessments. No pecuniary interests. Declared interest in Close Kin Mark Recapture project (research investigator).
Jeremy Prince	No interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise.
Colin Sempfendorfer	Has potential pecuniary interest in research noting research interests are unlikely in particular to this fishery. Conducts assessments of Australian Sharks and Rays with FRDC funding.
Anissa Lawrence	Managing Director TierraMar Consulting. Consultant for Sustainable Shark Industry Alliance (SSIA), consultant for a number of NGOs in the fisheries context. Conservation member on SEMAC. Environment member for SA Rock Lobster MAC. No other declared interests pecuniary or otherwise.
David Stone	Executive Officer for Sustainable Shark Fishing Industry Inc. Declared interests in representing hook and gillnet industry member interests and in pursuing research for dolphin acoustic mitigation technology, and has a proposal to FRDC seeking funding. SESSFRAG observer. Declared interest in RBCs.
Jason Pettit	South Australian shark hook operator, SESSF quota holder. Declared interest in shark hook interests and RBC recommendations.
Kyri Toumazos	South Australia/Bass Strait shark fisher, boats fishing with hooks and gillnets. SESSF quota holder. Southern Rock Lobster Board CEO. Declared interests in RBCs.
Ryan Keightley	AFMA management officer and SharkRAG EO, no interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise.

**RAG Invited participants and observers declarations of interest**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Interest declared</b>
Miriana Sporcic	No interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise.
Nicolas Marton	No interests declared, pecuniary or otherwise.
Malcolm Haddon	Potential scientific research interest. Sub-Antarctic RAG member, NPF RAG member. Interested in developing applications in research proposal paper.
Clayton McCloud	AFMA management officer, no interests declared.
Claire Taylor	AFMA management officer, no interests declared.

## Attachment 2 – Dr Prince’s views

---

**From:** KEIGHTLEY, Ryan  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:58 PM  
**To:** Anissa Lawrence; Brendan Kelaher; Colin Simpefendorfer; David Stone; Jason Pettit; Jeremy Prince; Kyri Toumazos; Robin Thomson  
**Cc:** Malcom Haddon; Miriana Sporcic; Nic Marton; George Day; Claire Taylor; Clayton McCloud; Marcus Finn  
**Subject:** RE: FW: SharkRAG teleconference papers - 6000m net [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi all

Thanks for today’s discussion. It turns out Jeremy was on the line the whole time and couldn’t get his line through. This means we had a quorum, and Jeremy has outlined his comments below for addition to the meeting record.

Cheers  
Ryan

UNCLASSIFIED

---

**From:** Jeremy Prince  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:58 PM  
**To:** KEIGHTLEY, Ryan  
**Cc:** Brendan Kelaher  
**Subject:** RE: FW: SharkRAG teleconference papers - 6000m net [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Ryan & Brendan

There obviously wasn't enough bandwidth for me to be understood, or even get back into the discussion in today's meeting, but I was on the line listening right through until the end of the meeting.

Here are my two cents worth.

1. There is not enough data to be considered proof one way or another, but I think we unlikely to get this data by continuing with a level of research that we can afford.
  2. I suggest ithe best way to know would be to monitor change closely.
  3. There are strong views against which I am cognisant of and have in the past aligned myself with. But I think they may have their base in experience with the fishery during a very different past, when the race for fish was extreme and crazy behaviour was common. Now there are many incentives for better behaviour, and much better monitoring systems in place to see what happens. I think there are now enough incentives and controls in place to guard against the old bad behaviour.
  4. Working from first scientific principals rather than proof by date, with all the other controls now in place there should be minimal or no impact on target stocks, by catch or TEPs, but any accidents that do happen will be bigger.
  5. Because accidents would be bigger to my mind if we relax this measure it will be even more important to keep nets out of deepwater where big school shark accidents could happen.
  6. Contrary to the above, let me note that the idea of not letting the longer nets into SA strikes me as contradictory. If they are a problem there they should be a problem anyway. So some level of contradictory policy in that one. although probably not dissimilar to my own point 5.
- Jeremy