Commercial Fisheries
Voluntary Catch & Effort Reduction Program

Prof Mehdi Doroudi, Roger Edwards, Sean Sloan, Andrew Burnell
July 2014
Management plans and zoning for South Australian marine parks were approved in November 2012.

Fishing restrictions in sanctuary zones were deferred and will take effect October 2014. The delay provides for:

- education and preparation of fishers; and
- proactive management of potential displacement of commercial fisheries.

To protect the rights of individual commercial fishers and minimise impacts on fisheries management the South Australian Government successfully conducted a voluntary catch & effort reduction program during 2013.
Historical Context – Industry (Roger Edwards)


Subsequent zoning displaced rock lobster fishing.

No compensation or adjustment for displaced commercial fishing.

Industry mobilised to ensure that displacement related to future marine parks would be bought out by Government.
A second industry peak body, the Seafood Council formed to lead the process.

Well-funded, politically connected and credible with two objectives:
1. Marine Park legislation with compensation provisions; and
2. Fisheries legislation with access security provisions.

Alliances with recreational and conservation sectors.

Trade-offs and compromise.

Twelve years later *Marine Parks Act* was proclaimed with explicit compensation provisions for fishers.
Division 5—Affected statutory authorisations

21—Affected statutory authorisations

(1) If the rights conferred by a statutory authorisation under another Act are affected by the creation of a zone or the imposition of a temporary prohibition or restriction of activities within a marine park, the Minister must pay fair and reasonable compensation to the holder of the statutory authorisation or, if the Minister considers it appropriate to do so, compulsorily acquire, and pay fair and reasonable compensation for, the statutory authorisation, or any interest (or part of any interest) under a statutory authorisation.
Approach to Displaced Catch/Effort

Government and industry agreed on a four step process:

1. Avoid displacement by pragmatic zoning;

2. Redistribute effort only where possible, without impacting ecological or economic sustainability of the fishery;

3. A market-based buyout of sufficient effort to avoid negative impacts on the fishery;

4. Compulsory acquisition only as a last resort.
Pragmatic Zoning

SA Government committed to ensuring that zoning would have less than a 5% impact on the GVP of commercial fishing statewide. Final result was less than 2% estimated impact.


Sanctuary Zones ~6% of State waters
Displacement Estimation

South Australian Research and Development Institute developed methodology to estimate displaced fishing based on the spatial footprint of fisheries and catch & effort data reported by fishers.
Redistribution

Independent Expert Panel considered redistribution potential.

As there was recognised uncertainty in the implications of redistribution PIRSA adopted a precautionary policy position.

With a few exceptions all estimated displaced catch and effort was to be removed not redistributed.

Limited redistribution was considered acceptable in the sardine, prawn and blue crab fisheries due to the distribution, mobility and life history of these species.
Voluntary Catch/Effort Reduction

Process development informed by independent expertise in:

- Fisheries management;
- Fisheries adjustment processes;
- Commercial fisheries; and
- Probity

Industry consultation on program plan was conducted at combined sectors, individual sector and individual fisher levels.

All fishers in relevant sectors were invited to offer authorities for surrender at a self-determined price.

Similar independent expertise also included in the Technical Advisory Group formed to consider offers.
Voluntary Catch/Effort Reduction

Offers to surrender commercial fishing authorities were assessed by the Technical Advisory Group against the following key considerations:

• Whether the offer would reduce catch and effort from the fishery and/or sanctuary zones;

• Whether the offer reflected an effective use of public money with appropriate monetary consideration relevant to recent historic transactions and open market prices; and

• Minimising impacts on future fisheries management arrangements – for non-quota fisheries no splitting of licence packages/entitlements was considered.
Voluntary Catch/Effort Reduction

Protocols to maintain confidentiality and remove identifiers prior to consideration by the TAG.

Catch/effort data for individual offers determined by SARDI using agreed methodology and time period.

Independent probity advisor throughout program development and implementation.

Steering Committee involvement and observation of TAG by other relevant Departments, Treasury and Environment.
Process Outcomes

118 offers received (by 30 August 2013).

21 licences/authorities accepted and surrendered.

All targeted catch/effort removed from 5 of 6 sectors in the first round by 31 December 2013 (Western Zone Abalone, Northern and Southern Zone Rock Lobster, Marine Scalefish and Charter).

3 requests for review were received, considered and determination was unchanged in each case.
Success factors

• Early agreement with industry regarding approach;
• Robust and transparent displacement estimation methodology that includes industry supplied footprint information where available;
• Funding contingency confirmed prior to commencement;
• Appropriate consultation with industry at multiple levels;
• Voluntary process with applicant determined prices;
• Willing industry participation (across most sectors);
• Appropriate independent expertise used during development and implementation;
• Independent Probity Advisor engaged throughout;
Outstanding Issues

Impact on licence fees under a cost recovery arrangement.

Discussions are ongoing with the Central Zone Abalone Fishery.
Outcomes – Industry (Roger Edwards)

Displaced catch and effort removed through willing seller and buyer transactions.
- Licence holders set their own exit price
- Licence market values maintained

Catch and Effort pressure in the balance of fisheries is unaffected.

Government has borne the cost of reallocation from commercial fishing to conservation.