



Victoria Government Gazette

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SPECIAL

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT FISHERIES (COMMERCIAL ABALONE) REGULATIONS 2003

Notice is given that, in accordance with Section 11 of the **Subordinate Legislation Act 1994**, a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) has been prepared in relation to the Fisheries (Commercial Abalone) Regulations 2003.

The primary objective of the Proposed Regulations is to enable the introduction of a Beach Weighing Catch Registration System (BWCRS) for the commercial abalone industry. This will provide for the continued sustainable use, protection and management of Victoria's abalone resource through improved precision in the existing Abalone Quota Management System (AQMS), provide divers with their own recorded weight of the catch and assist enforcement.

Proposed regulatory changes include:

- amending the conditions for Abalone Fishery Access Licences to implement the beach weighing catch registration system as outlined in the Victorian Abalone Fishery Management Plan 2002; and
- amending the conditions for Fish Receivers' (Abalone) Licences; and
- revoking the authorising power to issue Abalone Storer's Licences (ASL's); and
- revoking the authorising power to issue Abalone Weighing Stations (AWS's); and
- making certain administrative amendments to the regulations.

The regulations are to be made under the **Fisheries Act 1995**. The RIS provides some possible alternatives to the Proposed Regulations. These include the use of electronic logbook catch reporting via a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), paper based system for reporting of landed catch, individual tagging of fish and an industry approved code of practice. Whilst some of the alternatives may achieve the objective of these Regulations, it would be at a higher cost, with greater restrictions and the net benefits would be significantly lower. Other alternatives could be introduced for less cost than the Proposed Regulations but with a much higher risk that the objectives of regulations would not be achieved.

The overall economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of the Proposed Regulations are described in Part 6 of the RIS. In short, the overall net benefit to the Victorian community from a sustainable abalone fishery greatly outweighs the costs of introducing an effective BWCRS. These measures are therefore required to provide for the long-term ecologically sustainable management of the Victorian commercial abalone fishery.

Copies of the RIS and the proposed Regulations may be obtained from the Customer Information Centre by telephoning 13 61 86 (between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm Monday to Friday), the Department's Information Centre (Ground Floor, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm Monday to Friday) or the Internet at www.nre.vic.gov.au/fishing

Public comments are invited on the RIS and accompanying regulations.

All comments must be in writing and addressed to: Dallas D'Silva, Senior Fisheries Project Officer (Abalone), Fisheries Victoria, Department of Primary Industries, PO Box 500, 6th Floor, 232 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne 3002 or dallas.d'silva@nre.vic.gov.au by no later than 5.00 pm, Tuesday 11 March 2003.

Dated 10 February 2003

BOB CAMERON MP
Minister for Agriculture

Gazette Services

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