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TORRES STRAIT
PZJA
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Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee (TSPMAC)

**MINUTES
TSPMAC NO. 8
16-17 JUNE 2009**

**NORTHERN FISHERIES CENTRE
CAIRNS**

CHAIR: Mr. Jim Gillespie

AGENDA

**TORRES STRAIT PRAWN
MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING No. 8
16-17 June, 2009: Commencing at 9:00 am
Venue: Northern Fisheries Centre
Address: 38-40 Tingira Street, Portsmith, Cairns, QLD**

Preliminaries – Chairs opening remarks/Adoption of Agenda/Disclosure of Interests/Apologies

1 Meeting Administration

- 1.1 Ratification of TSPMAC No. 7 meeting record (AFMA)
- 1.2 Ratification of OOS TSPMAC meeting and OOS decisions (AFMA)
- 1.3 Actions and/or business arising from previous TSPMAC meetings (AFMA)
- 1.4 PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2008) (AFMA)

2 Reports

- 2.1 History of recent management decisions and future developments for the fishery (AFMA)
- 2.2 Industry update – 2008 season and 2009 to date (Industry)
- 2.3 2008 Observer program report (AFMA)
- 2.4 Observer program – coverage and objectives (AFMA)
- 2.5 Compliance report - Season update on activities, end 2008 and 2009 to date, future compliance options (QB&FP)
- 2.6 Environment report (AFMA)

3 Research

- 3.1 Torres Strait Prawn Research Program - Final report (QPIF research)
- 3.2 Future funding for stock assessments (QPIF)
- 3.3 Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee – Update (QPIF)

4 Management

- 4.1 TSPF Management Plan Objectives (AFMA)
- 4.2 FMI's– Update (DAFF)
- 4.3 Long-term Harvest Strategy - Update (AFMA/ QPIF/BRS)
- 4.4 External leasing (QPIF/ AFMA)
- 4.5 Ghost nets and marine debris – Industry code of conduct (AFMA)
- 4.6 Survey of Turtle Excluder Devices, Bycatch Reduction Devices and Try-Nets (AFMA)
- 4.7 Australian Maritime College BRD trials (AMC)
- 4.8 TSPMAC decision making protocols paper (AFMA)

5 Finance

- 5.1 Budget update (AFMA)
- 5.2 Independent Chair costing (AFMA)

6 Other business

- 6.1 TSPMAC Self Assessment Process (AFMA)
- 6.2 TSPMAC industry member observer status on the TSSAC (AFMA)
- 6.3 Dates for next meeting

TSPMAC No. 8 DECISION RECORD

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

Ratification of TSPMAC No. 7 meeting record

8.1.1.1 The TSPMAC **AGREED** to adopt the minutes from the December 11, 2008 TSPMAC meeting (TSPMAC No. 7).

Ratification of OOS TSPMAC meeting and OOS decisions

8.1.2.1 The TSPMAC **AGREED** to adopt the minutes of the out of session teleconference TSPMAC held on 9 February 2009 (Attachment 1.2A); and

8.1.2.2 The TSPMAC **CONFIRMED** the out-of-session decisions from the TSPMAC at the 9 February 2009 OOS meeting.

Actions and/or business arising from previous TSPMAC meetings

8.1.3.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the information updates provided regarding the action items from previous TSPMAC meetings.

PZJA FMP No. 1

8.1.4.1 The TSPMAC **AGREED** to abide by all policies for the operation and administration of Management Advisory Committees as described in PZJA FMP No.1 (May 2008).

REPORTS

History of recent management decisions and future developments for the fishery (AFMA)

8.2.1.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the presentation on the recent history of management decisions and future developments for the TSPF.

Industry update – 2008 season and 2009 to date

8.2.2.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the Industry report provided verbally in respect of the 2008 Torres Strait Prawn Fishery season and 2009 season to date.

2008 Observer program report

8.2.3.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the activity in the observer program in the fishery for the 2008 season and the update of observer activity in 2009.

observer program – coverage and objectives

8.2.4.1 The TSPMAC **AGREED**:

- a) on the need to increase the number of Torres Strait Prawn Vessels participating in the TSPF Observer program and that the TSPMAC industry members have agreed to encourage TSPF license holders to take observers.
- b) that AFMA determine the process and costs associated with determining a robust level of observer coverage for the fishery.
- c) that AFMA explore the possibility of having islander observers participate in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery observer program.
- d) that AFMA should determine whether budgeted observer savings (i.e. not using all budgeted days) can be rolled into the following years budget.

8.2.4.2 The TSPMAC **DISCUSSED** the reviewed set of objectives for the TSPF observer program and agreed that further objectives should be developed by AFMA in consultation with the TSRA, CFGs and TSPMAC Industry members.

Compliance report

8.2.5.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the Domestic Compliance Report, Period August 08 to April 2009.

8.2.5.2 The TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that QPIF undertake a review of the level of effort and efficiency of the compliance program for presentation to the PZJA Standing Committee.

8.2.5.3 The TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that a review of the Fisheries Infringement Notice system and benefits it will offer to the fishery should be conducted and an options paper provided to the PZJA Standing Committee.

8.2.5.4 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the concerns of the traditional sector about TSPF vessels operating within close proximity to the reef and agreed that the CFG's should develop a paper regarding this for presentation at TSPMAC 9.

Environment report

8.2.6.1 That TSPMAC **NOTED**

- a) the environment update provided at Attachment 2.6A;
- b) the recommendations of the strategic assessment report;
- c) the current status of the Ecological Risk Assessment Process for the TSPF, including the intention to review the need to conduct a SAFE assessment for the fishery and estimated costs associated with this;
- d) The protected species interactions for the 2008 season and that it is not an offence to interact with a protected species in the TSPF however is an offence not to report these interactions;
- e) Information about Marine Bioregional Planning (MBP) the regions adjacent to the TSPF noting the MBPs are not applicable to Torres Strait Fisheries.

RESEARCH

Torres Strait Prawn Research Program - Final report

8.3.1.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED**;

- a) the final report for DAFF consultancy of QPIF titled the Torres Strait Spatial Management Research Project 2007-09;
- b) the final catch and effort estimates for the 2008 fishing season; and
- c) the preliminary catch and effort information for the 2009 season.

Future funding for stock assessments

8.3.2.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED**:

- (a) Resources required for research/scientific advice in the Torres Strait Prawn Fisheries (TSPF) are provided by Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPIF) with funding coming from a range of sources;
- (b) The current funding agreement between the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and QPIF which provides funding for the current research into the TSPF is due to end on 12 June 2009; and
- (c) The PZJA are currently in the process of identifying an appropriate source of funding for research/scientific advice in the TSPF post 12 June 2009.

Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee

8.3.3.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** that:

- (a) The former Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee (TSSAC) ceased in August 2006 with the closure of the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Torres Strait;
- (b) Following the cessation of the CRC, the TSSAC and Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) agencies reviewed the research prioritisation and funding process occurring within the Torres Strait Protected Zone (TSPZ);
- (c) At the PZJA 21 meeting the following items were agreed upon:
 - i. the composition of the TSSAC including the chair (see attachment 3.1A)
 - ii. changes to the terms of reference (TOR) to reflect the TSSAC's return to being solely a PZJA advisory body (see attachment 3.1B).
 - iii. the TSSAC be requested to consider its role on providing advice on a range of issues for the TSPF, including stock assessment advice

MANAGEMENT

TSPF Management Plan Objectives

8.4.1.1 The TSPMAC **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the objectives set out in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery Management Plan 2009 and the timeline for achievement.

FMI's- Update

8.4.2.1 That the TSPMAC **NOTED** the progress on implementing five Fisheries Management Instruments (FMIs) and the time frame for getting them registered.

Long-term Harvest Strategy

8.4.3.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the progress of the development of a harvest strategy (HS) for the TSPF and the timeline to come out of the TSPF HS working group meeting.

8.4.3.2 The TSPMAC **RECOMMENDED** that a letter be distributed to TSPF industry members to inform them of the development of the HS and processes for providing comment during its development.

External leasing

8.4.4.1 That the TSPMAC **NOTED** that:

- a) Industry members have repeatedly stated that the level of economic viability in the TSPF is marginal, this statement has been reflected in recent publications from the Bureau of Resource Economics and Bureau of Rural Science (BRS);
- b) That fisheries management options exist in the TSPF to transfer effort units (days) on a permanent or non permanent basis;
- c) That external legal arrangement options exist for licenced operators in the TSPF to transfer effort units (days) to vessels currently not licenced in the TSPF;
- d) While some past industry members of TSPMAC have requested that external leasing be prevented in the TSPF, this has not been the unanimous view of industry;
- e) Whilst the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) do not actively promote the use of external leasing arrangements PZJA agencies consider that external

leasing is a beneficial mechanism for providing greater economic benefit to industry;

- f) Industry members perceive that the current private external leasing arrangements are burdensome, prohibitively difficult and confusing; and
- g) PZJA agencies would be willing to consider facilitating external leasing if this was broadly supported by industry and the TSPMAC; providing that any arrangements do not result in an unacceptable transfer of business risk from licence holders to the PZJA.

8.4.4.2 The TSPMAC **DISCUSSED** the current fisheries management arrangements and external arrangements currently being used by industry members to transfer effort and licenses in the TSPF.

8.4.4.3 The TSPMAC **AGREED** that a letter be developed for distribution to industry which will include:

- a) information on the current external leasing arrangements and their risks;
- b) how formal leasing arrangements would be facilitated by PZJA agencies;
- c) a questionnaire asking if license holders are for or against external leasing and stating that a lack of response will be considered a vote for external leasing.

Ghost nets and marine debris

8.4.5.1 The TSPMAC **DISCUSSED** a method for developing an industry code of conduct for the responsible disposal of fisheries associated marine debris, including gear loss and marine waste within the fishery aligning it where possible with the recommendations of the Threat Abatement Plan.

8.4.5.2 The TSPMAC **AGREED** that AFMA should work with TSPMAC industry members to develop the industry code of conduct OOS.

8.4.5.3 The TSPMAC **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED**:

- a) the PZJA agencies intention to conduct an “in house” preliminary marine debris assessment of trawl rubbish in the area around Yorke and Coconut Islands.
- b) the need to engage CFG stakeholders when undertaking the surveys to ensure they are effective and other impacted sites are identified.

8.4.5.4 The TSPMAC **AGREED** that PZJA agencies should liaise with TSRA regarding developing a funding proposal for scoping the level of marine debris in the area around Yorke and Coconut Islands and costs of removal. The proposal will include a two tiered study:

- scoping the extent of trawl rubbish; and
- removing the trawl rubbish.

Survey of Turtle Excluder Devices, Bycatch Reduction Devices and Try-Nets

8.4.6.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the final BRD survey (attachment 4.6A) pending it being user friendly following completion by a subset of TSPF industry members.

8.4.6.2 The TSPMAC **NOTED** PZJA agencies intentions to postpone any technical review of the BRDs used on prawn vessels in the TSPF considering the other research priorities in the fishery at present.

Australian Maritime College BRD trials

8.4.7.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the preliminary results provide by the Australian Maritime College regarding the use of light as a bycatch reduction device in prawn trawl fisheries.

TSPMAC decision making protocols paper

8.4.8.1 That the TSPMAC **NOTED**:

- a) that at TSPMAC 7 industry members raised concerns with senior PZJA agencies officials over the way that decisions are progressed to the PZJA.
- b) that at TSPMAC 7 agreement could not be reached for the development of the TSPMAC decision making protocols.

8.4.8.2 That the TSPMAC **AGREED** that there is no need to develop a protocol paper for the decision making processes as there are already protocols in place that are outlined in the TSPF handbook.

8.4.8.3 The TSPMAC **NOTED** that the TSPMAC decision making protocols can be readdressed in the future if need be.

FINANCE

Budget update

8.5.1.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED**:

- (a) that the TSPF budget has not been finalized as AFMA are still awaiting a decision regarding which cost recovery impact statement will be used to attribute costs for the TSPF budget.
- (b) that the final budget would be presented to the MAC OOS, likely with the 2010 levies.

Independent Chair costing

8.5.2.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** the costs that would be incurred by hiring an independent chair for the TSPMAC.

OTHER BUSINESS

TSPMAC Self Assessment Process

8.6.1.1 The TSPMAC **NOTED** and **DISCUSSED** the performance criteria for the TSPMAC self assessment process.

8.6.1.2 The TSPMAC **AGREED** that a self assessment would be conducted at the first TSPMAC meeting in 2010.

The following members and observers were in attendance at TSPMAC 8.

Members	Permanent observers
Chair – Mr Jim Gillespie	DAFF – Mr Anthony Cuthbert (16 th) and Mr Mark Rowsell (17 th)
QPIF – Mr Shane Fava	BRS – Mr James Woodhams
QPIF – Mr Eddie Jebreen	PNG – Mr Phillip Polon (17 th)
AFMA – Mr Stan Lui	
AFMA & EO – Ms Lisa Cocking	
Research – Mr Clive Turnbull QDPI&F	Observers
Industry – Mr Marshall Betzel	
Industry – Mr Ronald Earle	Mr Ian Jacobsen - QPIF
CFG – Mr Gavin Morsby	Ms Carissa Featweather – QPIF
CFG – Mr Charles David	Mr Damien Miley - TSRA
CFG – Mr Francis Pearson	Mr David Maynard – Australian Maritime College
TSRA – Mr Neville Nakata	Mr Winston Harris
QPIF compliance – Mr Lyndon Peddell	

PRELIMINARIES

Welcome

Mr Jim Gillespie, the TSPMAC Chair opened the teleconference at 9:15am. He acknowledged that this was the first meeting of the new MAC and welcomed the new members.

Apologies

The executive officer noted apologies were received from Mr Chris Bourke and Mr Malcolm Southwell for not being in attendance at the meeting.

Disclosure of interest

No conflicts of interest were recorded for the majority of meeting attendees. The following conflicts of interest were recorded:

Torres Strait Prawn Management Advisory Committee disclosure of interests

Member or permanent observer	MAC position	Potential/actual conflicts of interest	Perceived conflicts of interest
Mr Charles David	CFG	Holder of a TIB finfish and TRL license	
Mr Ronald Earle	Industry Member	Holder of Torres Strait Prawn fishery licence	
Mr Marshal Betzel	Industry Member		Manager of fleet of boats nominated to Torres Strait Prawn Fishery license

Ratification of meeting minutes from TSPMAC 7

The executive officer advised that the draft minutes of the TSPMAC 7 meeting held on 10 and 11 July 2008 had been circulated to members on 2 January 2009. Comments were received from members and incorporated where feasible. An

amended version was distributed to all TSPMAC members on 30 January 2009. The Executive Officer questioned whether there were any further comments regarding the minutes from members who were present at the meeting. No further comments were received and the TSPMAC agreed to ratify the minutes as per the 30 January 2009 version found at Attachment 1.1A of TSPMAC 8 papers.

Ratification of TSPMAC OOS meeting on 9 February 2009

The TSPMAC agreed to adopt the minutes of the out of session TSPMAC teleconference held on 9 February 2009 (Attachment 1.2A) and confirmed the OOS decisions of that meeting.

Actions arising from previous TSPMAC meetings

The Executive Officer presented the actions arising from previous meetings and asked that relevant TSPMAC members and observers to provide the TSPMAC with the progress on their respective action items.

Table 1.3A: Actions and/or business arising from previous TSPMAC meetings.

Action reference number	Action	Date item was added	Responsibility	Status
TSPMAC OOS 070509 1.1	Determine the average yearly effort in the TSPF since the buyback.	TSPMAC OOS 070509	QPIF	Complete. The following fishing nights have been used annually since the buyback in 2001, and effort reduction in 2005: 2001 – 10157 2002 – 9641 2003 – 9000 2004 – 7041 2005 – 5966 2006 – 4407 2007 – 4832 2008 – 3453
TSPMAC OOS 070509 1.2	AFMA to determine the process required to change the observer coverage requirement to a percentage of effort in the fishery rather than a whole number.	TSPMAC OOS 070509	AFMA	Complete. Coverage levels can be changed by writing to DEWHA with a proposed change as long as the level of observer coverage in the fishery allows robust data collection (Attachment 2.3C).
TSPMAC OOS 070509 1.3	TSPF Industry members to develop a proposal for Government to pay 25% (the PNG portion) of the budget which benefit this sector of the fishery.	TSPMAC OOS 070509	Industry	Incomplete. Industry members will develop a paper for TSPMAC 9.
TSPMAC OOS 070509 1.4	QPIF to provide a summary of compliance costs, number of sea days conducted and vessels boarded in the TSPF at TSPMAC 8.	TSPMAC OOS 070509	QPIF	Complete. Compliance costs are \$64,200 which is a percentage of the overall compliance budget. 8 sea days per month are the target for the TSPF
TSPMAC	AFMA to provide a summary of some comments from other MACs	TSPMAC	AFMA	Incomplete. Comments cannot be provided at

OOS 070509 1.5	regarding the CRIS at TSPMAC 8.	OOS 070509		this time as the process is still pending.
OOS TSPMAC 090209 1.1	Seek PZJA standing committee approval to appoint an external industry member to the selection panel for the new TSPMAC industry members.	TSPMAC OOS 9 February 2009	AFMA, DAFF	Complete. The PZJA SC approved the appointment of an external industry member to the TSPMAC selection panel at its 3 February 2009 meeting.
OOS TSPMAC 090209 1.2	PZJA agencies to find any past PZJA decisions relating to external leasing in the TSPF.	TSPMAC OOS 9 February 2009	AFMA	Complete. See TSPMAC #8 paper no. 4.4
OOS TSPMAC 090209 1.3	Develop a PZJA Standing Committee paper in relation to external leasing which will be reviewed by the MAC prior to presentation to standing committee.	TSPMAC OOS 9 February 2009	AFMA	No longer an action item. MAC comments from TSPMAC paper 4.4 will be incorporated into the SC paper however the draft paper will not be put through the MAC.
TSPMAC 7.1	AFMA to follow up why industry members were not sent copies of the minutes of the previous meeting prior to the distribution of the TSPMAC #7 papers.	TSPMAC 7	AFMA	Complete. Draft Minutes from MAC meetings are only distributed to the attendees of the meetings for comment. They are not distributed to people who did not attend until they have been ratified by the MAC. In future, the minutes for ratification will be distributed to all MAC members once they have been commented on by attendees but before ratification.
TSPMAC 7.2	DAFF to liaise with industry (particularly Rosemary Millward) to ensure that the summary is providing the information sought.	TSPMAC 7	DAFF	No longer an action item. The MAC agreed that the table provided by DAFF to date would be sufficient and this action item was no longer required.
TSPMAC	AFMA to confirm membership expiry dates of the two industry MAC	TSPMAC 7	AFMA	Complete.

7.3	members Rosemary Millward and Rob Giddins.			The two affected industry members have had their positions extended to align with other members (expiry 27 April 2009).
TSPMAC 7.4	AFMA to call for nominations for the MAC membership positions before the end of the year.	TSPMAC 7	AFMA	Complete. A call for nominations was sent out 19 December and the process will be finalised before 27 April 2009.
TSPMAC 7.5	AFMA to provide advice in the TSPMAC #8 minutes as to the process for selecting Ron Earle to the selection panel.	TSPMAC 7	AFMA	Complete. Selection panels for TSPMAC recruitment processes
TSPMAC 7.6	TSRA to inform management of the infrastructure issues that are not only affecting the Torres Strait Prawn fishing industry but also impacting on the Torres Strait Islander's way of life.	TSPMAC 7	TSRA	Complete. TSRA management is aware of the infrastructure issues currently affecting Torres Strait Islander's way of life. The Major Infrastructure Program is addressing environmental health issues related to sewage, water, roads and electricity, and the Economic Development section's role is to address issues such as rising fuel costs and supply of resources that affect local businesses and economic development of communities. The above issues are directly affected by the reduced number of Barges and Mother ship activity ('infrastructure issues') that were raised by industry representatives at the previous TSPMAC meeting.
TSPMAC 7.7	DAFF, QDPI&F and AFMA to discuss and prepare an attachment for the PZJA standing committee TAE paper outlining the issues affecting the fishery and some possible solutions.	TSPMAC 7	DAFF, QDPI&F and	Complete. Was presented to the PZJA as an attachment to the TAE paper.

			AFMA	
TSPMAC 7.8	DAFF will seek legal advice on the Prawn TAE proposal before it goes to PZJA. If the legal advice is not supportive, the TSPMAC EO will organise a phone hook-up of the MAC.	TSPMAC 7	DAFF, TSPMAC EO	Complete. Legal advice was that there were no issues with raising the TAE above 9,200 days – noting that the effective effort in the fishery will not exceed 9,200 days.
TSPMAC 7.9	TSRA to circulate the proposed anchorage exclusion zone map and co-ordinates to the TSPMAC EO to forward on to the MAC.	TSPMAC 7	TSRA	Complete. TSRA distributed this paper to members for discussion at the February 2009 OOS meeting.
TSPMAC 7.10	AFMA to liaise with other agencies and industry to develop the protocol paper, however locate the previous paper to assist with this development.	TSPMAC 7	AFMA	Complete. AFMA will present the draft of this paper at TSPMAC #8
TSPMAC 7.11	QDPI&F to discuss with licensing regarding the issue of external leasing and to provide a report at the February meeting.	TSPMAC 7	QDPI&F	Complete. QDPI&F provided a paper for presentation at the 9 February teleconference – Agenda Item 1.2

Ongoing or incomplete action items from previous meetings

TSPMAC 6.1	DAFF and the TSPMAC Executive Officer to liaise with TSPMAC industry representatives to determine whether the current draft PZJA decision record is providing the information which was intended when industry requested the record at TSPMAC 5.	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC EO	Complete. The MAC agreed that the table provided by DAFF to date would be sufficient and this action item was no longer required.
TSPMAC 6.2	AFMA to confirm whether the AFMA VMS system is able to pick up TSPF vessels that are not cross endorsed Commonwealth vessels (i.e. QLD ECOTF vessels).	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. The AFMA Compliance section has advised that AFMA has no jurisdiction over QLD vessels.
TSPMAC 6.3	TSPMAC to undertake an annual self assessment against PZJA indicators outlined in PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2008).	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC	Ongoing. Self assessment is not thought to be appropriate at this time considering the change over of MAC members. The MAC agreed to conduct a self assessment at TSPMAC

				10 in May 2010.
TSPMAC 6.4	At TSPMAC 7, seek agreement from TSPMAC industry representatives and other TSPMAC members and permanent observers who were not present at TSPMAC 6 to abide by the PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2008) policies.	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC Chair	Complete. The TSPMAC agreed to abide by the policies set out in PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2008).
TSPMAC 6.5	QDPI&F Research to work with ABARE to obtain historical prawn and fuel prices for presentation at TSPMAC 7.	TSPMAC 6	QDPI&F Research	Complete. Information regarding prawn and fuel prices can be found in the TSPMAC 8 paper no. 3.1.
TSPMAC 6.6	AFMA to draft fishery specific objectives for the TSPF observer program which include scientific, cultural and social objectives and circulate these to the TSPMAC out of session for comment.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. At TSPMAC 8 the MAC agreed for AFMA to liaise with CFGs, TSRA and TSPMAC industry members to finalise objectives
TSPMAC 6.7	The TSPMAC Executive Officer to ask industry representatives if they would like any other fishery specific objectives to be considered for the TSPF observer program.	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC EO	Ongoing. At TSPMAC 8 the MAC agreed for AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry members to finalise objectives
TSPMAC 6.8	AFMA to investigate if an incentive program could be implemented in the TSPF Observer Program such as providing “free” days to vessels that take observers for a certain period of time.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. Free days cannot be allocated for the 2009 season as the PNG and DAFF days have already been allocated, however DAFF will investigate the possibility for 2010.
TSPMAC 6.9	DAFF to investigate whether the Australian Government days could be allocated for “free” to operators as a part of an observer incentive program.	TSPMAC 6	DAFF	Complete. The Days can be allocated for free, however it requires a provision in the management plan to be approved, so that we can amend the levy regs appropriately in accordance with the Levy Act 1984. see agenda item 2.3 of TSPMAC 8 for further information. The MAC and PZJA agencies would need to consider the benefit of doing this before any further action.
TSPMAC 6.10	AFMA to hold discussions with their observer program section to look at incentives in other fisheries.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. The observer section indicated that they would rather not

				use incentive programs to avoid setting precedence in other fisheries. More information is in TSPMAC#8 in paper no 2.4.
TSPMAC 6.11	QDPI&F to provide information to AFMA regarding their observer program and how they improve uptake of observers.	TSPMAC 6	QDPI&F	Complete. QPIF build relationships between industry and management through the observer program by ensuring comments received by observers are immediately provided to industry. See TSPMAC #8 paper no 2.4 for more detailed information.
TSPMAC 6.12	QDPI&F management to talk to QDPI&F licensing about better methods of transferring money for licenses such as Electronic Funds Transfers.	TSPMAC 6	QDPI&F	Complete. Currently operators can pay via cheque or credit card (2/3 day turnaround). To use EFT is possible, however the finance agency would need to liaise with the licensing section to identify where the funds came from, which would be a 2 week turnaround. QDPI&F are currently undergoing a review of licensing procedures and this will be investigated further.
TSPMAC 6.13	QDPI&F to determine whether an alternative payment system, such as Electronic Funds Transfer, can be used by TIB license holders in order to make the process for obtaining these licenses more simple.	TSPMAC 6	QDPI&F	Complete. This has not been pursued for the same reasons outlined in action item 6.12.
TSPMAC 6.14	DAFF to determine Biosecurity Australia's definition of the term "disease status" for presentation at TSPMAC 7.	TSPMAC 6	DAFF	Complete. Disease Status is a term used by biosecurity Australia to define the likely existence of a disease of importance to export markets in Australia. The status is a nominal scale from not existence, through likely to know to exist. If the status is non existence - then the import of product, that is

				a know vector, from a country know to have that disease (or at lease higher than ourselves on disease status) is likely to require substantial import assessment or treatment. Prawns in se asia - not including australia or PNG - are know to have a disease status of greater risk than Australia. Thus the disease status of prawns caught in PNG waters or Australian waters (being essentially the same stock0 carry the same disease status. thus the import of these prawns is subject to substantial import risk assessment by Biosecurity Australia. This assessment has not commenced.
TSPMAC 6.15	DAFF to determine whether PNG caught product will need to be clearly marked with the jurisdiction in which it was caught.	TSPMAC 6	DAFF	Ongoing. This action item is awaiting finalisation of import rules by Biosecurity Australia and AQIS
TSPMAC 6.16	DAFF to draft a letter to AQIS on behalf of the TSPMAC Chair which will inform them of the starting date of next season and ask whether their quarantine database will be up and running by the start of the season. The letter should also request that if possible, it would be useful for the system to be in by 1 March if not by end of 2008.	TSPMAC 6	DAFF	Incomplete. As AQIS are within DAFF, DAFF have suggested that the letter be written by another PZJA agency if it is still required. The MAC agreed the letter should be cowritten by DAFF and the TSPMAC EO on behalf of the TSPMAC Chair.
TSPMAC 6.17	AFMA to add the higher risk species from the CSIRO seabed mapping project to the “species of interest” list for additional data to be collected during the scientific observer program.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. The AFMA ERA section are questioning whether the high risk species list is the most suitable list for observers to collect data on. AFMA are reviewing to see whether another list would be more appropriate. See TSPMAC #8 paper 2.4 for more detail.
TSPMAC 6.18	AFMA to work with the TSRA and AFMA communications section to consider a method of disseminating the information from Mr Turnbull and Dr Pitcher’s reports to the indigenous	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. Work has commenced on this issue is ongoing, more information will be provided at TSPMAC #8.

	sector.			
TSPMAC 6.19	AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry representatives and determine whether they would still like observer status on the TSSAC.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. TSPMAC members would like to keep observer status on the TSSAC.
TSPMAC 6.20	AFMA to determine whether the lack of external leasing in the TSPF Plan is in breach of the national competition policy.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. Under S25 of the TSF Act the PZJA has authority to transfer a license at its discretion. Any policy in relation to competition etc does not override an Act of parliament this it is the PZJA's decision as to whether it transfers a license or not. It is not a breach of NCP to An update provided at TSPMAC #8.
TSPMAC 6.21	Establish a harvest strategy working group including the TSPMAC research member and one member from AFMA, QDPI&F, DAFF, TSRA and industry (each agency to nominate a member).	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. The HS working group has been established and had its first meeting on 15 June.
TSPMAC 6.22	AFMA to follow up on possible funding options for further monitoring of ghost nets and liaise with TSRA while progressing this.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. TSRA and QPIF are going to develop a funding/research proposal.
TSPMAC 6.23	AFMA to liaise with industry to request the development of an industry code of conduct relating to the disposal of marine debris for presentation at TSPMAC 7.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. AFMA and the TSPMAC industry members will work together to develop an industry code of conduct for distribution to the MAC OOS.
TSPMAC 6.24	AFMA and QDPI&F to discuss hiring a contractor to survey the trawl rubbish in the areas around Yorke and Coconut Islands and quote the removal.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. TSRA and QPIF are going to develop a funding/research proposal.

TSPMAC 6.25	AFMA to develop a research proposal to the TSSAC on potential funding sources.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. TSRA and QPIF are going to develop a funding/research proposal however it may not be presented to the TSSAC.
TSPMAC 6.26	After results of the BRD, TED and try net survey are received AFMA to discuss the potential for observers to conduct BRD trials through the AFMA observer program.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. Still finalising the BRD survey – to be discussed under agenda item 4.7
TSPMAC 6.27	AFMA to develop a proposal for consideration by the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee, to conduct a technical review of some of the BRDs used on prawn vessels operating in the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Incomplete – no longer an action item. The TSPMAC agreed that this research is not a current priority and previous research from other fisheries should be drawn on before looking to do a TSPF research project.
TSPMAC 6.28	Executive Officer to liaise with the Australian Maritime College and request that they provide a presentation on the light trials at TSPMAC 7.	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC EO	Complete. Presented at TSPMAC 8; agenda item 4.7.

TSPMAC 6.29	AFMA to apply a 3 tiered approach to the TED, BRD and try net survey, which includes; 1. sending out surveys to all licenses holders and wait two weeks for a response; 2. following up surveys with a phone call offering phone surveys; 3. QB&FP and AFMA observers to conduct surveys whilst in the field.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. AFMA is finalising the BRD survey and will undertake the survey in early 2009.
TSPMAC 6.30	Develop a proposal for consideration by the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee to conduct a technical review of some of the Bycatch Reduction Devices used on vessels	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Incomplete – no longer an action item. The TSPMAC agreed that this research is not a current priority and previous research from other fisheries should

	operating in the TSPF.			be drawn on before looking to do a TSPF research project.
TSPMAC 6.31	QDPI&F to send footage from the US TED trails to the TSRA and bring the footage for presentation at TSPMAC 7.	TSPMAC 6	QDPI&F	Complete. Footage was provided to the TSRA.
TSPMAC 6.32	CFG representatives to develop a full proposal regarding the proposed anchorage exclusion zones around Warrior and Dungeness Reefs to all vessels over 6m, for presentation at TSPMAC 7.	TSPMAC 6	TSRA	Complete. The final proposal was considered at the TSPMAC OOS teleconference. The MAC noted the proposal however agreed that this did not affect the prawn fishery as this area has been closed to them and industry stated that they remained neutral on the issue. The MAC agreed that this needs to be considered by the TRLWG.
TSPMAC 6.33	The TSPMAC executive officer to start the recruitment process for electing a new TSPMAC industry member to the TSPMAC.	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC EO	Complete. The selection process has been completed.
TSPMAC 6.34	AFMA to present a recommendation to the PZJA Standing Committee seeking their approval to have an external industry member on the panel as this is a deviation from the usual processes outlines in PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2008).	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Complete. The MAC's recommendation was provided to the PZJA Standing Committee, however the SC requested that FMP 1 be followed as the SC noted that the recommendation was made by the MAC when industry members were not present.

Action: DAFF and TSPMAC EO to draft a letter to AQIS on behalf of the TSPMAC Chair which will inform them of the starting date of next season and ask whether their quarantine database will be up and running by the start of the season. The letter should also request that if possible, it would be useful for the system to be in by 1 March if not by end of 2008.

Action Item 7.27

The MAC agreed that the PZJA decision record should be posted on the PZJA website and updated and uploaded to the website intermittently.

Action: DAFF to update the PZJA historic decision record with new PZJA decisions as they are made and provide to AFMA intermittently for updating on the PZJA website.

Action: AFMA to upload the PZJA historic decision record to the PZJA website

PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2005)

The Executive Officer explained that as TSPMAC members, we are obliged to abide by the policies set out within the PZJA Fisheries Management Paper No. 1 (PZJA FMP No 1) which sets out the Torres Strait PZJA policy for operation and administration of Management Advisory Committees. She explained that MAC members had agreed to abide by these policies when they agreed to take up membership on the MAC, however it has been practice in the past MAC that members again note the policies within this document and agree to abide by them.

REPORTS

History of recent management decisions and future developments for the fishery

Mr Lui gave a brief history of the past management decisions to occur in the TSPF since 1986.

The MAC agreed to provide comments and amendments to the presentation which would be updated and sent to the MAC with the final minutes and then uploaded to the PZJA website.

Industry report – 2008 season summary

Mr Ronald Earle, TSPMAC industry member explained that this year, catch was reasonable if not better than previous years and the quantity of tiger prawns was good. He added that profitability is negative at the moment due to high fuel prices and the dollar value and low prawn prices and marketability. He commented that endeavour prawns are not currently popular however the QLD government campaign did help with moving endeavour prawns.

Industry member Mr Marshall Betzel stated that boats can't afford to fish for the amount of product they are catching given the current economic circumstances. The MAC discussed that the exchange rate of the Yen is effecting the export market. Mr Betzel added that the depressed market in Japan is having more effect on exporting than the exchange rate and all prawn fisheries are having a problem with exporting. He added that Japanese are moving towards more western food which reduces the market however these trends usually work in cycles and will likely change again in the future.

TSPMAC industry members also discussed the logistical constraints which are reducing fishing. Due to a reduced number and frequency of mother ships and withdrawal of the direct air service, transferring crew and obtaining parts for vessel maintenance are all difficult and less economical to deal with.

Mr Winston Harris of the Queensland Seafood Industry Association asked if he could provide comments on behalf of TSPF license holder Mr Steven Wrayford. He commented that Mr Wrayford has concern regarding the increase in levies especially considering the lack of formal external leasing. This means license holders with vessels in no boat status have no safe mechanism for recuperating costs from their license.

Ms Cocking from AFMA questioned whether industry members were aware of any leasing of effort units which is occurring in the fishery to date. The TSPMAC industry members commented that they are not aware of any leasing thus far this season. They added that the allocation of the PNG nights has decreased the need to lease.

The MAC noted the industry report provided in respect to the 2008 fishing season in the TSPF.

2008 Observer program report

Ms Cocking from AFMA presented a summary of the 2008 observer program and 2009 observer program to date. Ms Cocking commented that 180 observer days were budgeted for the 2008 season and again for the 2009 season which is approximately 2.6% coverage of the fishery based on the 6,867 days allocated to the Australian sector. 161 observer fishing days were achieved in 2008 with 7 travel days. She added that an observer has been deployed in the fishery since 19 April this season.

Ms Cocking went on to explain the current limitations of the observer program, mainly being that only 9 vessels have taken observers since 2007. She explained that in order for the observer program to be effective, we need good temporal and spatial coverage of the fleet and season.

Mr Earle commented that we need to get observers out in March as this is the time that there are more vessels to choose from in the fishery. Mr Betzel explained that some vessels have a very full crew in first month as this is peak prawn catch time and can't fit another person on board. Mr Earle commented that they don't have that problem on their vessel.

Mr David Maynard questioned whether a crew member observer program had been considered for this fishery. Ms Cocking commented that AFMA had looked into a crew member observer program last year and AFMA staff attended to the Northern Prawn Fishery Crew Member Observer Workshop to see what was entailed in such a program. Mr Turnbull added that in past, crew turn over was too high to make a CMO program economical. Community Fisher Group Representative (CFG) Mr Charles David commented that there had been discussion in the past of looking into an observer program employing traditional inhabitants however they haven't heard any further information on this.

Mr Lui explained that a CMO program had been considered along with a traditional sector observer program when the program was first established. He commented that this would be discussed in detail under the next agenda item.

<p>ACTION: AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry members regarding a CMO program to develop an agenda item for presentation at TSPMAC 9.</p>

Observer Program – Coverage and Objectives

Ms Cocking presented the paper regarding the future objectives of the observer program and ways of increasing observer coverage in the TSPF. She explained that in order to export product caught within the TSPF, the fishery must be declared as a wildlife trade operation (WTO) by the Minister for Environment. This process is

undertaken by the DEWHA by assessing the fishery against its strategic assessment report (SAR) and required the fishery to have a robust level of observer coverage.

Mr David again discussed the need to look at traditional observers being used in the program as it will create employment opportunities for the Islanders as well as increasing expertise on traditional species and potentially decreasing costs as people are already located in the fishery and won't require travel costs. Mr Lui discussed that AFMA will need to explore the mechanisms for implementing this sort of observer program, and whether it would be tied into our current observer program or some external program. Mr Jebreen also commented that traditional inhabitants need to consider how long they would be willing to be at sea and if this is the sort of employment that would be suitable, as observer trips are usually 2 – 4 weeks in duration.

Mr Lui commented that they don't want to build an expectation that a traditional inhabitant observer program will definitely occur as there are very hard budget constraints at present; however the options would be explored.

Mr David stated that it would be useful to have Torres Strait Islanders trained up in research skills so they can be used in any areas that is required in all fisheries.

Mr Lui went on to explain the different options that were considered when setting up the TSPF observer program, including considering using crew member observers, scientific observers and traditional inhabitant observers. He explained that the scientific observers were considered to be the more cost effective option at that time and were chosen due to the testing of BRDs which specific skills are required for.

ACTION: AFMA to explore the methods that could be used to place traditional inhabitant observers in the TSPF including legislative

ACTION: TSRA to investigate the interest from Islanders in being a part of an observer program

Ms Cocking went on to discuss the current objectives for the TSPF observer program which were last reviewed via teleconference in early 2008 where a list of species of interest to the traditional sector was provided by the TSRA and added to data collection protocols for the fishery. She stated that draft objectives for the 2009 season were at attachment 2.3B and had been considered by the TSRA and QPIF research. She questioned whether the industry members had any additional objectives they would like to add for the 2009 season.

CFG representative Mr Gavin Morsby questioned where the species of interest list came from as he felt these species were not of key interest to the traditional sector. Ms Cocking explained that the list was provided by the TSRA who had liaised with CFG representatives. The CFG members reiterated that the list is not appropriate and should be reviewed.

ACTION: TSRA to liaise with CFGs to review list of species of interest and observer program objectives in general and provide comments to AFMA.

Ms Cocking went on to discuss the current level of observer coverage in the fishery. She explained that at TSPMAC OOS meeting in May 2009 the MAC requested that we review the level of observer coverage considering the current level of effort in the fishery with a view to change coverage to be based on a percentage which can move with the level of effort in the fishery. She explained that we can change the level of coverage, as long as the new level of coverage is robust, in line with the requirements of the Strategic Assessment Report recommendations which the fishery is assessed against for export approval. She asked Mr James Woodhams of BRS what would be required to prove that a level of observer coverage is robust.

Mr Woodhams commented that there would need to be clear, measurable objectives for the observer program, prior to the determination of a level of observer coverage that would offer some statistical certainty. He commented that a reasonable amount of work would be required to achieve this.

TSPMAC Industry members questioned if we may be able to reduce the number of observed fishing days if we can make the coverage of observers throughout the fleet wider.

Mr Lui questioned if we can copy another proposal for robust observer coverage. Mr Jebreen commented that QPIF are having the same problems at the moment and are developing a proposal to DEWHA regarding this issue and they are happy to discuss the TSPF within their proposal. The MAC discussed that the current level of observer coverage was on par with many other fisheries.

The MAC agreed that a letter should be drafted to DEWHA and sent to the MAC out of session for comment.

ACTION: QPIF to draft a letter to DEWHA regarding the level of observer coverage in the TSPF, explaining that the current percentage of effort is on par with other Australian Fisheries and explaining that we are undertaking a process to increase temporal and spatial coverage of observers to improve data collection. The letter should be sent to the EO for distribution to the MAC OOS for comment.

ACTION: AFMA to draft a letter to industry asking them to commit to taking observers.

ACTION: afma to determine if observer costs can be rolled over into the next season if they don't use all of their days.

TSPMAC Industry members suggested writing a letter to license holders explaining to them that if they are going to appeal to reduce the number of observed fishing days they will need to improved spatial and temporal uptake of observers in the fishery. Ms Cocking commented that we need to ensure they do not think that we will definitely be able to change the level of observer coverage if we improve uptake on other vessels, but instead explain that without doing this, there is little or no change that DEWHA will consider changing the level of observer coverage.

ACTION: TSPMAC industry members to write a letter to TSPF license holders explaining the need to increase observer uptake spatially and temporally throughout the fishery in an attempt to reduce the number of actual observed fishing days whilst maintaining statistically robust data collection.

Compliance Report

Mr Peddell presented the compliance report for the period of August 2008 to April 2009. He commented that they aim to do 8 patrols per month and 97 have been achieved so far this season. They attempt to board vessels before 10am or after 4pm if possible to minimise disturbance to fishing practices however he commented that there is still some hostility regarding boarding.

Mr Peddell explained that an infringement notices system will make enforcement more streamline and was being tabled with a view of being supported by the MAC. The system would include a list of simple infringements that can be addressed on the spot to remove the paperwork and complexity of infringements. An amendment to the Regulations is the only requirement to put these into place to allow a fee to be charged. Mr Peddell explained that at present, offences being detected lead to a brief of evidence being compiled and presented to the Department of Public Prosecution. If supported the alleged offender may then be summonsed to appear in front of the magistrate.

This process is the same for a person who has committed one offence or multiple offences.

Mr Fava explained that the current revenue raised through compliance processes is going to the transport department instead of offsetting the compliance costs. He explained that the compliance section could be doing more work than they are if they had infringement notice system in place as it is currently difficult to prosecute for these simple breaches, meaning some license holders may not take the rules seriously as they are not rigorously enforced. Mr Fava commented that a recommendation from the MAC would be useful to support the development and implementation of an infringement notice system.

Mr David commented that compliance are not functioning in the way they need to uphold the treaty and compliance in general as on a number of occasions, the traditional sector have reported breaches or concerns and the compliance team have not been able to respond in real time, putting the traditional sector at risk.

Mr Peddell commented that the charter vessels being used (customs etc) have their own work priorities as a priority, so if they are on a job in the TS, it is possible the vessel will get called away to address their own issues.

Mr Fava commented that the department want to do a review of the compliance program to reduce costs of compliance and it would be useful if the TSPMAC make a recommendation to provide support for this.

Mr David questioned if rangers could assist with the compliance by taking out compliance officers in their vessels, which will allow quicker responses between surveys. He commented that by increasing presence, people will be aware that they will be breached and will be less likely to do so.

Mr Fava commented that by combining a reduction in the number of days we charter the compliance vessel with increasing the use of vessels already held in the area (ie ranger vessels) we will be able to reduce compliance costs. Mr Peddell commented we can operate off other vessels if need be.

The TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that QPIF undertake a review of the level of effort and efficiency of the compliance program for presentation to the PZJA Standing Committee.

The TSPMAC RECOMMENDED that a review of the Fisheries Infringement Notice system and benefits it will offer to the fishery be conducted and an options paper provided to the PZJA Standing Committee.

ACTION: QPIF to undertake a review of the level of effort and efficiency of the compliance program and develop an options paper for presentation to the PZJA Standing Committee.

Mr Peddell went on to explain that there had been few offences in the fishery this season with no BRD or TED offences. He stated that the most common offence was vessel operators failing to have a Master Fishermen's License, which they remedied by helping to organise a license for these people. He went on to explain that VMS has solved a number of problems in the fishery, including monitoring the warrior reef closures.

Mr Earle commented that the TSPF seem to be abiding by rules and this should be honoured through compliance.

Mr Pearson went on to discuss ghost nets and questioned how often nets are changed and how this is done. He asked if they are placed on the side of the vessel where they can fall into the water. Mr Peddell commented that they fix them and then use them again however if they get torn during fishing operations they may get left on the bottom and they can't enforce this as they need to see it occurring.

Mr Morsby expressed concern that the VMS system must not be working as there are trawlers fishing within 2nm of the home reefs, which he believed should not be happening as a verbal agreement not to fish in these areas is established. He commented that a trawler came very close to him one evening last year and he was within 200m of Yorke Island. Mr Earle commented that the licenses specify how we can fish and they are currently working within these parameters. He added that they need to change these if they are not happy with them.

Mr Fava commented that the VMS system is set up around legislation not around verbal agreements and thus the VMS system is not supposed to monitor this behaviour. He added that this will need to be addressed in the appropriate forums if Islanders would like it included in legislation and be monitored by VMS.

Mr Morsby questioned if this hand shake agreement can be put in an official framework as the current agreement isn't being adhered to. Mr Turnbull and Mr Gillespie commented that they are not aware of such an agreement being made in a MAC meeting in the past. Mr Lui questioned if they were referring to the finfish agreement, which is an individual contractual arrangement. Mr Morsby commented that he thought there was an agreement in place. Mr Fava suggested developing a formal arrangement if this is an issue to the traditional sector.

Mr Jebreen suggested doing a VMS report to see how many people are operating within the area before we progress it forward. Mr Betzel questioned if VMS can be used for this purpose and Mr Jebreen commented that we will need to determine that and at least PZJA agencies may be able to explore this, even if information cannot be provided to the MAC.

Mr Earle commented that industry are likely to object if they are currently fishing in these areas and they are taken away.

The TSPMAC NOTED the concerns of the traditional sector about TSPF vessels operating within close proximity to home reefs and agreed that the CFGs should develop a paper regarding this for presentation at TSPMAC 9.

ACTION: The TSRA to develop a paper for TSPMAC 9 detailing the home reef areas which they would like excluded from fishing and providing detail of the past agreements which were made between CFGs and TSPF industry members and where these agreements were made.

ACTION: QPIF to determine whether VMS can be used to see who is fishing in the home reef areas and who this information can be provided to.

Environment Report

Ms Cocking presented the Environment report developed by the AFMA Environment section. She explained that the TSPF along with other Commonwealth Fisheries have a number of obligations in relation to the environment to ensure the fishery is operating in a manner which is sustainable and this paper outlines some of these obligations and our current progress towards them.

Ms Cocking explained that the Strategic Assessment of the fishery had assessed the management of the fishery under the Management Plan and had declared the fishery a wildlife trade operation (allowing export approval) until 25 February 2012. She explained that this assessment was dependant on the fishery abiding by a number of recommendations including developing a harvest strategy and continuing to mitigate protected species interactions.

She went on to discuss the Ecological Risk Assessment process which aims to determine the species, habitats and ecological communities which are most susceptible to fishing in a particular fishery. She explained that only a basic level of assessment had been conducted on the TSPF at this time, and fishery managers are currently working with the ERA section of AFMA to determine if we can utilise Dr

Roland Prichard's seabed mapping project instead of conducting a full safe assessment to minimise costs.

Ms Cocking went on to discuss protected species obligations in the fishery. She explained that although it is an offence under the EPBC Act to interact with protected species, all Commonwealth managed fisheries have been accredited on the basis that the management plan or regime includes all reasonable steps to ensure that members of protected species are not adversely affected by the fishing operation. This means that as long as operators are fishing in accordance with the fishery management arrangements it is not an offence to interact with a protected species. It is, however, an offence not to report these interactions.

She explained that the quarterly reports are developed by DEWHA regarding this interactions and can be found on the AFMA website. Ms Cocking explained that the majority of interactions occur with sea snakes in the TSPF and there is an interaction rate of 0.08 protected individuals per trawl shot in the fishery.

Ms Cocking also explained that the AFMA environment section have been developing protected species fact sheets which provide information on the species and the process being used in the fishery to protect them.

Ms Cocking went on to discuss the current marine bioregional planning occurring around Australia. She commented that although there are no plans occurring within the TSPZ the North and East plans may effect TSPF operators as they surround the fishery. The plans aim to be finished by mid to late 2010.

The TSRA commented that they want to ensure that any new park planning that occurs won't displace the indigenous sector through revenue.

Comment [A1]: TSRA, could you please confirm the wording of this sentence?

Australian Maritime College BRD light trials

Mr David Maynard from the AMC presented results of a study exploring the use of light as a bycatch reduction device (BRD) on prawn trawlers. Mr Maynard commented that BRDs fall under 6 types and different BRDs target different size fish and have different effectiveness in different fisheries. He commented that the light trials conducted in this study aim to increase the speed of response of fish. By lighting up the headrope, it gives fish a chance to see the net and respond before being caught.

Mr Maynard explained that during the trails in the Torres Strait a total of 2.5 nights and 21 trawls were conducted, 14 trawls of which were considered rigorous enough for data analysis. He explained that they had a control net which had no illumination and they recorded length data to compare the size of individuals that were being excluded by the BRD.

The analysis showed a 18% bycatch reduction by weight and 50% reduction in numbers meaning that a large number of small fishery are being excluded by the BRD. This was a drop in the bycatch to catch ratio from 5.4 - 4.2

Although they recorded a 5% increase in prawn weight, this was not statistically significant however does prove there is no decrease in prawns. Further, they believe that with an increased data set this would become significant.

Mr Maynard explained during analysis they ranked bycatch species by percentage of the catch they make up and found that they technique significantly reduced bycatch for 6 species and is likely to for two more with a larger data set. He commented that this type of analysis can be done with any BRD to determine its effectiveness.

He discussed the need to combine a number of BRDs of different sizes and that deal with different behaviours to address bycatch effectively. This technique is a behavioural based BRD and may be useful to combine with other BRDs. It is also a very positive BRD as there is no post escape mortality and he is positive in thinking that they BRD may be able to decrease bycatch by more than 30% with additional research.

Mr Earle questioned if the light from the lit net could have been effecting the control net which was not lit. Mr Maynard commented that that is possible however the experiment still allowed them to demonstrate a significant reduction in bycatch. He added that the new trials in the NPF will address this issue further.

Mr Maynard suggested developing quick reference guides which detail what bycatch is expected to be excluded by each BRD to make it easier to combine relevant ones to reduce bycatch overall.

Ms Cocking questioned what the Northern Prawn Fishery will require in order to approve this BRD for use in their fishery. Mr Maynard commented that they are doing surveys and need a 10% reduction to consider it being implemented in the fishery.

Final report for the research program

2008 season summary

Mr Clive Turnbull, the TSPMAC research member presented the results of the final report to come out of the DAFF funded research project. Mr Turnbull explained that endeavour prawn catch has decreased steadily with the decrease in effort since 2001 and tiger prawn catch has remained similar. This demonstrates that fishers are shifting and focusing on catching tiger prawns and not endeavour prawns. He added that tiger prawn catch rate was low in 2000 when effort was higher and since effort reduced, catch rates have increased. He commented that this may be due to stocks increasing due to decreased effort. Effort decreased in 2008 and is very low in 2009 to date. Last years effort distribution was fairly consistent throughout the season which was not usual fishing behaviour. Mr Turnbull explained that unstandardised catch rates suggest tiger prawn CPUE is high indicating high biomass. The lower tiger prawn catch in 2008 is likely due to less effort rather than stock abundance.

Final report of the Torres Strait Spatial Management Research Project 2007-09

Mr Turnbull explained that the research project came out of the Alternative Management Strategies Workshop where it was suggested that spatial management using trigger points be utilised to manage the fishery. Options analysed included an East York Island closure to protect the spawning stock and a 12000 day effort closure.

The following were the major points to come out of the research project:

- the stock in the PNG area is a continuation of the stock in the Australian area.
- about 18% of the stock is in the PNG area. This equates to the 200t estimate that has been used for the catch sharing calculations.

- The area around Yorke island has the highest proportion of of tiger prawns and CPUE .
- They found a spp of tiger prawns (japonicus) in the bramble cay area that you don't get elsewhere
- Highest spawning rates are in the deeper water for tiger prawns and shallower areas for endeavour prawns.
- The modelling results indicate that:
 - the proposed spawner closure is of minimal benefit but that the model may be under estimating the benefits of the closure.
 - In the current economic conditions it is unlikely that fishers will use all available effort, the spawner closure tiger would not be activated and the likelihood of overfishing is low.

Mr Harris questioned the necessity of a spawning closure if the fishery is sustainable and there is minimal effort and excellent spawning. Mr Turnbull commented they did discuss reviewing the closure however it was first recommended by industry.

Mr Earle questioned if we should review the TSPF prawn season dates. Mr Turnbull stated that the season closure (1 December to 1 March) protects the fishery from growth overfishing to maximum the size of prawns being caught. The results of the study prove that larger prawns are being recruited into the fishery supporting this closure.

Mr Gillespie questioned if there were any further recommendations for the fishery which had come out of the report. Mr Turnbull commented that the Harvest Strategy Working Group is more likely to review these outcomes for use in the development of the harvest strategy.

Mr Turnbull went onto discuss the models used in stock assessments and explained that they allow us to determine the risk of going above MSY associated with each scenario. This information can then be used to determine what level of risk we are willing to take.

Mr Turnbull summarised by saying that if tiger prawns are managed effectively then the endeavour prawn stock should also be ok.

Future funding for stock assessments

Mr Fava presented this paper and explained that to date the majority of research in the TSPF has been conducted by QPIF. This research has included fishery independent trawl surveys, analysis of the commercial catch and effort data, stock assessments and simulation modelling. He commented that under current arrangements, research is not cost recovered from industry and funding has been sourced from a variety of areas, including internally from QPIF, the previous Torres Strait Cooperative Research Centre (TS CRC) and most recently from DAFF. He added that these previous sources of funding will not be available for next financial year. Mr Fava discussed that future stock assessments would require slightly less work than the current amount of work from DAFF project and that further funding would need to be sourced to allow QPIF to continue these assessments. He explained that PZJA agencies have presented a paper to the PZJA Standing Committee with potential options for funding future stock assessments run by QPIF. He stated that PZJA agencies are also going to apply for some funding from the TSSAC.

He explained that we don't just want funding for the next financial year but want to sure up access to scientific expertise into the future by sourcing ongoing funding.

Mr Earle questioned if we have scientific requirements outlined for the future. Mr Jebreen commented that the harvest strategy development is the short term goal as well as the ongoing information required for the prawn handbook. He explained that we are wanting to increase the economic return to fishermen and look at Maximum Economic Yield as well as Maximum Sustainable Yield.

Mr Jebreen discussed the need to monitor the stocks using logbook data which Mr Turnbull analyses and that this data is also fed into stock assessments and is the base data for setting up the HS for the fishery. He also explained that there will be time required for preparing for MAC and bilateral meetings.

Mr Harris asked if we have considered applying for funding from the Cooperative Research Centre. Mr Fava commented that this was a good idea and perhaps Mr Harris and PZJA agencies can work together to look into this possibility.

ACTION: QPIF to liaise with Mr Harris to determine whether funding can be sourced from the CRC for TSPF research needs.

Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee

Mr Fava explained that this paper is for information of new MAC members to ensure they are aware of the TSSAC and its role. He explained that there have been changes to the terms of reference and structure of the group in past 12 months and that the group review applications for funding to carry out research in the Torres Strait. Mr Fava explained that if industry or the MAC come up with research that is required in the fishery, we can develop proposals to put through the SAC.

Mr Betzel asked when applications are due for the SAC process. Mr Fava explained that it works on an annual funding cycle however applications are accepted any time of year.

TSPF Management Plan Objectives

Mr Lui informed the MAC that the TSPF Harvest Strategy Working Group met yesterday and looked at the objectives of the TSPF Management Plan and he would like the MAC to look at the objectives to note the work that is required over the next 12 months.

My Lui went through the TSPF management plan objectives and discussed the progress on achieving these objectives and where we see the objectives being attained in the future (see Attachment A for the comments against each objective).

Objective 1

Mr Gillepsie questioned the objective in relation to spatial closures and whether we are referring to the current ones success. Mr Turnbull commented that yes we feel the current closures are effective. Mr David commented that it is positive that the TSPF

industry members have agreed to develop the closures themselves however the traditional sector would like additional closures put in place.

Mr Fava questioned if the Environmental Management System (EMS) and Harvest Strategy are dependant on each other as it may limited one of both of their development. Mr Lui Stan commented that the harvest strategy is the priority however the EMS will likely be developed at the same time. Ms Cocking commented that they are not dependant on each other however species to come out of the EMS could be added into the HS or a bycatch work plan to assist their management.

Mr Jebreen asked if there are components that aren't being addressed by Mr Turnbull's MSE that need to be covered elsewhere. Mr Turnbull commented that there are other areas he could explore in terms or alternative management regimes. Mr Lui commented that there are currently a few options being considered however we need further information on these before we can present them to industry. Mr Fava commented that we could develop some changes to management arrangements that can occur in line with the HS development.

The CFGs questioned whether the closures they want implemented around home reefs can be a part of the HS. Mr Lui commented that these do not need to be in the HS but will be a part of a different management arrangements.

Mr Harris discussed the investment warning that is currently in the fishery and whether this was still required. The Chair commented that perhaps Management agencies can determine what criteria AFMA have for having an investment warning in a fishery and whether it is still required in the TSPF. Mr Jebreen commented that we should be managing the fishery in a way that doesn't require an investment warning so it would be very beneficial to look into this.

<p>ACTION: AFMA to determine whether an investment warning is still required for the fishery and the methods of lifting it.</p>
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Objective 2 Economic efficiency

Mr Earle questioned the objective regarding economic efficiency indicators and asked which ones are currently being collected. Mr Turnbull commented that ABARE were collecting data which has shown that economic performance has halved. Mr Jebreen stated that we are looking for economic indicators such as individual operator profitability questioned how this will be funded as it requires a body of work. He suggested wether the CRC may fund this type of work. Mr Woodhams commented that the AFMA economists are looking at these indicators as a part of the development of a harvest strategy for the fishery.

Mr Harris commented that he thought the NPF was moving away from MEY and suggested liaising with David Carter about this. Mr Woodhams commented that whilst there are differences in the economics of the NPF and the TSPF (e.g. the prices received for prawn), there is still valuable information that can be obtained from the work undertaken in the NPF.

ACTION: AFMA to provide information from NPF HS to the next TSPMAC for consideration

The TSPMAC recommended that Mr Galeano attend the next TSPMAC to present information regarding the economics of the fishery.

ACTION: The AFMA economist to attend the next TSPMAC meeting to provide information on the economics of the TSPF.

Objective 3

The MAC questioned the objective regarding compliance risk assessments. Mr Jebreen commented that the compliance risk assessment looks at the compliance risks for the fishery, ranks them and then compliance target the risks/ regulations they see as being the highest risk of not being complied with. Mr Earle commented that the compliance costs in the fishery should be minimal as the risks are minimal.

The MAC went on to discuss the extension program objective. Mr Turnbull commented that the TSPF handbook provides an extension program to the TSPF industry members. Ms Cocking commented that from her understanding the extension program was referring to extending the wider public as well as industry even though the objective specifically referred to TSPF industry members. This would allow the public to see the positive steps the fishery is taking to minimise its impact on the environment. Mr Lui commented that we will need to budget for such correspondence. The MAC agreed that PZJA agencies should develop communication extension programs to provide information to the wider public regarding the positive achievements in the fishery in terms of bycatch.

ACTION: PZJA agencies to develop an article to distribute positive information regarding the TSPF including bycatch reduction for presentation in forums including the TSRA newsletter, the QSIA news letter and the Torres News.

Mr David questioned why CFGs weren't included in the HSWG. Ms Cocking commented that TSRA were invited to be a part of the working group from the beginning, and following the first meeting, the working group had decided that the TSRA does need to be present in future. CFG representatives commented that they should be a part of the working group as well as the TSRA. AFMA agreed that it was important have TSRA at the HSWG and again reiterated that they were invited from the beginning and should be present at future meetings.

Mr David commented that they want to have to 1nm closures around home reefs included in the management plan.

The Chair explained that MAC members need to understand the proper processes for present formal agenda items to the MAC, and that new issues that require a decision cannot be raised at the meeting for approval by the MAC without going through the proper processes including the development of a formal MAC paper for distribution with other MAC papers. This allows proper consideration and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Fisheries Management Instruments

Mr Rowsell presented this item and explained that with the development of the TSPF Management plan, there were a number of old Fisheries Management Notices that had either been partially incorporated into the plan, or rehashed and needed to be put into a new FMIs. He commented that there is no risk to management of the fishery as the new management instruments are amending ones that are already in place and will not be revoked until the new ones are effective. Mr Earle questioned how industry will be notified of the introduction of the instruments as was concerned that they may be enforced before industry are aware they are in place. Ms Cocking commented that a letter is distributed to all TSPF license holders as well as a notification being placed in the Cairns Post, the Torres News and on the PZJA website.

Harvest Strategy

Mr Lui explained that a harvest strategy is currently being developed as required by the management plan and will put into place the decision making processes for determining the TAE for a given season. Mr Lui commented the purpose of the working group yesterday was to develop a work plan and timeline for development of the harvest strategy. Mr Harris commented that industry members had been asking him what had come out of the harvest strategy working group already and asked if an active fishermen would be on the WG. Ms Cocking commented that PZJA agencies attempted to get an active fisherman for the MAC and does have two industry members on the working group, Mr Marshall Betzel and Mr Steve Murphy. Mr Murphy is a current license holder but is not currently fishing in the TSPF and Mr Betzel was chosen to give a link to the MAC.

The MAC discussed the possibility of conducting port visits to liaise with the wider industry regarding the HS and agreed it would be a positive form of communication.

Mr David commented that port visits should also be conducted in the Torres Strait and CFGs would like support from PZJA agencies when undertaking these.

The TSPMAC recommended that a letter be distributed to TSPF industry members to inform them of the development of the HS and processes for providing comment during its development.

ACTION: AFMA to develop a letter to license holders informing them of the process being undertaken to develop the HS and HSWG industry member contact details for consulting.

ACTION: EO to distribute the TSPMAC chairs summary to all TSPF license holders via email as a preference as well as posting it on the PZJA website.

Mr Lui displayed and discussed the draft timeline for the working group:

HSWG meeting

Aug-09

HSWG meeting

Oct-09

1st draft HS to TSPMAC

week 1 Dec

09

Industry consultation period	December/Jan
HSWG meeting	Jan/Feb 09
Port Visit consultation if required	early
2nd draft of HS to TSPMAC	1/05/2009
HSWG if required (teleconference?)	
HS to PZJA Standing Committee	Jun-10
HS to the PZJA	Jul-10

External leasing

Mr Fava presented the agenda item on external leasing in the fishery. He commented that PZJA agencies are looking for direction in relation to external leasing from the MAC. Mr Fava explained the methods of “external leasing” that are currently occurring in the fishery. Mr Gillespie commented that agencies have seen it as a positive step for industry and have never understood why past TSPMAC members have opposed it. Mr Fava reiterated that there had been concern in the past that QPIF were pushing for people to use external leasing arrangements and however this is not the case and there has been no policy shift pushing them to promote methods of externally leasing, they were simply providing information when requested by industry members.

Mr Earle questioned why this issue was first raised. Mr Fava commented that people had had concerns that the current arrangements being used were illegal and wanted clarity on how they people were doing it, however the methods being used are perfectly legal and are a business transaction. Mr Harris commented that around 7 industry members want external leasing formally introduced in the fishery and is of the opinion that other license holders in the fishery should also be consulted. Mr Jebreen reiterated that PZJA agencies would like clear direction from industry.

Mr Betzel suggested that a paper be produced detailing the risks associated with the current “external leasing” arrangements being used by license holders in the fishery and how formal external leasing would be facilitated by the PZJA if it was introduced.

Ms Cocking commented that PZJA agencies had discussed conducting an industry survey questioning whether people are for or against external leasing, similar to the one conducted many years ago.

Mr Earle questioned how we will deal with a lack of response from people as often people do not complete surveys.

Mr Jebreen suggested that the letter specify the preferred course of action which will be the default if no response is received. He also commented that PZJA agencies will need to consider the management arrangements such as the maximum boat size rule and how this will effect leasing. For example if industry members that have a large boat leased out their license, this rule would prevent them putting their boat back on the license at the end could not put their boat back on it when they get the license back. These issues would need to be considered before the letter is written to ensure that external leasing is not in any way discriminatory.

Mr Jebreen asked it to be noted that this is such an issue at present due to the high licensing costs and less involvement in the fishery.

Mr Fava commented that we need to ensure industry members understand that we cannot prohibit the informal arrangements currently being utilised as it is an independent business decision however formal arrangements would likely limit these other arrangements due to their risk.

The TSPMAC agreed that a letter be developed for distribution to industry which will include:

- d) information on the current external leasing arrangements and their risks;*
- e) how formal leasing arrangements would be facilitated by PZJA agencies;*
- f) a questionnaire asking if license holders are for or against external leasing and stating that a lack of response will be considered a vote for external leasing.*

ACTION: QPIF and AFMA develop a letter for distribution to industry which will include:

- a) information on the current external leasing arrangements and their risks;**
- b) how formal leasing arrangements would be facilitated by PZJA agencies;**
- c) a questionnaire asking if license holders are for or against external leasing and stating that a lack of response will be considered a vote for external leasing.**

Ghost nets and marine debris – Industry code of conduct

Ms Cocking presented the paper regarding ghost nets in the TSPF. She explained that at TSPMAC 6, the MAC agreed to develop an industry code of conduct to address the responsible disposal of marine debris and nets in the TSPF. She explained that the issue of ghost nets was first raised when CFGs representatives presented a piece of prawn trawl net to the PZJA 22 stakeholder forum. Ms Cocking explained that AFMA had begun drafting the code of conduct and now needed assistance from the TSPMAC industry members to further develop the document.

Ms Cocking went on to discuss the request at TSPMAC 6 to seek avenues for surveying and assessing the extent of trawl rubbish around York and Coconut Islands, including attaining a quote for the removal of the rubbish.

She commented that PZJA agencies are looking to have the identified sites surveyed during a scoping survey potentially using underwater trawl cameras during a compliance patrol occurring in the area to minimise costs. She added that significant engagement from the CFG representatives will be required to ensure the initial camera survey is undertaken in the correct area.

Mr Jebreen questioned whether the scoping would actually provide any information about the true problem of marine debris and suggested developing a funding application with two parts, the first to look at the problem and the second to get rid of the rubbish.

Mr Fava questioned if the people from the traditional sector may be able to conduct surveys however added if we have to pay people for the surveys, it leads to OH&S problems. Mr Morsby commented if photo gear was provided, they could get some traditional inhabitants to do the surveys. Mr David asked if we could just use footage from CSIRO's past projects. Charles commented the problem is wider than Yorke Island and we could use the CSIRO information along with the survey footage to help determine the full extent of the problem.

ACTION: AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry members to develop the draft code of conduct for circulation OOS and then approval at the next TSPMAC.

Mr Lui asked how we would enforce a code of conduct. Mr Gillespie commented that we could have license conditions to abide by the code of conduct. Mr Peddell explained that a document of *Approved Arrangements Aboard Vessels* is already developed and signed off and we may be able to add the code of conduct to this.

Mr Earle commented that we need to ensure the code is well communicated to industry and put it in the handbook. It should be communicated at every possible opportunity including port meetings that are arranged for other reasons. He commented that a code of conduct isn't enough and we need to retrain industry, as their awareness is the key to the success of such documents.

Mr Peddell questioned what will be expected from compliance in regards to enforcing the code of conduct. Mr Jebreen commented that it is already illegal to litter so this could be part of enforcement however Mr Peddell commented that you have to be caught doing this to be prosecuted. Mr Jacobsen commented reducing littering will improve the appearance of the fishery and thus could improve marketability.

Ms Cocking discussed some of the funding options that may be available for conducting surveys into marine debris including caring for our country, the TSSAC and the threat abatement plan for marine debris. Mr Fava commented that the SAC won't have enough money to provide for such a large project and suggested that the TSRA may like to apply for funding as they have been good at getting funding for such things in the past.

Ms Cocking questioned how we will know how much funding to apply for for the removal of the marine debris before we have scoped it. Mr Jebreen stated that we may not be able to cost the second part of the project until the first part is conducted and that QPIF will assist in preparing the application.

ACTION: PZJA agencies to liaise with TSRA regarding developing a funding proposal for scoping the level of marine debris in the TSPF and costs of removal. The proposal will include a two tiered study:

- **scoping the extent of trawl rubbish; and**
- **removing the trawl rubbish.**

Mr Pearson questioned what will be occurring with the wreck of the vessel that sank recently in the Torres Straits. Mr Peddell commented that they are currently investigating how to remove it.

Survey of Turtle Excluder Devices, Bycatch Reduction Devices and Try-Nets

Ms Cocking explained that at TSPMAC 6, the MAC reviewed a survey of BRDs and try nets and agreed that the survey should be reviewed by TSPMAC industry members and other experts to ensure it is suitable for distributing to industry. She commented that since the MAC, the survey had been reviewed by Mr David Brewer a gear and bycatch specialist, gear experts within AFMA and the new TSPMAC industry members, and the amended version was attached to this paper. She also explained that the MAC had agreed that a funding proposal should be developed to conduct a technical review of the BRDs being used in the fishery however the MAC should reconsider whether this is actually necessary at this time considering other research priorities. She added that there are past studies which we could draw data on first.

Mr Gillespie questioned whether any industry members had attempted to complete the survey as this can be the best way of determining if it is written well.

ACTION: AFMA to liaise with QPIF to get comments on the BRD survey

ACTION: AFMA to get a small number of industry members to complete the survey to see whether it is user friendly, make appropriate amendments and then distribute the survey to TSPF license holders.

Ms Cocking commented that at TSPMAC 6, the MAC agreed that compliance should help administer the surveys and questioned Mr Peddell if they would have the resources to do this. He commented that they wont be able to conduct the surveys but could deliver them and provide some advice.

The TSPMAC agreed it would be useful to get more information from other fisheries regarding BRD effectiveness instead of conducting a technical study at this time.

Mr David questioned if we can have information provided regarding the reductions in bycatch in the fishery over the years using BRDs. Mr Earle commented that the MAC should recommend that the bycatch information be compiled and provided in a report. The MAC agreed that it would be easier to use current studies that compare a BRD to no BRD rather than doing this again for the TSPF.

The MAC discussed whether observer data can be used for this and Mr Turnbull commented that it will be difficult to as we need a very long time series because there is no control to compare the use of BRDs to.

ACTION: AFMA management to liaise with the observer section to get a report on the bycatch that is caught in the TSPF.

The TSPMAC agreed that PZJA agencies should explore the potential of putting a bycatch report in the TSPF handbook.

ACTION: AFMA to assess whether a summary of bycatch data can be put in the TSPF handbook for the 2010 season.

PZJA decision making process

Mr Lui explained that at TSPMAC 6, the MAC requested that an industry member be involved in developing a PZJA decision making protocol paper however past TSPMAC industry members decided not to be a part of the process. Ms Cocking explained that the request for a protocol paper stemmed from a meeting held between past TSPMAC industry members and high level PZJA agency officers where industry members had been concerned with the PZJA decision making processes after the MAC, as they felt the MAC opinion was not considered.

Mr Harris questioned the purpose of the PZJA Standing Committee. Mr Lui commented that they oversee decision making processes for all of the fisheries before they go to the PZJA. Mr Gillespie added that because the PZJA includes very high level Government officials and doesn't meet that often, the Standing Committee reviews recommendations to ensure that all of the repercussions have been considered before it is presented to the PZJA for final approval.

Mr Gillespie questioned whether it is a bureaucratic issue rather than a MAC issue. Mr Harris commented that it may be useful for industry to know how the decision making processes occur as it is complex and difficult to understand. Mr Lui questioned if we then need a flow chart rather than a policy paper. Mr Fava commented that the decision making processes are already outlined in the handbook and thus there is little need to develop something else.

The TSPMAC agreed that the Prawn handbook provided the appropriate information to industry and no further paper needed to be developed.

Budget update

Mr Lui explained that a paper of the draft TSPF 2010/11 budget was presented at an OOS meeting and there were 3 options for the budget depending on which cost recovery impact statement (CRIS) was used by AFMA. He explained that the CRIS details what will be funded by Government and what will be recovered from levies within AFMA.

He explained that AFMA are still determining which CRIS will be used for the 2009/10 budget and until this time we will not have the final budget for presentation to the MAC. Ms Cocking explained that the final budget will likely be presented at an OOS meeting of the MAC with the levies for noting later in the year.

Independent chair

Ms Cocking explained that past TSPMAC industry members requested that AFMA estimate the costs which would be associated with hiring an independent chair for the TSPMAC. She explained that costs were estimated at \$8,526 which covered expenses

and sitting fees. She explained that the current chair, Mr Gillespie is currently on long service leave and is unlikely to return to QPIF after this so he is in essence independent anyway.

TSPMAC self assessment process

Ms Cocking explained that under FMP1, the MAC is required to undertake a self assessment process annually. She explained that given the new MAC, it would be inappropriate to conduct one at this time, and as such, the MAC should note the assessment criteria and decide on a date in the next 12 months it undertake the assessment.

The TSPMAC agreed that a self assessment should be undertaken at the first meeting in 2010.

The MAC went on to discuss the methods of ensuring information from the MAC is being disseminated to the TSPF license holders. Mr Betzel commented that he planned on writing a short summary report from the TSPMAC industry members to be provided to the TSPF license holders. Ms Cocking commented that she could distribute this via email on behalf of the TSPMAC industry members.

ACTION: TSPMAC industry members to write a brief report from industry regarding the MAC for the EO to distribute.

TSPMAC industry observer status on the TSSAC

The EO questioned whether industry would still like observer status on the Scientific Advisory Committee as no one had been attending. They MAC agreed that it would be worthwhile to keep the status as they would like to attend in the future.

Sponge farming

Mr Morsby presented information on the sponge farm project in the Torres Strait. He commented they are hoping to close the nearby areas to traffic to protect the sponge farming infrastructure and explained that there would be selected areas that anchorage would be allowed which have been agreed to by the local communities.

Mr Morsby explained that the research project is funded by the TSRA and has been in development for 5 years and is a part of the economic development plan.

ACTION: TSPMAC executive officer to liaise with TSRA regarding the development of a full paper regarding the sponge farms for the next TSPMAC meeting.

Mr Harris questioned if there will be a process for consulting industry regarding the loss of trawl grounds for these farms. Mr Earle added that industry will need to consider the issues associated with these farms and closures, liaise with broader industry and then with the CFGs. He questioned if license holders are currently receiving information on this issue and suggested sending a letter to educate them.

ACTION: TSPMAC industry members to include information regarding the sponge farm in the industry report from the TSPMAC.

Next meeting dates

The MAC agreed that the dates of the next TSPMAC meeting would be 8-9 December 2009.

Close

Mr Gillespie thanked the MAC for their input and once again welcomed the new members.

Action reference number	Action	Date item was added	responsibility	Status
TSPMAC 8.1	DAFF and TSPMAC EO to draft a letter to AQIS on behalf of the TSPMAC Chair which will inform them of the starting date of next season and ask whether their quarantine database will be up and running by the start of the season. The letter should also request that if possible, it would be useful for the system to be in by 1 March if not by end of 2008.	TSPMAC 8	DAFF and TSPMAC EO	
TSPMAC 8.2	DAFF to update the PZJA historic decision record with new PZJA decisions as they are made and provide to AFMA intermittently for updating on the PZJA website.	TSPMAC 8	DAFF	
TSPMAC 8.3	AFMA to upload the PZJA historic decision record to the PZJA website	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.4	AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry members regarding a CMO program to develop an agenda item for presentation at TSPMAC 9.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.5	AFMA to explore the methods that could be used to place traditional inhabitant observers in the TSPF including legislative	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.6	TSRA to investigate the interest from Islanders in being a part of an observer program	TSPMAC 8	TSRA	
TSPMAC 8.7	TSRA to liaise with CFGs to review list of species of interest and observer program objectives in general and provide comments to AFMA.	TSPMAC 8	TSRA	
TSPMAC 8.8	QPIF to draft a letter to DEWHA regarding the level of observer coverage in the TSPF, explaining that the current percentage of effort is on par with other Australian Fisheries and explaining that we are undertaking a process to increase temporal and spatial coverage of observers to improve data collection. The letter should be sent to the EO for distribution to the MAC OOS for comment.	TSPMAC 8	QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.9	AFMA to draft a letter to industry asking them to commit to taking observers	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.10	determine if costs can be rolled over into the next season if they don't use all of their days.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	

TSPMAC 8.11	TSPMAC industry members to write a letter to TSPF license holders explaining the need to increase observer uptake spatially and temporally throughout the fishery in an attempt to reduce the number of actual observed fishing days whilst maintaining statistically robust data collection.	TSPMAC 8	TSPMAC industry members	
TSPMAC 8.12	QPIF to undertake a review of the level of effort and efficiency of the compliance program and develop an options paper for presentation to the PZJA Standing Committee.	TSPMAC 8	QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.13	The TSRA to develop a paper for TSPMAC 9 detailing the home reef areas which they would like excluded from fishing and providing detail of the past agreements which were made between CFGs and TSPF industry members and where these agreements were made.	TSPMAC 8	TSRA	
TSPMAC 8.14	QPIF to determine whether VMS can be used to see who is fishing in the home reef areas and who this information can be provided to.	TSPMAC 8	QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.15	QPIF to liaise with Mr Harris to determine whether funding can be sourced from the CRC for TSPF research needs.	TSPMAC 8	QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.16	AFMA to determine whether an investment warning is still required for the fishery and the methods of lifting it.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.17	AFMA management to liaise with the observer section to get a report on the bycatch that is caught in the TSPF.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.18	AFMA to assess whether a summary of bycatch data can be put in the TSPF handbook for the 2010 season.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.19	the information from NPF HS be considered and presented to the next MAC	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.20	The AFMA economist to attend the next TSPMAC meeting to provide information on the economics of the TSPF.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.21	PZJA agencies to develop an article to distribute positive information regarding the TSPF including bycatch reduction for presentation in forums including the TSRA newsletter, the QSIA news letter and the Torres News.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA & QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.22	AFMA to develop a letter to license holders informing them of the	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	

	process being undertaken to develop the HS and HSWG industry member			
TSPMAC 8.23	EO to distribute the TSPMAC chairs summary to all TSPF license holders via email as a preference as well as posting it on the PZJA website.	TSPMAC 8	TSPMAC EO	
TSPMAC 8.24	QPIF and AFMA develop a letter for distribution to industry which will include: g) information on the current external leasing arrangements and their risks; h) how formal leasing arrangements would be facilitated by PZJA agencies; i) a questionnaire asking if license holders are for or against external leasing and stating that a lack of response will be considered a vote for external leasing.	TSPMAC 8	QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.25	AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry members to develop the draft code of conduct for circulation OOS and then approval at the next TSPMAC.	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.26	PZJA agencies to liaise with TSRA regarding developing a funding proposal for scoping the level of marine debris in the TSPF and costs of removal. The proposal will include a two tiered study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scoping the extent of trawl rubbish; and • removing the trawl rubbish. 	TSPMAC 8	TSRA & QPIF	
TSPMAC 8.27	AFMA to liaise with QPIF to get comments on the BRD survey	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.28	AFMA to get a small number of industry members to complete the survey to see whether it is user friendly, make appropriate amendments and then distribute the survey to TSPF license holders	TSPMAC 8	AFMA	
TSPMAC 8.29	TSPMAC industry members to write a brief report from industry regarding the MAC for the EO to distribute.	TSPMAC 8	TSPMAC industry	

TSPMAC 8.30	TSPMAC executive officer to liaise with TSRA regarding the development of a full paper regarding the sponge farms for the next TSPMAC meeting.	TSPMAC 8	TSPMAC EO	
TSPMAC 8.31	TSPMAC industry members to include information regarding the sponge farm in the industry report from the TSPMAC.	TSPMAC 8	TSPMAC industry	

Ongoing or incomplete action items from previous meetings

Action reference number	Action	Date item was added	responsibility	Status
TSPMAC OOS 070509 1.3	TSPF Industry members to develop a proposal for Government to pay 25% (the PNG portion) of the budget which benefit this sector of the fishery.	TSPMAC OOS 070509	Industry	Incomplete. Industry members will develop a paper : TSPMAC 9.
TSPMAC OOS 070509 1.5	AFMA to provide a summary of some comments from other MACs regarding the CRIS at TSPMAC 8.	TSPMAC OOS 070509	AFMA	Incomplete. Comments cannot be provided at this time as the process is still pending.
TSPMAC 6.3	TSPMAC to undertake an annual self assessment against PZJA indicators outlined in PZJA FMP No. 1 (May 2008).	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC	Ongoing. Self assessment is not thought to be appropriate at this time considering the change over of MAC members. The MAC agreed to conduct a self assessment at TSPMAC 10 in May 2010.
TSPMAC 6.6	AFMA to draft fishery specific objectives for the TSPF observer program which include scientific, cultural and social objectives and circulate these to the TSPMAC out of session for comment.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. At TSPMAC 8 the MAC agreed for AFMA to liaise with CFGs, TSRA and TSPMAC industry members to finalise objectives
TSPMAC 6.7	The TSPMAC Executive Officer to ask industry representatives if they would like any other fishery specific objectives to be considered for the TSPF observer program.	TSPMAC 6	TSPMAC EO	Ongoing. At TSPMAC 8 the MAC agreed for AFMA to liaise with TSPMAC industry members to finalise objectives
TSPMAC 6.15	DAFF to determine whether PNG caught product will need to be clearly marked with the jurisdiction in which it was caught.	TSPMAC 6	DAFF	Ongoing. This action item is awaiting finalisation of import rules

				by Biosecurity Australia and AQIS
TSPMAC 6.16	DAFF to draft a letter to AQIS on behalf of the TSPMAC Chair which will inform them of the starting date of next season and ask whether their quarantine database will be up and running by the start of the season. The letter should also request that if possible, it would be useful for the system to be in by 1 March if not by end of 2008.	TSPMAC 6	DAFF	Incomplete. As AQIS are within DAFF, DAFF have suggested that the letter be written by another PZJA agency if it is so required. The MAC agreed the letter should be cowritten by DAFF and the TSPMAC EO on behalf of the TSPMAC Chair.
TSPMAC 6.17	AFMA to add the higher risk species from the CSIRO seabed mapping project to the “species of interest” list for additional data to be collected during the scientific observer program.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. The AFMA ERA section are questioning whether the high risk species list is the most suitable list for observers to collect data on. AFMA are reviewing to see whether another list would be more appropriate. See TSPMAC paper 2.4 for more detail.
TSPMAC 6.18	AFMA to work with the TSRA and AFMA communications section to consider a method of disseminating the information from Mr Turnbull and Dr Pitcher’s reports to the indigenous sector.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. Work has commenced on this issue is ongoing, more information will be provided at TSPMAC #8.
TSPMAC 6.29	AFMA to apply a 3 tiered approach to the TED, BRD and try net survey, which includes; 4. sending out surveys to all license holders and wait two weeks for a response; 5. following up surveys with a phone call offering phone surveys; 6. QB&FP and AFMA observers to conduct surveys whilst in the field.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Ongoing. AFMA is finalising the BRD survey and will undertake the survey in early 2009.
TSPMAC 6.30	Develop a proposal for consideration by the Torres Strait Scientific Advisory Committee to conduct a technical review of some of the Bycatch Reduction Devices used on vessels operating in the TSPF.	TSPMAC 6	AFMA	Incomplete – no longer an action item. The TSPMAC agreed that this research is not a current priority and previous research from other fisheries should be drawn on before looking to do a TSPF research project.