

Sustainable Fisheries Strategy

2017–2027

Satellite tracking on all boats

Why is vessel tracking required on all commercial boats?

The Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027 paves the way for Queensland to have a world-class fisheries management system.

The strategy outlines 33 actions to be delivered across 10 reform areas with set targets to be achieved by 2020 and 2027.

The strategy commits to having vessel tracking on all commercial fishing boats by the end of 2020.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has been tracking commercial fishing vessels for compliance and monitoring purposes since 1996. Vessel tracking technology is currently employed in the east coast otter trawl fishery, the Beche-de-mer fishery, some net fisheries, and across many commercial fisheries in other jurisdictions.

What is the purpose of vessel tracking?

Vessel tracking helps us carry out real-time monitoring of commercial fishing fleets.

Data from vessel tracking is used to:

- monitor quota in near real time (e.g. deducting fishing days from individual's quota);
- monitor compliance with area and seasonal closures (including marine park zones);
- provide intelligence and evidence for investigations;
- help validate logbook data on where and when fishing occurred;
- provide fishing effort data that is used in stock assessments to estimate the biomass of a fish stock;
- help inform fishery management changes that may be needed.

Will recreational fishers be required to have vessel tracking?

Licensed fishing charter operators will be required to have vessel tracking by 2020.

Consideration is also being given to requiring vessel tracking for the recreational sector under certain situations, for example repeat offenders.

How will you protect the privacy of my data?

The department respects the privacy of commercial fishers' data and treats this information as confidential.

Individual information collected is used for internal fisheries management purposes and is shared only with the compliance partners (marine parks) under strict conditions.

Aggregated data is used to publicly report on the status of Queensland fisheries and is made available for public inquiry.

How will my information be used?

Vessel tracking provides an independent source of information, which can be cross-checked with logbook data to validate fishing location and effort.

Vessel tracking also collects finer scale information than that provided in logbooks. This finer scale information provides a better understanding of how fisheries are performing. For example, fine scale information on the location of fishing effort can also be used to improve the accuracy of ecological risk assessments, especially where key risks relate to fishing effort (like eastern king prawn in Figure 1). This improved level of understanding assists in maintaining export accreditations under the Commonwealth Government *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

When will vessel tracking be introduced to my fishery?

The strategy commits to having vessel tracking units installed on all commercial vessels by 2020, with a priority to install units on net, line and crab commercial fishing vessels by the end of 2018. This includes support vessels such as dories or tenders.

How will the program be rolled out?

Licence holders will be provided a list of approved vessel tracking units for each fishery from which they can select, purchase and have installed.

What types of vessel tracking units will be available for smaller boats?

Vessel tracking technologies are rapidly changing.

With technological advances, the size and cost of vessel tracking units has reduced significantly compared to when they were first introduced in the trawl fishery in Queensland in the 1990s

The department is reviewing a number of units prior to the rolling out the program in 2018.

The department will also be working with innovators over coming months to ensure smaller, more robust vessel monitoring units suitable for smaller boats are available.

When will the vessel tracking trial commence?

The trial of new vessel tracking units has commenced.

The trial covers vessels operating within the Gulf of Carpentaria, south-east Queensland and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

What units are being trialled?

A small unit (Spot Trace) is being trialled on a range of vessels in the crab, net, line and charter fisheries.

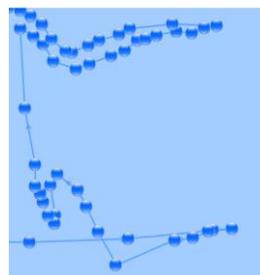
Other units such as the Skywave, Navman Thrane and Thrane, and Furuno are being considered.

An approved list of units will be available in early 2018, based on the results of the trials.



Spot Trace

- Size: 51.3 x 68mm.
- Weight: 87.9g



A typical track of a crabbing operation using the Spot Trace at 2½ minute polling.

Will the rules be the same as for trawl?

The department is reviewing the current rules for installing and maintaining vessel tracking units to ensure they are practical and achievable for smaller boats and fishing operations that use multiple boats. The rules that apply in the trawl fishery may not be appropriate for other fisheries.

In the event of the unit malfunctioning there will be provisions to manually report fishing locations.

The department is committed to working with industry to ensure that the rules are practical and achievable for smaller inshore boats.

Draft rules will be provided to industry for feedback before the end of the year.

Who will pay for vessel tracking?

Like the benefits, the costs of introducing vessel tracking into additional fisheries will be shared between government and industry.

The department and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority have pooled funding to help subsidise initial set up costs including unit purchase.

A total of \$2.2 million will be available to help industry with the costs.

This will most likely be through a reimbursement process where licence holders provide a receipt.

Details of the subsidy will be provided to industry later this year.

What are the costs?

All possible attempts will be made to minimise costs for industry.

One of the units being trialled costs around \$230 with a monthly cost of around \$30 to \$40 for sending location data. The cost of units vary and are dependent on the features of the unit. Polling cost also vary depending on the polling frequency, satellite network and airtime provider.

Many other industries including the trawl fishery incur these management costs e.g. shipping, transport etc. It is part of normal business operations.

Why should fishers contribute to the costs?

Fish stocks are community owned resources. Commercial fishers are licensed to access these resources to supply food while extracting profit and generating employment.

In doing so, fishers are required to provide information about the fishing activity to ensure our fisheries remains sustainable.

How to keep up to date?

To keep up to date, visit the department's website www.daf.qld.gov.au, follow Fisheries Queensland on Facebook and sign-up for Catch news for the latest information and opportunities to get involved.

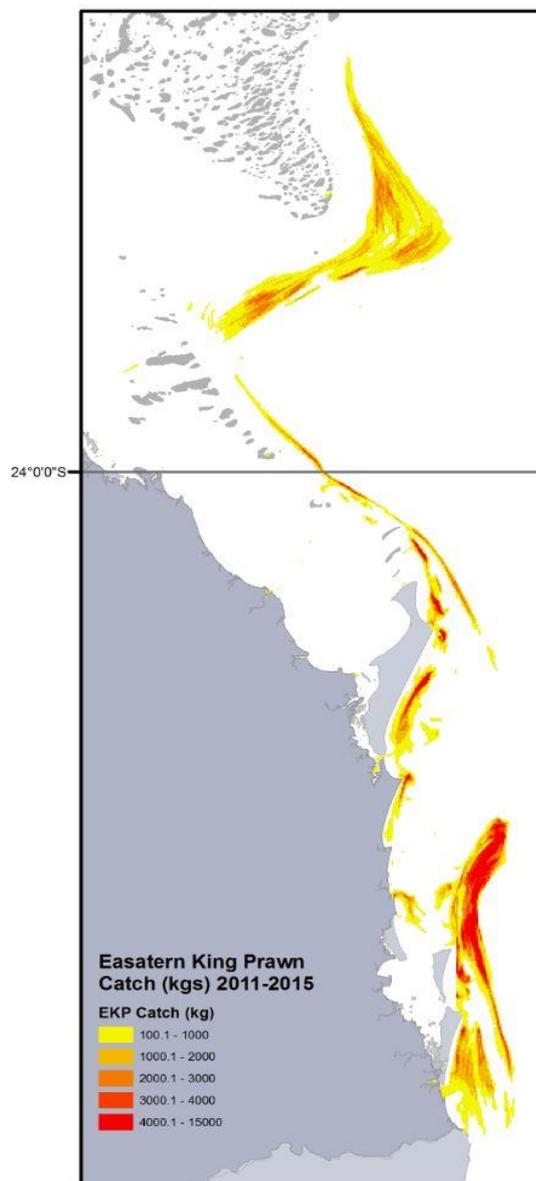


Figure 1: Example of how vessel tracking data is combined with logbook information to provide finer scale information, without compromising individual's private information.