

# Commercial trawl fishery (fin fish)

## Commercial fishing rules in Queensland

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From **1 September 2021**, the commercial trawl fishery (fin fish) will be managed under the *Queensland stout whiting fishery harvest strategy*.

### General

- The commercial trawl fishery (fin fish) targets stout whiting (*Sillago robusta*) between Sandy Cape on Fraser Island and the New South Wales border.
- The fishery operates under the T4 symbol. The coordinates of the T4 fishery area are available in Schedule 8 of the Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) Regulation 2019.
- Catch is quota-managed under a total allowable commercial catch (TACC) for prescribed whiting, which also allows licence holders to retain red spot whiting (*Sillago flindersi*). The TACC is allocated amongst individual transferable quota units.
- The TACC is adjusted according to the decision rules in the harvest strategy each year. The current TACC can be found in the Fisheries Quota Declaration 2019.
- Licence holders are permitted to retain other by-product species, including yellowtail scad (*Trachurus novazelandiae*) and goatfish (Mullidae family) under individual non-transferable quota units and squid, octopus, cuttlefish and threadfin bream under trip limits.
- Licence holders are also permitted to retain Moreton Bay bugs and Balmain bugs with no catch limits in place.
- The fishing year runs from 1 January to 31 December.
- A number of other spatial and temporal closures also apply to the fishery through legislation or permit conditions.
- Measurements of vessels used in commercial fisheries are determined by national marine safety requirements under the National Standard for Commercial Vessels – for more information, visit [amsa.gov.au](http://amsa.gov.au).
- Other Australian Government requirements include displaying unique identifying numbers, safety management plans, safety equipment and licensing – for more information, visit [amsa.gov.au](http://amsa.gov.au).

### Equipment

- There is a maximum total net length of 88 m (combined head rope, bottom rope and all other ropes attached to the net).
- The minimum mesh size is 38 mm.
- Permitted species may be taken only by using **otter trawl** or **Danish seine** apparatus that complies with fisheries regulations.

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- **Otter trawl** restrictions include:
    - maximum sweep length of 128 m
    - maximum vessel length of 20 m
    - compliant turtle excluder device must be on all otter trawl nets.
  - **Danish seine** restrictions include:
    - maximum haul rope length of 2500 m
    - deployed nets must be marked with a floating buoy
    - maximum vessel length of 25 m.

## Fishing operation

- An approved vessel tracking unit must be:
  - installed as per the department's *Vessel tracking installation and maintenance standard*
  - installed on vessel/s and confirmed working prior to commencement of a fishing trip.
- The licence holder must have a contract with an approved supplier for collection of vessel tracking positional data.
- The licence holder is responsible for keeping vessel tracking and contact details up to date on FishNet Secure.
- Fishers must comply with marine park and go-slow zoning – for more information, visit [gbrmpa.qld.gov.au](http://gbrmpa.qld.gov.au) and/or [des.qld.gov.au](http://des.qld.gov.au).

## Licensing

- Fishers must have a primary commercial fishing licence, at least one T4 symbol and sufficient quota to operate in the fishery.
- The person in charge of an operation must hold a commercial fisher licence to operate under a primary commercial fishing licence.
- A range of transactions can be completed online using FishNet Secure (e.g. quota temporary transfers, registering vessel tracking units to primary commercial fishing licences, accessing quota activity statements and registering change of personal contact details).
- Fees for licences and quota are invoiced in advance (i.e. before the fishing season starts or before the licence can be used).
- The licence holder is responsible for keeping contact details up to date on FishNet Secure.
- You may require accreditation with Safe Food in order to legally sell or supply your product in Queensland – for more information, visit [safefood.qld.gov.au](http://safefood.qld.gov.au).

## Reporting requirements

In summary, fishers must:

- report trip/catch notices for all catch to which a TACC applies via approved means (e.g. Automated Integrated Voice Response system)
- complete catch and effort logbooks and the threatened, endangered and protected animal logbook
- complete catch disposal records for the disposal of all catch to which a TACC applies
- keep sale dockets for all wholesale sales for 5 years, including to businesses involved in the processing and storage of fisheries resources.

For more information on reporting requirements, visit [fisheries.qld.gov.au](http://fisheries.qld.gov.au).