

Turtle excluder devices

Technical information guide for commercial fishers and net makers



Australian Government
Fisheries Research and
Development Corporation



Queensland
Government



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About this guide

Fisheries Queensland, part of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, has developed this guide to provide technical information on turtle excluder devices (TEDs).

TEDs allow for the effective escape of turtles and other large non-target species (including sea sponges, sharks and large rays) that interact with trawl gear.

This guide has been developed to ensure TEDs are made to a consistent standard—for fitting to trawl nets used throughout the Queensland east coast trawl fishery.

The guide and the standardised design specifications contained within it will help both net makers (to construct TEDs) and fishers (to fit and use TEDs). This will ensure TEDs effectively reduce bycatch (non-target species) while also retaining catches of target and permitted species.

Introduction

The appropriate use of recognised TEDs has significantly improved the escape of bycatch from codends of trawl nets. The benefits of using TEDs are improved product quality through reduced levels of soft and broken prawns, reduced handling (sorting) of bycatch and increased water flow through commercial trawl nets, which can lead to less drag and improved fuel economy.

Legislation requirements

A recognised TED and a recognised bycatch reduction device (BRD) are mandatory in all otter trawl nets of vessels fishing in the Queensland east coast trawl fishery.

BRDs are also required in all beam trawl nets of vessels fishing in the Queensland east coast trawl fishery.

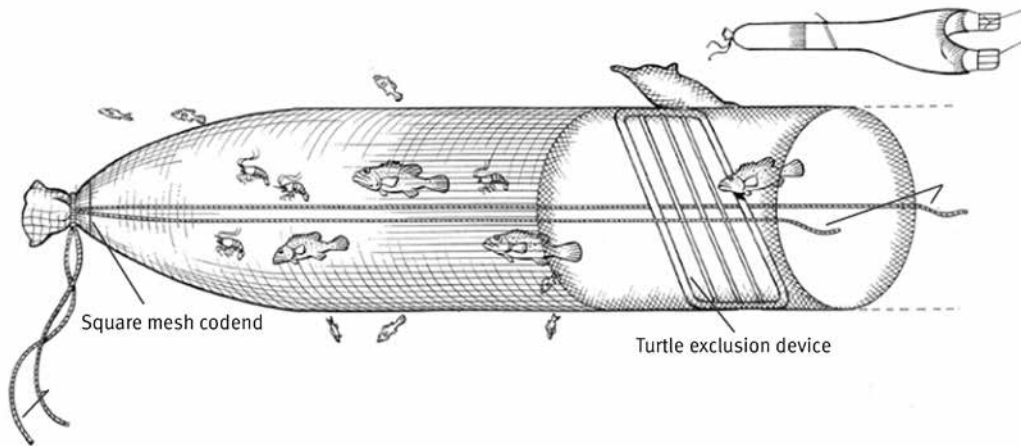


Figure 1. Artist's impression of a TED and a square mesh codend configuration within a net

TED specifications

Grids

TED grids can be any shape but must have the following specifications:

- at least 81 cm wide and at least 81 cm high
- vertical bars extending from the top to the bottom of the grid
- vertical bars no more than 12 cm apart (inside measurement)
- constructed of rigid material
- constructed as a single solid unit with no hinged or collapsible parts
- attached to the entire circumference of the net (preferably with rope or twine)
- installed and maintained at a 30–55° angle in the net.

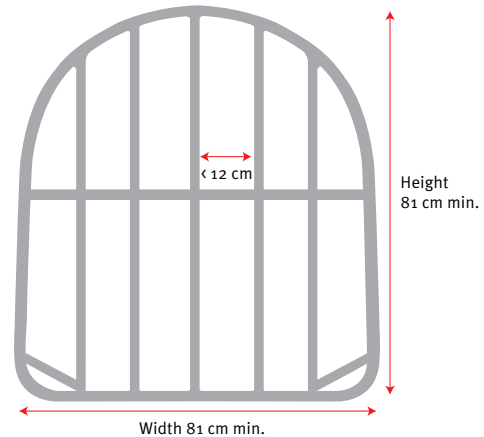


Figure 2. Minimum external TED grid dimensions and maximum bar spacing dimension

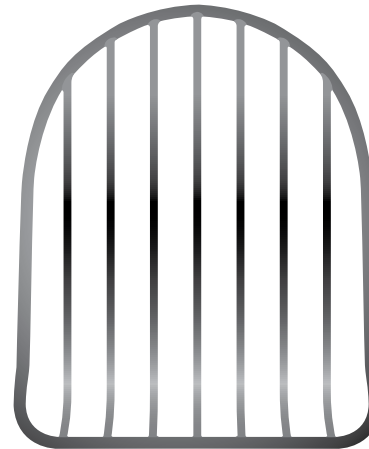


Figure 3. A typical stainless steel TED