

Line fishery (reef)

Commercial fishing rules in Queensland

Since 8 April 2020, the reef line fishery has been managed under the *Queensland reef line fishery harvest strategy*. From **1 September 2021**, the following commercial fishing rules will apply.

General

- The reef line fishery operates on the Queensland east coast, largely within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.
- To operate in the fishery, a primary commercial fishing licence must have an RQ fishery symbol and one of the following line fishery symbols:
 - L1 –line fishery (other than Great Barrier Reef region)
 - L2 or L3 – line fishery (reef)
 - L8 – line fishery (multiple hook – east coast).
- The fishery is quota-managed with three quota categories coral trout (CT), red throat emperor (RTE) and other species (OS).
- The total allowable commercial catch (TACC) for each category is adjusted according to the *Reef line fishery harvest strategy*, and the current TACC can be found in the Fisheries Quota Declaration 2019.
- Each TACC is split into individual transferable quota units, which commercial fishers must hold to operate in the fishery.
- The reef line fishery quota season runs from 1 July to 30 June each year.
- The commercial fishery area is defined by the relevant line symbol on the licence (see Figure 1) or refer to the Fisheries (Commercial Fisheries) Regulation 2019.

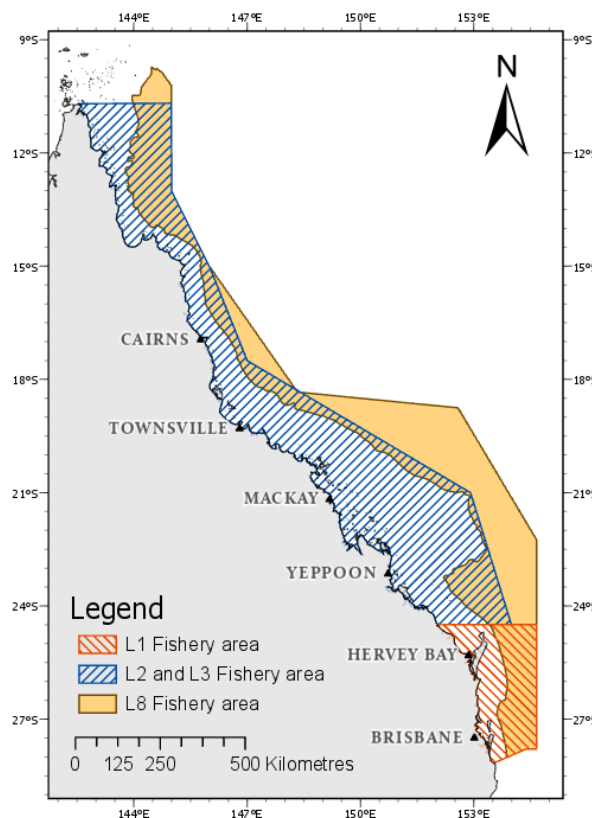


Figure 1: Boundaries of the fishery areas

Closures

- Two five-day annual spawning closures apply to the fishery around the moon phase in October and November – for more information, visit fisheries.qld.gov.au.

Equipment

- Reef fish may only be taken by using fishing lines with additional restrictions depending on the line symbol being used:
 - **L1, L2 or L3** – maximum of 3 fishing lines at the same time and a total of 6 hooks or lures attached, per person
 - **L8** – a drop line or bottom set line can be used, but not at the same time
 - a person must be within 100 m of a line or group of lines while they are in use
 - maximum of 6 drop lines with a float and up to 50 hooks attached to each line
 - maximum of 3 bottom set lines and 300 hooks with a float attached to the end of each line
 - floats must be solid, light-coloured and no less than 30 cm in any dimension.
- Primary vessels in the reef line fishery can be up to 25 m long and service up to 7 tender vessels, except L3, which may have 1 tender. Each tender may be up to 10 m in length.
- 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.
- Other Australian Government requirements include displaying unique identifying numbers, safety management plans, safety equipment and licensing – for more information, visit amsa.gov.au.

Fishing operation

- The legal size limits and form requirements for reef fish species can be found in Schedule 2 of the Fisheries Declaration 2019.
- Fishers must not possess reef fish in a form other than whole or gilled and gutted, unless the fish has been filleted under a filleting permit.
- 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 distance requirement for tender vessels and assistant fishers has been removed now that vessel tracking is required on all commercial fishing vessels. However, Australian Maritime Safety Authority safety rules apply – for more information, visit amsa.gov.au.
- Fishers must comply with marine park and go-slow zoning – for more information, visit gbrmpa.qld.gov.au and/or des.qld.gov.au.

Licensing

- The person in charge of an operation must hold a commercial fisher licence to operate under a primary commercial fishing licence.
- To operate in the fishery, fishers must have:
 - a primary commercial fishing licence
 - an RQ symbol
 - either an L1, L2, L3 or L8 symbol
 - quota in at least one of the quota categories (CT, RTE or OS).
- Coral trout and red emperor may not be landed in the L8 fishery (waters >200 m deep).
- If a primary commercial fishing licence has more than one fishery symbol on it, a person acting under the licence is not authorised to take fish in more than one commercial fishery at the same time, unless that person is:
 - taking fish under a SM symbol
 - taking regulated coral reef fish under an RQ symbol
 - taking fin fish (other than Spanish mackerel and regulated coral reef fin fish) under an L1, L2, L3 or L8 symbol
 - taking shark under an S symbol.
- 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).
- A filleting permit must be held to fillet any reef line quota species. For information on how to apply for permits (including a filleting permit), visit business.qld.gov.au.
- Fees for licences and quota are invoiced in advance (i.e. before the fishing season starts or before the licence can be used).
- 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.

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.