



Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme

V2 - Current as at April 2026

The *Fisheries Adjustment Scheme Act 1987* (FAS) enables the establishment, financing and administration of fisheries adjustment schemes. It provides an optional process through which commercial fishers offer to surrender authorisations (licences) and/or entitlement and in turn receive a payment from Government.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What fisheries are in scope for the Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme (VFAS)?

A total of 14 different fisheries are within scope for the VFAS. Eligibility for applications has been determined on the advice from an independent Committee of Management, based on an assessment that the ongoing viability of these fisheries may be reduced following the introduction of marine parks in the Kimberley and South Coast.

The fisheries eligible by region consist of:

Region	Fishery name
Statewide	Marine Aquarium Managed Fishery
	Specimen Shell Managed Fishery
Kimberley	Kimberley Prawn Managed Fishery
	Kimberley Gillnet and Barramundi Managed Fishery
	Kimberley Crab Fishery
	Northern Demersal Scalefish Fishery (Area 1 only)
South Coast	Abalone Managed Fishery (Area 1, 2, 3 and 5 only)
	Octopus Interim Managed Fishery (Zone 3 only)
	South Coast Line and Trap Managed Fishery
	South Coast Nearshore Net Managed Fishery
	South Coast Salmon Managed Fishery
	Southern Demersal Gillnet & Demersal Longline Managed Fishery (Zone 2 only)
	South Coast Purse Seine Managed Fishery (Zone 3 and 4 only)
	South Coast Crustacean Managed Fishery (Zone 2, 3 and 4)

Note that for some fisheries, only select zones or areas within the fishery are eligible to apply, as indicated above.

2. What is the role of the Committee of Management?

The Committee's role includes providing independent advice to the Minister on the desirability of establishing a VFAS for a particular fishery, determining an appropriate methodology for calculating amounts payable for authorisations or entitlements, considering offers made under the VFAS, and advising the Minister on whether to accept or reject an offer or to make a counteroffer.

3. How are fishers being advised of the establishment and scope of the scheme?

Notices establishing the VFAS were published in the *Government Gazette* on 10 April 2026, with a separate notice issued for each fishery. Each notice sets out the objective of the VFAS, identifies who is eligible to offer surrender of an authorisation or entitlement, and specifies the period during which applications will be accepted.

An advert inviting offers was published in Public Notices of The West Australian newspaper on 11 April 2026.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) will notify all eligible authorisation holders in writing and has advised the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) of the establishment of the VFAS.

4. If I hold a licence in a fishery for which a VFAS is established, do I have to offer up my licence/entitlement?

The VFAS process is voluntary, there is no obligation for an authorisation holder to make application to surrender a licence and/or entitlement.

5. Do I have to offer the surrender all the licences and / or units of entitlement that I hold?

No. You may offer the surrender of only part of your holdings of units of entitlement, or authorisations. For example, if you hold units of entitlement in the South Coast Crustacean Fishery, you may offer the surrender of just units related to a particular species or zone. Alternatively, you may offer the surrender of a proportion of your total unit holdings (i.e. 50%).

Also note that for some fisheries particular zones or areas are out of scope for the VFAS - please refer to the Notice for the fishery for specific details.

6. I am an abalone fishery licence holder. What areas of the fishery are open for surrender of units?

The VFAS applies to Areas 1, 2, 3 and 5 and is intended to facilitate a targeted reduction in fishing effort within these Areas. The specific quantum of units sought to be surrendered under the Scheme, by species and by Area, is set out in the *Abalone Managed Fishery Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme Notice 2026*.

7. Am I able to offer the surrender of other licences, such as fishing boat licences or fish processing licences?

Yes. You may offer the surrender of your associated Fishing Boat Licence (FBL), but only if you are also offering to surrender the associated Managed Fishery Licence or permit.

Fish Processing Licences, however, are not eligible for surrender under the VFAS.

8. What is the process to submit an offer to surrender an authorisation or entitlement to a VFAS?

The first step in the process is to apply, through the online application form, specifying the amount for which the applicant proposes to surrender an authorisation or entitlement. The second step involves the Committee of Management considering the offer and providing independent advice to the Minister of whether the offer should be accepted, declined or whether a counteroffer should be made.

9. How will the compensation amount be determined?

Valuation of authorisations (and units of entitlement, if applicable) will be reviewed by the Committee of Management and informed by the Compensation Working Group Final Report (CWG Final Report). This is available on the DPIRD Digital library:

https://library.dpird.wa.gov.au/fish_publishedrpts/13/

Supporting information, such as GVP figures and relevant beach price information for each fishery can be provided by DPIRD upon request.

Payments under a VFAS are determined by agreement between the parties. If agreement on an amount cannot be reached, the authorisation holder does not need to reply. If an offer is not accepted, neither the payment nor the surrender of the authorisation occurs.

10. How do I calculate my profit adjustment payment?

For input-controlled fisheries, each authorisation holder can calculate an indicative profit adjustment payment using the formula outlined in the CWG final report. To undertake this calculation, authorisation holders will need the following information:

1. Catch History

Obtain a record of your reported catch by species for the past ten years.

This can be requested from DPIRD by completing an *E1 Form – Application for the Release of Information* and returning it to vms@dpird.wa.gov.au

2. Beach Price

Multiply your reported catch (by species) by the relevant beach price for that species. Beach price data can be requested from DPIRD.

3. Income and Formula Application

This will provide an indicative annual income for each of the ten years. Identify your top five earning years and apply the proposed PAP formula to estimate your potential payment.

11. Can I appeal the offer if I am unsatisfied?

No. There is no right of legal appeal. The VFAS is a voluntary process that proceeds only where agreement between the parties is reached.

12. What are the tax implications of accepting an offer?

It is recommended that independent legal and financial advice, including advice on any taxation implications should be obtained before accepting any offer made under the VFAS.

13. At what point in the process is my licence cancelled, and should I renew it?

Authorisations and entitlement will be cancelled at the end of the process, if agreement is reached. Until that point authorisation holders should continue to renew their licences in the normal manner.

14. Who do I contact for more information?

Please email vfas@dpird.wa.gov.au if you have any further queries.

Important Disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

Copyright © State of Western Australia (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development) 2026.