

# Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme

## V1 - Current at May 2025

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. Who establishes a Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme (VFAS)?

The Minister for Fisheries (Minister). Where the Minister considers that it is desirable for consideration to be given to the establishment of a Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme (VFAS), the Minister must establish a Committee of Management to provide advice concerning the establishment of a VFAS and provide advice concerning all offers made to the VFAS.

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

The role of the committee is to provide independent advice to the Minister. This includes advice regarding whether a VFAS should be established for a particular fishery, consider an appropriate methodology for determining amounts payable for authorisations or entitlement in the fishery, and assist the Minister in assessing whether to accept offers.

### 3. How will I know when a VFAS is established?

When a VFAS is established, a notice establishing the VFAS will be published in the *Government Gazette*. The notice must contain the objective of the VFAS, identify the fishery to which it applies, identify who is a person entitled to offer surrender of an authorisation or entitlement, the manner of operation and period for the VFAS will operate. It will also be advertised in The West Australian newspaper.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) will advise all authorisation holders in writing who are eligible to apply and the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) when a VFAS has been established.

### 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 a licence holder to make application to surrender a licence and/or entitlement.

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

The first step to the process is applying with an offer stating an offer for which the person will surrender their authorisation or part of their entitlement. The second step is that the Minister accepts, declines or makes a counteroffer to the person.

### **Step 1**

An authorisation holder makes application to surrender an authorisation or part of entitlement to the VFAS, and indicates the amount of payment they are seeking in return.

### **Step 2**

The Minister must determine to accept, decline or make a counteroffer to the person and provide the decision in writing and provide adequate time for the authorisation holder to consider the offer.

## **6. How do I accept or reject a payment?**

The Minister's letter of offer will advise the way to accept the payment and the period to do so. Compensation under a VFAS is determined by agreement and is voluntary. If there is not agreement on an amount, an authorisation holder does not need to reply. If the payment is not actively accepted, then the payment (and licence surrender) does not occur.

## **7. Can I appeal the offer if I am unsatisfied?**

No, there is no right of legal appeal. It is a voluntary process which requires agreement between the parties.

### **Important Disclaimer**

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