Department of Primary Industries
and Regional Development

OUT26/10734

16 September 2026

The Hon Bob Baldwin
Australian Fishing Trade Association

bobbaldwin@afta.net.au

Update on Rebuilding Programs for NSW Fish Stocks

Dear Mr Baldwin,

I am writing to provide an update on the *Rebuilding Programs for NSW Fish Stocks*, including the adoption of a new rebuilding program for Redfish.

Redfish remains classified as a depleted stock, having experienced significant long-term declines. Commonwealth led scientific assessments indicate the stock had fallen to around three per cent of unfished biomass levels in 2019.

The Australian (Commonwealth) Government is scheduled to decide on 31 October 2026 whether Redfish should be listed under Commonwealth environmental legislation. A threatened listing would prevent harvest, while a conservation dependent listing would allow limited harvest under an approved rebuilding management plan.

The NSW rebuilding program for redfish has been developed using the best available scientific information and is designed to share responsibility for recovery across all fishing sectors. The program also aligns with measures already implemented by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, which has progressively reduced Commonwealth incidental catch limits from 50 tonnes in 2019 to 5 tonnes in 2026.

Feedback has been received through the previous commercial and recreational fishing advisory councils and NSW Charter Working Group in 2025. Public consultation was held between 28 November 2025 and 31 January 2026.

Consultation information is available at https://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/rp-fish-stocks

Establishing the rebuilding program arrangements before the Australian Government's listing decision is a requirement to support the potential for Redfish to be considered for a conservation dependent listing.

To meet the above requirements, the changes outlined below are scheduled to commence on 7 October 2026. These changes will support stock recovery, share rebuilding responsibility across fishing sectors, and demonstrate that NSW has appropriate management arrangements in place for this depleted stock.

Species	Measure	Current arrangements	Initial rebuilding arrangements	Est. catch reduction
Redfish	Minimum size	N/A	25 cm (all sectors)	30%
	Commercial bag/possession	100–1000 kg (area/season dependent)	Ocean Trawl, Southern Fish Trawl and Ocean Trap and Line: 40kg All other commercial: 0kg	
	Recreational bag/possession	20	1	

The Department appreciates the feedback provided by all stakeholders throughout the development of the rebuilding programs. This feedback has helped inform the final approach for Redfish and will continue to inform the remaining programs.

If you have any questions regarding the rebuilding programs or implementation arrangements, please contact Dr Heath Folpp, Director Fisheries Management. Dr Folpp can be contacted at heath.folpp@dpird.nsw.gov.au or on 0438 042 278.

Yours sincerely,

David McPherson
Executive Director, Resource Management
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development