

Timeline of the Sardine Fishery's identification of common dolphin interactions and subsequent management responses.

Milestones	
1991	The South Australian Sardine Fishery (SASF) was established
2004	Management arrangements for the SASF were accredited under the Commonwealth <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act), exempting the fishery from export controls for a period of 5 years (Part 13A) and accredited for interactions with protected species on the basis that the management plan or regime includes all reasonable steps to ensure that members of protected species are not adversely affected by the fishing operation. Part 13, the recommendations, among other things, that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mechanisms be established to allow fishers to record interactions with Threatened, Endangered and Protected Species (TEPS) at a species level and at an appropriate level of accuracy; and • if information became available to indicate that the SASF was having significant interactions with any TEPS, that measures to mitigate those interactions should be implemented within 12 months.
Nov 2004 – June 2005	SARDI research project undertaken; including an observer program conducted between November 2004 and June 2005 revealed high rates of encirclement (1.78 per net-set) and mortality (0.39 dolphins per net-set) of common dolphins (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>).
2004-05	Level of observer coverage: 5%.
Aug – Sept 2005	The SASF was subsequently closed by the Minister during August and September 2005 to prevent further interactions with common dolphins.
Sept 2005	A TEPS Working Group, which had been established prior to the closure, finalised a Code of Practice (CoP) to mitigate operational interactions with TEPS, especially dolphins.
Nov 2005 – June 2006	Observer program conducted after the introduction of the CoP, November 2005 to June 2006.
2005-06	Level of observer coverage: 10% minimum observer coverage target; there was actually 11.8% coverage.
Jan 2007	SARDI report was released – <i>Measurement, Management and Mitigation of Operational Interactions Between Common Dolphins and the South Australian Sardine Fishery</i> , this report examined logbook and observer data both before and after the implementation of the CoP – April 1999 and May 2004. <p>The observer program conducted prior to 2005 (the implementation of the CoP) showed that rates of dolphin encirclement and mortality were reduced to 0.22 and 0.01 dolphins per net-set respectively, suggesting that the CoP had reduced encirclement rates by 87.34% and mortality rates by 97.11%.</p> <p>The report highlighted that the logbook data collected between 1999 and 2004 suggested that the rates of dolphin interactions within the SASF were low and did not identify the species involved.</p>
2006-07	Level of observer coverage: 10% minimum observer coverage target continued; there was actually 11.0% coverage.

Nov 2007	<p>SARDI report was released – <i>Operational interactions between the South Australian Sardine Fishery and Common Dolphins in 2006/07: assessing the effectiveness of the industry Code of Practice.</i></p> <p>This report continued to show that although there was improvement, there was not accurate reporting in the logbooks compared to the observer records.</p>
Dec 2007	<p>South Australian Sardine Industry Association workshop (attended by PIRSA and SARDI to discuss the outcomes of the SARDI Nov 2007 report on dolphin interactions. This workshop resulted in reviews to the Code of Practice, increased awareness amongst operators and a review process to assess the need to implement an increase in observer coverage if accuracy in reporting was not improved.</p>
8 Feb 2008	<p>In light of December 2007 workshop outcomes the Minister decided to introduce a 30 % observer coverage target.</p>
2007-08	<p>Level of observer coverage: minimum observer coverage target changed part way through the year from 10% to 30%; there was actually 27.8% coverage.</p>
Mar - Sept 2008	<p>Review of CoP with TEPS Working Group for improvement and refinement.</p>
10 Oct 2008	<p>TEPs Working Group meeting to finalise the CoP. This meeting was attended by Commonwealth Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) representatives and their comments were incorporated into the revised CoP.</p>
Jan 2009	<p>CoP endorsed by Minister for Fisheries and Minister for Environment.</p>
15 Apr 2009	<p>SARDI Report published – Operational Interactions of the SA Sardine Fishery with common dolphins.</p> <p>This report found that the refinements to the Code and/or improvements in its implementation since 2006/07 have increased its effectiveness in mitigating interactions with common dolphin. There has been an improvement in the encirclement rates over time. The accuracy of reporting has also improved with the encirclement events recorded in the logbooks and the observer data now very closely matched</p>