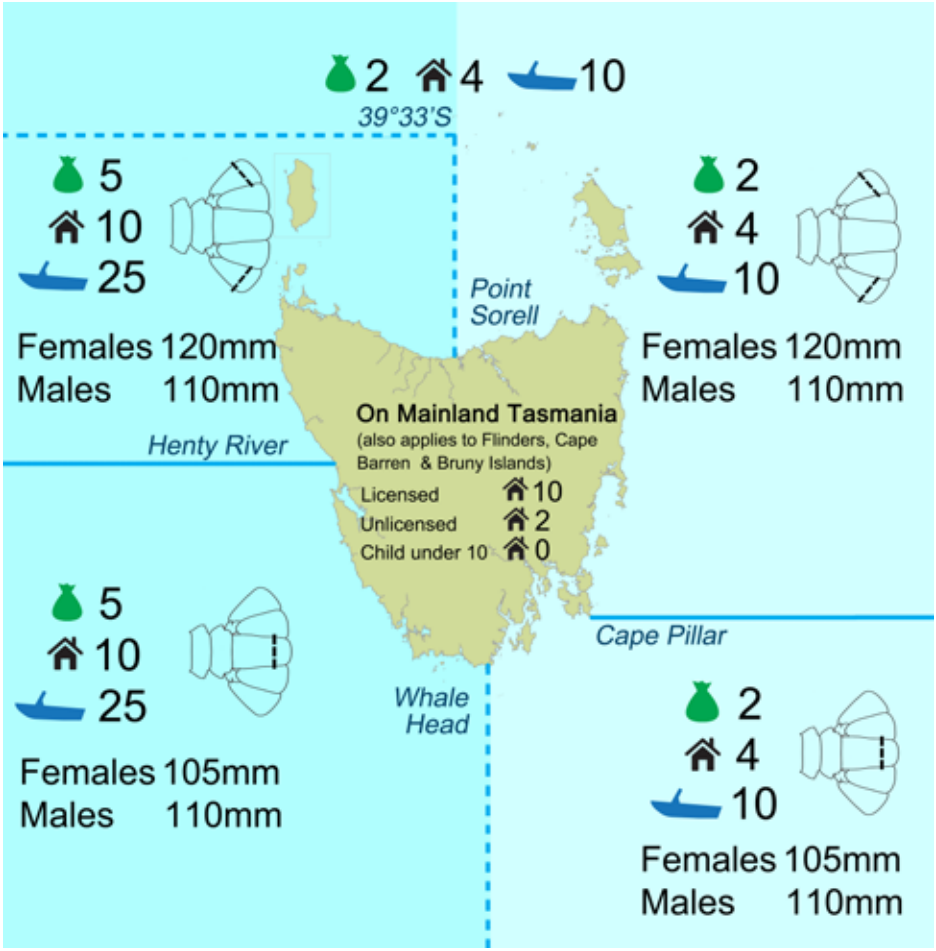
Quick Guide to Rock Lobster Area Rules



- Any rock lobster in your possession must:
  - o comply with the rules of the region/zone you are entering, and
  - o be tail-marked according to where they were caught.
- If you are crossing the Henty River or Cape Pillar lines with rock lobster onboard, you must make a size limit zone transit report (page 51).
- If you possess more than your daily bag limit while on water, you must:
  - o abide by the possession limit of the region you are in, and
  - o demonstrate you have fished for more than one day.

Licence:

A rock lobster licence is required. A rock lobster dive licence allows you to take rock lobster by hand, a rock lobster pot licence allows you to use one pot, and a rock lobster ring licence allows you to use up to four rings. You must be 10 years or older to hold a rock lobster licence.

Size limit:

Northern Zone

Males 110mm

Females 120mm

Southern Zone

Males 110mm

Females 105mm

Daily bag limit:

Eastern Region – 2 rock lobster

Western Region – 5 rock lobster

Northern Bass Strait – 2 rock lobster

Possession limit:

Eastern Region – 4 rock lobster

Western Region and mainland Tasmania (including Flinders, Cape Barren and Bruny Islands) – 10 rock lobster

Northern Bass Strait – 4 rock lobster

Non-licenced possession limit:

On land – 2 rock lobster

On State waters – 0 rock lobster

Child under 10 – 0 rock lobster

Boat limit:

Eastern Region – 10 rock lobster

Western Region – 25 rock lobster

Northern Bass Strait – 10 rock lobster

Boat gear limit:

5 pots and 20 rings

Seasons:

Seasons apply see page 50.

Biotoxin and Public Health info:

See page 61.

Catch Reporting Requirement

All recreational rock lobster licence holders must make a catch report after they go fishing for rock lobster, even if they don't catch anything (see page 54).

Southern Rock Lobster

Eastern Rock Lobster

The rules apply to both southern and eastern rock lobster.

Seasons

Season Open:

Waters outside the East Coast Stock Rebuilding Zone (ECSRZ)

Open from 1 November 2025.

East Coast Stock Rebuilding Zone

Open from 6 December 2025 (see map below).

Season Closed:

Eastern Region (including ECSRZ)

Closes 1 May 2026.

Western Region (Females)

Closes 1 May 2026.

Western Region (Males)

Closes 1 September 2026.

Gear at Season Opening

You can only possess a rock lobster pot on state waters from 6am the day before the season opens for that region or zone and only set a pot after 1pm on the same day. Pots can then be pulled after midnight.

Transiting at season opening

You cannot possess pots, rings or lobster in any part of the ECSRZ until that area opens, except in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel – see below.

Transiting the D'Entrecasteaux Channel

When waters outside the ECSRZ are open but the ECSRZ is closed, you can transit the River Derwent and D'Entrecasteaux Channel waters with pots, rings and/or rock lobster onboard provided:

- You make a transit report at least one hour before entering the D'Entrecasteaux Channel or River Derwent.
- You directly transit between closed and open waters (no swimming, diving or stopping).
- You only leave from and return to a public wharf, boat ramp or jetty and unload your lobster, pots and rings within an hour of landing there.
- You make a transit report at least one hour before re-entering the closed area with pots, rings and/or lobster onboard.

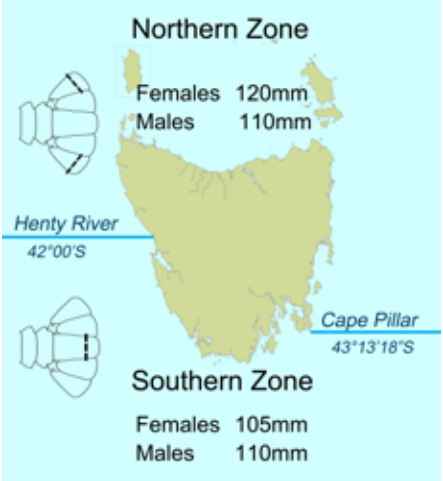
Once the ECSRZ opens, you do not have to make these reports.

See D'Entrecasteaux Channel boundary map on page 59.

You cannot possess pots, rings or lobster in an area which is closed to rock lobster fishing unless your are following the rules for transiting or setting gear at season opening.

Size Limits and Tail-Marking

Regional size limits and tail-marking requirements apply.



You cannot possess female rock lobster smaller than 120mm inside the Northern Zone.

Tail-marking

Rock lobster that you keep must be marked as recreationally caught.

Southern Zone: Cut off at least a quarter of the central tail fan segment or punch a 10mm hole in it.

Northern Zone: Cut off at least a quarter of both outer tail fan segments or punch a 10mm hole in them.

- If fishing from a boat, mark the tail fan within five minutes of the lobster being brought to the boat, before retrieving another pot, moving the boat and before landing; or
- If fishing from the shore, mark the tail fan within five minutes of landing and within 50 metres of where you are landing.

Transiting between size limit zones

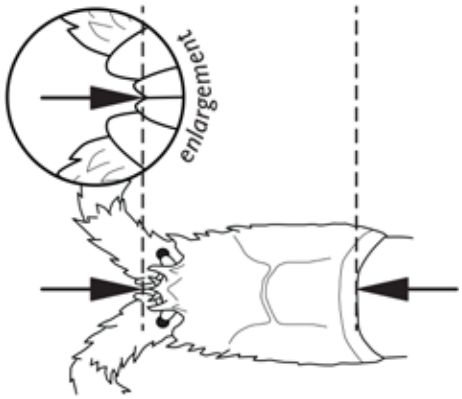
You can transit into another size limit zone with lobsters on board provided that:

- You do not possess female lobsters smaller than 120mm in the Northern Zone.
- You make a transit report to **1300 720 647** at least one hour before crossing any size limit boundary.
- Lobsters are tail-marked in accordance with the zone in which they were taken.

Measuring Rock Lobster

1. Spread the antennal horns.
2. Place the gauge tip hard into the middle notch.
3. Measure from the notch to the end of the carapace.

See diagram below.



Rock Lobster

Sexing Rock Lobster

Female rock lobster:

- Have large, overlapping swimmerets or flaps under the tail.
- Have a small nipper claw on the end of each rear leg.

Rock lobster in berry

- You cannot take rock lobster in berry (with eggs) or strip the eggs.
- If you catch a lobster in berry, you must return it to the water as soon as possible.

Male rock lobster:

- Have small swimmerets or flaps under the tail.
- Have no nipper claws on the rear legs.

Rock Lobster Catch Limit Regions

See next page for a map of catch limit regions.

Western Region: Waters and islands westward of Point Sorell and Whale Head.

5 **25**

Northern Bass Strait: Waters north of latitude 39°33' S.

2 **10**

Eastern Region: Waters and islands eastward of Point Sorell and Whale Head. This region includes the East Coast Stock Rebuilding Zone.

2 **10**

On-water possession limits

When on State Waters, if you can demonstrate you have fished for more than one day (e.g. an overnight trip to an island), you may possess a maximum of:

Western Region:

10 (on water and islands)

Northern Bass Strait:

4 (on water and islands)

Eastern Region:

4 (on water and islands, excluding Flinders, Cape Barren and Bruny Islands)

You must abide by the boat limit for each region.

On-water possession limits apply on State Waters and land within 100m of the high-water mark, except where the fisher's shack or home is within the 100m.

On-land possession limits

Mainland Tasmania, and Flinders, Cape Barren and Bruny Island, including homes, shacks and vehicles:

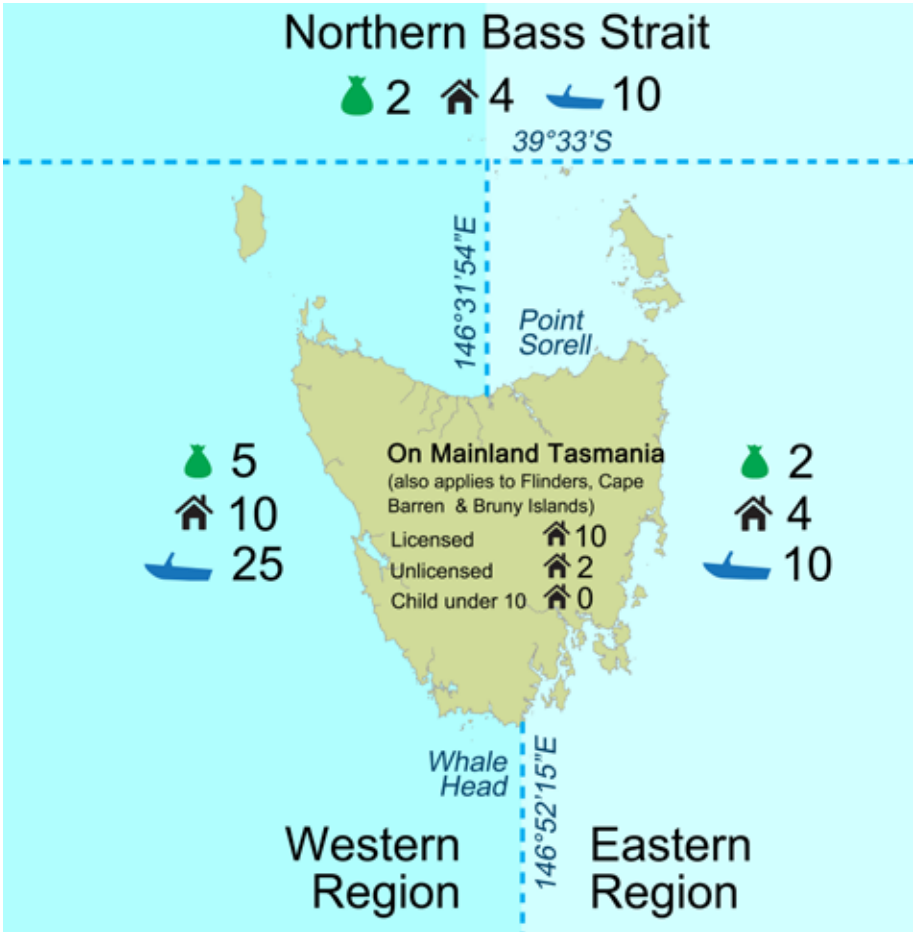
Licensed	**10**
Unlicenced	**2**
Child under 10	**0**

Moving between catch limit regions

You cannot move from the Western Region to the Eastern Region if you possess more rock lobster than the Eastern Region limits.

You do not need to make a transit report when moving between catch limit regions.

Rock lobster catch limit regions map

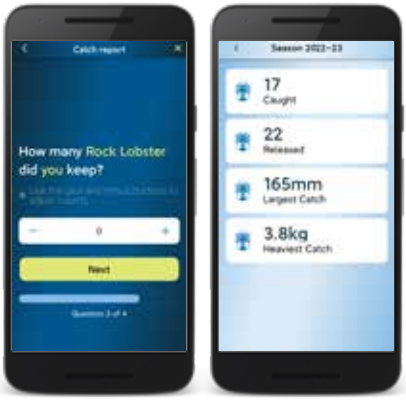


Reporting Your Catch

All recreational rock lobster licence holders must report their catch using either:

1) the ***Fishing Tas*** app; or
2) the telephone reporting service.

Another fisher can report on your behalf using the app. It is the responsibility of the fisher making the report to ensure it is accurate.



Report your catch using the Fishing Tas app.

Reporting Service - 1300 720 647

- Transit reports
- Catch reports
- Lost, stolen or irretrievable gear

Please provide your licence or UIC number, boat registration and fishing area details.

How to make a catch report

A catch report must always be made after fishing for rock lobster, even if you did not catch any.

A catch report must be made:

- **if fishing from a boat**, immediately after the last rock lobster has been tail-marked and before travelling more than 250m from where the last rock lobster was brought to the boat, and before bringing any rock lobster to shore, or
- **if fishing from the shore**, immediately after the last rock lobster has been landed and tail-marked, and within 250 metres of landing the last rock lobster.
- **if no rock lobster are taken**, within 250 metres of finishing diving for rock lobster or hauling the last rock lobster pot or ring.

If you have taken a lobster but intend to continue fishing for rock lobster within 250m of where it was taken, you do not have to make your catch report until after you finish that fishing activity (either after the last lobster is taken or after the last pot or ring was hauled or dive was completed).

A catch report includes:

- when you fished for lobster (the date);
- the fishing method/s you used;
- the general location where you fished;
- How many rock lobster you kept (even if 0); and,
- How many rock lobster you released (even if 0).

Temporary Reports

There may be some circumstances in which you are unable to submit a catch report. For example, you may not have access to a phone or there may be no reception.

If this occurs, you must maintain a temporary report of your catch either in the ***Fishing Tas*** app or on paper. As soon as practical, you must submit this report via the ***Fishing Tas*** app or telephone reporting service.

Using the Fishing Tas app

If you have access to the ***Fishing Tas*** app but there is no reception, you can enter your catch report as usual, and it will save as an **unsent report**. You will then need to check this report has submitted when you return to reception.

On paper

You can also maintain a temporary report by writing down the details of your catch report on paper. You must include all details required in a catch report (see page 56 for template).

Visit **fishing.tas.gov.au/report-rock-lobster-catch** for more information on catch reporting and how to use the ***Fishing Tas*** app.

Sharing Rock Lobster when Group Fishing

Rock lobster can be shared between licensed pot fishers on the same boat provided:

- A fisher's excess catch is only given to another fisher on the same boat who has a pot set, or who has retrieved a pot that was set within 250 metres of any other pot used.
- Any retained lobster is tail-marked in accordance with the rules, see page 51.
- After lobster are marked, each fisher must not possess more than the bag limit.
- The boat operator ensures the total number of lobsters is within the boat limit.

Holding Lobster on an Unattended Vessel

A fisher can leave lobsters on a boat unattended and be more than 100 metres away provided:

- The lobsters are not left unattended for more than 24 hours.
- The lobsters are in a separate compartment or container (such as a bag) which is marked with a fisher's licence number or unique identifying code.
- The fisher is not using a cauf at the same time.

Eating Rock Lobster at Sea

You can cut up and eat one lobster per licence holder. This lobster is included in your daily bag limit.

Rock Lobster Temporary Report Record

If you are fishing in an area that does not have reception or you do not have a phone with you, you must maintain a temporary written record of your catch report.

As soon as practical (e.g. on return to reception), you must submit this report via the ***Fishing Tas*** app or telephone reporting service (**1300 720 647**).

You can record any temporary written reports here.

Date	Fishing method	General location where you fished	No. lobsters kept	No. lobsters released	Submitted?
E.g. 23/12/25	*Pot*	*Binalong Bay*	*2*	*1*	*Yes*

Rock Lobster Fishing Gear

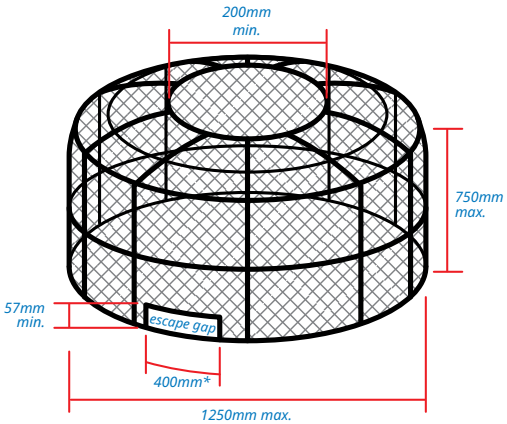
The licence holder must **personally** set and retrieve any rock lobster fishing gear. Another person may assist them if needed e.g. to lift the pot.

Think before you set

You cannot leave your pot in the water for more than 48 hours.

Reconsider setting your pot if the weather is forecast to turn, or if it's likely you won't be able to pull it within 48 hours. **Your pot cannot be retrieved by another person.**

Pot: You can only possess and use one rock lobster pot on State waters. A person in charge of a boat must not allow more than 5 rock lobster pots to be on or used from their boat, and all licensees must be present.



**Minimum 400mm if one escape gap.*
Minimum 200mm if two escape gaps.

A rock lobster pot must:

- be no larger than 1250mm x 1250mm at base and 750mm high;
- have only one neck or entrance at least 200mm in diameter;
- have escape gaps at least 57mm high and the lower inside edge no more than 150mm up from the floor of the pot. If there is only one escape gap, it must be at least 400mm wide and if there are two, they must each be at least 200mm wide.
- have nothing obstructing the escape gap;
- not contain anything likely to entangle the rock lobster in the pot; and
- be marked with a buoy with the licence number and the letter 'P' for pot.

You cannot leave your pot in the water for longer than 48 hours.

You cannot recreationally fish for rock lobster or have a recreational pot or ring on a commercial fishing trip.

Lost, Stolen and Irretrievable Gear

If you leave your pot in the water for longer than 48 hours due to bad weather, illness, loss or theft, ring **1300 720 647** and provide your licence number.

Rock Lobster

Ring or hoop net:

- You may only possess and use up to four ring nets on State waters.
- A person in charge of a boat must not allow more than 20 rock lobster rings to be on or used from their boat and all licensees must be present.
- A rock lobster ring is a single ring or hoop of no more than one metre in diameter, covered with mesh.

- If you are more than 100m from a ring, a marker buoy with the licence number and the letter 'R' for ring must be attached. See page 6 for marker buoy specifications.

Rock lobster buoys: Rock lobster pots, caufs and unattended rings must be marked with a buoy that has only your licence number and 'P' if it is a pot or 'R' if it is a ring. A yellow buoy must be used for caufs.

Aboriginal fishers should use a unique identifying code to mark their gear as specified on page 6.

Diving:

- You can take rock lobster by SCUBA, surface air and snorkelling.
- The only aid that can be used to take rock lobster is a gloved hand.
- Nooses, gaffs, nets and spears cannot be used for rock lobster fishing.
- It is illegal to possess a crook or noose while diving, or to possess a noose on a boat unless it is being used for game fishing.
- Rings and pots can be used from a boat that is being used by divers.

Lines / nets: It is illegal to take rock lobster by a hook and line or a net.

Rock lobster cauf:

- A rock lobster cauf is a device for holding rock lobster in the water.
- A person can only use one cauf at a time. It must have a yellow buoy marked with the licence number attached.
- A cauf can be used by more than one fisher, but lobsters in a shared cauf must be separated from other fishers' lobster into their own compartments. Each fisher must have their own yellow buoy marked with their licence number attached to their compartment of the cauf.
- All rock lobster in the cauf must be tail-marked and count toward your possession limits.

Area Restrictions

See page 67 for a full list of restrictions.

No rock lobster pot areas

Specific No Rock Lobster Pot areas are listed below. Rock lobster pots cannot be set in these areas, however rock lobster rings can be used.

D'Entrecasteaux Channel and Derwent Estuary – with a southern boundary being a line from Scott Point to the northern tip of Partridge Island and then from the southern tip of Partridge Island south to Labillardiere Peninsula on Bruny Island and a northern boundary being a line from Dennes Point to Piersons Point.

Derwent River – upstream from a line from Dennes Point to Cape Direction.

Georges Bay – west of the line of longitude of the end of the training wall situated at the entrance to Georges Bay.

King Island – within 300 metres of the Blowhole on the Eastern side of King Island.

Elephant Rock and North Bay Rock Lobster Research Areas

Elephant Rock and North Bay Rock Lobster Research Areas are pot only areas. See pages 70 and 71 for more information.

Other Crustaceans

Giant Crabs

Licence: recreational rock lobster pot licence required to fish for giant crabs.

Size limit: Females 150mm, Males 140mm (measure from front to back of carapace)

Bag limit: 1 giant crab

Possession limit: 1 giant crab

Seasons: as for rock lobster, see page 7

Rules: Female giant crabs in berry (with eggs) cannot be kept.

Giant crab

Inshore crabs

- Inshore crabs include all crabs other than giant crabs and soldier crabs. No minimum size.

15 30

Red velvet crab

Red bait crab

Sand crab

Spider crab

- Female crabs in berry (with eggs) cannot be kept;
- Crabs can be taken by hand, bait net (page 33), dip net, bait trap, rock lobster ring or pot (licence required), but not specialised crab traps. If using soldier crabs as bait, see page 29.

Prawns

Prawns are mainly caught using a dip net or landing net. Gear and area restrictions apply, see page 34.

50 100

King prawn

Marine Plants

Seaweed collection

- No licence is required when seaweed is collected for private use.
- There is a daily limit of 100kg per person for cast seaweed and collection is only from beaches with public access.
- Marine plants (including seaweed) attached to the sea floor must not be harvested.
- Seaweed cannot be taken in Marine Nature Reserves. See page 67.