

Summary of key findings of the National Survey of Bait and Berley use by Recreational Fishers: Follow-up Survey Focusing on Prawns/Shrimp

A recent survey has confirmed that uncooked prawns sold for human consumption in Australia are being used as bait/berley by recreational fishers.

The 2002 'National Survey of Bait and Berley Use by Recreational Fishers' and the 2007 'Follow-up Survey Focusing on Prawns/Shrimp' provide a longitudinal study of people surveyed in 2002 who also fished in the past 12 months ('repeat fishers').

There has been a significant increase in the number of these repeat fishers using prawns sold for human consumption (sold as seafood) as bait/berley from 2002 until now.

The prime reason for purchasing sold as seafood prawns to use as bait/berley also changed, with 'convenience' now the highest ranked reason (almost half), 'quality' ranked second and 'price' remaining third. This supports some anecdotal information that increased availability, rather than lower prices, has led to increased usage of sold as seafood prawns as bait.

An important issue for quarantine is whether or not *imported* uncooked prawns sold as seafood are used for bait/berley.

In 2002, respondents were not asked whether the product they purchased was imported because country-of-origin labelling had not been introduced at that stage. Under current interim quarantine conditions, any prawns sold as seafood other than uncooked whole prawns less than 13 cm in length could have been imported.

In the recent follow-up survey, a small number of respondents reported using potentially imported product, mostly in the form of uncooked shelled prawns. A few of these fishers reported using local product only, but most were unsure of the origin of the prawns they used. One of these respondents confirmed using imported product (shelled prawns marinated on skewers). In comparison, in 2002 less people reported using potentially imported prawns as bait/berley. These products were purchased as prawns with heads removed, one bought shelled prawns, and one used heads/shells only. The surveys confirm that potentially imported prawns are used for bait/berley.

No-one in the 2002 or the recent follow-up survey reported using uncooked whole prawns more than 13 cm long from any purchase source.

The recent follow-up survey shows increases in usage and overall quantities of prawns sold for human consumption being used as bait/berley by repeat fishers. In some cases the increases are statistically significant and others they are not; however, in no case has a decrease been observed.

By design, the follow-up survey did not assess the total current fishing population's patterns of bait usage and no inferences have been drawn from these results for the broader fishing population (e.g. new or less frequent fishers).