

## Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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### Start of lobster season prompts call to report tags

With the opening of the Eastern Region recreational rock lobster season, Tasmanians are being urged to report any tagged rock lobsters they find off the State's coast.

As an incentive to report recovered tags, those who do so will enter a prize lottery, with local businesses Sunderland Marine Insurance, Tamar Marine, Mures, Southern Tasmanian Divers, and Pennicott Wilderness Journeys donating prizes to a lottery draw, drawn five times a year.

More than 350,000 rock lobster tags have been released into Tasmanian waters since 1958, with over 90,000 tags recaptured and reported.

Professor Caleb Gardner, Director of the Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement at IMAS, said that by reporting recovered tags fishers are supporting vital research aimed at ensuring the fishery's long-term sustainability.

"IMAS researchers use the reported tag information to study various aspects of the lobster fishery, including growth, population size, movement patterns, changes in natural mortality, and recovery rates from damage or injuries.

"There have been a number of management changes to the fishery in recent years, such as changes to commercial catch limits and recreational bag limits, so there's a lot of interest in seeing how the stock responds this season.

"The research outputs from the lobster tagging project include the ability to measure different growth rates in regional populations to assist with sustainable management of the fishery. For example, northern Tasmanian lobsters grow at twice the rate of southern Tasmanian lobsters.

"This world-class scientific research supports the Tasmanian Government's sustainable management of both the commercial and recreational rock lobster fisheries," Prof Gardner said.

People can report tag numbers, and the size, sex and location of a tagged rock lobster through the IMAS website at: [www.imas.utas.edu.au](http://www.imas.utas.edu.au), by emailing [fish.tag@utas.edu.au](mailto:fish.tag@utas.edu.au), or by calling 03 6227 7280.

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