

## Marine Stewardship Council - Variation Request Form V1.3

<b>Date submitted to MSC</b>	<i>September 9, 2014</i>
<b>Conformity Assessment Body</b>	MRAG Americas
<b>Fishery Name/CoC Certificate Number</b>	Australia Northern Prawn
<b>Lead Auditor/Programme Manager</b>	Richard Banks
<b>Scheme requirement(s) to vary from</b>	CR 27.22.6.1
<b>Is this variation sought in order to undertake an expedited P1 assessment (CR annex CL)?</b>	<i>No</i>

### 1. Proposed variation

*Offsite surveillance audit will be undertaken by one team member (Team Leader and P3 expert Richard Banks)*

### 2. Rationale/Justification

*This fishery originally had four conditions, two of which were closed ahead of schedule as of the 1<sup>st</sup> annual surveillance audit. This leaves two outstanding conditions, progress against both of which can be reviewed by the Team Leader without compromising the quality of the surveillance audit. The remaining conditions and review needs are as follows:*

- 1. 3.2.4: Research Plan. Within 2 years the development of a research plan that provides for a more strategic approach to the NPF issues showing an appropriate balance of activities between stock assessment and ecosystem research across all three sub fisheries.*

*The assessment team has been informed that the NPF MAC has approved a 5-year research plan and the team will receive a copy shortly. A review of this plan can be done by the Team Leader (and P3 expert) alone, without compromising the quality of the surveillance audit.*

- 2. 2.2.3: Bycatch species: Information/Monitoring. Within three years of certification, AFMA and NPMI must be in a position to demonstrate that information is sufficient to estimate outcome status with respect to biologically based limits.*

*Milestones for closing this condition are on track. The client undertook to evaluate the risk of fishing impacts to bycatch species through a level 3 SAFE assessment, which is unlikely to be completed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> surveillance audit. Therefore this will be evaluated at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual audit. However the assessment team is satisfied that current bycatch information is sufficient to determine a low risk outcome, and therefore the SAFE assessment is just for added confidence. Review and reporting on progress in this regard can be undertaken by the Team Leader alone without compromising the quality of the surveillance audit.*

*Considering the above, the assessment team considers it practical and cost-effective to undertake a surveillance audit with only the Team Leader. In addition, this request is in line with future developments in the MSC fishery certification requirements that will require one assessor at a minimum to undertake the second surveillance audit as long as this assessor has the required expertise to review progress against conditions under evaluation at the audit. In this case, there is only one P3 condition that will require review, and this can be undertaken by the Team Leader and P3 assessor, while review of progress against the second outstanding condition will be more substantial*

*at the 3<sup>rd</sup> surveillance audit and not this one, as the SAFE assessment will not be completed in time for the 2<sup>nd</sup> audit and the team has already concluded that the information available is sufficient at this time for an 80 score on PI 2.2.3, requiring the SAFE assessment only for added confidence.*

**3. Implications for assessment (required for fisheries assessment variations only)**

*There are no implications for the fishery in terms of timelines or continued conformity with MSC Standards. Stakeholders have been notified of the surveillance audit at least 30 days beforehand, and invited to provide written submissions and/or have meetings by telephone with the Team Leader if desired.*

**4. Have the stakeholders of this fishery assessment been informed of this request? (required for fisheries assessment variations only)**

*No. Opportunities for stakeholder involvement in this surveillance audit remain unchanged.*