

8 THURSDAY ISLAND TRC

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The Thursday Island TRC consists of Thursday Island in the Torres Strait.

BUSINESS PROFILES

Location and Use of Ports

Table 8.1 shows the number of licence holders giving their town address as Thursday Island and the number of survey respondents who reported Thursday Island as their homeport. On the basis of the sample count, it is estimated that there are 19 commercial fishers with Thursday Island as their homeport and that the 95% confidence interval for the population count is between 11 and 27. Figure 8.1 shows the geographic location of this TRC.

Table 8.1
Location of Homeports

Town	Adj. Database Count	Sample Count	Estimated Count	Percent within TRC
Thursday Island	12	8	19	100.0
Total TRC	12	8	19	100.0

95% Confidence Interval for Estimated TRC Count 11-27
Percent of Total Active Licence Holders in QLD 0.8%

Note: Adjusted database count is based on the postal address as recorded in the licencing information, which may not be the homeport of the fishing business. The adjusted database count reduces the count for latent licence holders (8.8%)
The estimated count adjusts the sample count by the sampling fraction of 2.444.

Only one fishing business used Thursday Island as a port when travelling to or from fishing areas. This fishing business had its homeport in Cairns.

Fishing Activity and Type

Table 8.2 shows the type of fishing activity undertaken within the last year by fishing businesses within this TRC. Lobster fishing is the primary fishing activity undertaken by businesses within the TRC, followed by line fishing and pearling.

Table 8.2
Type of Fishing Activity (During the last 12 months)

Fishing Type	Sample Count	Percent within TRC
Lobster fishing	7	100.0
Line fishing	3	42.8
Pearl	2	28.6
Netting	0	0.0
Crabbing	0	0.0
Trawl	0	0.0
Total Sample	7	100.0

Note: This is a multiple response table where all rows are independent.

As shown in Table 8.3, activities such as pearling, lobster and line fishing are relatively independent activities within this TRC. For instance, of the seven lobster fishers, three also engaged in line fishing and two in pearling.

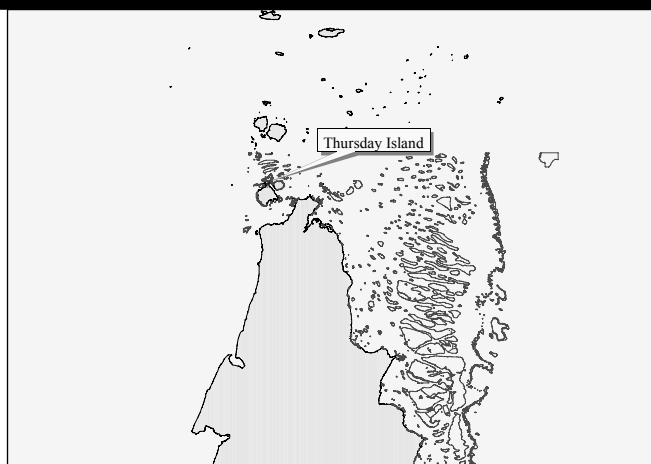


Figure 8.1 Location of the Thursday Island TRC

Table 8.3
Co-occurrence of Fishing Activities

	Line Fishing	Lobster Fishing	Pearling
Line Fishing	3 <i>100.0</i>	3 <i>42.9</i>	1 <i>50.0</i>
Lobster Fishing	3 <i>100.0</i>	7 <i>100.0</i>	2 <i>100.0</i>
Pearling	1 <i>33.3</i>	2 <i>28.6</i>	2 <i>100.0</i>

Note: The co-occurrence table should be read by column. Column percentages are given as italics.

Table 8.4 shows the peak months for fishing activity within the TRC to be June and July, compared with the Queensland average of March and April.

Table 8.4
Peak Fishing Months During Past 12 Months

Months	Sample Count	Percent within TRC	Percent of QLD Fishery
January	2	28.6	24.5
February	2	28.6	29.7
March	2	28.6	43.9
April	3	42.9	42.8
May	2	28.6	38.1
June	4	57.1	33.5
July	5	71.4	23.9
August	3	42.9	19.9
September	2	28.6	23.5
October	2	28.6	24.8
November	2	28.6	26.2
December	2	28.6	21.4

Table 8.5 provides a more detailed description of the seasonal variation in fishing activities by businesses. Line fishing is most common between February and July, lobster fishing between March and August, and pearling between January and August.

Table 8.5. Seasonal Variations in Fishing Activity

Months	Sample Count	Percent within TRC	Percent of Fishery
Line Fishing			
January	1	50.0	64.6
February	2	100.0	64.3
March	2	100.0	68.1
April	2	100.0	70.4
May	2	100.0	74.7
June	2	100.0	78.7
July	2	100.0	82.0
August	1	50.0	80.8
September	2	100.0	79.7
October	0	0.0	79.7
November	0	0.0	78.2
December	2	100.0	70.6
Lobster Fishing			
January	4	57.1	41.7
February	5	71.4	50.0
March	7	100.0	66.7
April	7	100.0	66.7
May	7	100.0	66.7
June	7	100.0	66.7
July	7	100.0	66.7
August	7	100.0	75.0
September	6	85.7	66.7
October	3	42.9	50.0
November	2	28.6	50.0
December	5	71.4	66.7
Pearling			
January	2	100.0	75.0
February	2	100.0	100.0
March	2	100.0	100.0
April	2	100.0	100.0
May	2	100.0	100.0
June	2	100.0	75.0
July	2	100.0	75.0
August	2	100.0	75.0
September	1	50.0	75.0
October	0	0.0	50.0
November	1	50.0	75.0
December	1	50.0	75.0

Location of Resource Use

Figure 8.2 shows the location of resource use by commercial fishing operations with their homeports at Thursday Island. The primary resource catchment is restricted to the Torres Strait, although the secondary resource catchment extends south along the northern section of the Great Barrier reef to Princess Charlotte Bay.

Fishing Industry Employees

Table 8.6 identifies the number of employees of commercial fishing businesses within this TRC for both peak and off-peak seasons. The majority of businesses within peak and off-peak seasons have between two and five full-time employees (inc. the owner or operator), with few part-time or casual employees. The average number of employees per business during the peak season is 4.8, while in the off-peak season it is 4.7. It is estimated that during the peak season there are 77 full-time equivalent employees while in the off-peak season there are 75 full-time equivalent employees.

Business Ownership and Size

Table 8.7 shows the number of years the current owner or operator has owned the fishing business. On average, businesses within this TRC had been owned for an average of 20.3 years, which was significantly higher than the average for all Queensland commercial fishing businesses. In addition, Table 8.7 shows no ownership of less than 13 years.

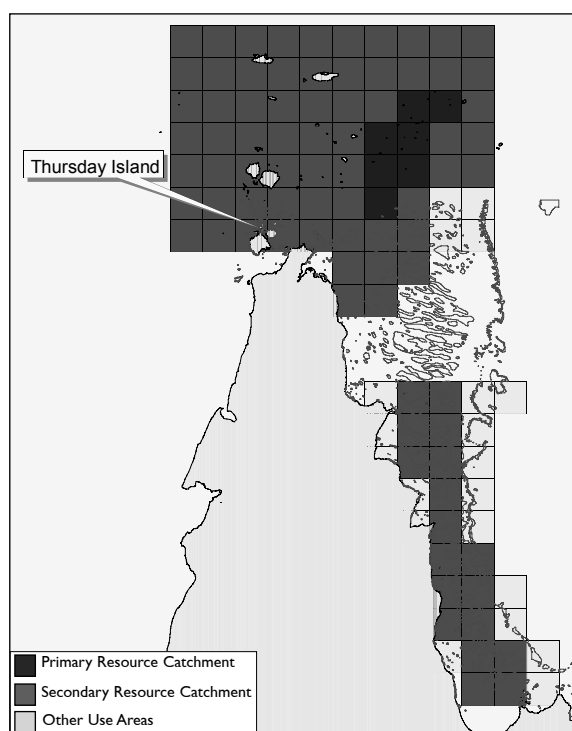


Figure 8.2 Thursday Island TRC: Location of Resource Use

Table 8.7 Number of Years of Current Ownership of the Fishing Business

Number of Years	Sample Count	Percent within TRC	Cumulative Percent
1-5	0	0.0	0.0
6-10	0	0.0	0.0
11-15	1	14.3	14.3
16-20	4	57.1	71.4
21-25	0	0.0	71.4
26-30	2	28.6	100.0
Total	7	100.0	
Mean Number of Years owned or operated			20.3
Difference of TRC Mean to QLD Mean (14.6)			+5.7

Note: Standard errors for number of years ownership (sample = 1.7; QLD population = 0.37).

The average number of years the business had been operating was 19.8 years, which was similar to that for all Queensland fishing businesses (18.2 years). Table 8.8 shows that 62% of businesses had been operating their business for between 16 and 20 years and that 88% of businesses had operated for over 17 years.

Table 8.8 Number of Years Business has been Operating

Number of Years	Sample Count	Percent within TRC	Cumulative Percent
1-5	0	0.0	0.0
6-10	1	12.5	12.5
11-15	0	0.0	12.5
16-20	5	62.5	75.0
21-25	0	0.0	75.0
26-30	2	25.0	100.0
Total	8	100.0	
Mean Number of Years owned or operated			19.8
Difference of TRC mean to QLD mean (18.2)			+1.6

Note: Standard errors for number of years operated (sample = 1.8; QLD population = 0.46)

Table 8.6
Number of Employees

Number of Employees	Full-Time Count	Full-Time Percent	Part-Time Count	Part-Time Percent	Casual Count	Casual Percent
Peak Season						
Nil	1	12.5	8	85.7	6	75.0
1	1	0.0	0	0.0	1	12.5
2-3	3	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
4-5	2	25.0	0	14.3	0	0.0
6-7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
8-9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
10-11	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12-13	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
14-15	1	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
16-17	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
18-19	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	12.5
Total Businesses	8	100.0	8	100.0	8	100.0
Total Employees	29		0		19	
Mean Number of Employees per Business (Peak)		4.8				
Estimated Number Employed within the TRC		77				
Off-Peak Season						
Nil	1	12.5	8	100.0	6	100.0
1	1	12.5	0	0.0	1	12.5
2-3	3	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
4-5	2	25.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6-7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
8-9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
10-11	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12-13	1	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
14-15	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
16-17	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
18-19	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	12.5
Total Businesses	8	100.0	8	100.0	8	100.0
Total Employees	28		0		19	
Mean Nos Employees per Business (Off-Peak)		4.7				
Estimated Number Employed within the TRC		75				

Note: Part-time and casual employment is recorded as 0.5 when contributing to total employment.
Total number of employees includes the owner-operator and is the number of full-time equivalent employees.
Estimates of total employment based on an estimated 19 fishing businesses (Table 8.1)

Table 8.9 shows that the majority of fishing businesses within this TRC operated only one boat (87%).

Table 8.9
Number of Boats Operated by Fishing Businesses

Number of Boats	Sample Count	Percent within TRC
1	7	87.5
2	1	12.5
Total Number of Businesses	8	100.0
Mean Number of Boats Operated		1.1
Difference of TRC mean to QLD mean (1.7)		-0.4

Note: Standard errors for number of boats operated (sample = 0.1; QLD population = 0.05)

The majority of boats (56%) operated by businesses were between 7 and 10 metres, with an additional 33% being between 15 and 18 metres (Table 8.10).

Table 8.10
Length of Boats Operated by Fishing Businesses

Length of Boat (metres)	Sample Count	Percent within TRC
3-6	1	11.1
7-10	5	55.6
11-14	0	0.0
15-18	3	33.3
Total Number of Boats	9	100.0
Mean Length of Boats Operated (metres)		11.9
Difference of TRC mean to QLD mean (9.9)		+2.0
Mean Length of Largest Boat Operated (metres)		11.5
Difference of TRC mean to QLD mean (11.4)		+0.1

Note: As mean length of boats is a multiple response, standard errors cannot be computed. Standard errors for mean length of largest boat (sample = 1.5; QLD population=0.14)

Value of Production and Location of Sales

Table 8.11 shows for the 12 months prior to the survey, the wholesale value of all products sold by fishing businesses within the Thursday Island TRC. Seventy-five percent of businesses within this TRC had production values of up to \$300,000 for the previous 12 months. In addition, there are several businesses within this TRC with production values in excess of \$500,000 per annum (Table 8.11).

Within the Thursday Island TRC it is estimated that the 19 fishing businesses had a gross value of production of approximately \$5.3 million, which is approximately 1.7% of the total value of production of the Queensland commercial fishing industry.

Table 8.11
Wholesale Value of Product (Annual value)

Wholesale Value (\$,000)	Sample Count	Sample Percent	Queensland Percent
Less than \$100	2	25.0	42.8
\$101 - \$200	2	25.0	21.4
\$201 - \$300	2	25.0	16.2
\$301 - \$400	0	0.0	8.5
\$401 - \$500	0	0.0	3.8
\$501 - \$600	1	16.6	1.8
\$601 - \$700	0	0.0	1.3
\$701 - \$800	0	0.0	0.4
\$801 - \$900	1	16.6	1.0
\$901 - \$1,000	0	0.0	0.3
Over \$1,000	0	0.0	2.3
Total	8	100.0	100.0

Median GVP for TRC	\$277,815
Estimated Total GVP for TRC	\$5,278,000
Median GVP for QLD Population	\$128,629
Estimated Total GVP for QLD Population	\$314,241,000
Percent of Total Queensland Production	1.7%

Note: Estimated TRC population total is based on an estimate of 19 businesses within the TRC, with a median GVP of \$277,815. Queensland total GVP based on 2,443 businesses (2,679 licenced businesses with 8.8% latency) with a median GVP of \$128,629.

Within this TRC, three (37%) of the fishers surveyed indicated they sold their entire product to overseas markets. Table 8.12 shows the value of sales to specific locations within Australia for the sample of eight businesses and the percentage of sales to each location. The sample percent of sales to each location has been used directly to estimate the total value of business sales to all locations. From Table 8.13, and as shown in Figure 8.3, 41% of sales (\$2.2 million) occur within Thursday Island and a further 36% or \$1.9 million occur directly to Cairns. It is probable that the \$1 million in sales to overseas markets occurred firstly within Thursday Island or to Cairns, thereby increasing the value of sales to these locations.

Table 8.12
Town Location of Sales (\$'000)

Location of Sales	Sample Value of Sales	Percent of Sample	Estimated Sales
Thursday Island	909	40.9	2,159
Cairns	790	35.6	1,879
Western Australia	83	3.7	195
Total (Australia)	1,782	80.2	4,233
Total (Overseas)	441	19.8	1,045
Total Sales	2,223	100.0	5,278

Note: The sample value of sales is based on GVP as reported by businesses in the survey.

The estimated value of business sales (Table 8.11) is proportionally distributed to all locations on the basis of sample percentages.

Business Expenditure and Debt Levels

Table 8.13 shows that approximately \$2.7 million was spent by businesses in this TRC within the previous year on business goods and services (excluding salaries and wages). The majority of this expenditure (54%) or \$1.5 million occurred in Thursday Island and a further 42% or \$616,000 occurred within Cairns (Figure 8.4).

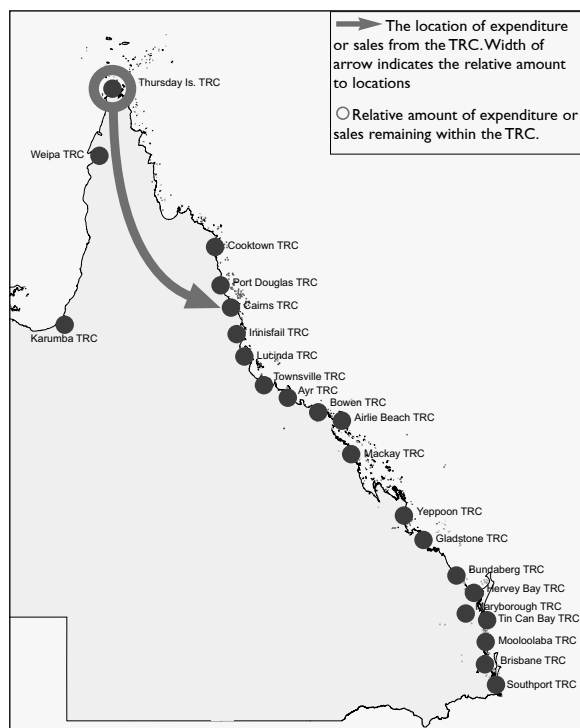


Figure 8.3 Thursday Is TRC: Location of Business Sales

Table 8.13
Town Location of Business Expenditure (All costs, excluding salaries and wages)

Location of Expenditure	Sample Value of Expenditure (\$'000)	Percent of Sample	Value of Expenditure (\$'000)
Thursday Island	626	54.1	1,488
Cairns	532	45.9	1,262
Total Expenditure	1,158	100.0	2,750

Note: Business expenditure includes all non labour expenditure (ie., fuel, equipment, repairs etc). Coefficients from the QLD input-output table for 1992-1993 indicate that expenditure on local intermediate purchases and imports, accounted for 52.1% of total revenue. The amount of business expenditure occurring within specific locations is based on 52.1% of the estimated GVP for the business.

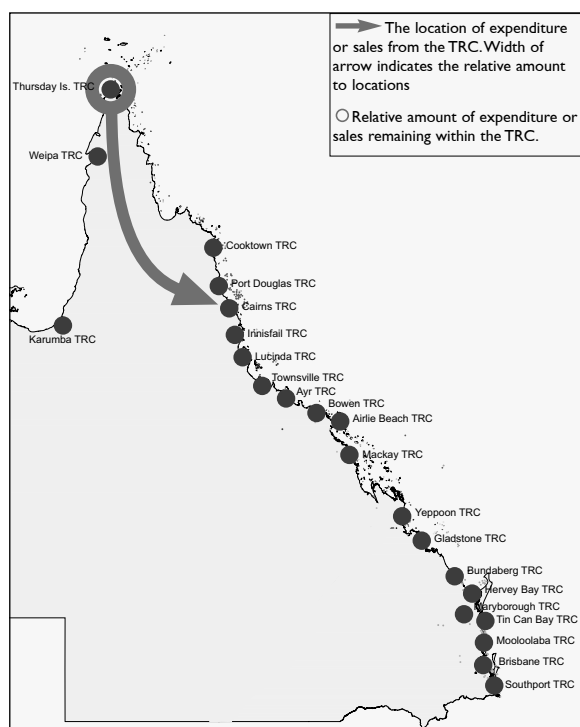


Figure 8.4 Thursday Island TRC: Location of Expenditure

Asking each business operator, what percentage of their business assets were not owned outright by their business, identified for the purpose of this study the level of business debt. Table 8.14 shows that 75% of businesses within the Thursday Island TRC had no debt. The overall debt level within the TRC was 11% of business assets, which is somewhat lower than the 16.6% as reported across all commercial fishing businesses in Queensland.

**Table 8.14
Business Debt Levels**

Percent of Assets Not Owned	Sample Count	Sample Percent	Queensland Percent
Nil	6	75.0	60.1
1 – 10%	0	0.0	6.4
11 – 20%	0	0.0	5.2
21 – 30%	0	0.0	6.4
31 – 40%	1	12.5	3.3
41 – 50%	1	12.5	9.6
51 – 60%	0	0.0	1.8
61 – 70%	0	0.0	1.2
71 – 80%	0	0.0	1.1
81 – 90%	0	0.0	1.6
91 – 100%	0	0.0	3.3
Total	8	100.0	100.0

Median Debt Level for TRC	11.2%
Median Debt Level for QLD Population	16.6%
Difference of TRC mean to QLD mean (16.6)	-5.4%

Note: Debt level defined as the percentage of total business assets not owned outright by the business.

EMPLOYEE PROFILES

Town of Residence

All employees within the Thursday Island TRC resided on Thursday Island.

Months Employed in the Fishing Industry

Table 8.15 shows that during the past 12 months the majority of owner/operators and employees within this TRC were employed in the fishing industry between April and July. This is similar to the profile for all Queensland employees.

**Table 8.15
Months Employed in the Fishing Industry During Past 12 Months**

Months	Owner/ Operators	Employee	Total Within TRC	All QLD Employees
January	100.0	87.5	93.3	80.7
February	100.0	75.0	86.7	82.3
March	100.0	87.5	93.3	86.1
April	100.0	100.0	100.0	86.8
May	100.0	100.0	100.0	87.3
June	100.0	100.0	100.0	87.8
July	100.0	100.0	100.0	86.7
August	100.0	87.5	93.3	86.3
September	100.0	87.5	93.3	86.8
October	85.7	62.5	73.3	85.4
November	65.7	37.5	60.0	84.4
December	100.0	62.5	80.0	82.3

Note: Owner/operator sample of 7; employee sample of 9

Location of Household Expenditure

Table 8.16 and Figure 8.5 show the location of household expenditure related to individual income derived from employment in the fishing industry. As might be expected, the majority (93%) of industry related household expenditure occurs in Thursday Island (\$1.6 million) with a further 7% or \$0.1 million occurring within Cairns.

**Table 8.16
Town Location of Household Expenditure
(all commodities and services)**

Location of	Sample Value (\$'000)	Percent of Sample	Estimated Value (\$'000)
Thursday Island	283	93.1	1,557
Cairns	21	6.9	115
Total	304	100.0	1,672

Note: The gross individual annual income of fishers within this TRC was estimated as \$35,692 (Table 8.18). The Household Expenditure Survey for Queensland: 1993-1994 (ABS, 1996) indicates that for households in non-metropolitan areas 79% of gross weekly income was related to commodity and service purchases. Furthermore, of the total expenditure on commodities and services purchased by households, Queensland Input-Output tables indicate that 77% of expenditure occurs within Queensland, with the balance contributing to taxes and imports from outside Queensland. Applying these percentages to the gross individual annual income of employees indicates that direct employee expenditure on household commodities and services to be \$21,711, with total household expenditure across all 77 (Table 8.6) employees to be \$1.7 million (Table 8.16)

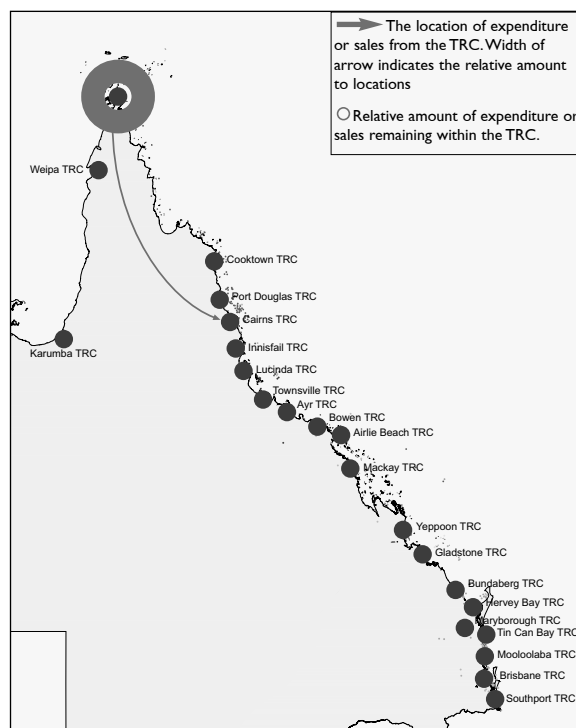


Figure 8.5 Thursday Island TRC: Location of Household Expenditure

School and Employment Locations of Family Members

The towns in which family members attend school and are employed are shown in Table 7.17. As might be expected, Thursday Island is the primary location for school and employment (90%).

Table 7.17
School and Employment Locations of
Family Members

Location of Employment or School	Sample Count	Percent of Sample
Thursday Island	28	90.3
Cairns	2	6.5
Brisbane	1	3.2
Total Family Members	17	100.0

Note: Counts and percentages based on all family members.

Employee Social and Demographic Profiles

Table 7.18 provides profile information about employees within the TRC. Information is provided separately for owner-operators and non owner-operator employees within the TRC. For comparative purposes, information is also provided for all employees throughout Queensland.

Table 7.18. Owner-Operator and Employee Profiles

Profile	Owner/ Operators ^a	Employee	Total Within TRC	All QLD Employees
Estimated Number of Employees ^b	19	58	77	7,088
Mean age of fisher	47.6	34.0	40.3	37.3
Age range	33-55	20-56	20-56	15-79
Percent males	100.0	87.5	93.3	94.8
Mean years resident in town	27.9	11.4	19.1	19.1
Mean number of years in fishing industry	22.0	7.6	14.3	12.6
Median hours per week in fishing industry	54.0	59.5	56.8	60.0
Percent moved town to retain employment	28.6	12.5	20.0	20.5
Percent currently employed in other industry	14.3	50.0	33.3	34.2
Percent previously employed in other industry	85.7	75.0	80.0	69.2
Housing tenure				
Rent	14.3	71.4	42.9	33.6
Mortgage	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.1
Own home	85.7	14.3	50.0	31.1
Other (eg, live with parents, on boat)	0.0	14.3	7.1	15.2
Educational				
Year completed school				
Primary school	14.3	0.0	6.7	5.2
Year 8	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0
Year 9	14.3	0.0	6.7	11.9
Year 10	14.3	37.5	26.7	44.4
Year 11	28.6	25.0	26.7	10.1
Year 12	28.6	37.5	33.3	20.2
Percent completed trade or TAFE certificate	28.6	25.0	26.7	37.7
Percent completed industry or business course	0.0	37.5	20.0	15.2
Percent with business plan ^c	0.0	—	0.0	22.9
Percent active fishing group member	85.7	62.5	73.3	25.7
Marital Status				
Percent married or relationship	100.0	25.0	60.0	60.0
Percent with partner employed in business ^d	71.4	nd	nd	56.1
Median hours per week employed in business	23.7	nd	nd	20.0
Partners Income^{de}				
Full-time employment	57.1	50.0	55.6	28.3
Part-time employment	42.9	50.0	44.4	18.5
Casual employment	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.6
Not employed	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.5
Family Composition				
Mean family size	4.3	1.6	2.9	2.6
Estimated number of total family members	82	93	175	18,429
Dependency Ratios				
Age Dependency Ratio ^f	42.9	8.3	30.3	33.4
Elderly Dependency Ratio	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3
Child Dependency Ratio	42.9	8.3	30.3	31.2
Family Member Industry Dependency Ratio ^g	46.7	25.0	42.1	23.9
Gross Individual Income				
Less than \$16,000	0.0	14.3	7.7	34.6
\$16,000 - \$26,000	16.7	28.6	23.1	19.6
\$26,000 - \$36,000	33.3	14.3	23.1	22.1
\$36,000 - \$52,000	33.3	42.9	38.5	11.7
\$52,000 - \$78,000	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.6
Over \$78,000	16.7	0.0	7.7	5.4
Average Income (\$)	41,833	30,429	35,692	27,471

Note: ^a Owner/operator sample of 7; employee sample of 9.

^b Based on peak estimates derived in Table 8.6.

^c Percentages for owner-operators only.

^d Percentage based on those fishers with partners.

^e Includes partners income from all sources.

^f The age dependency ratio is the number of children (below 15 years) and elderly persons (above 65 years) to every 100 persons in the population.

^g The industry dependency ratio is the number of persons in the family who are over 15 years of age and working in the fishing industry (excluding the direct industry employee) as a proportion of all family members over 15 years of age.

All Queensland employees includes all owner-operators and employees. Value is the weighted sample of owner-operators (2.43) and employees (8.68).

