

Compliance Summary Report

Purpose

This report provides a summary of compliance activity during the 2022/23 fishing and gamebird hunting seasons.

It also reports on achievement of internal regional compliance guidelines of:

- Checking 10% of Fish or Game Adult Full Season Licence holders annually
- Maintaining 95% compliance with laws and regulations.

Licence Diversion levels

Direction on matters of prosecution, including diversion levels are guided by the “Offense Guidelines” adopted by the Council. These standard diversion fines were approved in November 2022 and are in line with Southland and Central South Island regions levels.

Fishing Season Compliance

Total Adult and Family Full Season Licence holders	12084
Documented Interview with anglers	1167
% Checked (Target >10% Adult licence holders)	9.66%
Number of Offenders (excluding Failure to Produce or “FTP’s”)	31
% Compliance(Target: 95%)	97.34%

This season, **non-resident** full season fishing licence volumes increased by 713% from the 2021-2022 season. In comparison, **resident** full season adult and family licence sales had decreased by 304 licences. Overall, Licence Equivalent (LEQ) were up by 0.8%

Our total number of interviewed anglers increased to 1167 with last year only recording 772. The previous table shows that the compliance team was slightly beneath its target of 10% of total full season family and adult licences (9.66%)

31 individuals were apprehended for Conservation Act 1987 offences, 13 less than last season. Over the last 5 years, compliance levels have ranged between 95% and 98% of those interviewed (and this season’s result fits within the range at 97.34%. In addition to the more serious offences, all those who failed to produce a licence to a ranger in the field (FTP’s) have their licence check on the database and were given verbal or written warnings. This is a routine procedure to ensure anglers do not lie about having a valid licence.

Overview of Fishing Offences

Fishing without holding a valid sports fishing licence (FWL) remains the most common offence in the Otago region, with FWL comprising 87% of offences detected (excluding FTPs). Four offenders committed two simultaneous offences: without a licence and obstruction of a ranger/provided false details. In terms of regulation offences, two individuals were caught fishing with two rods. Thus, resulting in a total of 95% of offences involving FWL.

Fishing prosecution summary

FWL Outcomes

- 5 FWL offenders were given warnings due to factors such as the matter being their first offence, their youth, health issues, or having a licence for a different Fish and Game Region or similar.
- 20 FWL offenders accepted diversion with four more offenders still being processed at years end.
- 1 offender (simultaneous offences of FWL and providing false details) was dealt with through prosecution. This offender was fined:
 1. Fishing without a licence: \$300
 2. Providing false details: \$500
 3. Prosecution cost: \$450
- One 'simultaneous' offence will be heard in court in the coming weeks.

2 Rod Offence Outcomes

- Both 2 rods offenders accepted diversion

All offenders accepted the Councils Diversion package; they chose to accept diversion and pay their fine into the Otago Regions 'Habitat Enhancement and Research Fund'.

The region continues to use the diversion system of laying a charge and then offering diversion. All offenders accepted the Councils Diversion package and paid their fine into the Otago Regions 'Habitat Enhancement and Research Fund'.

The proportion of successful diversions has therefore been consistent with last season all offenders that we offered diversion successfully completing its terms.

Game Season Compliance

Total Documented game licences	3907
Total game licences checked	155
% Checked (Target >10% Adult licence holders)	3.97%
Number of Offenders (excluding Failure to Produce or "FTP's")	20
% compliance (Target: 95%)	87.1%

Game Compliance Summary

The target of interviewing 10% of gamebird licence holders was once more, not achieved this season. This contact rate is an almost unattainable target, especially when much of our compliance work is focused on opening weekend and on individual farm ponds and private land, with a well-trained but limited number of rangers. After opening weekend, game ranging generally results in considerable effort for a limited number of hunter contacts. Thus, all 155 game licence checks were conducted in opening weekend this season and almost exclusively on private land.

HWL Outcomes

- 4 Hunting without licence offences accepted diversion

Breach of Game Gazette conditions

Lead Shot Outcomes

- 5x hunters caught in possession of lead shot accepted Diversion.
- 3x lead shot offenders were offered a warning due to mitigating circumstances such as amount of lead shot present and/or were given an onsite warning.

Over bag limit

- 6x offenders were given a warning for being Over the Bag Limit (Shoveler Hens).

Taking Partially Protected Wildlife

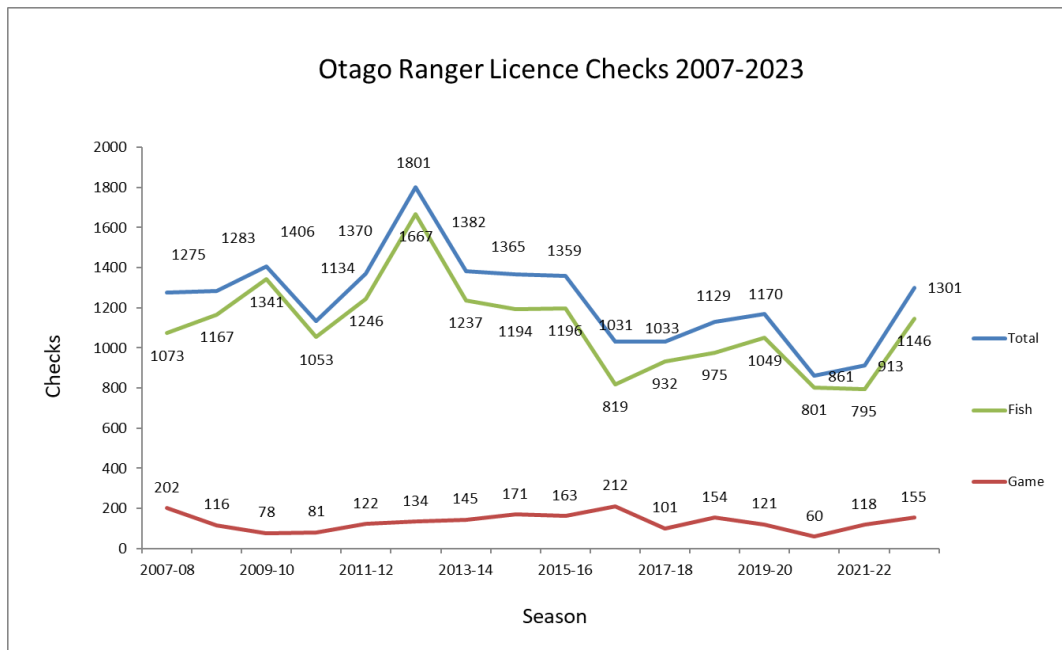
- 2x offenders accepted diversion for Taking Partially Protected Wildlife (Grey Teal). This is an increase from last year's season where 1 offender was given a warning for Taking Partially Protected Wildlife.

Other

Police are still following up with one offender who left a firearm unattended near a hunting area. The offender will receive a warning from the Firearms Safety Authority for his behaviour.

This season saw a decrease in compliance with a noticeable increase in lead shot offences (an increase of 5 offences from the previous season).

Trends in ranging activity



Fishing licence checks were up from the 2021/22 season with an increase of 395 interviews.

Game bird licence checks were also up from the 2022 season, with an increase of 79 interviews.

Recommendations

Council receives this report.

Matthew Veitch

Otago Fish & Game Compliance Officer

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