

OTL DFT – a call out to OTL DFT who may be interested in applying for a permit

OceanWatch is calling on OTL DFT fishers to express interest in attaining a Section 37 permit to trial modified fishing gear configurations.

Permit holders are authorised to modify fishing gear, i.e. remove ropes and floats from the water column to reduce potential of entanglement with migratory whales.

Permit modifications may include:

- a) Galvanic time release
- b) Programmable Time Release
- c) Acoustic Release
- d) Sub-surface horizontal rope

Fishers are to provide feedback to OceanWatch on the practical use of the modified gears, including efficiency in setting and retrieval, safety aspects and lost fishing gear.

***** Fishers who are interested should express interest in attaining a permit before the end of April 2022.**

Permits will authorise fishers post June 2022.

Endorsed OTL fishers should contact Michael Wooden at OceanWatch to express interest.

Email: michael@oceanwatch.org.au

Phone: 0422 618 248

In addition, 7mm and 8mm negatively buoyant rope has been acquired and is being trialled by some fishers through the program. Use of NBR is being trialled to minimise slack rope at the surface. Use of NBR and any other additional lawful modifications e.g. weights, chains do not require access to this permit.

If you have an innovative idea that you believe can minimise risk of entanglement, please get in contact.

OceanWatch continues to work collaboratively with industry to identify and test new and novel approaches to reduce the potential for interactions between commercial fishing gear and Australia's growing east coast Humpback Whale population.

This work is funded by the NSW Government under the Marine Estate Management Strategy.

