



# How Queensland took its fishing permits into the 21st century

Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries needed a more efficient and transparent way to collect payments and data for its Stocked Impoundment Permit Scheme (SIPS). Australia Post's digital solution gives recreational fishers more choice – from online to in-person applications, and ensures efficient payments for the department.



# Snapshot

## Customer

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Queensland

## Industry

Government

## Website

[qld.gov.au/freshwaterfishing](http://qld.gov.au/freshwaterfishing)

## Product

Digital solution for licence applications

## Challenges

- Department audit revealed traceability risks with the SIPS paper-based system
- DAF staff spent too much time chasing payments and permit numbers, and on manual data entry
- Needed an electronic system operated by a single service provider with permits available online, over the phone and in person.

## Solution

Australia Post tailored a digital solution that enabled local agents to continue selling permits, and ensured immediate payment transfers into DAF accounts, automated reconciliation and data transfer, and provided instant digital permits to fishers.

## Results

- Approximately 50,000 permits are issued each year – with minimal paperwork
- iPads used by agents to assist with the transition to digital permits
- 585 Australia Post outlets provide in-person permit services – significantly expanding the department's physical reach
- Fishers now receive a digital permit instantly via text or email when they purchase online, over the phone or at an agent
- Secure credit card payments are made directly to the department
- DAF will save the equivalent of one staff member, freeing them to focus on protecting fishing stocks and infrastructure, and enforcing permits.



A demonstration of the application process can be found at <https://youtu.be/GNV2CHhQA9o>



“Very few providers could do everything we needed. Australia Post worked with us to accommodate our network of agents.”

**Daniel Smith**

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries



“We're now getting consistent permit data and automatic reconciliation of our finance files via SecurePay – it will save us at least one staff member in terms of hours.”

**Daniel Smith**

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries



“Service stations and tackle shops were using old carbon copy books with payment at the till – which meant DAF had problems enforcing the permits and collecting payments.”

**Damien Gesterkamp**

Product Specialist – Solutions Development  
Australia Post



“We had to go beyond our traditional solutions to make this work. We'd never executed a digital application solution on iPads before, so we had to build those capabilities in and take responsibility for the risks.”

**Damien Gesterkamp**

Product Specialist – Solutions Development  
Australia Post



## Background

Queenslanders can fish in any of 63 stocked dams and weirs – but only with a permit. Until July 2016, permits could be purchased online or at one of 151 local agents, but there was a lack of data visibility and payments had to be chased. The Department needed a more efficient solution.

“An internal audit in 2014 revealed risks with the paper-based system, mainly lack of financial accountability,” explains DAF’s Daniel Smith. “It recommended an electronic, trackable system. But when we developed the business specifications, very few organisations could provide everything we needed.”

One of the main challenges was integrating the existing agent network – primarily tackle shops and service stations. Some depended on SIPS as a source of foot traffic.

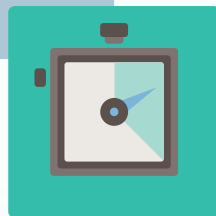
“We wanted a single service provider for online, phone and in-person permit transactions,” says Daniel. “And we needed to streamline the permit process for fishers and the department, so we had complete visibility and they could enjoy their weekend.”

DAF issues around 50,000 permits every year. The department planned to extend the scheme; by expanding the number of dams and weirs covered by the permits, and by requiring individual permits (rather than permits that included partners). Daniel and one other staff member were spending a lot of their time chasing payments and permit data, and manually entering carbon copy permits as they were sent in from the agents.

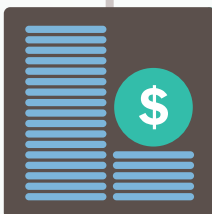
“We wanted to broaden the reach so the permits were more accessible for fishers – but also reduce our admin burden,” says Daniel. “Sometimes it would take weeks for permit data to reach us, and if someone had lost their paper permit in the meantime, we had no way of validating or enforcing it easily.”

### The new digital permit process has:

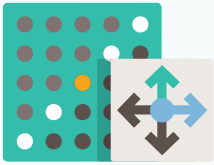
Saved the equivalent of one staff member in admin time



Provided overnight data directly into DAF’s data systems with no manual entry



Managed revenue of \$1.1million to the Department



## Challenge

Many regular fishers, (particularly in older demographics), waited until they reached the campsite before sorting out their fishing permit. Guiding them through an online application process that required credit card payment was a key challenge in deploying a new, digital solution.

The in-person solution catered for customers without a credit card or email address. These customers can simply walk into a Post Office and purchase a permit and receive a paper receipt permit.

DAF's agent network also needed to use the same online application system, but many are in remote areas with limited connectivity.

A separate agreement was developed between the 50 agents (who opted into the new scheme), a specialist technology provider and Australia Post, to provide 50 iPads. These were locked down to the online permit application form, and this agreement reduced the technology risk for DAF.



## Solution

The omni-channel service went live in July 2016 with four options for fishers to choose from. Across all channels, credit card payments are made securely via SecurePay and transferred directly to DAF's account:

1

### Online smart form

enabled by Decipha, with seamless application and payment via desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone – with a digital permit issued immediately via text or email.



2

### In person

at 585 Australia Post outlets in Queensland and New South Wales border towns, broadening the permit's physical reach.



3

### iPad smart forms

at 50 external agents, removing all paperwork from DAF's administration of the process.



4

### Over the phone

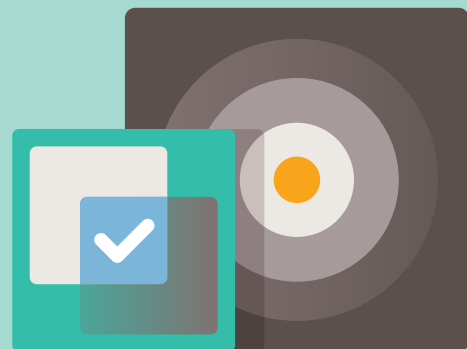
managed by Australia Post staff.



## Results

While permit numbers have remained relatively stable, revenue has grown – with far less administrative effort from Daniel and his team. Over time, Daniel expects the solution to free up another staff member's time – the equivalent of around 2,000 hours a year.

“It's definitely fixed the payment accountability issue, and there is now more choice for customers to buy their permits,” he says. “We're now working on further improvements such as buying multiple permits on one transaction and enhancing the online form to improve customer experience and reduce drop-out rates.”



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