

## 2025/26 Tasmanian Southern Rock Lobster Commercial Logbook Data Summary - May 2026

This document provides a brief summary of logbook data from the commercial Tasmanian Southern Rock Lobster fishery up to the end of the 2025/26 licensing year. A preliminary standardized catch per unit effort (CPUE) analysis is also provided. A new harvest strategy is in the final stages of development. This is likely to contain new management/assessment areas which will be utilized in future assessments and analyses (possibly including the full 2025/26 assessment) once adopted.

The southern rock lobster commercial TACC has been 1050.7t for the last twelve years, preceded by three years at 1103.24t (Figure 1). In the last fifteen years the TACC has been consistently caught, with one exception in 2019/20 due to COVID and export market disruption.

Over the last decade CPUE has risen substantially, primarily through two significant recruitment events in 2016-2017 and 2021-2022 (Figure 3). In 2022-23, CPUE reached a multi-decadal high. This was the highest nominal CPUE since the early 1980s and the highest standardized CPUE since the introduction of consistent logbooks in 2000.

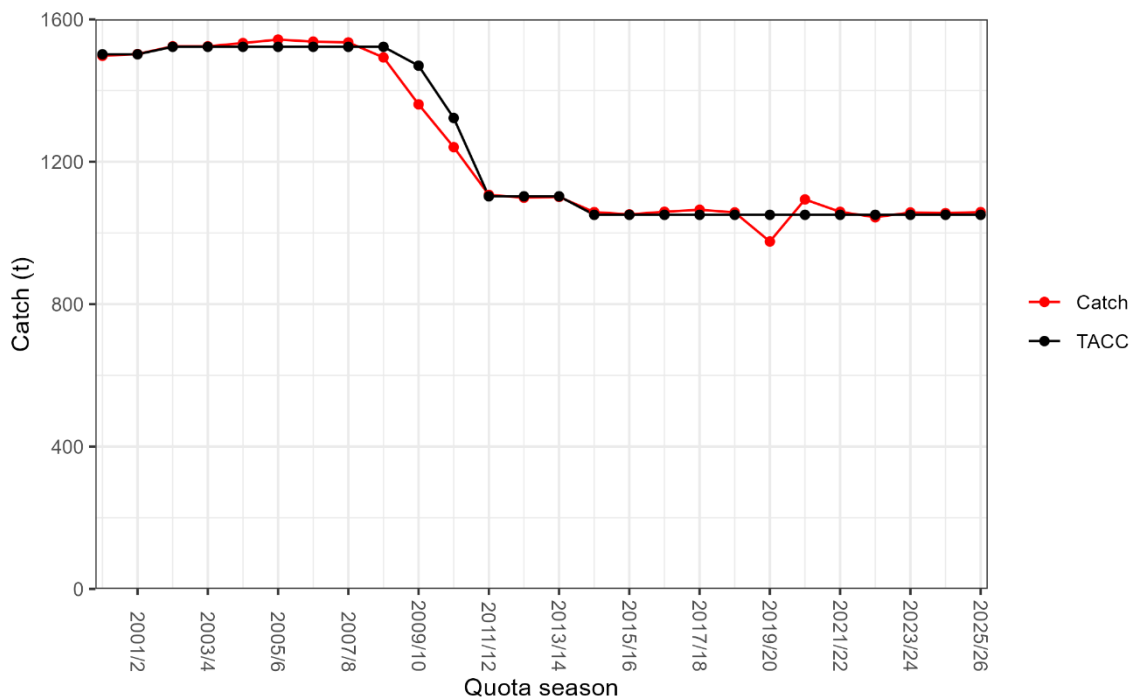
CPUE remained at a similar level in 2023/24, but fell substantially in 2024/25, with a further decline in 2025/26. Despite the recent declines, CPUE remains high. A further consideration is that these analyses do not compensate for the shift to the recent more conservative higher legal minimum size limits (this is addressed in the stock assessment model). Nominal CPUE is at the third highest level since the introduction of the ITQ system, and standardized CPUE is at the fourth highest level.

Regionally, the recent CPUE declines have primarily occurred in the Western assessment areas (Figure 6) with stable CPUE in the Eastern regions (Figure 5). However, the nominal (unstandardized) CPUE in the Western areas remains above that observed in the Eastern areas. In the last five years the most notable change in catch location has been an increase in the catch taken in Area 5 (NW Tasmania including King Island; Figure 8) and a decrease in catch from Area 8 (SW Tasmania; Figure 8). Also of note is an ongoing gradual increase in catch over the last decade in Area 1 (Figure 7).

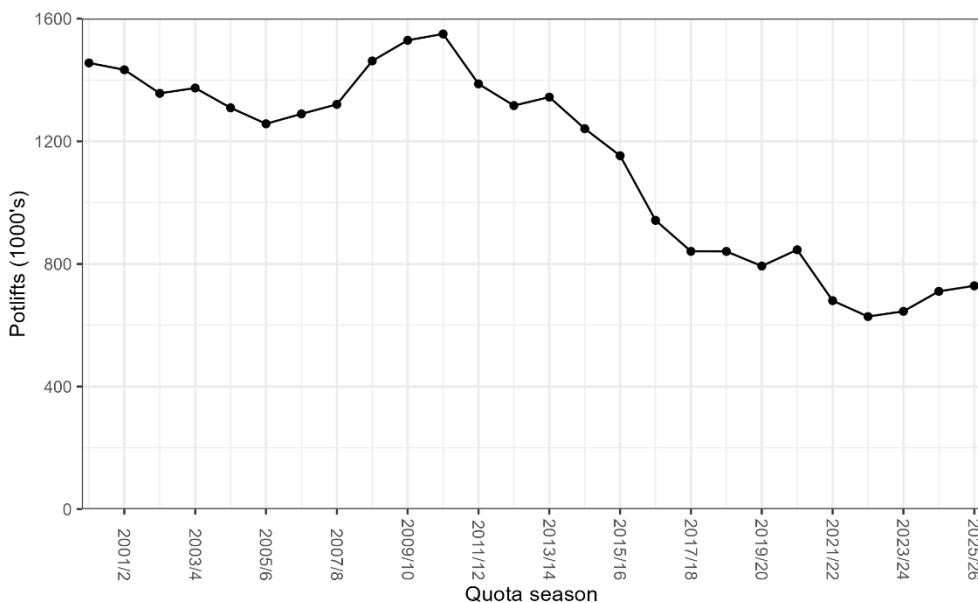
The effort required to catch the TACC has reduced significantly over the last fifteen years (Figure 2) due to a combination of increasing CPUE and the large TACC reductions from 2008-2011. Hence the gap between lease price and beach price has narrowed and competition for leased quota by fishers has become increasingly intense. This has led to an ongoing reduction in vessel numbers (down to 130 in 2025/26; Figure 4).

The reduction in effort over the last fifteen years has been observed in all assessment areas (Figure 9 and Figure 10). This provides additional benefits of reduced environmental impact and gear conflict. However it is noted that some concerns have been reported at finer spatial scales than the assessment areas reported here and this warrants further consideration.

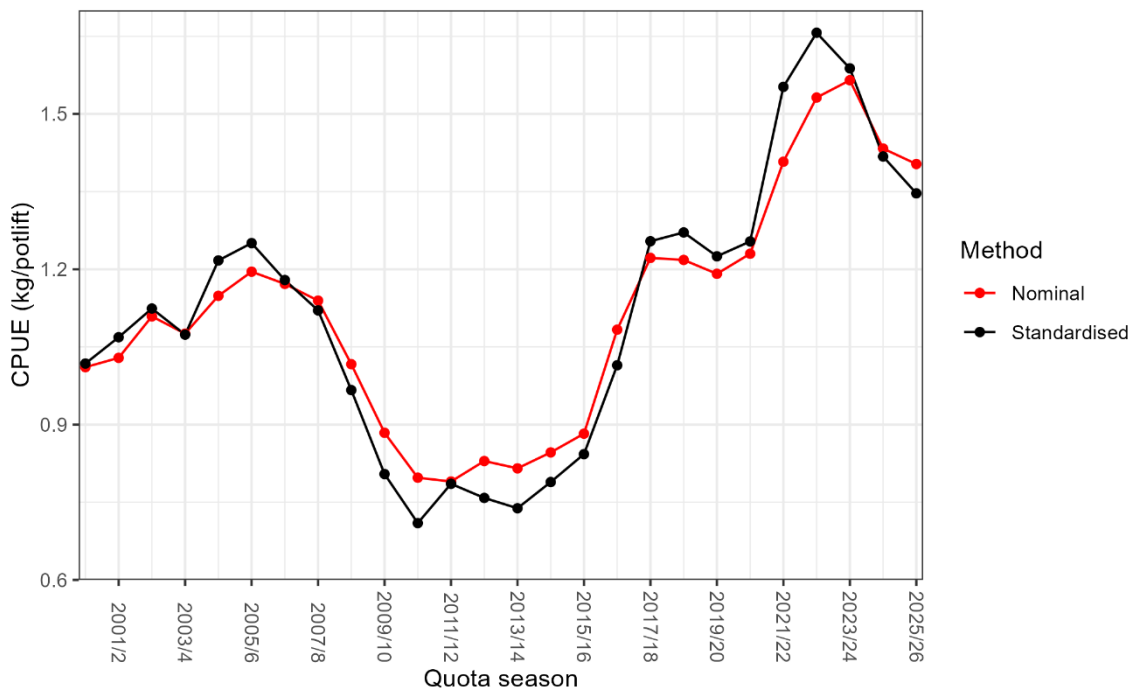
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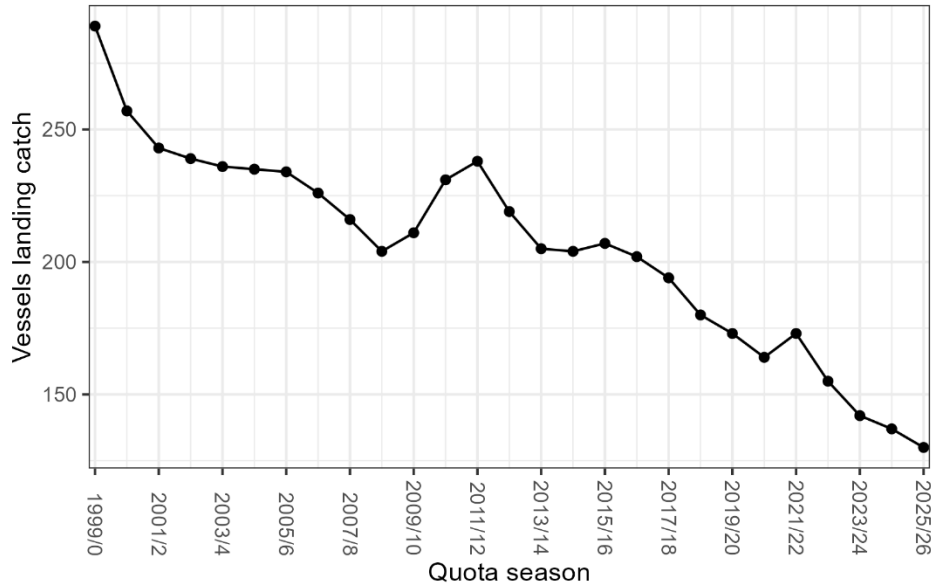
**Figure 1:** Tasmanian commercial Southern Rock Lobster catch and TACC. Note the under / over catch in 2019/20 and 2020/21 was permitted carry-over due to COVID and export market disruption.



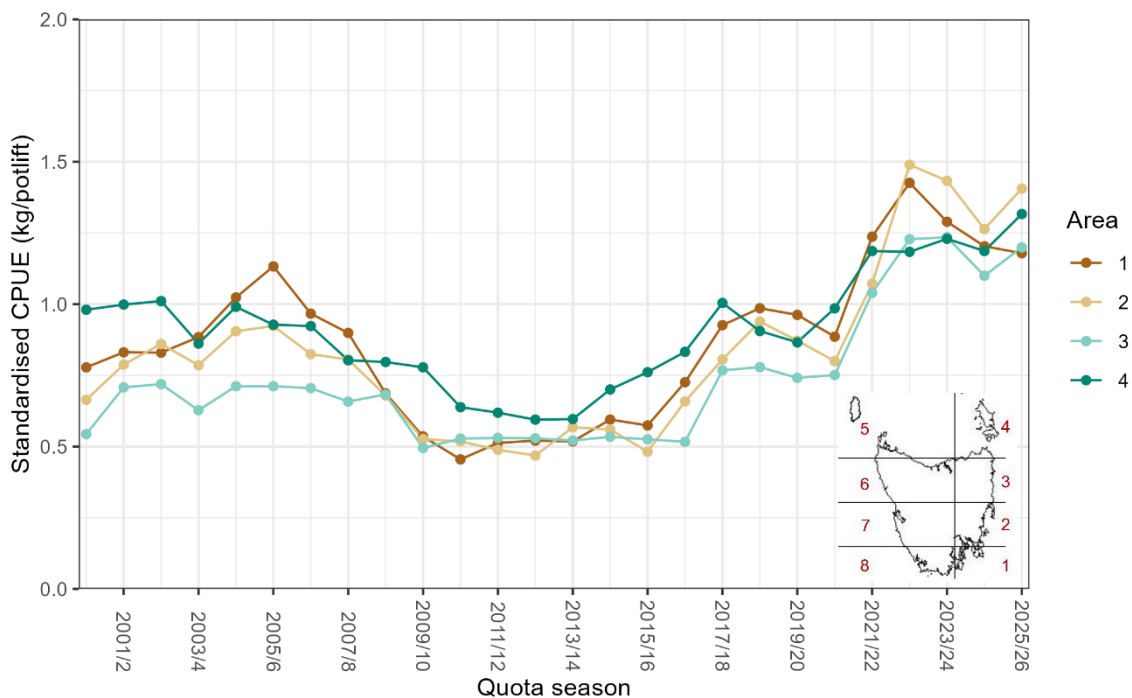
**Figure 2:** Tasmanian commercial Southern Rock Lobster effort, measured in thousands of potlifts.



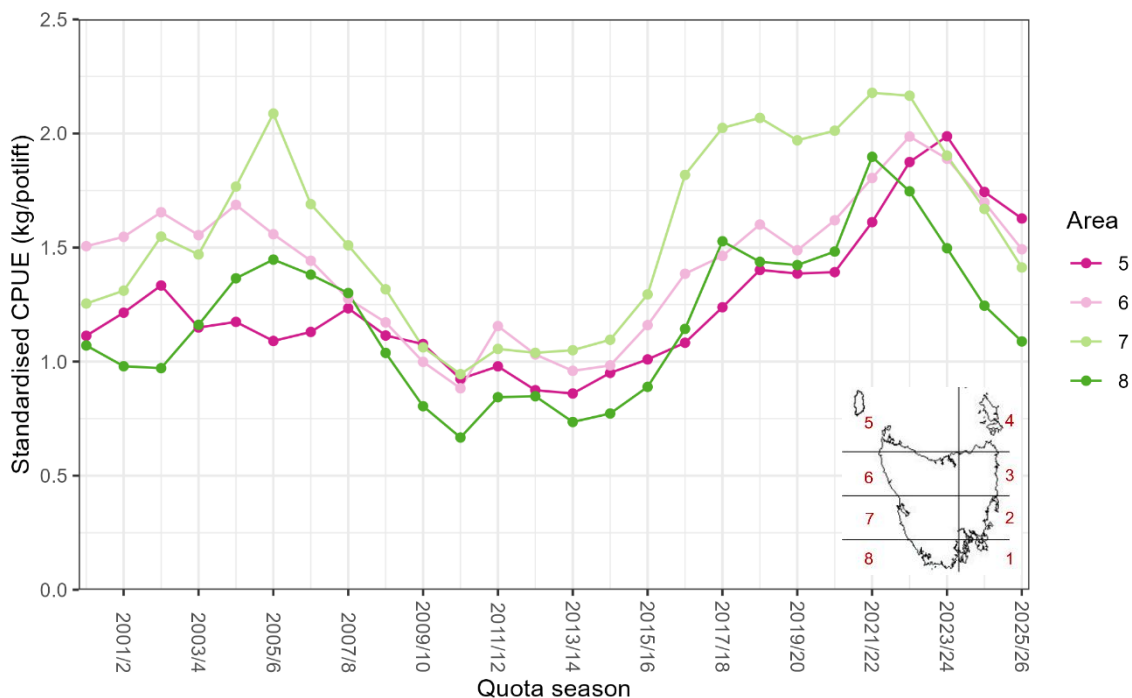
**Figure 3:** Tasmanian commercial Southern Rock Lobster nominal and standardized annual CPUE.



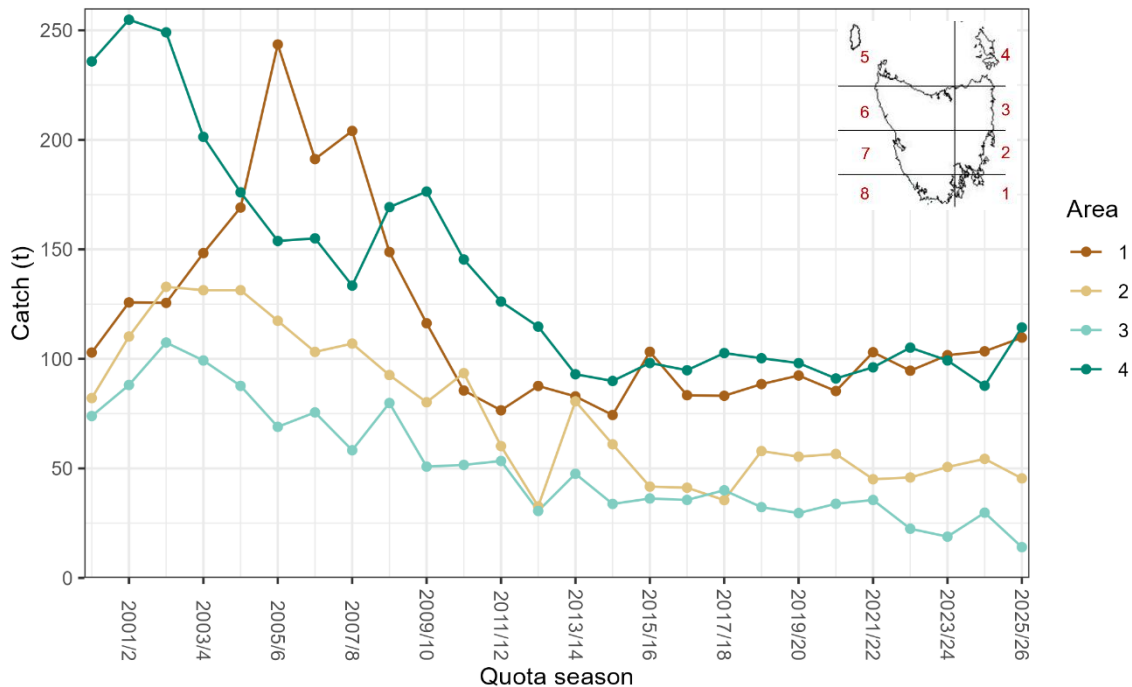
**Figure 4:** Number of vessels landing catch in each quota season.



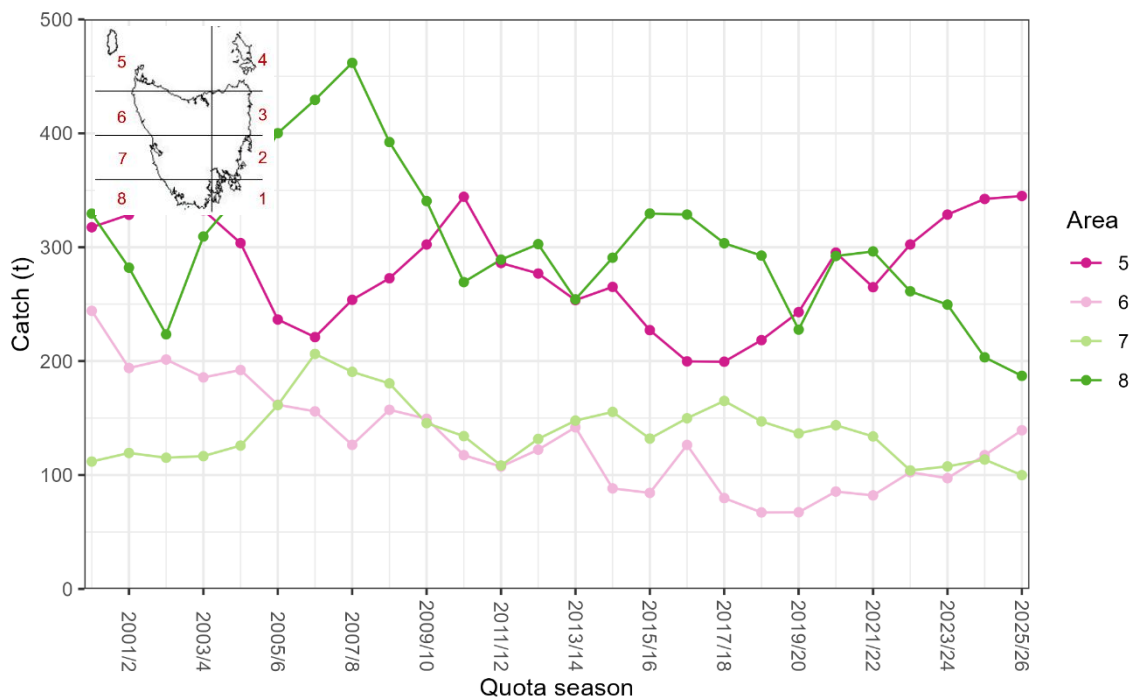
**Figure 5:** Standardised CPUE in the Eastern stock assessment areas.



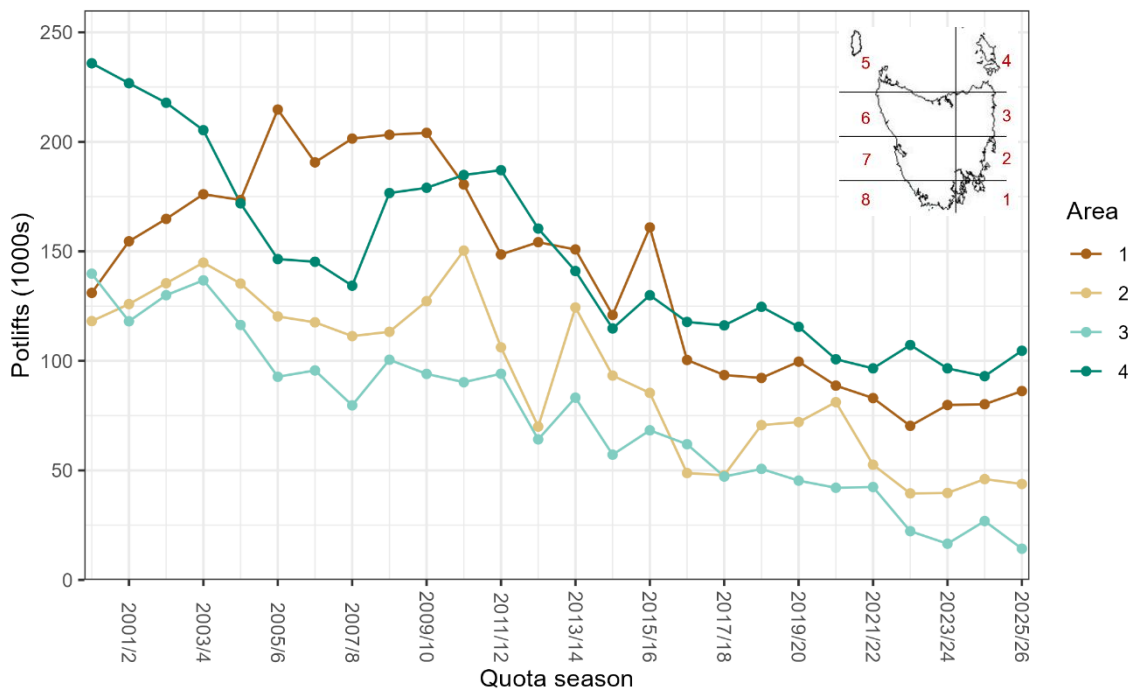
**Figure 6:** Standardised CPUE in the Western stock assessment areas.



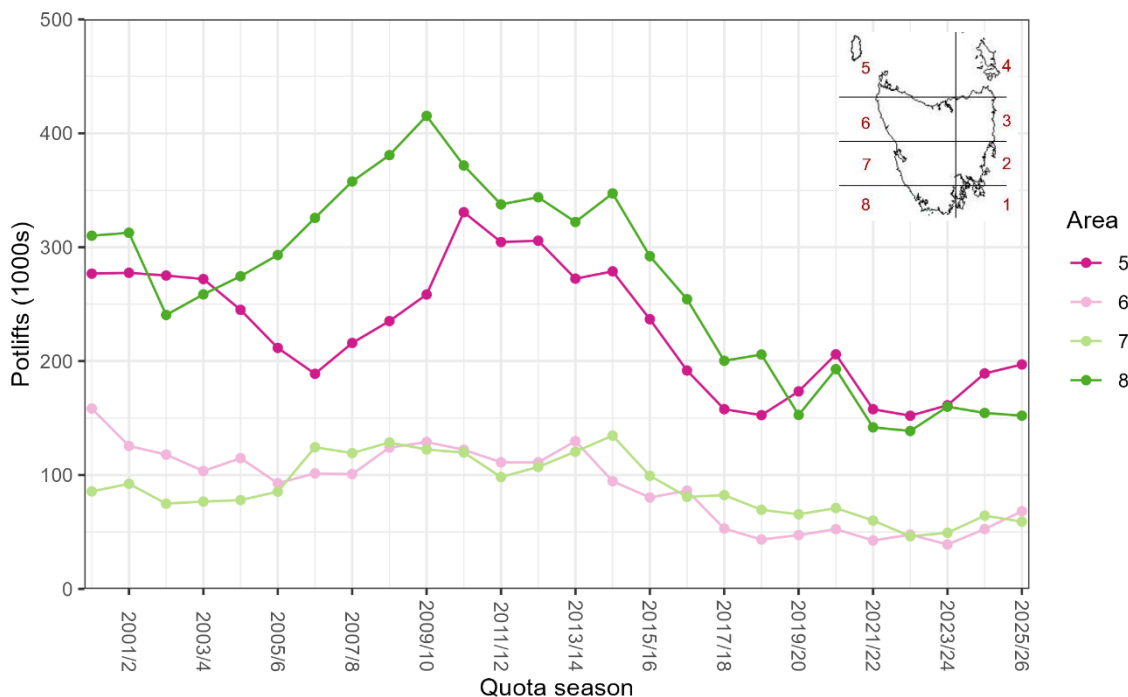
**Figure 7:** Commercial catch in the Eastern stock assessment areas.



**Figure 8:** Commercial catch in the Western stock assessment areas.



**Figure 9:** Commercial effort in the Eastern stock assessment areas.



**Figure 10:** Commercial effort in the Western stock assessment areas.