

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

FINAL REPORT TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PROJECT: Assistance with the re-education of South Coast tuna fishermen (FIRTA 85/97)

The objectives of this project were to

- \* assist South Coast tuna fishermen to diversify their fishing activities from fishing for Southern Bluefin Tuna;
- \* assist South Coast fishermen generally with technical information on fishing.

In 1984 the Commonwealth Government introduced new management arrangements for the Southern Bluefin Tuna fishery including a reduction in quota allocations. It became necessary for tuna fishermen who had sold out of the industry and those with uneconomic quotas to diversify into other fishing activities.

The Western Australian Government provided two tuna fishermen from Albany with some financial assistance to investigate the potential for pair trawling for surface fish species using existing tuna boats. Pair trawling had not been tried by local fishermen in this region before and arrangements were made for the two men to spend ten days on an AFZ observer platform to observe Taiwanese pair trawling. The pair trawling experiment however was not a success and was eventually abandoned. The exercise failed because the fishermen lacked the necessary theoretical and practical experience to make it succeed. Funds were therefore sought from FIRTA for a project to attempt to improve the knowledge of South Coast fishermen in fish trawling techniques.

In order to achieve this aim funds were to be allocated to:-

- (a) purchase three sets of fishing reference books and make them available in Albany, Esperance and Fremantle for examination and loan to fishermen;
- (b) send three South Coast fishermen to the Australian Maritime College in Launceston to participate in courses on fish trawl gear design, operation, net-making and mending.

Fishing reference books were ordered from English firm "Fishing News Books Ltd" and arrived in September 1985. These books comprise 15 volumes and cover areas such as echo sounding and sonar, fishing gear, design of fishing gear, the making, mending and setting of fish nets, deep sea trawling, pair trawling, squid jigging and other topics. In the original submission for FIRTA assistance 17 volumes were listed. Two volumes "Modern Fishing Gear of the World 1 and 2" are out of print and are unlikely to be re-printed.

Three sets of the reference books have been purchased and are now located at the W.A. Fisheries Department in Albany, Esperance and Fremantle. The loaning of the books will be controlled by Departmental officers at these offices. The Department's gear expert, Mr Peter Edsall, is also available to answer any questions fishermen may have arising from the books. Fishermen who lose or damage a book will be expected to pay for its replacement.

The second proposal, that of sending three fishermen to the Australian Maritime College was initially intended to be completed in June 1985. Unfortunately it was not possible to undertake a fair selection process to select three fishermen in time to meet the enrolment deadline. The Australian Maritime College however was kind enough to organise a special ten-day course for November 1985 provided this Department could guarantee at least ten fishermen's attendance. To this end the College agreed to finance the cost of airfares and one week's accommodation for an additional seven fishermen from F.I.R.T.A. funds it had available. The W.A. Fisheries Department provided the additional necessary funds from its Fisheries Research and Development Fund to send the extra seven men.

Thus ten W.A. fishermen were able to participate in the ten day course, three being fully funded from this project. Four fishermen came from Esperance representing the Esperance Professional Fishermen's Association and six were from Albany representing the Tuna Boat Owners Association of Western Australia. The ten-day course entitled "Fish Trawls - Gear Design and Operation" and "Net Making and Mending Fish Trawls" commenced on November 4, 1985 under the control of Captain D.M. Waters. The instruction involved classroom lectures on the development of trawling gear, net construction, design and operation; demonstrations of scale models of trawl nets operating in the flume tank; the physical construction by the fishermen of a fish trawl net; and practical trawling experience, including a four-day fishing trip on the College's fishing vessel "Bluefin".

After attending this course together with the technical reference books now available, it is hoped that the fishermen involved will be capable of assessing whether projects such as pair trawling using tuna boats, or trawling from Albany and Esperance using smaller vessels, is feasible. Further the knowledge they have accumulated should prove advantageous to the fishing community of Albany and Esperance.

Attached are letters from the two fishing organisations indicating support for these types of education programmes.

ATTACHMENT 1 : Reference books purchased. Published by  
Fishing News Books Ltd, 1 Long Garden  
Walk, Farnham, Surrey, England.

1. Control of Fish Quality
2. Culture of Bivalve Molluscs
3. Echo Sounding and Sonar
4. Fishing Gear Designs
5. Small Scale Fishing Gear
6. Fishing Boats and Their Equipment
7. Fishing With Light
8. How to Make and Set Nets
9. Mending of Fishing Nets
10. Modern Deep Sea Trawling Gear
11. Netting Materials for Fishing Gear
12. Pair Trawling Pair Seining
13. Pelagic and Semi-Pelagic Trawling Gear
14. Modern Fishing Gear of the World 3
15. Squid Jigging from Small Boats

Our Ref.: KJD/131/85.....

P.O. BOX 599,  
ALBANY, W.A. 6330.

Your Ref.: .....



**TUNA BOAT OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Mr P Rodgers  
Department of Fisheries and Wildlife  
108 Adelaide Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Peter

May I present to you in letter form a short report of the trawl course run at the Australian Maritime College in Tasmania, from 4th to 15th November, 1985 and attended by six fishermen from the Albany area and four from Esperance.

The group arrived in Launceston on Saturday evening, November 2nd and were met at the airport by a member of the college staff who took us by bus to the college at Beauty Point.

On Sunday afternoon, Captain Carver, Head of School (Fisheries) was kind enough to take us on a tour by college bus around some of the north of the island. This was much appreciated by the group who felt that arriving a day early was good value.

On Monday, November 4th, we began the course with classroom lectures on the development of trawling gear. We were then shown scaled models of trawl nets operating in the flume tank, then commenced the activity which was to consume most of the first week, constructing a fish trawl net.

Under the excellent tuition of the A.M.C.'s gear technologists, Ian Cartwright and Frank Chopin, we cut out and constructed two similar fish trawls. This activity was not confined to college hours, but continued each evening, usually till 8 - 9pm, the extra hours being kindly put in by Messrs Chopin and Cartwright to enable us to gain maximum benefit in the time allowed.

These gentlemen were ably assisted in our instruction by John Boyes, Skipper of "Bluefin", the A.M.C.'s training vessel.

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John showed us the joys of wire splicing and being an experienced trawlerman, as is Ian Carwright, was able to answer our queries with practical advice.

All three of these tutors were at all times cheerfully at pains to show us as fishermen the quickest, strongest, cheapest and most efficient ways to achieve a result. They are all good communicators who really went out of their way to maximize the benefits of our stay at the A.M.C.

The group completed one full trawl by Friday evening. Our tutors took pity upon us at that stage and gave us the weekend off, which enabled us to visit Launceston, hire cars and have a look around.

On Monday 11th November, we sailed on the "Bluefin" with its skipper John Boyes, four crew, a cook, Ian Cartwright and ourselves.

This trip, which was of four days duration and took us down the east coast of Tasmania, putting down trawl shots in a variety of depths and conditions, was really for the group, the part of the course which enabled them to make some decisions regarding the potential of their own vessels for trawling, and consider the sorts of practical problems which we might encounter. "Bluefin's" engineer, Ollie, gave great assistance advising on hydraulics, cost of various components and general mechanical requirements of a trawler. We were made very welcome on "Bluefin" by all of its crew and gained much hands on experience of the vessels mechanical and electronic equipment.

We berthed at Beauty Point on Thursday evening in time for dinner and a little local R & R.

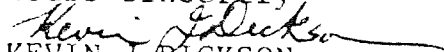
On Friday, we covered in the classroom more points on net construction and operation, board design and general queries from the group. We also went back to the flume-tank for some further observation on how trawls behave. The flume-tank has to be seen to appreciate its value as a training and testing tool - it is a marvellous facility which must surely be paying dividends to the Australian Trawl Industry.

On Friday evening, our tutors and some of "Bluefin's" crew and the group descended upon the local chinese restaurant where an excellent evening was had by all.

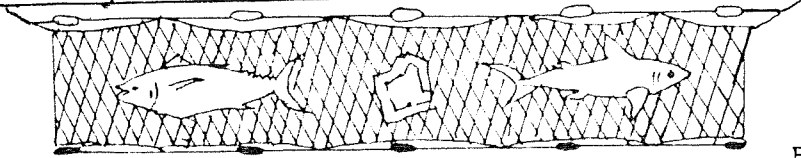
The evening was a fitting end to a truly worthwhile introductory course in trawling. We cannot speak highly enough of the facilities and quality of teaching at the A.M.C. As fishermen running our own businesses, it was very encouraging to know that these facilities exist and are there for our side of the Industry.

Even though the distance is great and fares expensive, we can honestly say that trips such as ours are worthwhile and should be supported in the future with similar type funding.

Yours sincerely

  
KEVIN J. DICKSON  
Secretary

# Esperance Professional Fishermen's Association Inc.



Date 24-11-85

Phone 712155

President Bill Kent

Secretary Neville Mansted

Address 50 Pink Lake Rd..

ESPERANCE 6450

B.K. Bowen  
Director  
Fisheries Department  
108 Adelaide Terrace  
PERTH W.A. 6000

Dear Mr Bowen,

On behalf of the fishermen who attended the Australian Maritime College Trawl Course, I would like to convey our thanks and appreciation to the Department for organizing a very well run and informative course.

It is of our opinion that more attention should be given to these types of courses in preference to specific grants to individual fishermen as a lot of the time the fishermen have not the experience to carry out certain types of surveys.

Also the members of our association have requested that as a follow up to the trawl course, a visit from the 'Bluefin' would be extremely beneficial with the view of future training courses.

Yours Sincerely,

*N. Mansted*

N. Mansted