

# Member Update

## Abalone Victoria (Central Zone) Ltd – November 2016

### Key Dates

#### Central Zone TACC Workshop Forum 2017

1. Pre-industry meeting will be held on 10 January 2017 between 1-3pm at Tasmanian Seafoods 13-17 Redgum Drive, Dandenong South
2. TACC Forum will be held on Wednesday 11 January 2017 at the Hastings Club 155 Marine Parade Hastings

#### AVCZ AGM Outcomes 2016

The AVCZ AGM was convened on the 11 November 2016 at the Hastings Motor Inn Hastings. The main outcomes of the AGM were the return unopposed of Industry Director Peter Johnston and Independent Director Markus Nolle and the key constitutional amendment that was unanimously supported for the reduction of Directors on the Board by 1 Industry Director and 1 Independent Director. The main objective for the amendment was to reduce the Company's governance costs (that is, directors' fees, and travelling and other expenses to attend board meetings). The Board is confident that a reduced Board of Directors will not compromise the ability of the organisation to respond to industry matters in an efficient and effective manner. The Board is now comprised of 4 Industry and 2 Independent Directors. Visit the AVCZ website to view the current Board of Directors. <http://abalonevictoria.com.au/governance/directors/>

#### AVCZ Financial Audit Report

AVCZ registered company auditor Saward Dawson Chartered Accountants undertook the organisations'

annual audit report for the period ending 30 June 2016. The Auditors found that AVCZ complied with all requirements under Section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001* and retained a modest carryover of funds. All members received a copy of the full financial report as part of the Notice of Annual General Meeting 2016.

#### Hot Industry Topics

AVCZ key priorities over the past four months since the July 2016 newsletter include:

#### AVCZ Business Plan Update

AVCZ convened the annual independently facilitated strategic planning workshop on the 31 May 2016. All Industry (members/non-members) were invited and encouraged to attend in developing an AVCZ business plan for the 2016/17 operational period. The draft plan was circulated to all members prior to being finalised and approved by the State Government. The plan's approval and subsequent release of the organisations' operational grant funding was received on the 29 August 2016. AVCZ is currently meeting ALL key performance indicators stated in the AVCZ Business Plan 2016/17. Members can request of copy of

the Business Plan by contacting the AVCZ CEO see details below.

#### Fisheries Independent Survey Review

Industry (all 3 zones) lobbied Fisheries Victoria (FV) for a review of the fisheries independent surveys (FIS) which is costing industry approx. \$500K+ pa. The FIS review focused on verifying the survey method, accuracy and quality of data recorded. A number of issues were raised resulting in 18 recommendations for changes to the program. Arguably, the review found that the data from the FIS showed close agreement with the data collected from the survey sheets. The independent review key findings included:

1. that the program had a number critical issues in need of resolving;
2. as an interim measure significantly reduce the number of survey sites for the 2016 period; and
3. consult with industry in redesigning the survey program in the longer term.

A significantly reduced number of survey sites will deliver a cost saving to industry. AVCZ will be requesting FV to redirect the surplus funds to industry agreed priorities and/or be returned

to quota holders.

### **AVCZ Data Logger program**

The program is providing industry with access to scientifically sound and defensible data to assist in negotiating better management outcomes in support of future TACC setting processes. AVCZ has committed a budget of approximately \$150,000 (inclusive of carryover from the 2015/16 financial year) for the implementation of the data logger program. Expenditure to date include:

1. implementation of a trial data logger program;
2. purchase of 10 shell measuring boards and 6 additional modules;
3. purchase of 23 boat data loggers (6 installed);
4. purchase of 18 diver depth loggers (10 deployed); and
5. installation of 5 shell measuring boards (under construction).

The expenditure of the residual program budget is currently under review by the AVCZ Board for consideration of the following initiatives:

1. installation of up to an additional 15 boat data loggers;
2. Industry data management and reporting consultancy services; and
3. deckhand incentive payments program to measure harvested shell size.

As part of the data logger program, AVCZ has received 10 CZ divers signed data collection and use release agreements which enables AVCZ to access each divers' information including catch and effort for the purposes of scientific analysis and reporting whilst maintaining diver confidentiality. AVCZ requests all CZ divers support

the program and sign the data use agreement.

### **Ongoing Industry Negotiations**

- continuing to lobby FV for access to data that informs the Status of Australian Fish Stocks assessment;
- AVCZ is currently in discussion with FV regarding the draft stock assessment report, reef report card and other issues that may influence the TACC process;
- progressing the development of the CZ Harvest Strategy as part of the Abalone Working Group objectives;
- ongoing negotiations with FV for the establishment of a CZ Fisheries Resource Advisory Group;
- monitoring FV performance in delivering full cost recovery and agreed prioritisation of government R&D and fishery management;
- continuing to work across the 3 zones to engage FV compliance unit to address a number of matters negatively impacting the industry and will include submissions as part of the Fisheries Regulation review;
- lobbying FV for the development of an electronic docketing application for divers;
- industry support for accreditation under the Marine Stewardship Council.

### **AVCZ Website**

AVCZ website is now live and contains the latest industry news, publications, guidelines and provides details on the organisations' objectives, Board composition and much more. The website can be accessed via

this link

<http://abalonevictoria.com.au/>

### **Industry Membership**

A big thank you for the ongoing support of industry members who signed up for the 2016/17 period. Current membership stands at 35 with renewal membership applications still being received.

### **Planning for Industry Expansion**

Many in the industry argue that Victorian seafood industries are economically under developed and opportunities for their expansion and consolidation remain largely untapped. For example, China is currently the largest source of visitors to Victoria, growing 25.5% to 490,000 visitors for the year ending December 2015 (source Tourism Victoria). Significant benefits could be achieved for both the Abalone industry and associated regional economies if direct access to this market were realised. One obvious initiative is the removal of the restriction of trade for Victorian wild caught Abalone in Victoria. Discussions are now underway with FV to further explore this opportunity. A good start but this is only the tip of the iceberg with the next step to consider broader industry support for a Victorian seafood industry strategic plan that delivers economic and political opportunities for industry expansion into the future – watch this space

**For further information** contact the AVCZ CEO Malcolm Petrie 0497977677 or [malcolm.petrie@outlook.com](mailto:malcolm.petrie@outlook.com)