



NOVEMBER 2017

ABALONE VICTORIA (CENTRAL ZONE) LTD

KEY ACTIVITIES

Pre-Industry TACC Meeting and Workshop

Fishery Resource Advisory Group

Industry Compliance Workshop Outcomes

Harvest Strategy

Annual General Meeting

Data Logger Program

TACC PRE-INDUSTRY MEETING AND WORKSHOP

AVCZ is calling all Quota Holders and Divers to attend both the pre-Industry TACC meeting and TACC workshop in early December 2017. These forums are an important opportunity for industry to review, discuss and provide feedback on the TACC for the 2017-18 fishing season.

AVCZ will be hosting a pre-industry TACC meeting on Monday 4 December 2017 commencing at 1:00PM at Tasmanian Seafoods P/L 13-17 Redgum Drive, Dandenong South. The meeting will review the Central Zone stock assessment report, recent logger data information and propose a TACC for each SMU for the 2018/19 fishing season.

The Central Zone TACC workshop will be convened on Tuesday 5 December 2017 commencing at 10:00AM at the Harbour View Motor Inn 126 Marine Parade, Hastings. The meeting will outline the VFA stock assessment report, AVCZ logger data information, diver survey results and feedback in proposing the TACC for Blacklip and Greenlip for the 2018/19 fishing season.

To RSVP please contact the AVCZ CEO by email malcolm.petrie@outlook.com or mobile 0497 977 677 by Thursday 30 November 2017.

AVCZ encourages all divers to utilise the online diver survey. The information provided is anonymous and is being collected on a voluntary basis by the Abalone Industry Committee. Diver feedback will be an important contribution to setting the annual TACC. Visit the AVCZ website abalonevictoria.com.au to access the online survey and enter your feedback today.

FISHERY RESOURCE ADVISORY GROUP

The inaugural Fishery Resource Advisory Group (FRAG) meeting on the 29 September 2017 was an important and positive initiative by AVCZ towards building a more collaborative partnership with the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) in the future co-management of the fishery. The FRAG is based on the Tasmanian model which brings together both industry and the VFA on a quarterly basis to monitor and review information on the fishery and provides future recommendations on appropriate TACC levels. The meeting was attended by the AVCZ Board, industry scientist and representatives from VFA. Key agenda items discussed included a review of the 2016 stock assessment report, an outline of the 2017 stock assessment process and current stock assessment update presented by industry.

The minutes of the meeting, terms of reference and presentations are all available on the AVCZ website abalonevictoria.com.au

Central Zone quota holders and divers are encouraged to attend future FRAG meetings and will be notified when the next FRAG meeting will be convened early in 2018. For further information on the FRAG and meeting outcomes please contact the AVCZ CEO by email malcolm.petrie@outlook.com or mobile 0497 977 677.

INDUSTRY COMPLIANCE WORKSHOP

VFA convened an industry-wide compliance workshop on the 2 November 2017 in Queenscliff. The workshop focused on co-management and knowledge sharing between industry and VFA and discussed a number of key issues for industry including:

- safety and risk assessment procedures when approaching and boarding vessels at sea. VFA reaffirmed the need to inspect catch and size limit as the requirement to undertake at sea inspections. VFA agreed to recirculate the at sea inspection procedure to industry;
- diver and licence holder legal obligations, awareness and education programs. VFA has committed to developing a commercial fishery handbook which explains how the regulations and policies will be applied by the VFA. A draft is expected to be completed by the end of the year for industry review;

- *Fisheries Regulation 2009* is set to expire in February 2019. Work is expected to commence on reviewing and drafting a new regulation in 2018. AVCZ is working with the Abalone Industry Committee and Seafood Industry Victoria in preparing a collaborative submission;
- Industry outlined the future commercial opportunities in developing domestic sales and markets and how the regulations will need to consider the consumer and market needs for this to be achieved. Industry and VFA agreed to further discuss this matter out of session;
- Industry and VFA also agreed to discuss the following matters raised out of session and include:
 - current management arrangements for fishing greenlip abalone once a blacklip abalone SMU is reached
 - adoption of standard bin weights
 - clarification on 10kg carry over for divers working multiple quota units in a day
- VFA provided an overview of compliance activities over the past 12 months. VFA presentations on compliance activities can be view on the AVCZ website abalonevictoria.com.au

Whilst it was notable that no divers were in attendance, the workshop was considered a positive opportunity for both industry and VFA to discuss issues of concern and reach agreement on key industry issues to be addressed.

CENTRAL ZONE HARVEST STRATEGY

The Abalone Working Group (AWG) met on the 30 & 31 October 2017 with the aim of finalising harvest strategies across all 3 zones. The AWG is independently chaired and consists of representatives from each of the 3 Victorian abalone producing zones, VFA and scientists representing industry and VFA.

Harvest strategies are widely used internationally and throughout Australian fisheries as a best-practice approach to fisheries management and provides an agreed framework that specifies predetermined management actions underpinned by a range of information. The AWG agreed to use standardised catch per unit effort as the primary information source and plans to test the data prior to introducing the draft strategies across all 3 zones in March 2018. Secondary data sources will also be considered and include, length frequency, fishery independent surveys, logger data and diver surveys.

Once the draft harvest strategy for the Central Zone is completed AVCZ will be offering regional information sessions to outline and discuss the framework, predetermined management actions and data sources to be utilised. AVCZ will advise on information sessions in due course.

AVCZ AGM OUTCOMES 2017

The AVCZ AGM was convened on Friday 3 November 2017 at the Melbourne Seafood Centre. The key outcome of the AGM was the return unopposed of Industry Director Michelle Hansen and the election of Kaz Bartaska and Allan Buck who were previously appointed by the Board to fill casual vacancies.

Visit the AVCZ website to view the current Board of Directors

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

DATA LOGGER PROGRAM

The AVCZ Board recently wrote to all quota holders to not only acknowledge the significant contribution of quota holders, divers and deckhands who have supported and participated in the AVCZ data logger program but also to highlight that the program is yet to gain the full support of all divers across the central zone.

With the recent establishment of the Fishery Resource Advisory Group, soon to be released draft Harvest Strategy and forthcoming TACC workshop there is no better time for industry to access real time, accurate and indisputable data in leading negotiations with government that delivers a prosperous commercial industry for the future.

The Board acknowledges the importance of industry delivering 100% coverage across the central zone in support of future negotiations with VFA and has called upon all quota holders to encourage and support their lease diver/s to be active participants in the AVCZ data logger program.

The AVCZ data logger program is currently operating on 20 of 24 boats in the central zone, AVCZ will continue to follow-up and encourage all remaining divers to support and participate in the program.

AVCZ WEBSITE

Offers the latest industry news, publications, guidelines and much more to find out visit abalonevictoria.com.au

For further details contact AVCZ CEO Malcolm Petrie 0497977677 or malcolm.petrie@outlook.com