



MONTHLY SERVICE BULLETIN



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March, 1961.

STAFF NOTES

The Minister for Fisheries (Mr. Hutchinson) will enter Fremantle Hospital on March 1 for an operation. He is expected to be absent from his official duties for about four weeks. All members of the staff join in wishing him a speedy and complete recovery.

During Mr. Hutchinson's absence, the portfolio of Minister for Fisheries will be held by the Honorable G.P. Wild, M.B.E., M.L.A., Minister for Works and Water Supply.

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The Director (Mr. A.J. Fraser) will visit Pemberton on March 11 and 12 to inspect the trout hatchery and to have discussions with office-bearers of the Pemberton-Warren Trout Acclimatisation Society. On March 19, Mr. Fraser will attend the delayed quarterly meeting of the Trout Acclimatisation Council of W.A. at Mundijong. He will be accompanied by the Research Officer (Mr. B.K. Bowen) and Technical Officer J.S. Simpson.

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We welcome to the Staff Mr. Roderick Kevin King, who commenced duty at head office on February 20. Mr. King is attached to the Department during the absence of the Chief Clerk (Mr. B.R. Saville) on annual leave and special duty in the eastern States.

We regret to report the impending departure of both typists from Head Office. Miss Marie McDonnell has tendered her resignation from the public service from March 17. Miss Wendy Rowland has applied for, and been granted, a transfer to another Department.

* * *

We are happy to report that Cadet Inspector Kevin Enright will recommence duty on March 7 after extended sick leave. Our cadets are really having a run of bad luck. Peter Willey, whom we welcomed to the staff late last year, suffered injuries in a road accident on February 11 and is expected to be off duty for some weeks. Ian Cardon, it will be remembered, only recently had to take time off for an appendicectomy and Paul Smith contracted crayfish poisoning.

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We are also pleased to report that Assistant Inspector D.H. Smith, who was injured in a road accident at Busselton last Christmas, returned to duty on February 6. He will be stationed in the Fremantle district as assistant to Senior Inspector A.K. Melsom. Dennis still suffers some disability as a result of his accident and is being kept on light duties under doctor's orders.

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Assistant Inspector N.K. Henry will complete his tour of duty at Geraldton on March 16 and then transfer to Perth. Cadet Inspector P.A. Smith, who has been assisting at Fremantle, will be transferred to Geraldton as assistant to Inspector R.M. Crawford, vice Mr. Henry.

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The last fortnight of the Abrolhos close season for crayfish was policed by Inspector G.D. Houston, Assistant Inspector N.K. Henry and Cadet Inspector R.G. Emery. Inspector Houston was stationed on the Wallabi Group, Cadet Inspector Emery on the Southern Group and Assistant Inspector N.K. Henry on the Easter Group. They will return to Geraldton when the season opens on March 1.

* * *

Inspector B.A. Carmichael, of Albany, will visit Esperance early next month on a routine inspection of that part of his district.

He will take the opportunity to tag a number of fish in connection with an angling competition to be conducted by the Esperance Chamber of Commerce.

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On his return from the Abrolhos Inspector Houston will be stationed at Lancelin to help patrol the one-mile offshore crayfishing closure. He will be assisted by Cadet Inspector P.C. Willey.

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The Relieving Inspector (Mr. G.C. Jeffery) remains at Lancelin and Assistant Inspector E.H. Barker at Jurien Bay.

PERSONAL PARS

Mr. Bent Mogelberg, of the Atlanta Trading Corporation, of New York, U.S.A., and Mr. W.L. (Len) Johnson, of the Ross Group Ltd., of Sydney, called on the Minister and Director during the month.

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Dr. G.L. Kesteven, Assistant Chief (Fisheries), Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, C.S.I.R.O., Cronulla, N.S.W., will arrive in Perth on March 5 for a short visit. He will discuss with the Director and others detailed plans for the integration of the forthcoming co-operative research programme in relation to the crayfish, Australian salmon and tuna resources of Western Australia.

"DIAMANTINA" RETURNS

On February 22 the frigate, H.M.A.S. "Diamantina", returned to Fremantle. She had been lashed by high seas whipped up by gales reaching fifty-five miles an hour during her nine-day cruise. One purpose of the cruise was to re-locate the Diamantina Deep found by her crew last year. This was the occasion when depths of 4,500 fathoms were recorded in a giant trench in the Indian Ocean. Poor weather hindered navigation during her latest trip, however, and the deepest reading taken was understood to be 3,500 fathoms.

MARGINAL ALLOWANCE AND BASIC RATE INCREASE.

The Public Service Commissioner has advised that following the normal half-yearly review of salary rates obtaining in other States,

he has reached agreement with the Civil Service Association on the increased marginal allowances payable on and from January 13, 1960. Also, as a result of the quarterly declaration of the Court of Arbitration in Western Australia, the basic rates payable have been increased on and from January 31, 1961. All the increases, together with arrears, will be paid in the pay period ending March 9.

TREE'S IDENTITY STILL A MYSTERY

In January a local newspaper published an item referring to the washing ashore of a giant 70 ft. tree at North Point, 30 miles east of Albany. This report was brought to our notice by Dr. D.L. Serventy, of the Wildlife Survey Section, C.S.I.R.O., who pointed out that, if the tree could be identified and its point of entry into the sea established, it would be of considerable scientific value. It could, he said, give us a better understanding of the movements of oceanic currents. Subsequently, Inspector J. Traynor, who was then relieving at Albany, obtained some pieces of the tree for identification with the assistance of a local fisherman and Mr. T. Herlihy of the Department of Agriculture, Albany. The party found that the tree had been washed ashore on the eastern side of North Point, just east of Two People Bay. This is 15 miles as the crow flies from Albany, but about 30 by road. Sections of the tree were obtained and after Mr. Herlihy had established that they were free of unwanted pests, such as syrex wasps, Mr. Traynor brought them to Perth whence they were air-freighted to Professor H.N. Barber, of the Botany Department of the University of Tasmania. Mr. Traynor said that the tree was 75 feet in length from the butt to the topmost branches. The latter had been broken off where they were about 6 inches in diameter. The tree was 9 feet in circumference at the butt and 20 feet from the roots was 7 ft. 6 ins. in circumference. The root system was described as being very large, similar to that of a Moreton Bay fig. It had apparently been twisted around as if the tree had been torn out of the ground by a cyclone. He estimated that the tree would have stood about 100 feet when it was intact.

Professor Barber has been carrying out interesting work into the origin of drifting trees and logs for some time. He told us that he had recently obtained further specimens of South American trees on Macquarie Island and, what is more strange, a piece of what he said was almost certainly an Australian Epacrid on South Georgia. (Epacrids vary in size from small plants 2 to 3 inches tall, to woody bushes of 4 to 5 feet in height). So far Professor Barber has not identified the tree, but will write us again when he has more data.

FURTHER £5,000 FOR PEARLSHELL PROMOTION CAMPAIGN

The Government has again approved a grant of £5,000 towards the world publicity and propaganda campaign designed to boost the mother-of-pearl industry. Announcing this last month, the Minister for Fisheries, Mr. Hutchinson, pointed out that it was the second grant of this amount contributed by the State Government to the "Pearls for Prestige Campaign", as it is known. It was launched by the Commonwealth Government, the Australian PearlsHELL Industry and the United States pearlsHELL users. The consensus of opinion in the pearlsHELL industry in this State, the Minister said, was that there had been some improvement in the sale of pearlsHELL on overseas markets since the promotion campaign was initiated and it was considered that the campaign was probably to some degree responsible.

YOU MAY DO THIS !

The Public Service Commissioner advised all permanent heads in a circular last month that the Premier had agreed to a request from the Prime Minister that State officers be allowed to assist in the 1961 Commonwealth census. State officers may, therefore, accept appointment as sub-enumerators or collectors on the census and retain the fees payable for their services. Where possible, selected officers will be allowed to take recreation leave over the period of the field work of the census. However, due to the peculiar exigencies of our Department and the fact that the 1961 annual leave roster has been settled, permission to co-operate in the census may be refused. Anyone who desires to participate in the census should make written application to his officer-in-charge.

SERVICE SUMMER DRESS

For the guidance of all officers, the circular received from the Public Service Commissioner during the month is reproduced hereunder :

"The Civil Service Association has requested that officers who so desire, be permitted to wear "shorts" during the summer months.

Having in mind that officers in some Departments have already adopted this form of dress and the severity of the present summer season, I think it desirable to indicate standards of dress which should be recognised and approve under the following conditions :-

- (a) The shirt should be white or near white. Extremes of colour will not be permitted.
- (b) A tie is to be worn under all circumstances.
- (c) Shorts should be of good fit and appearance. "Short shorts" will not be permitted.
- (d) Shoes with knee high socks are compulsory.

I would expect all officers to approach the dress question with a sense of responsibility and an appreciation of the need for a neat and tidy appearance. In special cases where the propriety of the new form of dress is in question, the advice of the Permanent Head should be sought through appropriate channels."

COMMONWEALTH FISHERIES ACT - LICENSING

Mr. C.G. Setter, Director of the Fisheries Division of the Department of Primary Industry recently advised as follows :-

"You will recall at the 1960 Commonwealth/State Fisheries Conference, the question of issuing licenses to companies and the issue of employee licenses were discussed.

After the Conference, I took this matter up with the Attorney-General's Department and have now been advised that the terms of the Act as it now stands permit the issue of licenses to registered companies rather than to the individuals concerned. Would you please inform your issuing officers that a license to take fish may now be issued in the name of a registered company.

With regard to the issue of licenses to master fishermen in respect of employees, I am advised by the Attorney-General's Department that it is not permissible to issue such licenses under the present provisions of the Act. I shall be examining the possibility of amending the Act to provide for the issue of employee's licenses, and will advise you in due course what action, if any, is contemplated."

CARE OF CONFISCATED GEAR

All officers are instructed that great care must be taken in ensuring that confiscated gear is adequately protected. It must

be clearly understood that, while any fishing equipment is being held by the Department pending confiscation, the Department is merely the custodian of that equipment and must account for it in its entirety when called upon to do so. In future, each officer who has seized nets, lines, pots and the like placed in his care will be held responsible, personally, for the safe-keeping of that gear and may be called upon to make good any losses.

WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

In the previous issue of this Bulletin we reported that Dr. R.W. George, Curator of Invertebrates in the Western Australian Museum, had recently announced that, in his opinion, the scientific name of the Western Australian crayfish should not be Panulirus longipes.

Subsequently, when crayfisherman Guiseppe Rotondella, of Fremantle, was charged under the Fisheries Act with having consigned undersize fish, his counsel, Mr. F. Atkins, claimed that his client's crayfish were not Panulirus longipes as referred to in the Fisheries Act but an unnamed species, and consequently were not subject to the restrictions applied to Panulirus longipes. He called Dr. George to give evidence to support his contention. The novel plea was of little avail, however, for the Magistrate pointed out that Parliament could call the fish whatever it liked so long as it could be identified. He said there was no doubt that the fish concerned in the charge had been identified as that referred to in the Act. Rotondella was convicted and fined £10 on this charge.

COMMONWEALTH PROSECUTION SUCCEEDS

The first action taken under the Commonwealth Fisheries Act was heard at Geraldton early last month, when crayfisherman Cornelius Daniel Hendrick denHartog, of Geraldton, was charged with having attempted to take crayfish from proclaimed waters at the Abrolhos and also with having obstructed an officer in the exercise of his duty. Inspector R.M. Crawford, of Geraldton, gave evidence that he had chartered the carrier boat "Linda" for a patrol of the Abrolhos Islands on September 19. That morning they found a nine-mile line of craypots off Evening Reef in the Wallabi group and were pulling them for confiscation when the "Aries", skippered by den Hartog, rammed the "Linda". den Hartog claimed that he had been fishing well to the north of the Abrolhos and had decided to move to Dongara when engine trouble

occurred. It was vital, he said, that the pots be dropped off as soon as possible for the safety of the boat and her crew. The collision with the "Linda", he said, had occurred when both vessels were racing for the same pots, and he maintained that he had no intention of ramming because to do so would have endangered his own boat as well. Finding den Hartog guilty, Stipendiary Magistrate K.A. Philp said that there was no doubt in his mind that den Hartog had deliberately tried to ram the "Linda" and, after the first glancing blow was struck, had circled around for another attempt. He convicted den Hartog on both counts, fining him £100 on each. Costs totalling £32. 10. 0 were allowed against the defendant. The Magistrate also ordered the confiscation of the 41 craypots seized. These were valued at between £500 and £600.

NOR'WEST SELLS CHASER

The Nor'West Whaling Company Ltd., of Carnarvon, has announced that it has sold the whale chaser "Minilya" to the Cheyne Beach Whaling Company, of Albany. The price has not been disclosed.

LACK OF LIFEBOAT BLAMED FOR DEATHS

The City Coroner, Mr. R.P. Rodriguez, adjured owners and skippers of fishing boats to adhere strictly to regulations prescribing the type of equipment to be carried. He said this last month during the inquest into the cause of death of the skipper, Mr. J. Roberts, and crew member P. Hind, of the fishing boat "Linda" which foundered on a reef near the mouth of the Moore River on October 21.

Skippers of departmental vessels concerned are reminded that they, too, must comply with the regulations and not leave port without proper equipment.

WATER-BIRDS DIE

By the middle of February, what appeared to be an outbreak of botulism was decimating the population of ducks and swans and other aquatic birds on Lake Monger, West Leederville. As we mentioned last month, towards the end of most summers, considerable numbers of water-birds, waders and shore birds become affected and many die. This year, the incidence of the disease seemed

to arise much earlier than in previous years. It was estimated that something like 300 ducks, swans and coot died in a fortnight at Lake Monger alone. Many sick birds were picked up, the majority of which have been cared for by Miss L. Nicholls, Technical Assistant, Wildlife Survey Section, C.S.I.R.O. Residents around the lake have also looked after many others. A large number of specimens have been taken to the microbiological laboratories at the Royal Perth Hospital where Professor N. Stanley is continuing the studies recorded in the last issue of this Bulletin.

"NIOBE QUEEN" REPAIRED

A faint radio message picked up at Geraldton on February 21 reported that the 45-foot "Niobe Queen", owned by Tropical Traders Limited, was drifting helplessly north of the Abrolhos Islands. A relief boat, the "William Sumpton", set out and reached the "Niobe Queen" on the evening of the following day and towed her back to Geraldton. Repairs to her defective engine were quickly effected and she was back in the water on February 23.

FISH PROCESSING AT SHARK BAY.

Mr. George Powell, manager of Engineer and Marine Services Pty. Ltd., advised recently that his Company would this month market a comprehensive range of consumer packs of fish put up at its Shark Bay plant. Mr. Powell said that a strong advertising campaign would be inaugurated to launch the product, which he described as a most attractive vacuum pack in laminated plastic.

MIND THOSE OUTBOARDS

The need to exercise care when handling outboard motors at sea is drawn to the attention of all members of the staff who might use them. Although all the Department's outboards are insured under an "all risks" policy, it does not cover their loss when caused by dropping the motor overboard, or its falling into the water because it has not been affixed properly to the boat.

OUTSTATION OFFICES

Plans have been drawn for the building of a new district office at Geraldton. Based very largely on the new Perth district inspectors' office on the bank of the Swan River at Victoria Park, it will be erected adjacent to the new fishermen's wharf at the West End.

Approaches have also been made to the Public Works Department for the construction of new inspectors' offices at Bunbury and Mandurah.

It is hoped that funds for all three structures can be provided during the financial year commencing July 1 next.

Considerable improvements have just been carried out at the Albany inspector's office. Inspector Carmichael writes appreciatively of the added convenience and comfort provided.

SALE OF FISH BY "AMATEURS"

Evidence recently brought to his notice has prompted the Minister for Fisheries (Mr. Hutchinson) to issue the following direction -

"All fisheries officers to be instructed that the capture and sale of fish by non-professional fishermen must be strictly supervised."

For the guidance of officers we have prepared the following outline of the restrictions applying in this matter.

Regulation 3(a) provides that all persons catching or assisting or attempting to catch fish for sale by any method shall hold a professional fisherman's license. This requirement is unequivocal. A PERSON MAY NOT CATCH FISH FOR SALE UNLESS HE HOLDS A PROFESSIONAL FISHERMAN'S LICENSE. In addition there is in force a Ministerial direction to all licensing officers which, among other things, sets out that a professional fisherman's license shall not be granted or renewed unless -

- (a) the licensing officer is satisfied that the applicant's livelihood is mainly derived or intended to be derived from the capture and sale of fish; or
- (b) where the applicant previously held a professional fisherman's license, the licensing officer is satisfied that, during the currency of that license, the applicant's livelihood was mainly derived

from or a substantial portion of the applicant's time was devoted to the capture and sale of fish.

Regulation 3A requires the owner or person in charge of any net which is being used for catching or attempting to catch fish for domestic purposes to hold an amateur net fisherman's license. These licenses are issued more or less without restriction as to the persons who may hold them but they do not allow the holder to sell his catch. Only a person holding a current professional fisherman's license may legally take fish for sale.

All inspectors are asked to note and act on the Minister's direction.

LABELLING OF FISH IN BULK

It will be remembered that the amendments to the Fisheries Act, assented to last year, provided that all fish being transported had to be packed in receptacles containing not more than 100 lb. of fish and such receptacles labelled. In a recent letter to the Secretary of the South Coast Licensed Fishermen's Association, which had brought to notice the difficulties which would be encountered in packing in containers large catches of fish intended for canneries, the Minister for Fisheries said that legislation would be introduced next Session to empower the Director to exempt from compliance with labelling and boxing requirements specified classes of fishermen and specified categories of fish where bulk consignments were concerned. He has directed that in the meantime no action be taken against Australian salmon and tommy rough fishermen who convey fish in bulk, and unlabelled, for treatment at a cannery.

EASTER HOLIDAYS

It has been decided that the following days will be observed as public service holidays at Easter - Friday, March 31; Saturday, April 1; Monday, April 3; Tuesday, April 4.

Field officers required to work on any of those days will be entitled to claim a day in lieu to be added to their annual leave. It should be noted that Easter Sunday is not a public service holiday.

CRAYFISH EXPORTS

The table hereunder shows a continued increased in the overall weight of crayfish exported from Western Australia in the last three years. While the actual weight of frozen crayfish tails was slightly less in 1960 than in 1959, the increased weight of cooked whole crayfish was sufficient to offset the decrease in tails. It is realised that the final column, "Total Weight", is liable to error but it has some value in indicating the trend of overall exports. While it might be considered that 40% of the weight of whole crayfish is a high proportion with which to estimate the tail-weight, it should be remembered that there has already been a loss in tail-weight in cooking which is not experienced when the crayfish is de-tailed. Actually, the recovery of tails varies between approximately 32% and 42% of weight of whole crayfish.

YEAR (a)	FROZEN TAILS		COOKED WHOLE		TOTAL WEIGHT* (f)
	Cases (b)	Net Weight (c)	Cases (d)	Net Weight (e)	
		lb.		lb.	lb.
1958	217,826	4,565,735	11,852	453,368	4,747,082
1959	291,881	6,311,017	2,681	105,522	6,353,226
1960	261,015	6,263,191	20,537	846,190	6,601,667

* "Total Weight" includes 40% of column (e)

IMPORT OF FOREIGN BIRDS DISCOURAGED.

Acting on the advice of a joint co-ordinating committee set up by the Agriculture Protection Board and the Fauna Protection Advisory Committee, the Department has accepted a recommendation that excepting under special circumstances no further authorities be granted for the importation into Western Australia of exotic birds - and then only for certain species. In future, authorities to import will be limited to pheasants, peacocks, parrots and canaries. This decision has been brought about by general concern at the possibility of the introduction of further unwanted species. Recent papers published on the acclimatisation and spread of undesirable birds such as Java sparrows and spice finches have highlighted the need for the prohibition. It is considered that almost any acclimatisation would be detrimental to the native fauna, and in many cases would be disadvantageous to agriculture.

CLEARING HOUSE

Pearl Shell Industry Fights for Survival

(From Roy de Pedro at Broome).

Australia's pearl shelling industry is making a brave fight for survival.

Here in Broome there is a stockpile of a big percentage of the lower grades of shell fished over the past season. Small shipments go forward from time to time, but these in no way meet up with the proportions our shellers desire and require to market.

Our first-grade mother of pearl shell is still in ready demand and fetches a good price but the failure to sell other grade shells shrinks the intake obtained from first-grade shell by about 40 per cent.

It is impossible to fish top grade shell only. Divers are unable to assess shell values under sea. This means that fleets still must work at full overhead, depreciation and maintenance of luggers, crew and shore workers' wages and payment of contracted bonuses to divers and crews on their total take.

Bonuses are paid on total landed tonnage of shell irrespective of its marketable quality.

Divers make every endeavour to bring up only the best shell but at thirty fathoms a shell is just a shell and it is not until it reaches the grading sheds that a true assessment of good and bad can be made.

Australian shellers have over many years learnt to face up to adversity in a practical way. Cyclones have played havoc with their fleets, depression years were not easy and operations had to be suspended over two wars.

Broome's fleet totalled fifty-two luggers in 1939. At the conclusion of hostilities there were only six serviceable boats in these waters.

In thirteen years this skeleton fleet had grown to forty-one luggers, most of which had been locally built.

The recession of the market in 1959 reduced the number to twenty-six and it is most unlikely that the maximum number of luggers working during the coming season here will exceed sixteen.

Last year some of the unused luggers were sent south to join the crayfishing fleets, but their conversion for use in the new industry proved costly and it is evident that the changeover is uneconomical.

It is a sad thought that stout and seaworthy 60-ft. craft, built over the past 15 years with an assured life of about 30 years, must now be left to rot on the foreshore.

There seems little or no alternative to this other than governmental assistance to the industry.

When it was obvious several years ago that synthetics were making quick inroads into the shelling industry fleet owners appealed to the Federal Government for assistance. They asked the Government, in the interests of the Australian industry to consider banning other fleets from taking shell from Australian waters.

Over the past four or five years the Federal Government has granted seasonal permits to Japanese fleets to fish 400 to 500 tons of shell, mostly lower grade, from the Arafura Sea north of Darwin. With its lower working costs these Japanese fleets can sell to, and satisfy the market, at some £150 a ton cheaper than the Australian industry can produce this class of shell.

No doubt the concession was originally granted when trade between the two countries was adverse to Japan. It can hardly be said that this is so today. Still, the concession still remains in force, notwithstanding appeals from the Australian industry.

The shell taken from Australian waters by Japanese pearling fleets brings no direct monetary gain to the Commonwealth. The Australian shellers pay industrial taxation and all fleet and shore employees are taxed on their earnings.

It seems strange that a Government, giving willing assistance to projects likely to help in the opening up of our vast north, is apparently unwilling to assist Broome's 87-year-old industry - a dollar-earning industry which over the years has drawn much to this part of the State.

There seems little doubt that, as long as these concessions continue to be granted to Japan, its fleets, with their lower cost of production, must continue to monopolise the world market for lesser grade shell - and, ironically, with Australian mother of pearl shell.

Japanese Report on Tuna Explorations in
Indian Ocean

Tuna fishing grounds around Madagascar and the Indian Ocean are being explored by the Japanese guidance ship TAISEI MARU. The Mie Prefecture Fishery Experimental Station late in October 1960 received a report on the vessel's 11th trip as follows:

The first experimental operation was carried out south southeast of Madagascar but failed to yield results. The second operation in the south southwest sea area of the Island revealed that the water temperature was 17.7° C. (63.9° F.) in the 328-foot layer at 28° south latitude, 51° east longitude and condition of the layers seemed comparatively stabilized. As a result of ten experimental operations, one south southeast of Madagascar and nine in the southwest sea area, catch ratios were found to be 5.74 percent and 9.35 percent respectively. In the southeast area 88 percent of the catch was albacore, 7.4 percent yellowfin, and 4.6 percent big-eyed mixed. In the southwest area species caught were numerous with yellowfin conspicuously more than others, followed by swordfish. The reason why yellowfin were found more was that the water temperature was 2°-4° C. higher than in the southeast area. Also, the branch stream running southward through the Mozambique Channel along the African coast had an effect on fishing in the southeast area and the fish caught were large-sized, comparatively speaking.

More than 30 vessels were operating in the Madagascar sea area in October 1960 with albacore as their objective generally. Fishing seemed better in the southern area. A considerable number of fishing vessels were operating north and in the central part south of the Mozambique Channel. These fishing grounds were entirely undeveloped up to a year ago. In waters around the Chagos Islands, there were some 10 vessels fishing for yellowfin and big-eyed, but fishing was only "fair." (FISHERIES ECONOMIC NEWS, October 28, 1960.)

(Fishery Products Report

New York

December 29, 1960)

New Zealand Tuna Fishery Proposed

According to New Zealand press reports, a fishery firm will initiate tuna fishing off the north coast of the North Island within the next two months. Initially operations will be quite limited but the company has asked for Government financial assistance

to expand operations.

The Wellington EVENING POST of November 3 reports :

"A depot at Awanui had been built to hold about 20 to 25 tons of frozen tuna, and the freezing plant was now being installed. The depot would be a holding place, and the fish brought by refrigerated truck to Hikurangi for processing.

"The company would supply Watties cannery if requested, and there was a U.S. market for headed and cleaned tuna," the Managing Director of the company said. The decision to go ahead, he added, had been made as the result of research work by two fishing boats on the far north coast over five weeks, which had just finished.

"We are now certain that tuna can be caught off Northland coasts in quite large quantities," the Managing Director said. "Unfortunately, our boats are too small, the fish were too fast for them, and the fishermen have had no previous experience of tuna fishing."

The newspaper article continues: "Through the company's representative in Australia tuna fishing had been investigated there. It was reported back that South Australia had developed a booming tuna fishing industry which this season doubled its output for the fourth successive year." This report has been sent by the firm's Managing Director to the Minister of Marine to support the urging of aid in setting up the New Zealand industry. The Managing Director said there were fishermen available to go from Northland to Australia to learn about the technique of tuna fishing. He himself hoped to go to inquire personally into the industry. (United States Embassy in Wellington, November 4, 1960.)