

member.

Government approval has been obtained for the setting up of a new controlling body to be known as the Pemberton Hatchery Board. As a board of management, it will be directly responsible for the running and maintenance of the hatchery and ponds at Pemberton, for the employment of labour, publicity, sales and for co-operation with the local tourist authority. Its members will comprise Mr A.J. Fraser, Director of Fisheries, as Chairman; Mr B.R. Saville, Fisheries Department, as Deputy Chairman; and three members, all residents of Pemberton. Mr A.R. Kelly, Mr R.J. Kelly and Mr H.F. Jay have all accepted appointment in this regard. The inaugural meeting of the Board was held at Pemberton on September 13. In the Director's absence, it was chaired by Mr Saville. Mr G.B. Todd, also of Pemberton, agreed to act as honorary secretary-treasurer, and has been duly appointed.

The final meeting of the Trout Acclimatisation Council was held on September 29 at the Forest Youth Camp hall, Pemberton. The Minister for Fisheries, Mr Hutchinson, was present at the meeting, which was chaired by the Director. The Department's other representative on the council, Research Officer B.K. Bowen, was also present, as were Technical Officer J.S. Simpson and Mr L.G. Smith, by invitation.

At a wind-up dinner held later at the R.S.L. Hall, Pemberton, and presided over by Mr A.R. Kelly, a Certificate of Life Membership of the Council was presented to Mr C.A. Glew. Mr Glew, who was a foundation member of the Council and secretary and treasurer for a lengthy period, and who has been associated with trout acclimatisation from its earliest beginnings in 1930, had been honoured at a previous meeting of the Council by being made its first and only Life Member. A copy of the certificate, which has already assumed historic significance because of the Council's liquidation, appears elsewhere in this issue.

#### BOTULISM - INFORMATION WANTED

Those officers blessed with longer memories might recall that in the May 1962 issue we asked for specimens of dead fish or waterfowl to be brought to this Office for forwarding for study purposes to Professor Stanley.

Professor Stanley now advises that while specimens are no longer required, full information on any noted or reported mortalities would be appreciated. Sufficient specimens have been received for the necessary pathological

laboratory work, but reports on the incidence of this or any other diseases causing mass mortalities are required.

Mortalities from botulism are not expected to occur until the summer has advanced, but mass fish losses might occur earlier from other causes. If any large-scale mortalities are noted we will want to know the species involved, an estimate of the numbers killed, and when and where the mortalities occurred.

### CRAYFISHING

#### Record Abrolhos Production - at a price!

At folios 195 and 196 are set out tables of production and fishing intensity at Houtman Abrolhos during the past ten years. It will be seen that there is a marked increase in the number of men operating there last season and that for the first time production passed the 4,000,000 lb. mark. The result, one might say, inevitably, was a marked decrease in the catch-per-man.

The high price paid for crayfish and the additional boats and men which it has induced into the industry has resulted in much sharper competition on existing grounds in the Abrolhos as it has on all other grounds. This heightened competition has, in turn, induced fishermen to use an increased number of pots and to search for new grounds. The number of men operating these days in the Abrolhos, gives a wry twist to our recollection that, less than a decade ago, one authority stated that the number of men fishing the Abrolhos should be limited to sixty!

A review of the 1962 figures indicates that although production did increase, it took something like a 30% increase in the number of men to force an increase of less than 11% in production. The combination of the two factors resulted in the average catch-per-man falling by about 15%. It will be seen that with the exception of the Pelsart Group, the catch-per-man showed a serious decline this year in what was regarded by fishermen as a good fishing year. This could be a warning harbinger as also might be the fact that the total catch in the North Island area showed a sharp decline. The record catch in the Pelsart, or Southern, Group was only made possible by the increased number of boats (including 8 former Fremantle vessels) which fished these waters and brought under production grounds which were not previously worked. Our contention that only the working of new grounds made the increase possible is supported by the fact that while the