

CANCELLATION OF LICENSES

Following the examination of evidence by the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, Mr. Hutchinson, and the Honorary Minister, Mr. MacKinnon, of breaches of the crayfish conservation laws by some fishermen, it has been decided that in the best interests of the crayfish industry more drastic measures are necessary against those fishermen who continually breach the regulations. Consequently two licenses have been cancelled and another fishermen has had his license endorsed to the effect that his crayfishing activities be confined to the Abrolhos Islands area.

A Fremantle fishermen Giuseppe de Ceglie, has had his professional fishermen's license cancelled following his fourth conviction for offences relating to undersize crayfish. Another fishermen, who was operating from Dongara, openly boasted that he was using more pots than he was licensed to operate - and this was confirmed by departmental officers and other fishermen - has had his current professional fishermen's boat and crayfish pot licenses cancelled. He is now not legally able to fish commercially anywhere in the State. The license of this fisherman was suspended some years ago, but evidently he had not learnt a lesson.

The other fishermen was detected crayfishing within the Abrolhos Island area although his license was not so endorsed permitting him to do so. He has now been restricted to fish within the Abrolhos Island area during the current season.

ABROLHOS ISLANDS AND TOURISM

The part to be played by the Abrolhos Islands in the State's future tourist development programme will be considered following an inspection of the islands by a special committee which has been set up to study the associated problems of tourism as against the needs of the fishing industry and fauna conservation.

The party which visited the islands between April 26 and 29, on board p.v. "Dampier" and r.v. "Lancelin", comprised the Public Service Commissioner, Mr. R.H. Doig, Chairman of the Tourist Development Authority; Mr. R.H. Miller, Director, Tourist Development Authority; Mr. A.E. Heagney, Assistant Under Secretary for Lands; Mr. W. Burton of Geraldton, representing the Abrolhos Islands Trustees; Senior Research Officer B.K. Bowen and Fauna Officer H.B. Shugg, Department of Fisheries

and Fauna and Mr. L.M. Kelly, Lands Department, who was secretary to the committee.

The vessels left Geraldton on April 26 and anchored for the first night at the Wallabi group. Next morning "Dampier" conveyed the committee to inspect North Island, and in the afternoon a visit was paid to West Wallabi Island. On Wednesday the Easter Group was visited and inspections were made on Rat and Wooded Islands. After the visit to the Easter Group the vessels proceeded south and arrived at the Southern end of Pelsart Island and anchored there for the night. Early Thursday morning the committee landed and inspected the lower end of Pelsart Island. About mid-day the whole party boarded "Dampier" for the return journey to Geraldton arriving there late in the afternoon. "Lancelin" headed straight for Fremantle, arriving there next day.

Following their return to Geraldton, the committee met the Abrolhos Island Trustees and discussed with them the future development of the Islands.

Prior to the party returning to Perth on April 30, the Public Service Commissioner and Mr. Miller took the opportunity to visit the various Government Departments in Geraldton.