

TUNA SURVEY - FLIGHT I.

During the period December 5 - 13 the Senior Research Officer (Development), Mr. J.P. Robins, undertook the first flight of a tuna survey of our northern coastal waters. The area surveyed extended from Fremantle to Wyndham. Mr. K. Godfrey, of the Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, C.S.I.R.O., acted as "spotter" and recorder. The Director joined the aircraft at Broome on the way north and returned with it to Perth.

Eighty per cent of all sightings were within the area from Onslow to Port Hedland. Approximately 480 schools were sighted, ranging from 2 to 10 tons in each school.

The next survey flight is scheduled for mid-January.

1966 SPERM WHALING SEASON

During the 1966 whaling season, which ran from March to December 5, 606 whales were taken by Cheynes Beach Whaling Co. Ltd., operating from Albany.

The Company produced 4,175 tons of whale oil, 1,845 tons of solubles, 990 tons of whale meal, 4,440 lb. of teeth and 226 lb. of ambergris.

A new aircraft has been purchased by the company. It is a twin engined, push-pull aircraft. The plane will be used as a spotter for the Company's three chasers next season.

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The Field officers Association is still negotiating for a maximum number of hours of duty per week to be fixed, and for a system for taking days off in lieu of Saturdays and Sundays worked. Fisheries Inspectors, because of the nature of their duties, are required to work at unusual hours to coincide with the activities of fishermen. Inspectors are seeking 5 days on and 2 off, or 10 days on and 4 off.

Fauna Wardens have been advised that when they work Saturdays and Sundays, to take days off in lieu during the following week.

The task of a field officer is always difficult and, in the long run, there is little that can be done to alleviate the conditions they encounter, especially in a State with an expansive coastline such as ours. However, the new allowances granted and the relief that will come from the appointment of the five new inspectors should go a long way toward compensation for the inspectors.