

TAKING OF CORMORANTS DESTROYING FISHING NETS

Since May 1967 the Department, on application from the Mandurah Licensed Fishermen's Association, has allowed fishermen to destroy cormorants damaging nets or taking fish during a fishing operation.

The authority to take cormorants is limited to the time that fishermen are actually fishing and there is a proviso that it may be revoked at any time.

A follow-up has recently been conducted by Senior Inspector A.V. Green, who says that there is no evidence that the authority has caused more cormorants to be taken than previously. One reason for this is that most fishermen seldom carry a gun on their boats.

Inspector Green points out that fishermen find it difficult to destroy cormorants by shooting and the cost of cartridges relative to the number shot is prohibitive. The reason for this, says Inspector Green, is that as birds and boats are bobbing up and down particularly in "choppy" conditions, it is difficult to make shooting effective.

Cormorants appear to have become more plentiful over recent years and are eating large quantities of commercial fish as well as causing considerable damage to fishermen's nets.

As a result of Inspector Green's report it has been decided to extend the authority until the spring and summer months when more trouble is experienced from cormorants than during the winter.