

Chairman's Report 2007

My first year has mostly been a year of getting my feet wet and learning the ropes. Greg and Jim's input and advice over the year has been invaluable. I have also got a new respect for what SASMIA has done for the industry in the past. I can assure you that without the efforts of the previous committees that the squid industry would be a very different industry, that is if we would still have had one.

Section 21

The absence of section 21 transfers has been a major stumbling block for those who are trying to consolidate and also for those wishing to extend their enterprises. In some cases this has even hampered the expansion of meaningful transformation within the industry. It has also made it difficult for industry to achieve its objectives as set out in the squid policy document. We have been informed that the policy document for section 21 transfers should be out for comment soon.

Effort Reduction

We are back to the same scenario as last year and for this I quote from last year's report "Once again we are plagued by the dreaded mathematical model and there are proposals afoot which threaten every aspect of the industry. Fortunately this proposal has received only limited support. One of the major problems that I have in accepting the results of this particular mathematical model is the known unreliability of the input data." Unfortunately this view is now receiving growing support.

New data taken from the yellow books has shown a very significant drop in man hours fished, therefore a drop in effort. This information is however conveniently ignored. I cannot over-emphasise the importance of accurately completing the yellow books. I feel that next year's committee needs to make it a priority to see that an operations manual for the industry be implemented. They also need to see to it that the department uses more direct methods of stock assessment as is done in other sectors. Of great concern to me is the lack of squid scientists at scientific working group meetings, this needs to be addressed as a matter of utmost urgency.

Vessel length categories

There has been a demand from members who wish to get their vessels back up to full capacity to take a look at these categories. Next years committee may want to take a look at whether there is a need to alter the present categories or do away with them in total. This would need some serious scrutiny before any proposals go to the department. If handled correctly this could reduce the number of vessels in the industry thereby reducing the effort.

Fees

In order to look after our industry we are going to have to employ specialists in there fields and these guys don't come cheap. In the future we are going to need lawyers and scientific consultants to help us manage our industry and to ensure that our rights are not infringed upon. Be prepared, we may need to look at an increase in membership fees soon.

Conclusion

In conclusion I would like to thank the committee for their support in particular Karen, Gwen, Greg and Jim. SASMIA at present enjoys the support of a vast majority (95%) of the industry. It is only with this kind of support that we can retain our credibility with the Department and other bodies, thereby promoting the best interests of the industry.