

HELP STOP THE SPREAD

Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)

Information for marine users in Victoria



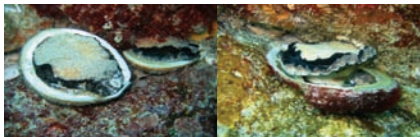
What is Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)?

- Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) is a virus that is the first of its kind found in Australia. AVG affects the nervous tissue of abalone and rapidly causes death.
- Abalone with the virus can appear to be weak. In some cases protrusion of the mouth part may be visible and/or the edges of the foot may curl inwards to expose clean shiny shell.
- The Virus can be spread through direct contact, through the water column or something in the water such as mucus produced by the abalone.
- The virus only affects abalone species.
- The Victorian Chief Veterinary Officer has advised that there are no known or likely public health or food safety implications associated with this virus.

For further information go to: www.dpi.vic.gov.au

The A.B.C.D. of Bio-security

- A** - Avoid Spreading - Don't carry infected boats, gear and abalone along the coast
- B** - Be sure to tell others about the virus
- C** - Call authorities when you are suspicious
- D** - Decontaminate your wetsuits, gear, boats and equipment



Commercial Fishers Bio-security?

Commercial divers and fishers have adopted bio-security protocols. These are included in the *Abalone Harvesting Code of Practice*. For more information go to:

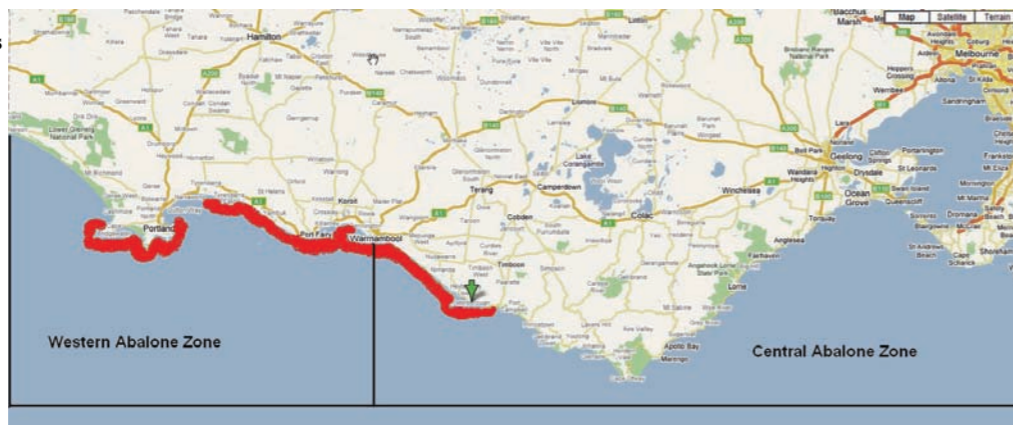
www.vada.com.au/Virus/Virus.htm

What to do if you find sick abalone?

Please call
Disease Watch Hotline
(1800 675 888)
Or the
Fish Reporting Line
13FISH (133474)

When making the call it would be good if you could provide the following information:

- » GPS Co-ordinates of the reef and/or description of the area where the abalone was found (including depth of water, whether it was washed up on the beach or rocks);
 - » Basis for suspecting disease (clinical signs, numbers of dead or dying abalone).
 - » Contact details of person finding the abalone.
- You may be asked to collect a sample.**
- » Collected samples should be sealed in a plastic bag and kept at as low a temperature as possible.
 - » A zip bag or a tied shopping bag would be suitable.



What you can do?

If you find yourself in an area that you suspect is infected with the virus or some other disease:

- » Ensure that you decontaminate your fishing vessels, all equipment, wet suits and gloves between dive sites.
- » Dispose of abalone shell, meat and gut appropriately.

Decontamination:

Boats should be washed as soon as possible after leaving the water and away from the water's edge so that soapy water does not affect our waterways. Consider using a carwash for vessels.

- » All organic matter from inside and outside the vessel should be removed

Wetsuits and Dive Equipment:

- » Wash wetsuits with a neoprene wash (available from dive and surf shops) although a mild liquid soap or shampoo.
- » Dive tanks, buoyancy vests, regulators and masks that have not come into contact with abalone can be washed down in soap-free freshwater.
- » Equipment that has come into contact with abalone, eg. catch bags, gloves, knives and measuring devices, should be soaked in soapy freshwater for 30 minutes and rinsed.

People and clothing:

Divers who come into contact with abalone should:

- » Wash their hands with soapy water.
- » Spray any waterproof clothing with soapy freshwater and rinse.
- » On returning home, wash clothes with laundry detergent.
- » Decontaminated vessels, wetsuits, dive equipment and clothing should be allowed to dry.

Disposal

Abalone shell, viscera (meat and gut) should not be:

- » shucked (taken from the shell) at sea,
- » dumped into the sea,
- » used as fishing bait.

"Take your abalone catch home and dispose of the waste with your household rubbish."



March 2008

Registered by Australia Post
Publication Number 381712/02391

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Issue #86

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SIV NEWS

Sustainable Fishing Healthy Seafood

Independent Chairman & Review of Rules

The Board of Seafood Industry Victoria is currently in the throes of searching for and appointing an independent Chairman to lead the organisation into the future.

The proposal to consider the appointment of an independent Chairman came from the Annual General Meeting held in September 2007.

The Board and independent Chairman will then embark on delivering the remaining resolutions of the AGM which are review the rules and purposes of SIV, and to make recommendations for change with a view to having the recommendations dealt with at a General Meeting.

Secondly, that the Board of SIV review all administrative governance and communication processes and protocols within SIV, including those applicable to the operations of sub committees.

These reviews are aimed at improving the way in which SIV operates and to ensure that SIV delivers quality outcomes to its members. Once the Chairman is appointed, I would expect that they will be seeking to meet with Associations to discuss their role and to gain a good understanding of the needs of industry, and how best to deliver industry needs and expectations.

Seafood Directions 2007 Conference Tasmania

Written by Maria Manias, Executive Officer, Port Phillip & Westernport Bay Professional Fisherman's Association

It was with great pleasure to be invited and to attend the Seafood Directions 2007 Conference, held in Tasmania, as a representative of 'grass root fishers' of Victoria. The conference itself had an interesting set up with two workshops happening at the same time, allowing attendees to make their own choices as to which workshop was best suited to them. The conference ended with a boat trip to Hobart Casino for a Gala Dinner where awards were presented. It was a proud moment to be present at the presentation of an additional award to Tim Mirabella for his contribution to the Victorian commercial fishery, in particular for the drive behind the EMS for the wild harvest fishery.

To see and meet the diverse range of representatives within the seafood industry from both government and non-government organisations allowed me to further build my support network. I had a wonderful finish to the conference. I was invited to a breakfast with Fisheries Research Development Corporation's staff and Board. This organisation is truly a reflection of team work and unity, and I was inspired enough to convince myself that it can happen with the right mix of people. I'd like to thank Seafood Industry Victoria for nominating and FRDC for sponsoring me to attend the conference as a representative for the Victorian 'grass roots' commercial fishers.



www.vada.com.au



www.wada.com.au



www.vrfish.com.au

Eastern Zone Abalone Industry Association (EZAIA)



www.siv.com.au



www.oceanwatch.org.au

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Email: bbrony@bigpond.com



Congratulations

to Joanne and Steve Tripylas on the birth of their first son - John!

Complaint Mechanisms

From time to time SIV Member Associations and individual fishermen have felt aggrieved by a decision or action of government. There are a number of ways that these grievances can be formally raised and resolved, and are as follows:

- Ombudsman Victoria
- The Secretary of DPI
- Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001

Complaining to Ombudsman Victoria if you are unhappy about the way you have been treated by:

1. A State Government Department;
2. A Statutory Authority;
3. A local Council; or
4. A private Agency that carries out statutory responsibilities of government

The ombudsman investigates complaints made against staff who work for government departments, statutory authorities and local councils.

Complaints and allegations of inappropriate behaviour can be submitted in writing to the Secretary of DPI.

The Secretary is the DPI Accountable Officer with respect to disclosures and has a range of related responsibilities under the Financial Management Act 1994 and Public Administration Act.

The Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001

The purpose of the Act is to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies.

You can either contact the relevant public body or go directly to the Ombudsman.

More Whistleblowers information can also be found on the Ombudsman website below.

The Ombudsman Victoria
Level 22, 459 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000

Phone: (03) 9613 6222
Toll Free: 1800 806 314
Email: ombudvic@ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Internet: www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au

OceanWatch Australia's SeaNet News

By Kate Milner, SeaNet Extension Officer Victoria, OceanWatch Australia

Well since the last instalment of SeaNet News, there have been many changes. The first most notable one is that the SIV office has moved. We have left South Yarra and now reside in West Melbourne not far from the Queen Vic Markets.

I was involved in the review of Animal Welfare Arrangements for Finfish in Australia. My South Australian SeaNet colleague, Claire van der Geest and I attended a two-day workshop for the commercial wild capture fish sector, along with fishers and industry representatives from all over Australia.

I was also fortunate enough to be able to attend the Rock Lobster Congress that was held in Cairns; this provided me with excellent insight into Rock Lobster Fisheries from right around the country and will help me to assist Victorian Rock Lobster Fishers in the future. Subsequently I attended the stock assessment and TAC forums in Queenscliff for Southern Rock Lobster in Victoria.

OceanWatch Australia has been involved in the preparation of communication materials for a national rollout of information regarding Introduced Marine Pests (IMP's) to the commercial fishing sector. My role will be in rolling out information and materials to Commonwealth fishers in Victoria. Victorian Department of Primary Industry will be responsible for communicating these materials to Victorian state fishers.

I would like to thank Peter Clarke, John Gazan and Grant Leeworthy for their starring roles in the production of the Introduced Marine Pests DVD, which is part of the material being produced for fishers. Look out for them on the big screen when the "IMP Roadshow" comes to a town near you!

OceanWatch Australia staff attended Seafood Directions in Hobart November 2007. Once again, I found this event to be excellent. One notable speaker from the conference was Tim Mirabella with his talk on Environmental Management Systems (EMS's) and their role in coastal fisheries. Tim's talk was great and touched on many of the issues facing all fishers. For those that were there to see Tim's presentation, I am sure you would agree. Thanks Tim for making me remember why I enjoy my job so much!

Prior to Christmas summer season, I was involved in the preparation of the information guide in regards to the Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis for marine users in Victoria. The pamphlet was a joint project between OceanWatch Australia's SeaNet Program and Victorian abalone diving associations, VR Fish and Seafood Industry Victoria. The pamphlet and posters have had a wide distribution across the state, with more than 15,000 pamphlets being circulated.

Finally, I will be at the Queenscliff Seafood Feast with SIV, pop in to our stall for a chat. Hope to see you there for a great day contributing to a good cause, on Good Friday!

OceanWatch Australia Strategic Planning Days

In early December 2007, OceanWatch Australia held a Strategic Planning forum in Sydney.

OceanWatch Australia staff, board members and representatives from the seafood industry were invited to attend and contribute to the future direction of OceanWatch Australia and its programs, including SeaNet.

The strategic planning process was held over 2 days with a focus on ensuring OceanWatch Australia provides an effective and targeted service to the seafood industry, particularly the wild catch sector.

OceanWatch Australia is now in the process of developing a Strategic Plan for the next five years, with outcomes still being finalised. The strategic plan will be made available to all key stakeholders in the near future.

For any further information on OceanWatch Australia's SeaNet Program go to www.oceanwatch.org.au

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily be those of Seafood Industry Victoria. While care is taken to ensure the accuracy of information in this newsletter, readers should not base business decisions or actions solely upon information contained within.

SIV Corporate Mission

Seafood Industry Victoria will continue building a united, ecologically sustainable and thriving seafood industry valued by the Victorian community