

**TORRES STRAIT LOBSTER WORKING GROUP MEETING  
10 – 11 March 2005  
PEARLS BUILDING, THURSDAY ISLAND**

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TRLWG TO THE  
TSFMAC**

Number	Recommendation
1	That the TSFMAC agree to the proposed terms of reference for the TRL RAG and its proposed relationships with other PZJA consultative bodies.
2	That the chair of the PZJA write to the Queensland and PNG inviting them to each nominate a scientific or management, and Industry member to the RAG (i.e. four extra members).
3	The working group reaffirms the previous working group recommendation to ban the practice of night diving for lobsters on the proviso that the wording of the prohibition does not impact on fishers transiting the fishery during hours of darkness.
4	TRL Working Group recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) that the area surrounding the islands of Mabuiag, Badu and Moa (as per Attachments 5) be set aside as a hookah free area; and</li> <li>b) that this arrangement be reviewed within three years of its implementation.</li> </ul>

**ACTION ITEMS**

Number	Action Item	Action Agency
1	Jim Prescott to draft a letter to inform the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) about the changes in management arrangements for Torres Strait Tropical rock lobster fishery for the 2005 fishing season.	<b>AFMA</b>
2	The TRL working group (Islander sector) requested written advice from AFMA or PZJA the length of time the cap would remain.	<b>QDPI&amp;F</b>
3	Obtain advice from DEH on when the report to DEH for each year (Recommendation 10) is due	<b>AFMA</b>
4	Industry and Islander sectors to consult on the trading of tenders and report on this consultation to John Kung by <u>29 April 2005</u> . The questionnaire developed during the meeting	<b>INDUSTRY &amp; TSRA</b>

	is to be used as a basis for this consultation	
<b>5</b>	Industry and Islander sectors to provide to John Kung a final list of nominations for the sub group and possible dates for holding a meeting of the sub group to finalise the management objectives for the Torres Strait TRL fishery.	<b>INDUSTRY &amp; TSRA</b>
<b>6</b>	Seek legal advice on whether conditions can be imposed on primary boats preventing them from being used for fishing.	<b>AFMA</b>
<b>7</b>	Industry and Islander sectors to consult on the limiting of hookah operations only one diver at any one time and report on this consultation to AFMA management by <u>29 April 2005</u> . The questionnaire developed during the meeting is to be used as a basis for this consultation (along with the other issues on the questionnaire).	<b>INDUSTRY &amp; TSRA</b>
<b>8</b>	Develop appropriate words in consultation with QB&FP officers ensuring prohibition is enforceable and does not impact on fishers transiting the fishery during hours of darkness. This action item to be completed in time for the next scheduled TSFMAC meeting.	<b>AFMA/QB&amp;FP</b>
<b>9</b>	Raise the issue of the terms of reference for the consultant (quota) with agencies and request that it include alternative management approaches.	<b>AFMA</b>
<b>10</b>	Industry to consult on hookah free area proposals and report back to AFMA management on the outcomes of that consultation by <u>29 April 2005</u> .	<b>INDUSTRY</b>
<b>11</b>	Raise the possibility of more joint patrols with the relevant compliance officials.	<b>AFMA</b>

**TORRES STRAIT LOBSTER WORKING GROUP MEETING**  
**10 – 11 March 2005**  
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**FINAL AGENDA**

- A) *OPENING*
- B) *APOLOGIES*
- C) *AGENDA*
- 1. Confirmation of the Record of the previous meeting (5 - 6 October 2004)**
  - 2. Business arising from the previous meeting**
  - 3. Strategic Assessment: Outcome of process**
  - 4. Business arising from TSFMAC meeting**
    - a. *Terms of Reference for Resource Assessment Groups (RAG)*
    - b. *Completion of Management Objectives (prioritised and resources needed)*
  - 5. Licence Amalgamation/tender trading draft policy**
  - 6. Catch Data**
  - 7. Other Issues: Hookah registry and night diving prohibition**
  - 8. Management arrangements for 2006**
    - a. *Total Allowable Catch (TAC) system: Policy considerations*
    - b. *TAC operational system:*
    - c. *Research Support– what research is needed to set “robust” TACs*
    - d. *Alternative strategies to achieve control of fishing mortality*
  - 9. Area closures (to hookah or more generally)**
- D) *OTHER BUSINESS*
- 1. Illegal Fishing by PNG nationals on Warrior Reef**
  - 2. Trawling or Bycatch of lobsters by PNG Prawn Trawlers**
- E) *NEXT MEETING*

**TORRES STRAIT LOBSTER WORKING GROUP MEETING**  
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**MINUTES OF MEETING**

THESE ARE **DRAFT** MINUTES WHICH HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO WORKING GROUP MEMBERS AND WILL BE RATIFIED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP. IF **NO** COMMENTS ARE RECEIVED BY **15 APRIL 2005**, THIS WILL REMAIN A TRUE COPY OF MINUTES TAKEN AT THIS MEETING.

**DAY 1**

**Attendance**

John Marrington	(Chair - AFMA)
Jim Prescott	(AFMA)
Sascha Taylor	(AFMA)
Ray Moore	(Industry Representative)
Brett Arlidge	(Industry – QRLA and QSIA Representative)
Peter Yorkston	(TSRA Fisheries Co-ordinator)
Lota Warriia	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Yorke Island)
Yen Loban	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Muralag)
William Bowie ( <i>proxy</i> )	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Badu Island)
Graham Hirakawa	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Port Kennedy)
Charles David ( <i>proxy</i> )	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Yam Island)
Terrence Whap	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Mabuiag Island)

**Observers**

Chris Robb	(Industry)
Richard Bowie	(Traditional Inhabitant - Badu)
Patrick Mills	(Traditional Inhabitant - TI)
Sammy Tamu	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Warraber Island)
Philip Polon	(National Fisheries Authority – Port Moresby)
Toshio Nakata	(CRC Torres Strait)

**DAY 2**

**Attendance**

John Marrington	(Chair - AFMA)
Jim Prescott	(AFMA)
Sascha Taylor	(AFMA)
Ray Moore	(Industry Representative)
Brett Arlidge	(Industry – QRLA and QSIA Representative)
Peter Yorkston	(TSRA Fisheries Co-ordinator)
Lota Warriia	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Yorke Island)
Yen Loban	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Muralag)

William Bowie ( <i>proxy</i> )	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Badu Island)
Graham Hirakawa	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Port Kennedy)
Charles David ( <i>proxy</i> )	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Yam Island)
Terrence Whap	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Mabuiag Island)

### **Observers**

Chris Robb	(Industry)
Sam Tamu	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Warraber Island)
Philip Polon	(National Fisheries Authority – Port Moresby)

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## **DAY 1 – 10 March 2005**

### *A) OPENING*

The meeting was opened at 0845 by the chair of the TRL working group, Mr John Marrington.

### *B) APOLOGIES*

Trysh Stone	(AFMA Senior Manager – Northern Fisheries)
John Kung	(QDPI&F)
Phil Gaffney	(QDPI&F)
Bill Nason	(QB&FP)
Lyndon Peddell	(QB&FP)
Quentin Hirakawa	(QB&FP)
Yimin Ye	(CSIRO Division of Marine Research - Cleveland)
Mark David	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Yam Island)
Manai Nona	(Traditional Inhabitant Representative – Badu Island)
Randall Owen	(GBRMPA)
Noel Taylor-Moore	(Independent Fisheries Consultant)

Apologies were received from Trysh Stone, Noel Taylor-Moore, Yimin Ye, John Kung, and Randall Owens who were all unable to attend because of the cancellation of flights owing to Cyclone Ingrid. Phil Gaffney from QDPI&F was not able to attend because of other work commitments.

### *C) AGENDA*

Due to the absence of numerous working group members and observers due to unforeseen circumstances the agenda was amended as noted. It was agreed to move Agenda item 4 (outcome of strategic assessment process) before Agenda item 3 so that the group would have the DEH recommendations for the fishery in mind when management objectives for the fishery were discussed. Other agenda items were moved accordingly to allow for telephone hook ups with those members who were unable to attend the meeting.

Dr Ray Moore also wished to discuss the following items under other business whilst the TRL working group had present a representative from the National Fisheries Authority (NFA), Port Moresby –

1. Illegal fishing by PNG nationals on Warrior Reef; and

## 2. Bycatch of Tropical rock lobster by PNG licensed prawn trawlers

Philip Polon agreed to discuss these issues after seeking advice from NFA in Port Moresby. The final agenda was adopted by the TRL working group.

### Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of the record of the previous meeting (5 – 6 October 2005)

The minutes of the last meeting of the TRL working group held on 5 – 6 October 2004 were distributed on 20 October 2004 for a period of 4 weeks for additional comments by members. Comments were received from Randall Owen and were incorporated into the final version. There were no other amendments made by members of the working group and the final minutes of the last meeting were ratified by the TRL working group.

### Agenda Item 2: Business arising from the previous meeting (5 – 6 October 2004)

There were no outstanding action items from the previous meeting of the working group.

### Agenda Item 3: Strategic Assessment: Outcome of Process

Mr Jim Prescott presented the agenda paper to the working group. Ray Moore questioned management on the following extract (highlighted in bold) from **Attachment 2. Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery** of the agenda paper;

*“...Unless amended or revoked, this declaration:*

*b. is subject to the following conditions:*

- 1. Operation of the fishery will be carried out in accordance with the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster management arrangements.*
- 2. The Australian Fisheries Management Authority will inform the Department of the Environment and Heritage of any changes to the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster management arrangements or other significant policy documents.”*

Ray Moore questioned management whether they had informed the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) that (1) the cap on the Traditional Inhabitant sector (TIB) had been lifted; and (2) informed them about the new management arrangements for the 2005 TRL fishing season. Management indicated that DEH had not been notified.

**Action Item:** AFMA (Jim Prescott) to draft a letter to inform the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) about the changes in management arrangements for Torres Strait Tropical rock lobster fishery for the 2005 fishing season.

Charles David questioned management on the foundation of the recommendation capping TIB boats 6 metres and greater. He stated this was a recommendation that the TIB sector hadn't supported and once again '*...management again restrict effort in the TIB sector*'. He further reported many Torres Strait Islanders eligible for a TIB licence had in fact undergone training for maritime tickets (i.e. coxswains) with the intentions of upgrading to larger 6m+ boats.

Management explained that at the last TRL working group meeting no recommendations were put forward to the TSFMAC and PZJA. Management also outlined the PZJA process in respect of briefings and how they are provided to each member by their respective organisations.

The question was asked when the cap on boats greater than 6 metres would be lifted. Jim Prescott responded that he had verbally been advised by the Ministers Office that it would only be in place until the longer term arrangements (such as a quota system) were introduced.

**Action Item:** The TRL working group (Islander sector) requested written advice from AFMA or PZJA the length of time the cap would remain.

Discussion then moved to the subject of “*Priority of Access*”. This continued for a period before the Chair brought the discussion to an end by reading the **DRAFT outcomes** of the last PZJA (17<sup>th</sup>) meeting.

Jim Prescott then continued on the agenda item by reading through the DEH recommendations on the ecologically sustainable management of the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster fishery.

**Action Item:** AFMA to get advice from DEH on when the report to DEH for each year (Recommendation 10) is due.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Business arising from the TSFMAC meeting (2 – 3 November 2004)**

##### **4a. Terms of Reference for Resource Assessment Groups (RAG)**

Jim Prescott presented this agenda item by reading through the ‘*Draft terms of reference and operational guidelines*’. Jim informed the group that the paper was adapted from the AFMA paper “FMP 12 (FISHERY ASSESSMENT GROUPS - ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RELATIONSHIP WITH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES)” and modified to make it relate more closely to the specific objectives of the Torres Strait TRL RAG.

The Working Group supported the ‘*Draft terms of reference and operational guidelines*’ but recommended that the membership be expanded to include representatives from Qld and PNG. The working group noted that this would create a larger than normal RAG but saw the benefit of equal representation for the other two jurisdictions.

**Recommendation:** That the TSFMAC agree to the proposed terms of reference for the TRL RAG and its proposed relationships with other PZJA consultative bodies.

**Recommendation:** That the chair of the PZJA write to the Qld and PNG inviting them to each nominate a scientific or management, and Industry member to the RAG (i.e. 4 extra members).

##### **4b. Completion of Management Objectives (prioritised and resources needed)**

John Kung presented this agenda item via telephone from Brisbane. Due to John being unable to be present this paper in person, he suggested the objectives be progressed out of

session. John indicated he will be on TI in April (i.e. next scheduled Finfish Working Group meeting) where he could work on the objectives with a sub group of the TRL working group (i.e. two Industry representatives and three Torres Strait Islander representatives). This approach was supported by the Working Group and the following nominations were made to sit on that sub group:-

**Industry representatives**

Ray Moore  
*Yet to be nominated*

**Islander representatives**

Peter Yorkston  
Lota Warria  
Graham Hirakawa

**Action Item:** Industry and Islander sectors to provide to John Kung a final list of nominations for the sub group and possible dates for holding a meeting of the sub group to finalise the management objectives for the Torres Strait TRL fishery.

**Agenda Item 5: Licence Amalgamation/ tender trading draft policy**

John Kung presented this agenda item via telephone from Brisbane.

The Working Group considered the issue of tender trading and licence amalgamation. The difference between trading and amalgamation was discussed at length. The question was raised as to why the Working Group was even discussing the trading of tenders because this was not a concept that had been developed by the working group. Management informed the members that the PZJA had directed the Working Group to consider this issue for a particular purpose, namely to allow non-islander licence holders to restructure their businesses should the need arise out of any decisions that may take effect in relation to priority of access that the tender trading issue had come from the PZJA.

Islander members did not support trading of tenders but did support the amalgamation of two licences where tenders were sacrificed and one of the two primary vessels would also be surrendered. Management informed the group that most Australian commercial fisheries allowed licence holders to trade units, the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery and Western and Southern rock lobster fisheries were used as examples of this.

Non-Islanders were of different opinion about whether or not there should be any sacrifice of tenders during tender trading or licence amalgamation. Ray Moore suggested that if a licence holder was going to do something good for the himself, then they should also do something good for the industry by removing tenders from the fishery. Management noted that such penalties on trading had hindered adjustment in some fisheries, and that it may be unnecessary when fishers may already be under financial stress to require a further penalty to apply in the process of restructuring a business.

Both sectors agreed that they would have to consult on this agenda item and report back to the Working Group. To assist in the process of consulting the working group drafted a questionnaire which in the process of drafting brought out many concerns and highlighted a number of significant issues (see Attachment 1). Members were asked to report on their consultations by 29 April.



**Action Item:** Industry and Islander sectors to consult on the trading of tenders and report on this consultation to John Kung by 29 April 2005. The questionnaire developed during the meeting is to be used as a basis for this consultation.

**Action Item:** AFMA to seek legal advice on whether conditions can be imposed on primary boats preventing them from being used for fishing.

**Action Item:** Industry and Islander sectors to consult on the limiting of hookah operations only one diver at any one time and report on this consultation to AFMA management by 29 April 2005. The questionnaire developed during the meeting is to be used as a basis for this consultation (along with the other issues on the questionnaire).

## **DAY 2 – 11 March 2005**

### **Agenda Item 6: Catch Data**

Vanessa Moore (AFMA Logbook officer) provided a summary of the data collection systems operating now (and historically) in the Torres Strait. Vanessa also presented catch figures for the fishery for the period 2001 to 2004 inclusive. AFMA noted that while it was not expected that final figures would deviate much from the figures presented there was further work to be done on the data, including the key punching of some logbook and docket book records. The catch data presentation is attached to the rear of the minutes (see Attachment 2).

Members were generally satisfied with the data, and Brett Arlidge indicated that the figures provided were in line with what his company estimated. AFMA indicated that it was reasonably confident that the data being collected now would lead to more accurate estimate of catch than were previously available from the fishery.

### **Agenda Item 7: Other Issues – Hookah Registry and Night Diving Prohibition**

#### **7a. Hookah Registry**

The working group was informed that it had been requested by the PZJA to provide advice on a register of hookah users and hookah gear. The working group noted that registering users may be outside the bounds of the TSF Act, however the group understood that the PZJA could establish a register of hookah gear and could require gear in use to be registered.

Islander members of the working group did not support establishing a register citing that they considered that the register posed a threat to their economic development opportunities because they expected that it was a first step towards a limit on the number of hookahs that would be allowed in the fishery. They noted that they had, '*in good faith*', volunteered a 12 month cap on the number of TIB licences with CR endorsements and then had to fight hard to have it removed. They noted that they did not trust the PZJA as a result of this issue. There were also concerns expressed about the cost of registering a hookah.

Despite the Islander position, the working group continued to work through the issues with both sectors participating in discussion. Outcomes of the discussion were:

- a hookah will be defined as ‘a frame fitted with a motor and compressor’;
- the licence holder should be responsible for registering a hookah regardless of who owns the hookah;
- hookahs should be marked with a unique tag. The tag would be attached to the frame as the frame is generally replaced the less frequently than the motor or compressor. The tag should be able to be removed and re-attached to a different hookah when necessary and for what ever reason; and
- the register should be updated on an annual basis.

Islanders were willing to accept the definition of a hookah but did not show support for the other outcomes. Non-islanders supported the register but noted that from their perspective since every tender in their sector is equipped with a hookah, the register would only record what was already widely known.

#### **7b. *Night diving prohibition***

The working group noted that there had been some night diving for lobsters tried by at least one operator during the 2004 season. The group agreed that night diving under an input management system constituted a threat to the fishery because it could increase fishing effort and also agreed that the issue was best dealt with directly by eliminating the potential for this method of fishing.

The working group members were reminded that they had agreed in principle at the last meeting to introduce a prohibition on night diving. Jim Prescott noted that the PZJA had requested advice on the prohibition given the difficulties with enforcement.

At the last meeting discussion had centred on ways of preventing the take of lobsters by diving at night and it was noted that this was particularly problematic given that a person were have to be caught in the act of taking a lobster to be breached.

Jim Prescott suggested that a notice could be worded to the effect of it prohibiting the possession of diving gear (eg a mask, fins etc) and TRL between certain hours. This would allow an officer to detect a breach at any time and would not have to be present when the lobsters were taken. The group considered that this approach had merit, however some members pointed out that fishers transiting from distant grounds to their respective communities or to a buyers premises, for example on Thursday Island, would be disadvantaged by this approach.

As no compliance personnel were at the meeting it was difficult to progress this issue. AFMA undertook to continue discussing the matter with QBFP with the aim of resolving this issue as soon as possible.

<p><b>Action Item:</b> AFMA to develop appropriate words in consultation with QBFP officers ensuring prohibition is enforceable and does not impact on fishers transiting the fishery during hours of darkness. This action item to be completed in time for the next scheduled TSFMAC meeting.</p>
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**Recommendation** - The working group reaffirms the previous working group recommendation to ban the practice of night diving for lobsters on the proviso that the wording of the prohibition does not impact on fishers transiting the fishery during hours of darkness.

### **Agenda Item 8: Management Arrangements for 2006**

Discussion of this agenda item were postponed several times during the meeting to find a suitable time where the independent fisheries consultant, Noel Taylor-Moore, could be included in the discussion by telephone.

The discussion began with an introduction of members and Noel giving a brief description of his experience relevant to the consultancy he will undertake. Noel explained that his terms of reference were to determine a draft quota management system for the fishery. Noel pointed out that it was not in his terms of reference to determine any alternative management systems; however he noted that he would be favourably disposed to expanding his terms of reference to include this extra work.

**Action Item:** AFMA to raise the issue of the terms of reference for the consultant (quota) with agencies and request that it include alternative management approaches.

As the working group worked through the paper the consultant made comments where he thought it was appropriate and members asked questions of Noel as issues arose.

The working group understood that the quota system could have some major benefits in terms of establishing more secure access shares for each sector and there was support from both sectors for the system for that reason. However the working group also understood that there would be some difficult issues to be overcome. In particular some islander members of the working group had established that their share of the quota, if it were divided equally among current TIB licence holders, could be unviable for those who were economically dependent on the industry.

The working group discussed alternatives to a quota system for a short time. Management noted that the current input management arrangements do not allow for tight controls on effort because there are no simple mechanisms that can adjust effort should it be necessary. This is partly because there is still latent effort in the fishery in both sectors. It was pointed out that the increase in effort between 2003 and 2004 in the non-islander sector was the result of activation of licences that had been inactive for several years, but also because some active licences increased the number of days that they fished and it was noted that there is still opportunity for some licences to fish more days, i.e. there is still latent effort in that sector.

Management pointed out the greatest amount of latent effort exists in the TIB sector where most licences are used infrequently. The problem is amplified because there is no limit on the number of TIB licences with CR endorsements. Islanders did not accept this argument and complained that the other sector is clearly the one taking most of the catch.

Management suggested that there were some clear options for improving the input management system as it applied to the non-islander sector. It was quite achievable to allocate effort to the non islander sector licences based on the number of tenders and or on

history acquired. However, management conceded that there was no obvious way to complement arrangements of this sort with similar arrangements in the islander sector.

Both sectors agreed that managing effort is problematic. The working group was left looking forward to working with the consultant who they hoped may have some fresh ideas, and some ideas how a quota system might work.

#### **Agenda Item 9: Area Closures (to hookah or more generally)**

Jim Prescott read through the agenda paper. The working group noted the difficult history of trying to bring in hookah closures, with one member commenting that the real interest among Islanders was for a total hookah ban and that there had been solidarity on this issue.

Positions from previous meetings were generally unchanged. There was no support from the Island sector for a closure of the Eastern Torres Strait. There was no support offered by either sector for closing the territorial seas around Turu Cay, Kerr Island and Deliverance Island in line with the agenda papers' proposal for closures there to hopefully coincide with a trawl closure in PNG's surrounding area of jurisdiction.

After a lengthy discussion Terrance Whap re-introduced the proposal for a closure around Mabuia, Badu and Moa Islands. Terrance noted that he had consulted with his constituents on Mabuia and could offer several closed area options. The preferred option was the one presented at the last meeting which takes in a large area to the north of Orman Reef and extends south of Badu and Moa. The second option was for a smaller area that included waters north to approximately Numar Reef. The least preferred option included the waters north to number one passage between Anui and Gariar (this area corresponded with what was shown on "Map B" previously). Terrance offered the third option with the proviso that it would be reviewed within 3 years and that his constituents expected that the boundary would be extended progressively to the north to coincide with the area proposed originally.

The working group acknowledged Terrance's efforts in finding a compromise position thus enabling the issue of area closures to be further progressed.

**Recommendation:** The TRL Working Group recommends:

- a) that the area surrounding the islands of Mabuia, Badu and Moa (as per Attachments 5) be set aside as a hookah free area; and
- b) that this arrangement be reviewed within three years of its implementation.

Sammy Tamu was asked to comment on what area was being requested by Warraber (Sue) fishers. He outlined the area on the map (see Attachment 3). This represents no change on the previous area being sought and there was no agreement between the sectors to advance this. The non-Islander sector noted that they still support the area closure that they had proposed previously.

Charles David outlined on the map the area that Iama (Yam) fishers currently wanted closed. This area differs from the area previously outlined by Mark David, covering less of Warrior Reef and leaving out the areas to the west around Gabba (see Attachment 3). Charles noted that he wanted the southern end of Warrior Reef closed for reasons of fisheries management and because the area was important to him as his father was lost there. The non-islander

sector could not support the area closure proposed by Charles, but undertook to discuss the proposal with industry.

**Action item** – Industry to consult on hookah free area proposals and report back to AFMA management on the outcomes of that consultation by 29 April 2005.

D) *OTHER BUSINESS*

***Illegal fishing on Warrior Reef***

Charles David described what he and others at Iama (Yam) were observing on Warrior Reef. They noted that there were large numbers of PNG traditional inhabitants using the reef for collecting sandfish and they were probably also taking lobsters. Ray Moore also noted that this had been reported by other non-islander fishers who were diving for lobsters at Warrior Reef in February 2005.

Philip Polon responded by saying the PNG had few compliance resources to task to resolving the problem. He specifically noted that the nearest patrol vessel is based in Port Moresby and that NFA's own officers were also Port Moresby based. Philip did point out that there were plans for a fisheries wharf and facilities to be built in Daru in the near future and he was hopeful that a patrol vessel may be stationed there. However he also acknowledged that the people in Daru and adjacent coastal villages have few economic opportunities and that there was strong incentive to undertake the activities that are being observed.

Management noted that there are a series of compliance obstacles that must be overcome before the illegal fishing can be more effectively controlled. It was stated that one significant issue will be dealt with during the autumn sitting of parliament where an amendment to the *Torres Strait Fisheries Act* is expected to be passed which would allow Australian officers to detain and return suspected illegal PNG fishers to Thursday Island while investigations were made and then for an orderly repatriation of the suspects to PNG authorities for PNG to take appropriate action.

It was noted that there have been numerous attempts to have joint patrols and that these could be useful if they were made in a targeted way and were not disrupted as they had been in the past from time to time by the responses to other foreign fishing issues.

**Action Item:** AFMA to raise the possibility of more joint patrols with the relevant compliance officials.

***Bycatch of lobsters in Gulf of Papua (GOP)***

Ray Moore asked what the current status was with regard to the retention of bycatch of lobsters in the GOP. It was understood that this issue was discussed at the PZJA and that the Managing Director of the NFA had indicated at the time that although there was a lot of pressure on NFA to allow for the retention of bycatch that there was no retention allowed. Philip Polon reaffirmed this position at the meeting.

However, despite this policy working group members were aware that there were lobsters with the characteristic gooseneck barnacles being exported to Australia. It was noted that one company had imported two tonnes of tails already this year of what seemed to be migratory lobsters. Philip Polon explained that these lobsters may have been ones caught at

Iokea village in the Gulf Province where there was a large catch taken by villagers and purchased by an Australian.

The working Group remains concerned that trawling of migratory lobsters in the GOP could undermine any measures taken in Australia to manage the fishery. The working group remains concerned about this issue.

*E) NEXT MEETING*

Not discussed - date yet to be set.

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**TENDER TRADING POLICY + LICENCE AMALGAMATION**

The PZJA has requested that a policy be developed which will result in an open and transparent process of allowing adjustment between operators in the TRL fishery. It is thought that if tenders could be traded or 2 licences could be amalgamated into one that there could be benefits for the operators concerned and the fishery as a whole. This questionnaire is to seek your views on specific questions that must be answered before a policy is developed.

In answering the questions you should consider how the fishery might be managed in the future. There are essentially two options: by input controls (stricter controls on effort) or by output controls. We have allowed you two spaces to answer each question under these two different scenarios. You need to consider how these two systems may differ from one another before you answer the question. The answer may often be the same under either scenario.

**Q1 SHOULD ANY TENDERS BE SURRENDERED IN THE PROCESS OF TRADING? I.E. AS A MEANS OF REDUCING EFFORT? SHOULD THIS ONLY APPLY WHEN TENDERS ARE TRADED FROM A SMALL VESSEL TO A LARGE VESSEL?**

**IF YES – HOW MANY OR WHAT PERCENTAGE?**

Input Managed	Quota managed

**Q2 FOLLOWING TRADING OF TENDERS OFF A LICENCE, SHOULD THE PRIMARY AND ANY REMAINING TENDERS BE SURRENDERED OR BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN THE FISHERY?**

Input Managed	Quota managed

Q3 WHAT IS A SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF TENDERS FOR A FREEZER BOAT-TENDER LICENCE PACKAGE?

Input Managed	Quota managed

Q4 FOR ANY TENDER TRADED OR SURRENDERED, WHAT PERIOD SHOULD BE USED TO ESTABLISH ITS CATCH or EFFORT HISTORY –

- A) PRIOR TO A FUTURE ALLOCATION?
- B) FOLLOWING A FUTURE ALLOCATION?

Input Managed	Quota managed

**BOAT REPLACEMENT POLICY**

Q5 IS THE CURRENT BOAT REPLACEMENT POLICY PREVENTING EXPANSION OF THE LIVE FISHERY (current low prices for live is an issue but this question is about whether boats are large enough for the tanks needed to carry live when it is economically favourable to do so)? **YES** or **NO** (circle one)

**Table 1.** Vessel upgrade policies for the Tropical Rock Lobster (TRL) fishery

Fishery	Vessel	Length Categories (metres)			
		≤ 6	>6 and ≤10	>10 and ≤14	>14
TRL	Existing	≤ 6	>6 and ≤10	>10 and ≤14	>14
	upgrade	≤ 6	≤ 10	≤ 14	Same length <sup>1</sup>

1. As far as practical approval should be for vessel of same size or less

**USE OF PRIMARY BOAT FOR HOOKAH DIVING, NUMBER OF HOOKAH DIVERS PER TENDER**



Q6 SHOULD HOOKAH DIVING BE ALLOWED FROM THE PRIMARY BOAT FOR PRIMARY-TENDER OPERATIONS? IF SO UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS?

Input Managed	Quota managed

Q7 HOW MANY HOOKAH DIVERS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DIVE OFF A TENDER AT ANY ONE TIME?

Input Managed	Quota managed

# Torres Strait TRL Fishery Catch Data Summary

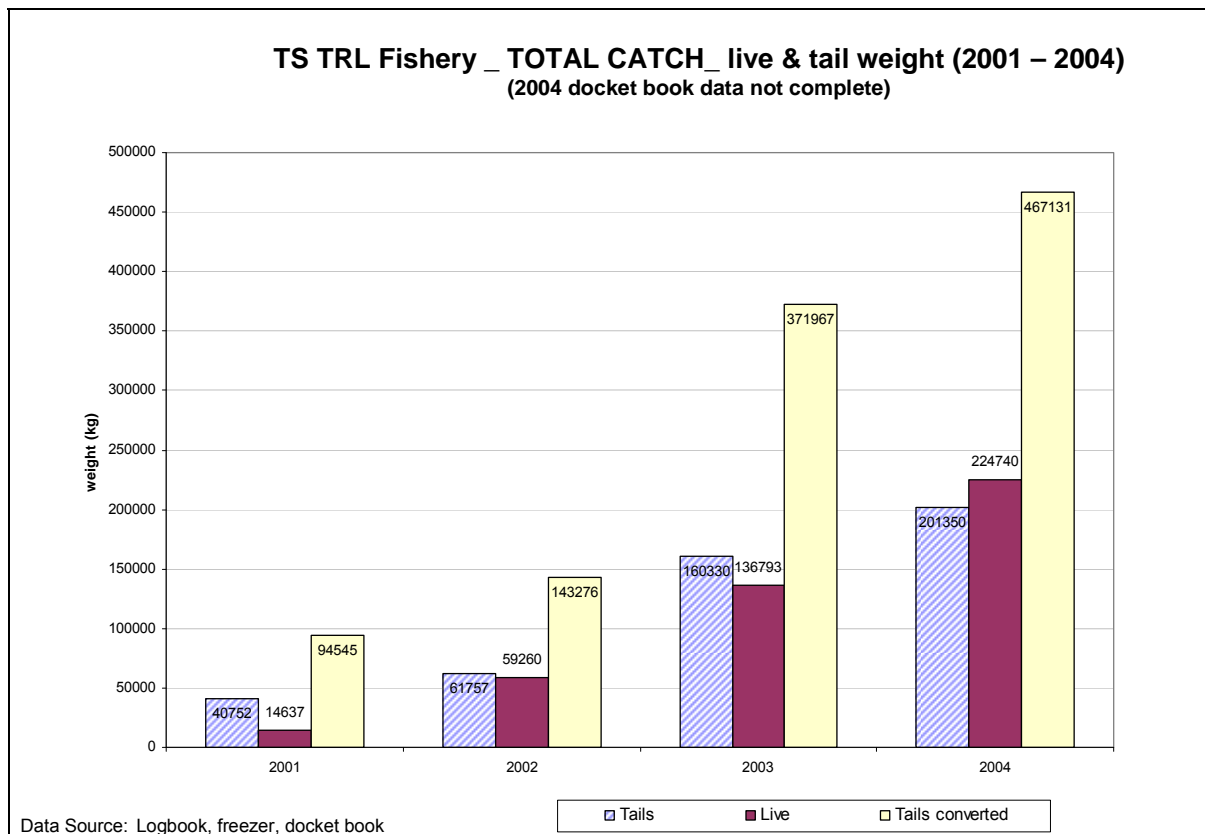
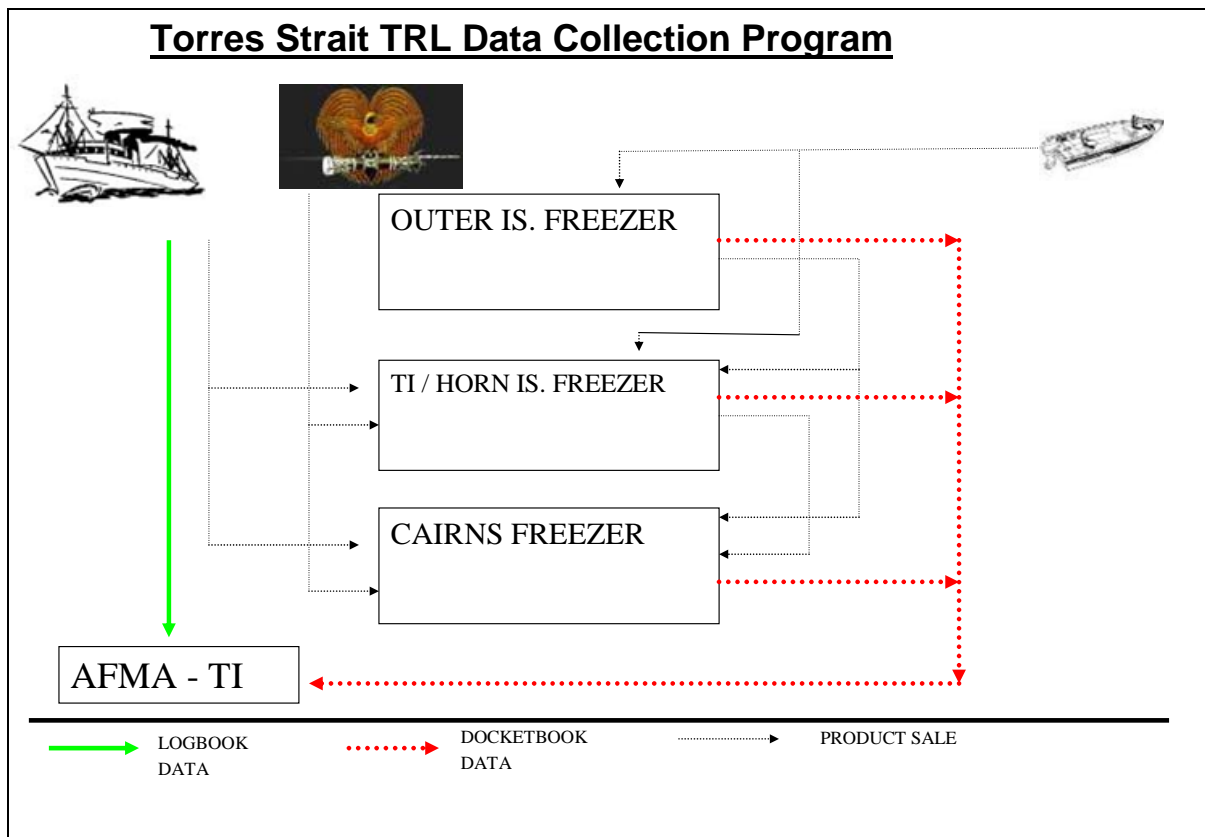
**VANESSA MOORE**

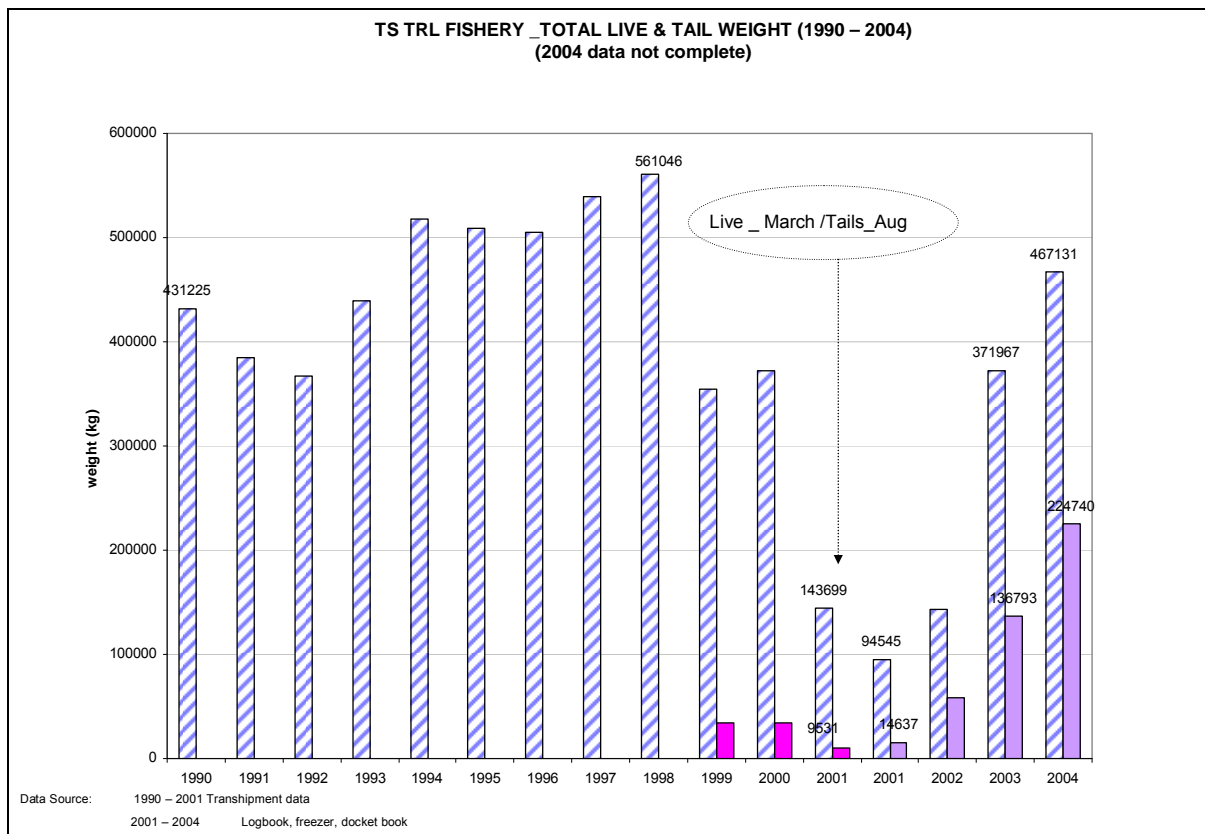
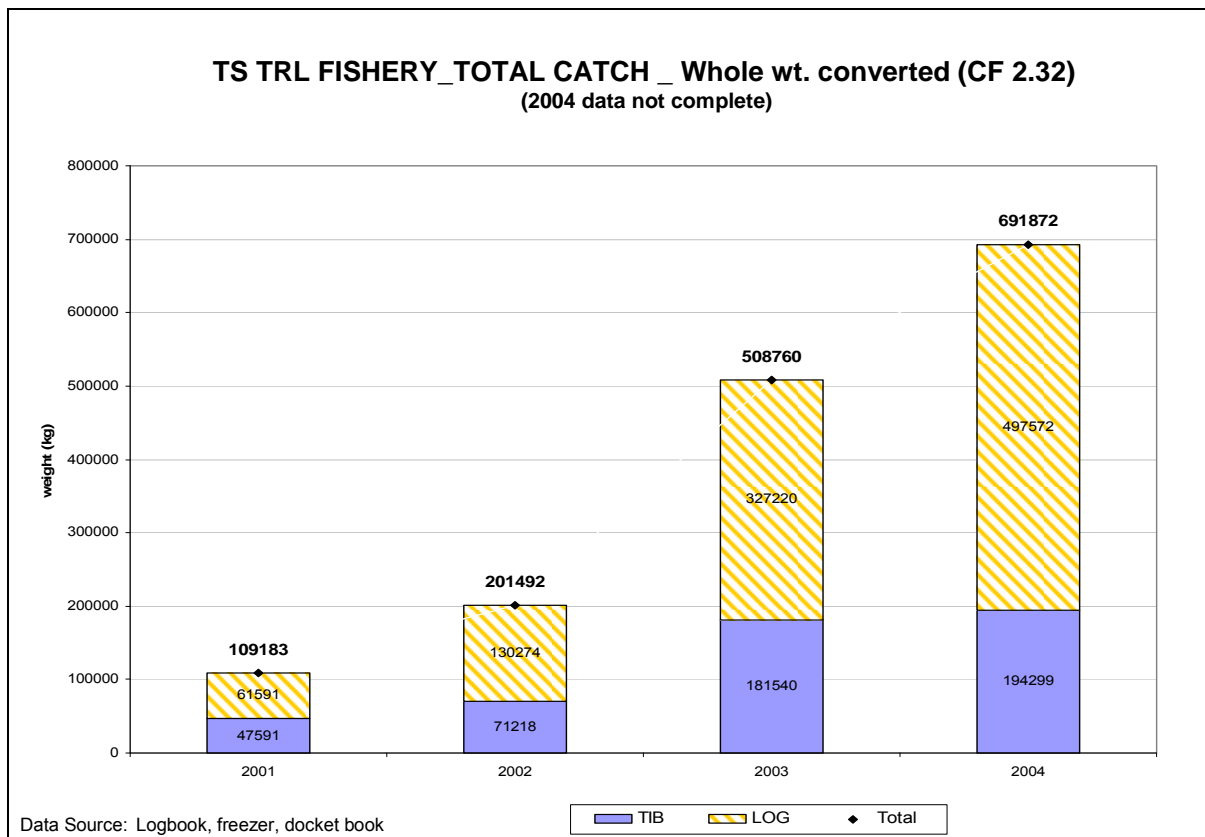
**TRL WG 10/11 March 05  
Pearls Building Thursday Island**

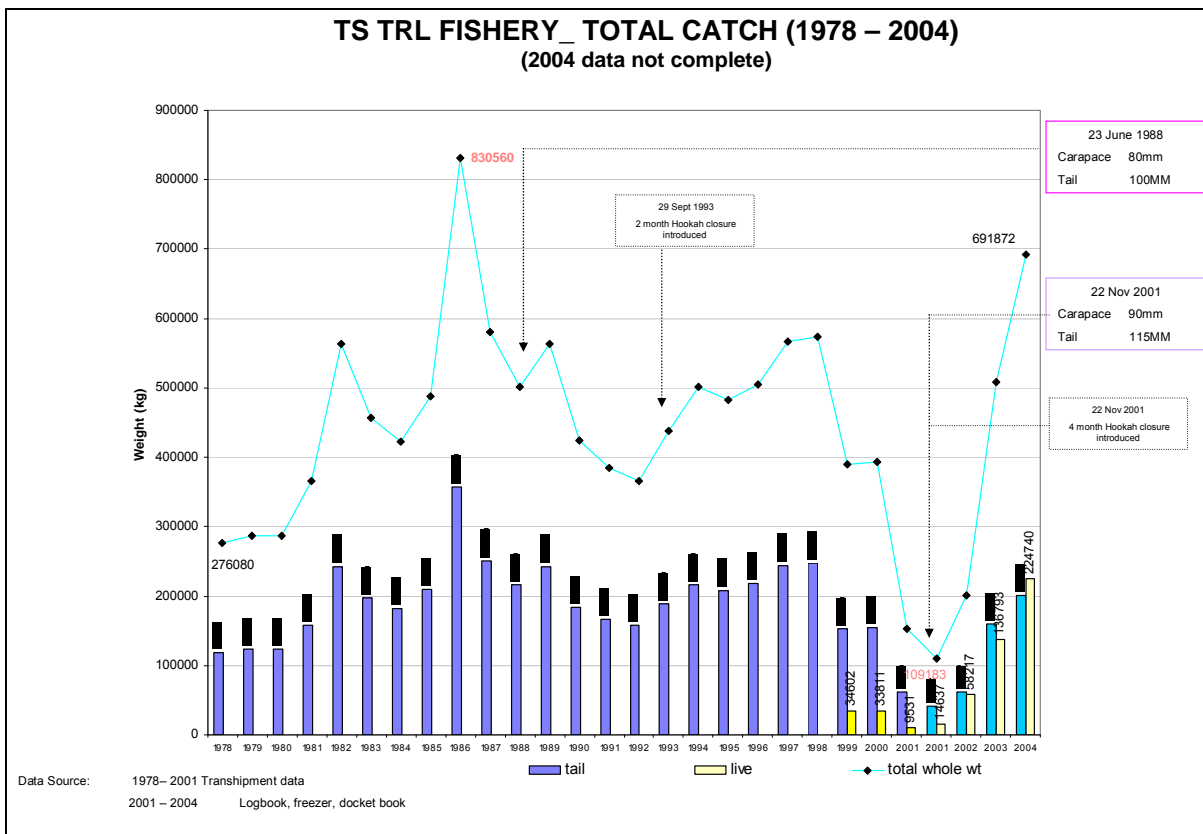
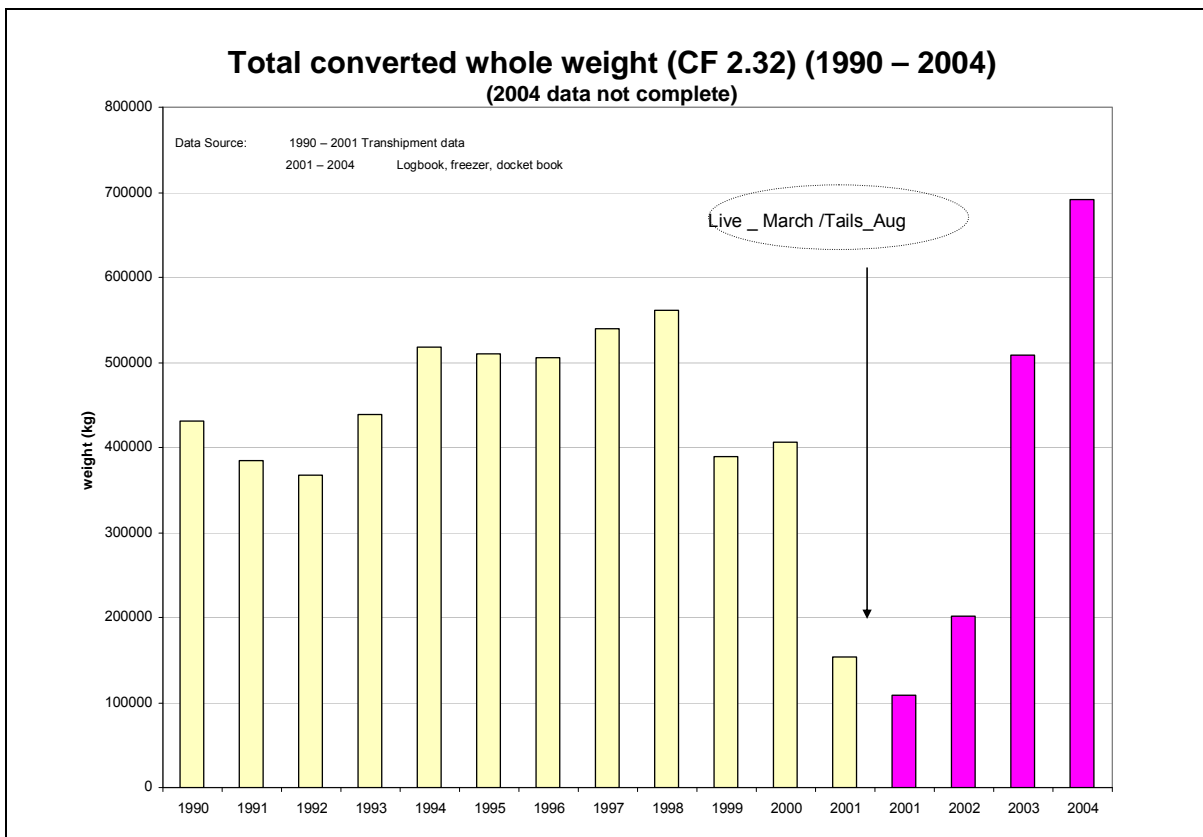
**This summary was provided for the Torres Strait TRL WG meeting. The information contained is not complete & should be considered as work in progress.**

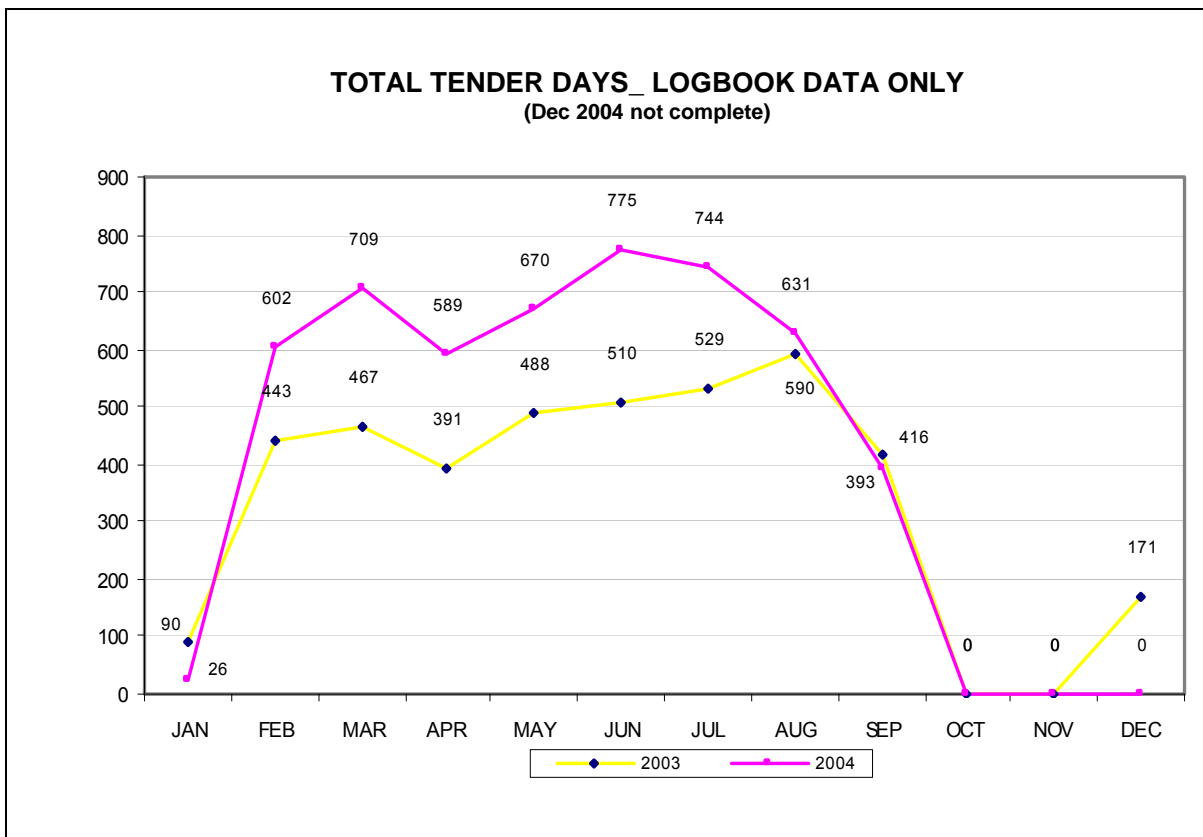
## TS Catch data – background

- **Historically**
  - Transshipment data – Tails \* (used to calculate historical catch)
  - QANTAS data – Live \* (used to calculate historical catch)
  - Freezer logsheets
  - Logbook data
- **Currently - 3 data sources**
  1. **Logbook data**
    - Freezer boats
  2. **Freezer data**
    - Buyers of TS Seafood located in Cairns, TI & Outer Islands
    - Invoices, Freezer data sheets etc.
    - Freezer boats, TIB & Processors
  3. **TS Seafood Buyers & Processors Docket Book**
    - Introduced in Dec 2003
    - Data collected from TI, Cairns & outer island buyers
    - Freezer boats, TIB & Processors









## Tender days comparison

(Dec 2004 not complete)



	2003	2004	
Total Tender days	4095	5139	(1044)
Activated licences (4 licences)			966
Increased effort (11 licences)			526
Reduced effort (9 licences)			- 448
No Boat Status (4)			

