



GERALDTON  
FISHERMEN'S  
CO-OPERATIVE

Rock Lobster Exporters

# the BROLOS Catcher

May 2, 2017

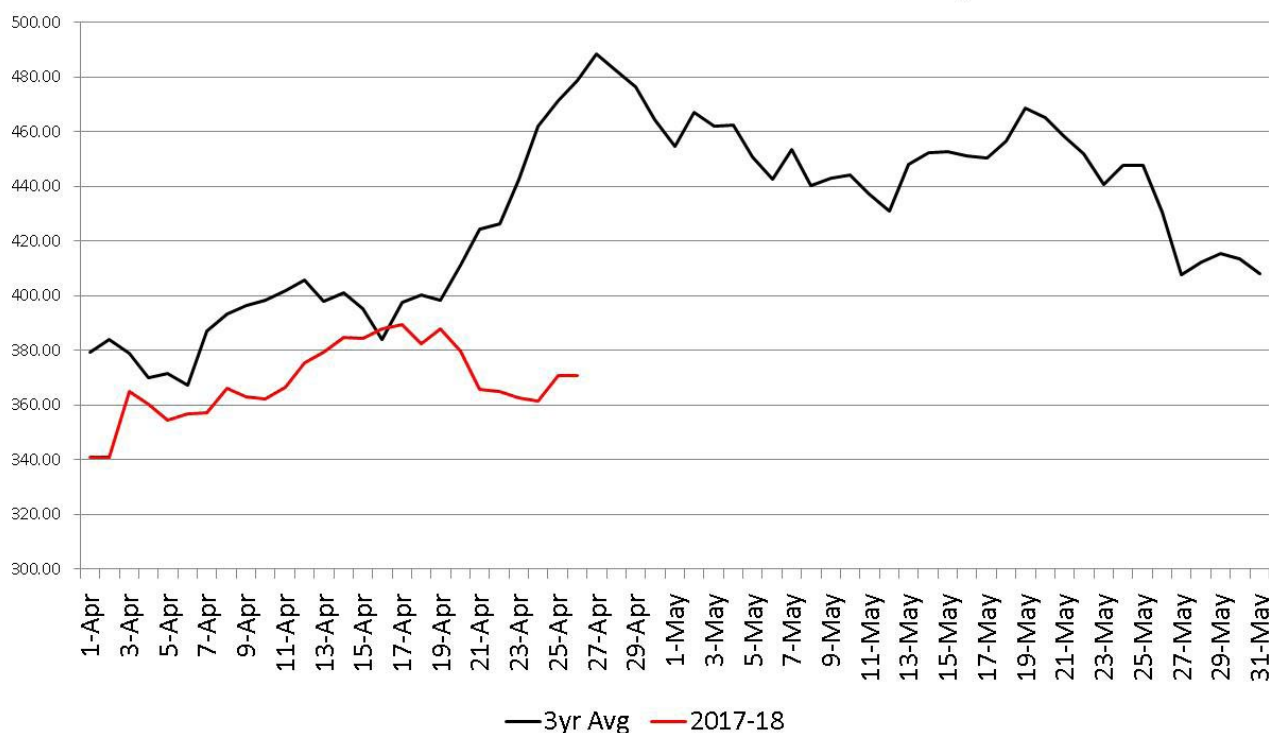
Issue No. 137

## Market Update

Strong catches over the last two weeks have kept pressure on the market and have kept a lid on any significant price improvements, despite demand also gradually growing in the lead-up to the high demand May period.

Traditionally, prices in China gradually increase after Qingming (Tomb Sweeping Festival, Apr 2-4) and into the lead up to the higher consumption month of May. As the following chart shows, prices tend to rally in the second half of April and peak around the beginning of May, after which they generally remain well supported for the month of May. As the chart below shows, despite prices gradually increasing after Qingming this year, prices weakened in the middle of April rather than continuing the usual April rally.

China Lobster Prices (CNY/kg)  
1 Month Before and 1 Month After the 1st of May

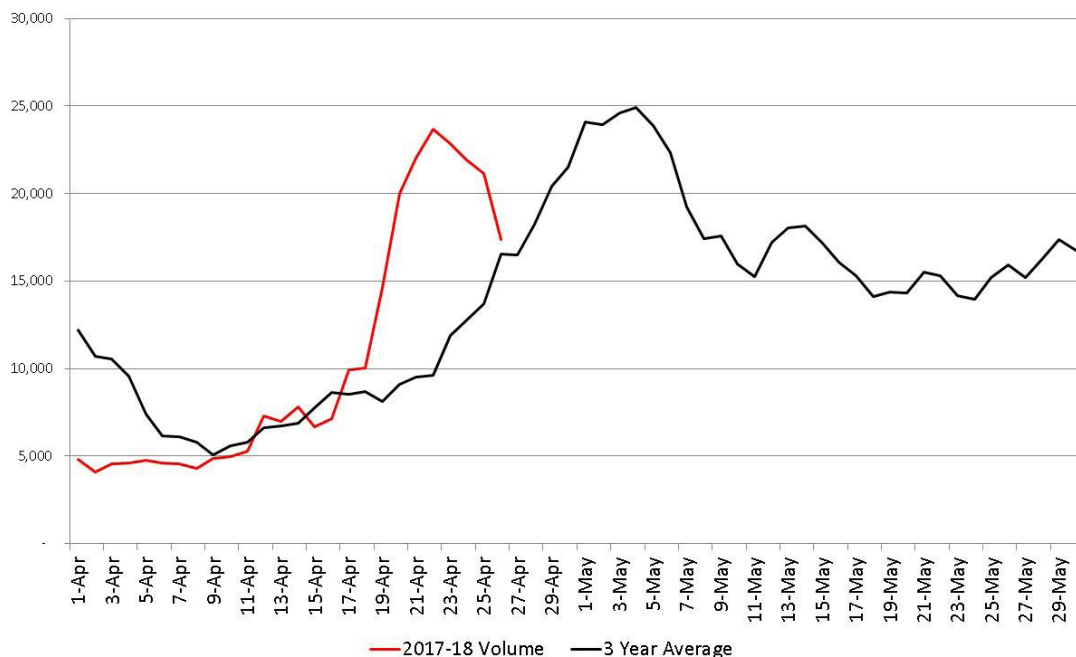


The following chart (on the next page) shows what fishermen landings traditionally do in the month of April and May. Landings normally increase over the month of April and peak, like prices, at the end of April/beginning of May. This year however landings jumped significantly around the middle of April in response to the slight improvement in beach prices at the same time. This jump in intake clearly had an impact and halted the price improvements in China.

Continued on next page....

# the BROLOS Catcher

Intake 1 Month Before and 1 Month After the 1st of May



As has been reported previously, there are a number of factors at play this year which have been affecting this year's low prices in Australia, however the dominant factor will always be the balance of supply and demand. In this instance, supply (or fishermen landings) has clearly exceeded demand during April which has kept a lid on prices.

Nonetheless, demand continued to grow approaching China's May Day holiday (Apr 29-May 1) and the scales are gradually shifting back towards demand driven price improvements. We won't make predictions about what the market will do from here but we remain hopeful that May will maintain its reputation for being a good month.



## A Day in the Life of a Brolos Fisherman

In last fortnight's Catcher we put the call out to all our Brolos fishermen to send in your best, most unique, and most interesting photos and videos. We've had a great response so far, but we know there is a gold mine of great photos and videos on your phones and cameras, *so keep them coming!*



Over the next month we have a number of barbecues planned (see next page for details). These are the perfect opportunity to share your pictures and videos with us, so come along and bring your phone, your iPad, and your camera. We can't wait to see what you have for us!

You can also email or MMS us your pictures, send them to Matt Harrison at [matthewh@brolos.com.au](mailto:matthewh@brolos.com.au) or 0439 104 766. Please only send one photo or video per email or message, with a maximum file size of 5mb. If you have any questions, give Matt a call on (08) 9435 8935.

We will start publishing your pictures across our [social media channels](#), and right here in the Catcher, on May 16.

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## Getting to Know ...

# Peter Armstrong

A-zone fisherman, Peter Armstrong, has fished from his base at Basile Island in the Southern Group of the Abrolhos for 23 years.

Originally hailing from Northampton, Peter was born into a family of merino lamb and wheat farmers. “We owned a farm about 30 miles north at Hutt River, lived on one farm on weekends and worked the other farm during the week. There were no days off back in those days.”

Peter is a first generation fisherman and has been a loyal Co-op supplier from the very beginning. In 1994 he went into partnership with Tony Fiocco.

“Tony said get yourself a boat and you’ll be set. So off I went to the bank to ask for a loan. They wanted to see my catch history... of course, I didn’t have one. So I went into the Co-op and I met with Leith Pritchard. He made a phone call to the bank, said ‘give him the money’, and the rest is history. I haven’t supplied to anyone but the Co-op since then, over 20 years. You don’t get better loyalty than that.”

These days Peter is based in Geraldton, where he lives with his lovely wife Karen. They have a son and daughter, Tom and Tessa.

Peter spends around a quarter of the year fishing, about 100 days. He heads out on his boat, Silhouette, and usually does a three or four day stint on the island at a time, all throughout the year. The difference between summer and winter on Basile, Peter says, is that “In wintertime the front door stays shut and the oven door stays open.”

Basile is a colourful island with an equally colourful group of characters, including fellow GFC rock lobster fisherman Perry Minissale, pearl farmer Pia Boschetti, and coral farmer Andrew Basile. On Basile, Peter’s shack is hard to miss... it’s the peach coloured one with the ‘Armstrong St’ sign attached to the outhouse.



Peter hopes that there’s a future for the Armstrong fishing business, if not in crayfishing then perhaps in aquaculture. “We have an aquaculture licence to cultivate octopus and there’s a hatchery on the jetty. At the moment, it’s a very tricky thing, octopus are hard to breed. At some point they hit a trigger, drop to the bottom of the water column and go from larvae to octopus. And nobody knows what that trigger is.”

Peter hopes that his son, Tom, might join in trying to find out. “We are tying two or three breeding runs a year, we keep the octopus in the water until they hatch, about five weeks each. So the young fella has a career path mapped out for him... I just plan to sit out on the verandah with a very nice bottle of red.”



## May GFC Barbecues

After a short break over the school holidays we will be getting stuck back into our program of stakeholder barbecues in May.

GFC's barbecues are a great opportunity to catch up with you, our members, provide updates about key company and industry information, answer your questions, and enjoy a sausage or two.

May's barbecues will be held in:

### **Kalbarri**

Wednesday May 3

1:00pm

Kalbarri Depot

### **Dongara**

Thursday May 4

4:00pm

Dongara Depot

### **Lancelin**

Thursday May 18

1:00pm

Lancelin Depot

### **Geraldton**

Wednesday May 31

4:00pm

GFC Truck Shed

We look forward to seeing you at the next barbecue in your area!

*Inset: GFC crew enjoy our first BBQ in Horrocks on April 5th. (Top to bottom) Anthony and Belinda Jupp with daughter Grace; Greg Horseman cooks up a storm; Craig Lucas, Carole Teakle, and Bob Cameron.*



## AFL Footy Tipping

With six rounds gone, it's already another successful year for our GFC AFL footy tipping comp. This year's competition sees a record high of 108 GFC fishermen, investors & staff all competing for the grand prize of \$3,000.

It's been an up and down start to the footy season as various teams struggle to finding their feet. The first five rounds were almost impossible to pick and our tippers haven't had a particularly easy job so far this year.

An early frontrunner is Billy Trent, who has been a fixture within the GFC tipping competition since 2014 and was a runner up in the 2015 competition. Billy lives in Kalbarri and has been a deckhand with Ian Ralph for the last nine years. Billy told us that he goes "purely with his gut feeling" when choosing his footy tips for the week.

All of us in the tipping comp will be watching Billy closely to see if he can keep his nerve and winning streak. However, as we all know, nothing in tipping is set in stone and Billy has 107 other keen tippers chasing right behind him.



*Above: GFC Footy Tipping Comp leader, Billy Trent.*

### Round 6 Leaderboard

RANK	TIPPER	ROUND 6 SCORE	ROUND 6 MARGIN	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL MARGIN
1	Billy	5	19	51	135
2	Mobile Duck	4	11	48	163
3	Mikayla Jayne	6	30	47	168
4	Donna Henley	5	11	46	84
5	Jared	6	20	46	108
6	Gopher	6	22	46	109
7	Todd Newby	6	23	46	113
8	Doc	5	17	46	120
9	Bj66	5	26	46	124
10	Fuel Berth	6	23	46	129



## Fishers urged to complete national survey on mental health and wellbeing



A Fisheries Research Development Corporation project run by Deakin University is setting an Australian first by surveying professional fishers about their mental health.

Lead researcher Tanya King said thousands of survey forms had been sent to professional fishers across the nation in a bid to develop a baseline dataset of their health and wellbeing.

The project, Sustainable Fishing Families, builds on the highly successful Sustainable Farm Families™ program, which has assisted farming communities across the country since 2003.

Dr. King said an evidence-based health and safety training program would be developed following analysis of the national survey.

She said encouraging health literacy and motivating farmers to take care of their most valuable asset: themselves, had demonstrated benefits to rural communities since 2003.

“We are hoping to duplicate these results for the

commercial fishing sector,” she said. “But we need fishers to complete the surveys so we have a robust baseline from which to work.

“The (farmers) programs has delivered both health and economic benefits to industry.”

Dr. King said that fishers had much in common with farmers – but they also faced industry-specific challenges, which made modification of the established program necessary.

“Fishers tend to work in rural and remote communities, which means they have higher rates of mortality, disease and health risk factors than urban dwellers,” she said.

“Fishers are at particular risk of certain kinds of illnesses (eg. skin and diet-related), as well as injury (fatality rates are more than double those in the agricultural sector).”

Dr. King said that mental health concerns were higher than average in the fishing industry, exacerbated by uncertainties such as high levels of debt, insecurity of tenure and licensing.

Almost 87 per cent of fishers were men, a factor placing them at greater risk of suicide.

“If you are a professional fisher and have recently received our survey, we strongly urge you to complete it and help us to improve our understanding of what causes good and bad health, and what can be done to address the issues to benefit fishers,” she said.

For more information, contact Tanya King [tanya.king@deakin.edu.au](mailto:tanya.king@deakin.edu.au) or Kirsten Abernethy [kirsten.abernethy@gmail.com](mailto:kirsten.abernethy@gmail.com)

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## Marine Store

More member specials in-store!

### New in Store

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- It's extendable.
- It's lightweight and floats when extended.
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Greg Gundlach Marine Store Manager

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