



GERALDTON  
FISHERMEN'S  
CO-OPERATIVE

Rock Lobster Exporters

# the BROLOS Catcher

December 20, 2017

Issue No. 152

## Merry Christmas

### *From the Chair*



It's hard to believe that Christmas is almost here already – where did this year go!

As usual, at the first board meeting after the AGM the position of Chairman and Vice Chairman are up for re-election. This meeting was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December and I'm delighted that after serving six weeks in the Acting Chairman role I was elected by my peers on the GFC board to replace the retiring John Ritchie as Chairman for the next twelve months.



*Above: Director Kris Carlberg was elected to the position of Vice Chairman at last week's board meeting.*

Kris Carlberg was elected to the position of Vice Chairman. Kris fishes in A and B zone, was our co-op's inaugural Research Manager in the 1990's and his grandfather was a founding director in 1950. I am certainly looking forward to working with Kris over the next year. Both Kris and I look forward to catching up with members during the upcoming preseason meetings in early January.

In other board news, the Independent Director selection committee, comprising Tony Cull (Chair), Darren Bailey and Kent Stanton have just completed the interview process for the new independent director to replace David Moroney and we are on track to finalise an appointment early in the new season. It is very encouraging to see the continued strong interest in these positions from the professional community and very pleasing indeed that people outside of GFC want to contribute to the success of our great Co-operative.

Despite a difficult year in some respects, there were also a couple of highlights for GFC, including the very successful member

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Left: A highlight of the 2017 was GFC's third member trip to China, here tour delegates attend the Shanghai International Fisheries & Seafood Exhibition.

Below: Certainly another highlight of the year, and of the Co-op's 57 year history, was the Grand Opening of your Welshpool Live Lobster Export Facility. Founding Chairman Bill Newbold, and Hon. Dave Kelly MLA (pictured here with former Chairman John Ritchie) officially opened the facility.

China Tour, and of course the official opening of our state of the art Welshpool facility on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The hard work by dedicated staff has translated into the facility exceeding our quality and productivity expectations to date in a timely Christmas present for all.

As we close out another year, on behalf of the board, I would like to take the opportunity to particularly thank our members for their support, and also our staff for their efforts over the last year. Thanks especially to those who will be working through this busy period to keep the product selling through the holiday season.

In my first Chairman's Christmas message, on behalf of the board, may I wish you all a very festive Christmas and a healthy and successful 2018.

Basil Lenzo, Chairman



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## Clean seawater – the solution to it all...

Hot weather, wind and (as a result) high salt levels can all have devastating effects on lobster quality. These conditions not only have a direct effect on lobsters (by heating them up), but increased evaporation means that seawater on all surfaces dries out, resulting in higher concentrations of salt, or hypersalinity.

Hypersalinity causes the catastrophic leg loss you see on those hot, easterly days and can be controlled by making sure deckies regularly wash down gloves, cakka boxes and anything else that is likely to contact your lobsters.

On the subject of cakka boxes, some fishermen falsely believe that a cakka box is big enough if it only gets overfull on 'big days', but these are precisely the days when the stakes are highest and quality is most likely to suffer. With the increase in catch rates under quota, all parts of your on board handling chain need to be reviewed to keep up. The picture below shows a cakka box that is way too small, causing lobsters to spill onto the deck and be exposed to extra handling, air exposure and hot dry winds. Check out the leg loss from the ones that have fallen on the deck! Many of these dropped lobsters will also have cracked shells, or internal damage and should be returned to the ocean.



*Above: This cakka box is too small!! Consider upsizing your cakka box if lobsters are falling on the deck.*

The cakka box is the first open air environment that lobsters experience - landing on a hot, dry, hard, salty surface is far from ideal. Consider padding your cakka box and adding seawater sprays – it will have a remarkable effect on improving lobster quality. And make sure each you gauge out the cakka box completely between pots!

There are good and bad ways to drain lobsters. Draining lobsters below deck, with aeration left on, is by far the best method. Your lobsters are in the dark, out of the sun and protected from damaging wind. If you choose to drain your lobsters on deck, do your best to protect them with wet hessian. The hessian must be kept wet. If it dries out, it will get hypersaline and will cause lobsters to kick legs if they touch it. Don't forget, after 15 mins drain time it's all downhill for your lobsters - they just lose strength, legs and feelers.

If you would like any assistance with lobster handling and optimal deck/cakka box conditions, contact GFC Continuous Improvement Manager, Brad Armstrong (0437 513 837) or GFC Research and Development Officer, Joel Durell (0407 135 712).

### REMEMBER!

- Keep lobsters out of the wind and sun.
- Wash down all surfaces (including gloves).
- Make sure your cakka box is big enough and won't damage lobsters (sprays and padding); empty your cakka box entirely between pots.
- Drain for no longer than 15 mins – either below deck or covered in wet hessian.
- And, if a lobster drops on the deck, it could have internal damage so throw it back!

## Market Update

When the last Catcher went to print fishermen landings were on the rise which was putting pressure on prices. Landings have since flattened out and we expect volumes to gradually drop between now and when the season ends on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January. As the old season draws to an end we start to look to the calendar to help build a picture of what's over the horizon....

Monday was the first day of the 11<sup>th</sup> Lunar month. It's now only 5 days to Christmas. 12 days to 2018. 26 days to the start of the new fishing season. And 58 days to Chinese New Year, the Year of the Dog! In-between all that we have a good spattering of lucky days on the lunar calendar.



*Above: 2018 will bring the Chinese Year of the Dog, the year of prosperity. A full 2018 Market Calendar will be included in an upcoming edition of the Catcher.*

We are not going to predict how all of this plays out in terms of demand and prices but with a new year comes renewed optimism so we're quietly looking forward to a prosperous new year for our members and customers. For our part, we will be putting our best efforts into making this vision a reality!

## 2018/19 Pre-Season Meetings

A brief reminder that GFC will be holding our traditional program of Pre-Season Meetings in early January. These meetings are a great opportunity to catch up before the beginning of the new season. They are also a chance for members to come along and be updated with important company, market, and industry information for the year ahead. There will be ample opportunity for questions and discussion. Dinner and drinks will be provided. All GFC members, investors and their partners are invited to attend. We look forward to seeing you there.

Jurien Bay	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2018, 5:00pm	Jurien Bay Hotel Motel, 5 White St, Jurien
Fremantle	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5:00pm	Swan Yacht Club, Riverside Rd, East Fremantle
Lancelin	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5:00pm	The Dunes Restaurant, 1 North St, Lancelin
Geraldton	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5:00pm	The Geraldton Club, 162 Marine Tce, Geraldton
Kalbarri	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5:00pm	Kalbarri Edge Resort, 22 Porter St, Kalbarri
Dongara	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5:00pm	Southerly's Harbour View Bar & Restaurant 1/60 Point Leander Dve, Port Denison



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## Marine Store

More member specials in-store!

### The Fishermen's Tool Kit: A great all-rounder for the boat!



**\$220**  
(inc. GST)

**GFC Members  
receive a  
10% rebate!**

68 piece 1/2" drive tool set, containing 16 regular 12 point metric sockets, FRP ratchet, universal joint, 21/2" and 6' extension bars, adaptor 3/8" F-1/2" M, bits holder with magnetic bits holder, 10 combination spanners, 6 screwdrivers, 4 pliers as well as 26 bits.

Supplied in a plastic carrying case with latch lid, retractable handle and metal pin hinges. The underside of the case is fitted with rubber feet to prevent it from sliding.

Greg Gundlach Marine Store Manager

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