

ALBERT TIMES



"Don't get warped – trawl for fish, not birds" Oct-Nov 2013 Issue 72

Albert's Column

This issue is all about mitigation, what the deepsea trawl industry has been doing and what others, such as WWF, are promoting (Smart Gear Competition).

My long range scouts tell me most skippers understand the importance of taking 'all practical steps' and yes, we understand at HQ, some vessels do a better job than others to mitigate seabird and marine mammal captures. I'm not so sure most fully understand why it's important, (apart from the obvious; it's just not acceptable to most of the human population) but here at HQ we live in the 'real-world' and understand when thousands of us follow one of those 'big lunch boxes' fighting over those juicy Offally-good-scrap, sooner or later...someone is going to run out of luck....!

There's a huge cost associated with all the monitoring, observers and science meetings and reports the government does, 'those chattering classes love it', not to mention the other direct costs to quota owners and their industry managers to monitor and manage all of the above so you can have access to overseas markets to sell your fish and access to fishing resources (fishing grounds)...it's \$ millions a year, yes \$ millions, most of these costs are taken via levy's from industry!

Every observed protected species capture goes into the 'government-machine' and individually it may not appear to be many, but each year they all add-up. What risk to the population would ongoing captures do, it's all 'modelled' estimated and reports written, each year the fishery is then levied to pay the costs, quota owners pay and all that money could be used elsewhere. It all starts out on the water, the skipper has to understand the importance of all the above, take control 'give a shit' and use best practice information and equipment onboard to do something about it to minimise the risk of captures.

Chow Albert

Tori Line 'Kraton' Streamers—10kms Sold in 10 Months

Back in 2011/12, Clement and Associated Ltd undertook a DOC/CSP project MIT2011-07 [Review Mandatory Seabird Scaring Devices-offshore-trawl]. At that time most of the fleet used light weight streamer tubing, fitted at 5m intervals and a windy-buoy for a drag weight, tori lines were often blown off-track away from the warps because the windy-buoy was too buoyant, also the windy-buoy provided too little drag therefore didn't provide enough aerial extent, often the back bone and streamers were lying in the water and not providing adequate coverage over the warps, the streamer material used, 3.5mm 'luminous-tubing', was far too light, blew horizontal in any wind, often broke and quickly faded to off-grey colour (streamer material has to be 'brightly-coloured' either, yellow, orange, red or pink) many vessels were often not meeting this regulatory requirement, and the old light weight streamer material wasn't providing much coverage over the warp with 5m spacing intervals meant there may only be 1 or 2 streamer lines over the length of the warp, while the rest of the 50/60m long rope backbone sat in the water. The result of having a long backbone line, not enough drag and light weight streamers, all combined so the tori line wasn't very effective in especially poor weather much of the time.

After trialling many different designs and material combinations a new 'best-practice' deep-sea trawl fleet tori line was developed, with much shorter back bone, only 30m long, with a deep-sea trawl float for a drag weight (all boats have them; heavier and half the size of a windy-buoy) and 10mm Kraton streamer materials fitted at 3m intervals. The heavier

but smaller trawl float fitted on a short back bone rope follows the vessel much better staying positioned behind the vessel warps more often than the windy-buoy did. Shorter line with more drag/weight giving better aerial extent, and back bone can now hold/support the heavier 10mm Kraton streamers, all providing much more coverage over the warps. The Kraton material is used in the States and Alaska on trawlers, it was also used on Long liners in Aussie.

We drafted a best practise 'fact sheet' and developed a formula, so each vessel can have a vessel specific tori line based on its trawl block height, so it can build and deploy, the right length with the correct drag weight and right number of streamers to offer best coverage over the warp danger zone suited to that individual vessel.!

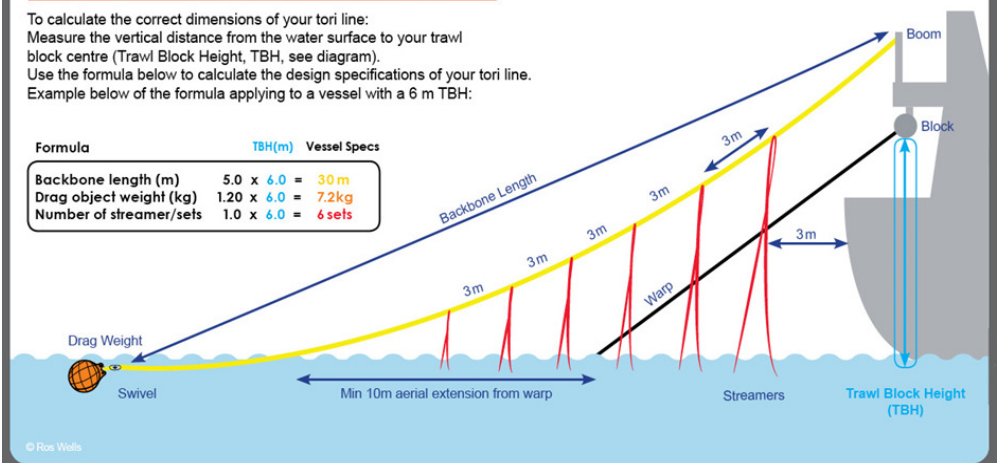
Results 1 year on:

We went one step further than just designing and constructing a better tori line, we made sure it was going to be the only design and material available and this is what made the biggest difference; we had all the trawl fleet educated/trained on the new design and materials and agreeing to use it. As the Kraton is only manufactured overseas, we went to the overseas suppliers/exporters, put them in touch with the local fishing gear suppliers (net sheds) guaranteeing the local gear suppliers that the fleet would buy reasonable volumes of the Kraton. The fact-sheet has become the new best-practise tori line for the fleet..... The fact-sheet is placed at all the net sheds, (& on all vessels) it is also handed out with the purchase of all Kraton streamer material.

RECOMMENDED DESIGN DIMENSIONS

To calculate the correct dimensions of your tori line:
Measure the vertical distance from the water surface to your trawl block centre (Trawl Block Height, TBH, see diagram).
Use the formula below to calculate the design specifications of your tori line.
Example below of the formula applying to a vessel with a 6 m TBH:

Formula	TBH(m)	Vessel Specs
Backbone length (m)	5.0 x 6.0 =	30m
Drag object weight (kg)	1.20 x 6.0 =	7.2kg
Number of streamer/sets	1.0 x 6.0 =	6 sets



New Tori Line Specification

It's taken the best part of a year to get all the old tori lines replaced with the new ones, (as vessels work through their remaining onboard spare stock) but we now have all the fleet using/deploying the new tori lines. In the past 10 months 10,000m (10kms) of Kraton streamer material has been imported and sold, with net sheds now ordering/importing their 2nd and 3rd shipments to keep up with demand, larger long liners are also starting to use the Kraton for their streamer-lines. The Aussies have access to Kraton again, so their longline fleet is also buying Kraton from the NZ suppliers. The ability of the new tori line to stay in line or 'track' the warps particularly in poor weather sea & wind conditions is seen as a big advantage....in the past this has been the devices main drawback. Most importantly, we've had many positive comments from skippers as to the improved performance of this new tori line, this makes it all worthwhile!



New Tori Line at work

Who's my cousin?



Light grey head with white cap, yellow patches at base, tip, sides of the bill. Breeds mostly on the Bounty Islands. Often seen attending fishing vessels. Distributed widely over the Southern Ocean

Send us:

You Name, Answer, Postal Address
and the Date of Issue
to albertross@fishinfo.co.nz

Be in to win

Albert Ross' Cap
Field Guide to NZ Birds



Buller's Albatross

Last Month's Cousin:
Buller's Albatross

WWF 2014 Smart Gear Competition to Reduce Fisheries Bycatch

WWF is launching the 2014 International Smart Gear Competition, which seeks and supports innovative solutions to reduce fisheries incidental bycatch, the unintentional catch of fish and other marine species. The competition entry ends August 31, 2014. The Smart Gear Competition aims to spur ideas for environmentally-friendly fishing gear that allows fishermen to fish smarter while helping to maintain ocean health.

WWF-NZ Marine Advocate Milena Palka added, "This is a great competition that is open to New Zealanders. I know that a lot of thinking and work is being done by the industry here on alternative fishing gear; this is a chance to have that work recognized internationally and developed further.

The 2014 International Smart Gear Competition will offer its largest prize purse to date, totaling \$65,000, including, a grand prize of US\$30,000 and two US\$10,000 runner-up prizes. After the prizes are awarded, WWF works with each of the winners to bring their ideas to life and see them implemented in fisheries around the world, "Today, more than 40% of the winning ideas identified by the competition in previous years are being used regularly in different types of fisheries,"

Full details and entry forms are available at www.smartgear.org. The competition begins March 1st, 2014 and ends on August 31st, 2014.

Did You Know?

Salvin's mollymawk:

Has the highest 'Risk-Score' for seabirds taken by deepsea trawling in the seabird National Plan of Action (the ratio between the estimated annual potential fatalities due to fisheries and the number that the population can withstand and stay healthy or grow).

Salvin's, largest breeding population is on the Bounty Islands (around 40,000 pairs) 98% of the world's population. Also around 1,200 breeding pairs on the Snares.

Salvins arrive in NZ in August, with egg laying in September, chicks fledge 4 months later.

Generally absent from the NZ zone in autumn and midwinter, mitigating to South America.

Majority of birds forage across Bounty Platform, Chatham Rise and Cook Strait but will be found also on Snares Shelf and lower east coast North Island.

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