

DPI INFORMATION BULLETIN – 31 JULY 2009 UPDATE ON ABALONE VIRAL GANGLIONEURITIS

On 17 July 2009 the Department received a report from a recreational diver of suspect abalone at reefs near Peterborough. On 24 July 2009 commercial abalone divers surveyed the area and submitted samples to local Fisheries Officers, which were sent to DPI Attwood for analysis. The divers reported that all abalone in the area appeared visibly healthy. The abalone have subsequently been diagnosed by aquatic animal health experts as negative for Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG).

On 26 June 2009 a Restricted Fishing Area was introduced to support the efforts of the Victorian Abalone Divers Association, Seafood Industry Victoria and VRFish, to reduce the risk of spreading AVG. The area includes all marine waters enclosed by a line running from the southern-most tip of Lion Headland to the mouth of the Aire River and extending to the high water mark between the two points, which covers approximately 13 kilometres of coastline.

- Prohibited activities include taking rocklobster, abalone and other shellfish, spearfishing and the removal of substrate.
- Permitted activities include snorkelling, surfing, boating, swimming and line fishing.

The closure will be enforced until 30 September 2009 and anyone engaging in the permitted activities is encouraged to abide by the abalone biosecurity protocols.

The following research reports have been completed and are available on the DPI abalone disease website www.dpi.vic.gov.au/abalonedisease:

1. Gavine, F., Ingram, B. and Doroudi, M. (2009) Development of Management Strategies for Herpes-like Virus Infection in Abalone. FRDC Project No. 2006/243.
2. Gavine, F. M., Ingram, B. A., Hardy-Smith, P., and Doroudi, M. (2009). Biosecurity Control Measures for Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis: A Code of Practice. Prepared as part of FRDC Project No. 2006/243.

For further information, please contact Mr Travis Dowling, Acting Director Fisheries Management, Fisheries Victoria on (03) 9658 4345.