


M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Council, SSC, and AP members

FROM: Jim H. Branson   
Executive Director

DATE: May 6, 1987

SUBJECT: Unrecorded Discards

ACTION REQUIRED

Report of industry committee on extent of unrecorded discards in trawl operations.

BACKGROUND

At the March meeting the Council heard a report alleging that pollock caught excess to the capacity of trawl codends in Bering Sea joint venture operations were being bled off, resulting in a significant amount of unrecorded catch. Al Burch, Manager of Alaska Dragger's Association, Kodiak, volunteered to survey the trawl industry to determine the occurrence and estimate the magnitude of the problem. He will report his findings to the Council.

Trawl Bleeding Survey  
Response Summary

Number of Responses: ~~49~~ 29

1a. Are you aware of any bleeding of nets in your fishery or in other fisheries?

Aware - 18

Unaware - 1

1b. If so, please specify the fishery or fisheries and whether they are joint venture or DAP operations.

JVP and DAP - 10

JVP only - 7

Note: 4 of 10 responding specified JVP and DAP only when catch indicators were not used.

Other Responses (1 each)

Inexperienced skippers

Catch indicator failure

Inexperienced sole boats in pollock fishery

Dumping of non-target fish by domestic operations

2. Are there times of the year that bleeding is most likely to occur? (please specify months)

Pollock:	Jan. - April	1
	Feb. - April	1
	Feb. - March	5
	Feb. only	2
	Peak Months	4
	No specific time	2
	When processing capacity is inadequate	1

Cod: July 1

Flounder: March - May 3  
Large March concentrations 1

3. Are there any specific fisheries where bleeding occurs (pollock, cod, flatfish, Atka Mackerel, etc.)?

Pollock - 8

Flounder - 2, Flounder, rarely - 1

Cod, rarely - 1

Atka Mackerel, rarely - 1

When stocks are concentrated - 1

In all fisheries if no catch indicator used or catcher indicator not working properly - 1

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3.5  
6

4. Based on your experience, what percentage of your tows require bleeding in the fisheries you participate in? Please list by the fisheries where you had to bleed fish.

Pollock:	0.0%	1
	0.03%	1
	0.05%	1
	0.25%	1
	1.0%	2
	2.0%	2
	5.0%	1
	5% - 10%	1
	1 tow every 1 or 2 weeks.	
Sole:	0.005%	1
	0.03% - 0.05%	1
	less than 1.0%	1
	10.0%	2
	25.0% during 3 month period	1
cod:	1.0%	2
Atka Mackerel:	2.0%	1
JV:	10.0%	1

5. If you have to bleed fish, what percentage of the catch in a tow do you estimate is bled off?

	0.0%	1
	0.25%	1
	1.0% - 3.0%	1
	1.0% - 4.0%	1
	2.0%	3
	3.0% - 5.0%	2
	4.0%	1
	5.0%	3
	5.0% - 10.0%	2
	20.0%	1
	50.0% (if catch indicator fails)	1
	1 ton	1

6. Under what conditions is bleeding likely to be necessary? (possible responses include: contractual limits on tonnages per delivery, weather, gear malfunctions, extremely high catch rates, bringing the net up through a school of fish, etc.)\_

Catch indicator or gear malfunction	11
Contractual limits on delivery or tonnage	8
Dense concentrations of fish	11
Inexperience	2
No blow out panel	2
Weather	2

7. Do you consider filling the net to the point where bleeding is necessary an economic advantage or disadvantage?

Advantage	3
Disadvantage	15

Comment: One felt it was a short term economic advantage, but a long term disadvantage to the resource.

8. When pollock are bled off at the surface, what percentage do you estimate are dead?

100%	3
90%	1
50%	1
30% - 50%	1
30%	1
25%	1
20%	2

Other answers:

Cod: 1%	1
Don't know	2
No opinion	1

Comments: Less than expected - have seen pollock swimming behind boat after bleeding.

Dumped roe-stripped fish mistaken for bled fish, thus difficult to estimate.

9. What positive steps do you do yourself, or know of others doing, to minimize or eliminate the necessity for bleeding?

Use catch indicator	12
Use blow out panel	8
Better catch indicators	2
Keep spare parts for indicators	1
Experience	3
Education	2
Use common sense	2
Fish top of dense schools	1
Avoid dense portion of schools	1
Limited contracts	1
Communicate methods to others	1

10. Do you have any suggestions on how to minimize or eliminate the necessity for bleeding?

Mandate use of catch indicators	9
Keep catch indicators working	1
Keep backup catch indicators	1
Mandatory blowout panel	5
Use good blowout panel	2
Publish information on blowout panel designs	1
Experience	4
Adjust tow to suit conditions	3
Self policing	2
Increase cod end size	1
Modify gear	1

Comments: Several respondents indicated that not all brands of catch indicators are reliable. Another respondent indicated there is a need to develop better catch indicators.

11. What percentage of your fishing time is joint venture deliveries? Deliveries to U. S. processors?

100% JV	14
99.9% JV, 0.1% DAP	1
97% JV, 3% DAP	1
95% JV, 5% DAP	1
60% JV, 40% DAP	1
50% JV, 50% DAP	1
100 % DAP	1

Comment: Some boats indicated experience over several years.

12. Do you have any other suggestions?

No real problem with cod and flounder	1
Not a problem if fishermen are professional	1

Comment: A number of respondents indicated they felt the bleeding issue was being used to attack joint ventures in the interest of justifying the 100 - mile closure.