

**MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS OF THE SQUID TARGET EFFORT LEVEL
NOW COMPUTED IN MAN-DAYS**

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It seems important for the Squid Working Group to grasp the nettle of the implications of the results presented in WG/08/06/SQ4 in relation to management recommendations for squid. A year ago, the situation was somewhat blurred, as there was uncertainty about the implications of poorly recorded “hours-fishing” values for jig effort, and further there was the possibility that the access rights process would reduce the number of vessels/men allowed in the fishery.

Since that time:

- 1) the access rights process has not led to any meaningful reduction in potential effort in the form of number of rights allowed; and
- 2) re-evaluation of jig CPUE in terms of more reliable man-days effort measures has indicated no appreciable change in the jig fishery CPUE trend as calculated earlier, so that the previous basis for estimating target a effort level now enjoys much enhanced credibility.

WG/08/06/SQ4 reports that the target effort level amounts to 306 thousand man-days, which with an effective 2133 men allowed in the fishery would require an average effort level of only 143 days fishing each year. This is much less than the potential annual effort per vessel which, even when allowance is made for the closed season and poor weather, is likely well above 200 days per year (as some vessels indeed have regularly achieved in the past). Thus this potential effort needs to be limited so that there is some assurance that it will not exceed the target of 306 thousand man-days. Given that a vessel can likely readily achieve in the low 200’s days of fishing a year even with the current closed season, a reduction of this (on average) in the range of 30-40% (probably phased in over time) would seem required.

Three possible approaches to this need to be consider (separately, or also perhaps in some combination), given the access rights now allocated:

- i) further closed periods – note that this would be equivalent to at least one week each month;
- ii) days-at-sea limitations: there are two ways this might be considered to achieve the same net effect:
 - a) the same limitation on each vessel – this wouldn’t (at least initially) have to be as low as 143 days, but certainly would need some immediately meaningful level below 200 days (at least) set;
 - b) vessel-specific allocations in proportion to previous average annual days-at-sea reported, though this raises the problem of how to treat new entrants.

Further work on better quantification of such options is needed. To progress in a manner that makes efficient use of limited time resources, initial feedback from management, compliance and industry is urgently required to reduce the set of possibilities to be examined further and in time for the end-October deadline for management recommendations from the Working Group.