

FISHERIES — WHALES AND WESTERN ROCK LOBSTERS

1613. Mr D.J. Kelly to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

What measures has the Government implemented to minimize the number of interactions between whales and western rock lobster fishing operations?

Mr T.R. Buswell replied:

The Government has formed a Ministerial Taskforce to oversee the development and implementation of appropriate mitigation strategies. The Department of Fisheries has obtained funding from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation funding to trial the practicality from a commercial fishing perspective of various fishing gear modifications. Those methods that prove practical will be trialled more widely during the next whale migration season. It is intended that all west coast rock lobster fishers who wish to operate during the humpback whale migration must use an approved mitigation method by the start of the 2014 humpback whale migration period.