

HELP STOP THE SPREAD

Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)

Information for marine users in Victoria



What is Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG)?

- Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) is a virus that is the first of its kind found in Australia. AVG affects the nervous tissue of abalone and rapidly causes death.
- Abalone with the virus can appear to be weak. In some cases protrusion of the mouth part may be visible and/or the edges of the foot may curl inwards to expose clean shiny shell.
- The Virus can be spread through direct contact, through the water column or something in the water such as mucus produced by the abalone.
- The virus only affects abalone species.
- The Victorian Chief Veterinary Officer has advised that **there are no known or likely public health or food safety implications associated with this virus.**

For further information go to: www.dpi.vic.gov.au

The A.B.C.D. of Bio-security

- A** - Avoid Spreading - Don't carry infected boats, gear and abalone along the coast
- B** - Be sure to tell others about the virus
- C** - Call authorities when you are suspicious
- D** - Decontaminate your wetsuits, gear, boats and equipment



Commercial Fishers Bio-security?

Commercial divers and fishers have adopted bio-security protocols, These are included in the *Abalone Harvesting Code of Practice*.

For more information go to:

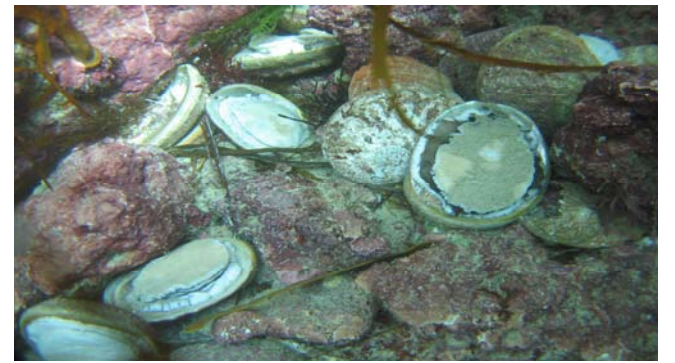
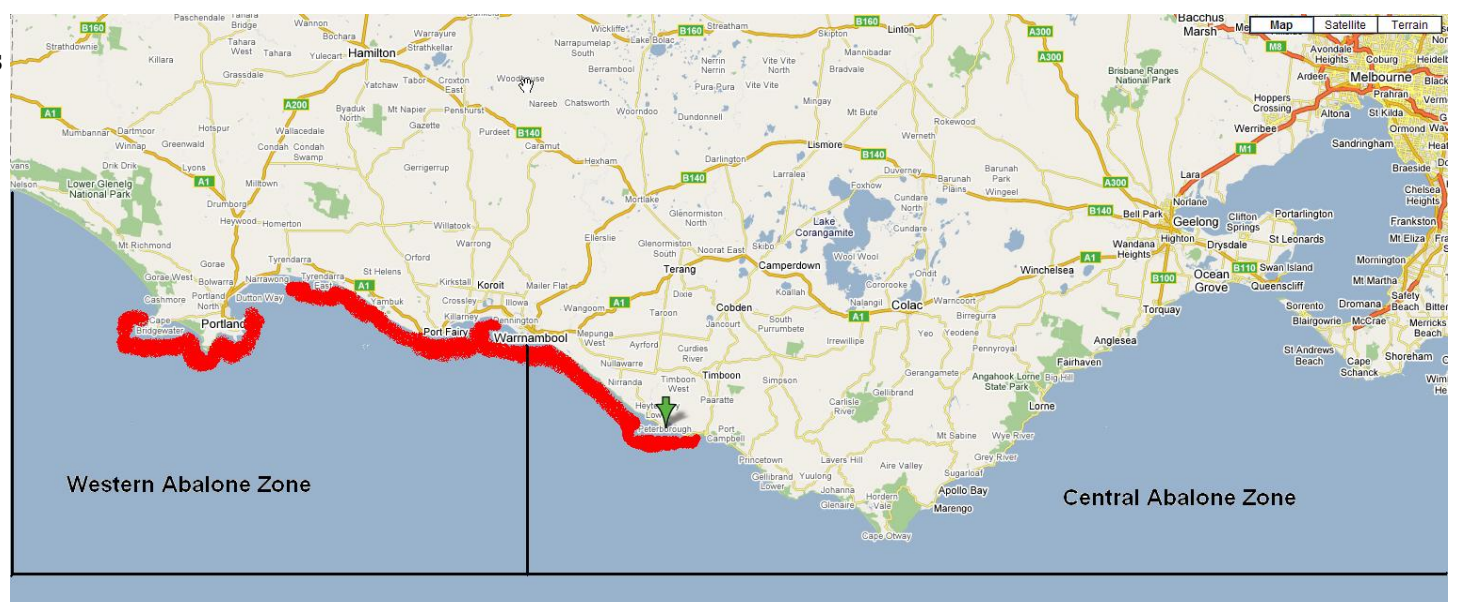
www.vada.com.au/Virus/Virus.htm

What to do if you find sick abalone?

Please call
Disease Watch Hotline
(1800 675 888)
Or the
Fish Reporting Line
13FISH (133474)

When making the call it would be good if you could provide the following information:

- » GPS Co-ordinates of the reef and/or description of the area where the abalone was found (including depth of water, whether it was washed up on the beach or rocks);
 - » Basis for suspecting disease (clinical signs, numbers of dead or dying abalone).
 - » Contact details of person finding the abalone.
- You may be asked to collect a sample.**
- » Collected samples should be sealed in a plastic bag and kept at as low a temperature as possible.
 - » A zip bag or a tied shopping bag would be suitable.



What you can do?

If you find yourself in an area that you suspect is infected with the virus or some other disease:

- » Ensure that you decontaminate your fishing vessels, all equipment, wet suits and gloves between dive sites.
- » Dispose of abalone shell, meat and gut appropriately.

Decontamination:

Boats should be washed as soon as possible after leaving the water and away from the water's edge so that soapy water does not affect our waterways. Consider using a carwash for vessels.

- » All organic matter from inside and outside the vessel should be removed

Wetsuits and Dive Equipment:

- » Wash wetsuits with a neoprene wash (available from dive and surf shops) although a mild liquid soap or shampoo.
- » Dive tanks, buoyancy vests, regulators and masks that **have not come into contact** with abalone can be washed down in soap-free freshwater.
- » Equipment that **has come into contact** with abalone, eg. catch bags, gloves, knives and measuring devices, should be soaked in soapy freshwater for 30 minutes and rinsed.

People and clothing:

Divers who come into contact with abalone should:

- » Wash their hands with soapy water.
- » Spray any waterproof clothing with soapy freshwater and rinse.
- » On returning home, wash clothes with laundry detergent.
- » Decontaminated vessels, wetsuits, dive equipment and clothing should be allowed to dry.

Disposal

Abalone shell, viscera (meat and gut) should not be:

- » shucked (taken from the shell) at sea,
- » dumped into the sea,
- » used as fishing bait.

"Take your abalone catch home and dispose of the waste with your household rubbish."



www.vada.com.au



Western Abalone Divers Association



www.vrfish.com.au

Eastern Zone Abalone Industry Association (EZAIA)



Sustainable Fishing - Healthy Seafood
Seafood Industry Victoria Inc.

www.siv.com.au



www.oceanwatch.org.au