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Charter vessel 'G A Reay'

REPORT

Cruise 18-28 August 1986

Personnel

| | |
|------------|-----|
| A W Newton | SSO |
| D C Emslie | HSO |
| K A Coull | HSO |

Objective

To undertake a routine demersal trawling survey on Rockall Bank

Narrative

The 'G A Reay' sailed from Dundee at 1800 hrs on 18 August and proceeded towards Rockall Bank. Fishing commenced on 20 August and continued for the next 7 days. The last day of fishing was spent assessing the saithe stock at Rockall; advice on fishing positions was given by the local fishing fleet. The 'G A Reay' docked in Aberdeen at 1800 hrs on 28 August.

Results

A total of 36 hauls was made with a 48' Aberdeen trawl fitted with a 30 mm small mesh cover. The majority of hauls were restricted to 30 minutes duration due to the high catch rates. Five of the hauls were declared invalid, principally because the small mesh cover burst with the weight of fish caught.

The principal species encountered was haddock and Table 1 shows that most of the commercially desirable fish belonged to the 1981 year class. The bulk of the haddock caught by the 'G A Reay' were 2 year olds. This confirmed previous indications that the 1984 haddock year class is very strong. The 1985 year class appears to be above average strength.

Investigations on the saithe would appear to indicate two components:

- a) fish 98-117 cms in length with ages between 6 and 19.
- b) a large number of smaller fish in the range 36-52 cms, all of which are 2 year olds.

A W Newton
23 September 1986

Table 1

Numbers and mean length of haddock - Rockall Bank 1986

| Age | Year class | Nos at age (per 10 hours) | Mean length (cms) |
|-----|------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 0 | 1986 | 3577 | 14.07 |
| 1 | 85 | 17309 | 22.48 |
| 2 | 84 | 62196 | 28.74 |
| 3 | 83 | 85 | 35.44 |
| 4 | 82 | 139 | 35.58 |
| 5 | 81 | 2568 | 39.10 |
| 6 | 80 | 225 | 44.19 |
| 7 | 79 | 0 | - |
| 8 | 78 | 0 | - |
| 9 | 77 | 15 | 46.43 |
| 10 | 76 | 37 | 49.55 |

G.A. REAY Routine Survey Rockell Bank 1986

