

BOATS & GEAR

TMQ installs first Notus trawl net monitor in SA

TMQ Electronics has installed Australia's first Notus Trawlmaster net monitoring system in a prawn trawler in South Australia.

A spokesman for TMQ Electronics said they had installed the system, in conjunction with Notus, a Canadian-based firm, on board the prawn trawler FV *Liberty* in Wallaroo, South Australia, via TMQ agent Millteck Marine from Port Adelaide.

"Notus Electronics Ltd of Canada has been supplying the trawl monitoring system of choice for several European and Canadian fisheries," he said.

"The Trawlmaster offers a dynamic 3D representation of the trawls. The software displays all information and automatically saves data for play back.

"The system on board *Liberty* comprises net door opening moni-

toring for door spread and distance from the vessel for each net.

"Master and slave sensors were set up on both net trawl doors, which, when submerged, communicate back to the vessel via a wireless ultrasonic 24 khz signal.

"The small size of the Notus sensors is critical to a successful installation. As Notus sensors are the smallest on the market (their weight is just 1kg in water), there is no effect on door stability.

"Two on-board hydrophones were fitted for selection of best signal from the master sensors. These were mounted amidships either side of the hull.

"The received signals are processed by the Notus command unit coupled up to the vessel's main navigation computer. A separate screen was employed to display the net door spread and distance instantaneously whilst trawling.

"The Notus Trawlmaster system features a smart charger to automatically maintain sensor battery condition as required, reducing the possibility of system down time."

He said that, while carrying out

the Spencer Gulf product survey over two days, the Notus Trawlmaster system performed immediately once the nets were shot away, showing the net door spread situation in real time.

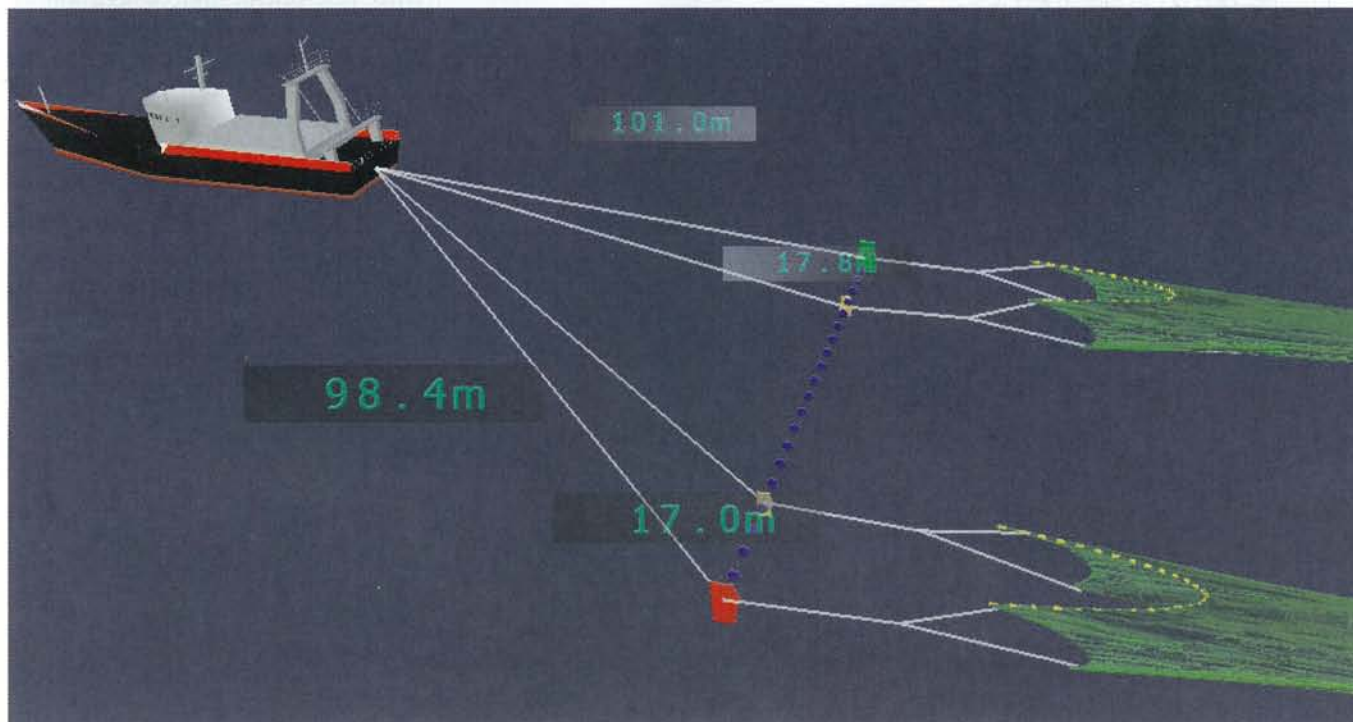
"Using eight-fathom nets and trawling in about 20 metres of water, the door spread started off at 55 feet on both nets, with the net trawl positioned 100 metres behind the vessel.

"At one particular shot carried out, doorspread distance changed quickly from 55 feet to 20 feet over a short trawl period of 15 to 20 minutes.

"On inspection of the retrieved nets, it was found that the main net content was a large amount of rubbish. This was now evident with respect to the Trawlmaster information showing exactly what was happening in the trawl.

"Confidence in the knowledge of knowing what is happening with the trawl via the Notus Trawlmaster system will continue to increase efficiency and productivity."

For further information, contact TMQ Electronics on 1800 777 835.



The Trawlmaster offers a dynamic 3D representation of the trawls.