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PROPOSED GAUGE FOR ENFORCEMENT OF ICNAF MESH SIZE REGULATIONS

BY: CANADIAN DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

CANADIAN AUTHORITIES ENGAGED IN ENFORCEMENT OF REGULATIONS MADE FOLLOWING ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ARE EXPERIENCING INCREASING DIFFICULTIES WITH THE COURTS ON CASES INVOLVING MESH SIZE INFRACTIONS. THESE DIFFICULTIES STEM FROM THE TYPE OF GAUGE NOW USED FOR MEASUREMENT OF MESH SIZE IN TRAWL NETS.

TO CONFORM WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES, THE GAUGE IN USE CONSISTS OF A BRASS PLATE $3/32$ OF AN INCH IN THICKNESS WITH SUITABLE CENTRAL HOLES TO REDUCE WEIGHT. THE GAUGE HAS THE REQUIRED TAPER OF 2" TO 8". THE BRASS PLATE IS ATTACHED TO A SPRING LOADED HANDLE WITH A GRADUATE MEASUREMENT CALIBRATED IN POUNDS OF PRESSURE. THE SPRING CAN BE SET TO A REASONABLE DEGREE OF ACCURACY FOR INSERTION INTO THE MESHES WITH A PRESSURE OF NOT LESS THAN 10 NOR MORE THAN 15 POUNDS.

IT WAS THE VIEW OF CANADIAN ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES THAT BECAUSE THE PRESSURE REQUIREMENT WAS INDEFINITE - 10 TO 15 POUNDS - LITTLE DIFFICULTY SHOULD BE ENCOUNTERED IN PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE IN COURT. IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE REGULATIONS, AND IN FACT UNTIL 1961, THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO DIFFICULTY BECAUSE THOSE PROSECUTED FOR VIOLATION OF THE MINIMUM MESH REGULATIONS ENTERED PLEAS OF GUILTY. MORE RECENTLY HOWEVER OUR OFFICERS HAVE BEEN PLACED IN THE POSITION OF BEING CALLED UPON TO PROVE BEYOND A DOUBT THAT THE PRESSURE USED IN INSERTING THE GAUGE INTO THE MESH WAS 15 POUNDS OR LESS. THE COURTS HAVE BEEN CALLING FOR CERTIFIED GAUGES, AND, OF COURSE, THE STANDARDS DIVISION OF THE CANADA DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE WILL NOT ISSUE A CERTIFICATE TO COVER A GAUGE WHICH IS SPRING LOADED.

IN AN ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP A BETTER ENFORCEMENT GAUGE FOR CANADA'S PURPOSES THE ICES RESEARCH GAUGE WAS EXAMINED. WHILE IT IS EXCELLENT UNDER GOOD WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES AND MEASUREMENT SAMPLING, ITS SPRING LOADED CHECKING MECHANISM AGAIN RENDERS IT SUBJECT TO MANIPULATION BY THE USER AND THUS IMPOSSIBLE OF CERTIFICATION BY THE STANDARDS DIVISION.

THE SEA FISHING INDUSTRY (FISHING NETS) ORDER, 1954, OF THE UNITED KINGDOM PROVIDES THAT "NO BRITISH FISHING BOAT REGISTERED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM SHALL CARRY ON BOARD FOR THE PURPOSE OF CATCHING SEA FISH.....
...ANY NET UNLESS IT HAS IN ALL ITS PARTS A MESH OF SUCH DIMENSION THAT WHEN THE MESH IS STRETCHED DIAGONALLY LENGTHWISE OF THE NET A FLAT GAUGE OF THE SPECIFIED SIZE SHALL PASS THROUGH IT EASILY WHEN THE NET IS WET".

IT IS SUGGESTED THAT A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR PROCEDURE SHOULD SUIT CANADA'S PURPOSE FOR ENFORCEMENT. ATTACHED IS A COPY OF A DRAWING OF THE BLADE ONLY OF A PROPOSED $4 \frac{1}{2}$ INCH GAUGE. THE TAPER CONFORMS WITH ICNAF SPECIFICATIONS BUT IS MAINLY TO FACILITATE ENTRY OF THE GAUGE INTO THE MESH. WITHIN 3 INCHES OF THE HANDLE THE GAUGE BECOMES A FLAT $4 \frac{1}{2}$ INCH GAUGE, WHICH PART OF THE GAUGE WOULD HAVE TO PASS THROUGH THE NET

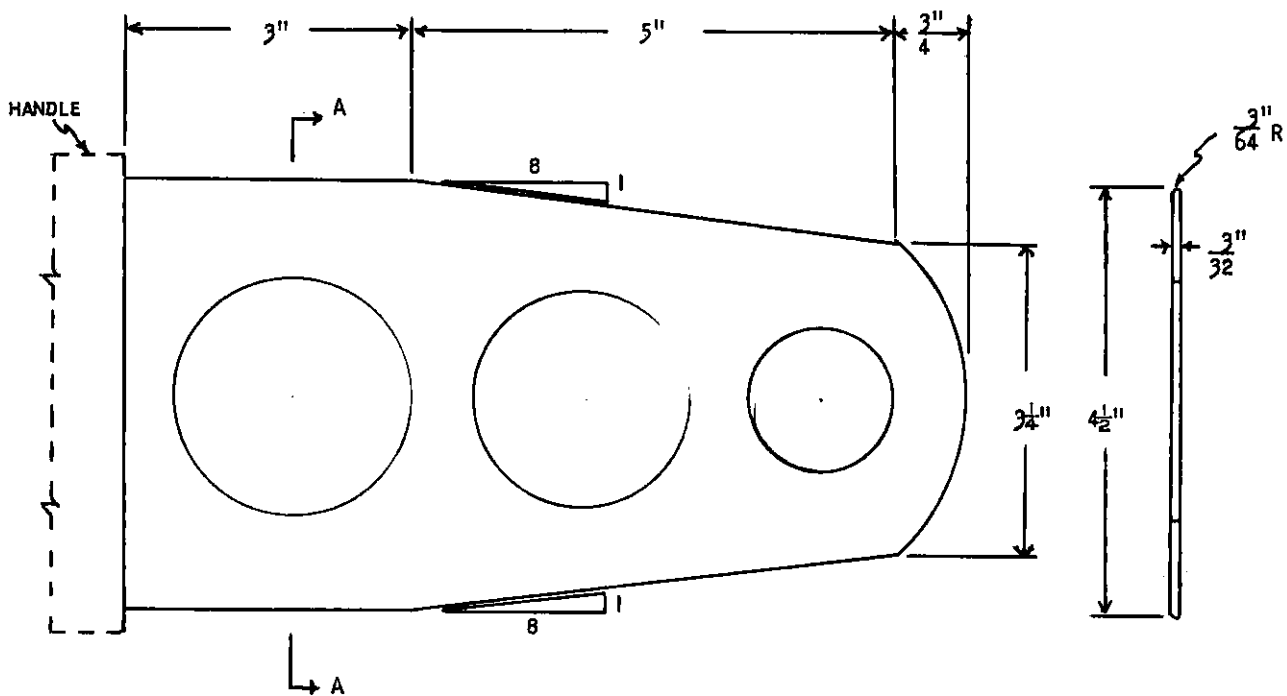
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EASILY WHEN THE NET IS WET. SEPARATE BLADES WITH PROPER FINAL WIDTH WOULD SERVE TO MEASURE THE DIFFERENT SIZES OF MESH WHICH HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH WHEN MEASURING TWINES OTHER THAN MANILA.

AS OF THE DATE OF WRITING NO PROTOTYPE HAS BEEN MADE OR TRIED AND MODIFICATIONS MIGHT PROVE DESIRABLE IN USE. THE PRINCIPLE IS ONE WHICH CANADA FEELS WOULD SERVE THE PURPOSE FOR PROPER MEASUREMENT SINCE THE FINAL WIDTH OF THE BLADE ALONG THE 3 INCH LENGTH NEAREST TO THE HANDLE CAN BE CERTIFIED BY GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY.

IT IS CANADA'S INTENTION TO PROCEED WITH MANUFACTURE OF ONE OR MORE PROTOTYPE SAMPLES FOR TESTING PURPOSES AND THE RESULTS WILL BE MADE KNOWN WHEN AVAILABLE.

OTTAWA,
MAY 10, 1963.



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SECTION A-A

NOTES

- 1 - GAUGE TO BE MADE OF BRASS, OR OTHER RIGID CORROSION-RESIST MATERIAL $3/32$ " THICK.
- 2 - LIGHTENING HOLES MAY BE INCLUDED AS SHOWN.

PROPOSED ICNAF REGULATION MESH SIZE
ENFORCEMENT GAUGE

PREPARED BY: DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES, CANADA.

MAY 9, 1963