Centro Harvest Subsidy
TASMANIAN ABALONE COUNCIL
TACL members had been advocating for action on this issue for many years and as a result, the TACL Board decided (at a meeting in 2015) to sponsor a harvesting trial.

The Board determined that the best way to assist the new *C. rodgersii* roe industry was to subsidise the cost of harvesting and processing until such time as an industry based on *C. rodgersii* had “got on its feet”.

An appropriate subsidy would assist the growth of a “new” export industry for Tasmania as well as reduce the degradation of productive abalone habitat.
The key elements of the TACL Centro Subsidy Program for 2016 were as follows:

TACL partial sponsorship of the urchin harvest dive rate was available - up to 100k (funded by the TACL Abalone Industry Development Fund - AIDF).

Participation in the Centro harvest was available to abalone divers who also held Commercial Dive licenses. Consideration was also given to offering the opportunity to 3 or 4 of the dedicated and highly experienced urchin-only divers.

Two designated harvest areas: Cape Pillar to the northern tip of Fortescue Bay in the SE (75% of effort) and north of St Helens in the NE (25% of effort) with precise areas yet to be determined.

Divers to invoice TACL for 75 cents per kg with balance to come from processor totaling approximately $1.50/kg dive rate.

Centro harvesting to occur inshore (to a depth out to about 17 metres) targeting incipient barrens within the weed canopy.
This proposal was communicated to all holders of Fishing License – Commercial Dive (FLCD), as well as processing entities.

(Note: about 26 of the current 53 FLCD’s are held by abalone divers)

The TACL Centro Subsidy Program commenced during the 2016 Centro harvest season and has been in operation ever since – with a progressive relaxation of various elements.

In order to encourage maximum removal of urchins, diver participation was expanded to include all 53 current holders of FLCD’s whether they were abalone divers or not.

Spatial and temporal restrictions were also removed - they can currently harvest at any time of the year and at any location between Eddystone Point and Cape Pillar.

Subsidy remains at 75 cents per kg, with processors paying varying rates dependent on roe recovery.
The TACL has so far invested $150k with a further 50k available from a second 100k tranche from the AIDF.

TACL retains copies of every urchin dive docket submitted by divers to access the subsidy.

Dataset includes kilograms harvested plus dive location plus buyer.

Acknowledge Tashimi, RTS Paua Co as the major buyers in 2018.

As of early November 2018, the total weight of *C. rodgersii* harvested under the TACL Centro Subsidy Program is 200,000 kgs which amounts to about 600,000 urchins removed from between St Helens/Bay of Fires region south to Maria Island.
TACL Centro Harvest Subsidy

- AIDF funding finishes shortly
- New subsidy source...........
- Abalone Industry Reinvestment Fund (AIRF)
- Governance Framework finalised – waiting on Ministerial sign off
- $5.1 million in AIRF for Centro and stock enhancement (primarily)
- 50% for Centro - $2.5 million
- Possible Commonwealth Government assistance
- Funds flow from early 2019
- Call for Expressions of Interest shortly