Track traps with GPS

LOBSTER and crab trap locations can now be recorded using Trap Tracker, a PC-based software system linked to a GPS receiver, developed by former South African fisherman Maurice Shenker.

The system, which also doubles as a chart plotter, allows skippers to record the exact location of traps, while also recording range, bearing and possible courses to steer.

Trap Tracker can indicate which trap has been in the water the longest or shortest time, and the software also adjusts the buoy position for changing sea currents.

As the traps are hauled, a skipper can record the catch levels in the trap as either very good, good, poor, nil or trap lost.

This information can be used to build up a highly detailed database of information.

"This can be expanded to include sea and weather conditions and the condition of the catch," says Maurice Shenker.

"Productive areas can be identified easily along with seasonal variations. It could also be an invaluable tool for resource management and in resolving disputes."