

You have to be up early to catch them.

At night the long-liners will sneak inside our Exclusive Economic Zone in search of grouper, schnapper and marlin.

Then just before morning they'll return to International waters their holds filled with the night's plunder.

Our job is to catch them before they catch too much.

The tackle.

Because they are not playing fair nor are we.

We're pitting one of our deadliest weapons against them. The Orion Maritime Patrol aircraft. It's capable of hunting down a nuclear submarine lurking in the deep.

Cruising at 330 knots the Orion and its crew of eleven from 5 Squadron at Whenuapai can search 78,000 square kilometres every hour.

Its sophisticated radar can pick up and track up to 100 targets. And by dropping Sonar buoys the Orion can, when needs be,

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track and deal with unwelcome submarines.

Only this time the bomb-bay holds not depth charges or torpedoes, but life rafts, emergency flares and first aid equipment.

Just in case the Orion is called to a rescue. But this is no mission of mercy, we're out to catch a thief.

The target.

Position. 150 miles north-east of the North Cape.

It's 0510 when the Orion's radar picks up a trawler. She's fifty miles inside the EEZ and heading out.

The Orion's radio operator contacts the duty frigate HMNZS Wellington, which is in the area. At high speed they'll be on the fisherman's tail in under an hour.

The Orion's observers man the aircraft's four blister windows. Their armament is a high speed reconnaissance camera. Its

powerful lense capable of picking out the rivets on a trawler's deck.