

# **National Seafood Emergency Plan – Queensland Trial Workshop**

***Queensland Seafood Marketers' Association***  
*Research Provider*

***Martin Perkins***  
*Principal Investigator*



**SEAFOOD SERVICES**  
AUSTRALIA

**Project No. 2002/427**

## NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

<b>2002/427      National Seafood Emergency Plan – Queensland Trial Workshop.</b>
---

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Mr Martin Perkins

**ADDRESS:** 33 Pankina Street  
Sunnybank  
Brisbane QLD 4109  
Telephone: 07 3344 2055  
Fax: 07 3344 2620

**Objectives:**

1. Test the draft manual plan in a desktop exercise.
2. Introduce all the nominated team members and alternates to the plan and train them in the use of the plan.
3. Use learned experience to tailor the manual further in Queensland.

**OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE:**

1. Slide show for the workshop was tailored to suit the seafood industry and in particular to suit Queensland conditions.
2. Handouts detailing the workshop procedure were produced.
3. Copies of the National Seafood Emergency Plan for all the attendees at the workshop were produced.
4. Guest speakers were recruited to 'set the scene' by identifying potential outcomes from an emergency if it was not controlled and also to illustrate case studies of food safety outbreaks that have occurred.
5. A scenario was developed that would enable the workshop participants to test their reaction to an emergency and also to ensure that the reaction was consistent with National guidelines.
6. The workshop to develop the Queensland State SEP was held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2003.
7. The Queensland plan was developed and a commitment was made by the 2 peak industry bodies in Queensland (QSIA & QSMA) to maintain the State based plan which will be linked to the National SEP.
8. Volunteers who will work together to maintain the plan were recruited from the attendees at the workshop.

**Acknowledgments:**

SSA / FRDC for funding the project  
John Burke – Safe Food Queensland for providing additional funds.  
Richard Coutts – Primary Business Solutions (Facilitator)  
Kerry Bell – Queensland Health  
Alan Snow – SSA

**Background:**

A National Seafood Emergency Plan was produced in 2001 and the individual States (apart from South Australia) have not tested their capability to handle an emergency that could jeopardise the future of the seafood industry. There is a commitment from Industry leaders throughout Australia to develop and test a plan that could minimise the damage to industry that would arise from a major food safety incident involving Australian seafood.

**Need:**

Failure to deal quickly and effectively with a food safety incident may result in costly trade disruption and threaten the financial viability of seafood suppliers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and food service providers. The Seafood Emergency Plan was developed through Seafood Services Australia to provide a proactive and simple step-by-step response and recovery guide, should an emergency occur. Queensland has participated in the initial stages of the SSA national plan and is keen to ensure the framework is established in this state.

**Objectives:**

1. Test the draft manual plan in a desktop exercise.  
*The workshop that was held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October carried out a mock emergency to test the draft manual in a specialised Queensland scenario. The results were impressive – all teams carried out the scenario and developed plans to cope with the emergency and also counter any potential fall-out to the industry without jeopardising the serious side of the outcomes of an emergency.*
2. Introduce all the nominated team members and alternates to the plan and train them in the use of the plan.  
*The attendees at the workshop were potential team members (see attached list of attendees in **Appendix 2**). The workshop was the perfect opportunity to introduce Industry representatives to Government bodies. Queensland Health and Safe Food Queensland are lead agencies in Queensland in the event of a food safety emergency. The workshop was an opportunity to view a scenario from the industry*

*perspective where the food safety aspect can be dealt with to community expectations and the industry is also protected from future fall-out.*

3. Use learned experience to tailor the manual further in Queensland.

*The Queensland section of the manual will be substantially changed and up to date contacts will be provided to SSA in **Appendix 3** so that in the unlikely event of an emergency all the correct contact details will be available. These contact details will be updated on a regular basis (annually) so that SSA can incorporate them in the National Plan.*

#### **Methods:**

The draft manual as designed by SSA and Campbell Crisis Management and Recovery was introduced to a “Team” of Industry and Government players who were then involved in a ‘real life’ seafood emergency. Richard Coutts (Facilitator from Primary Business Solutions), and Martin Perkins (Secretary – QSMA) conducted a desktop workshop with the team and were able to refine the draft manual as an outcome. Safe Food Queensland and Queensland Health would be closely involved in the management of any seafood emergency and were active participants in the workshop.

#### **Results/Discussion:**

Government and Industry worked well together producing excellent responses to the scenario. If it had been a real life food safety incident then we believe it was handled in such a way that the media would have the answers they wanted and the community would have known the truth. Most important - the reputation of the wild caught and aquaculture industries would have been preserved.

#### **Benefits and adoption:**

The major benefit of the project in Queensland has been to produce industry and government agreed strategies to handle a seafood safety emergency. QSMA and QSIA have agreed to work together to update the Queensland contact details annually and also to adopt any new findings from future workshops in other states. The Australian Prawn Farmers Association was a participant in the workshop and realised that any bad news story from the wild caught seafood industry will also affect the aquaculture industry. The adoption by industry in Queensland was outstanding and a considerable number of industry members are now aware of the National Seafood Emergency Plan. The chance of Safe Food Queensland or Queensland Health referring to the plan in the event of an emergency has increased enormously.

#### **Further Development:**

QSIA have nominated their office as the control centre in the event of a seafood emergency. They are also willing to provide all the functions of the control centre using their staff. The alliance between QSIA and QSMA has been strengthened by the emergency workshop and we see this relationship developing more in the future.

**Planned outcomes:**

The planned output of the workshop was to develop the manual for use in the event of a seafood emergency and have trained staff in place to manage any such emergency. The outcomes of the workshop were the formalisation of the contacts needed to have an operational manual and also to succeed in training a large group of staff across Government and Industry.

**Conclusion:**

In the risk analysis for the project one of the major threats was identified as a lack of commitment by industry. This was proven to be wrong – the seafood industry showed that they were committed to developing and using a SEP.

**References:**

Seafood Emergency Plan (SEP) – October 2001  
Foodborne outbreaks associated with seafood, Jan 2001 – June 2003.  
Food Industry Recall Protocol – FSANZ 2002  
Emergency Response Workshop – Campbell Crisis Management 2001  
Ground rules for working together – Primary Business Solutions

**Intellectual Property:**

National Seafood Emergency Plan – SSA & ASIC

**Staff:**

Martin Perkins – Principal Investigator  
Richard Coutts – Facilitator (Primary Business Solutions).

## Appendix 1

### **PURPOSE OF SEAFOOD EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (SEP)**

To minimise the damage to industry that would arise from a major food safety incident involving Australian seafood.

### **STEPS REQUIRED TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN**

Once industry leaders/senior business management is convinced it wants a crisis management and recovery capability, and commits to providing leadership, personnel, funding, equipment, training and other support, the key elements for achieving this are:

1. Establish a Management Committee to provide leadership and ensure operational capability
2. Develop a Plan that addresses the 'before', 'during' and 'after' aspects of:
  - (a) Rapid identification, assessment and declaration of potential emergency situations\*
  - (b) Mobilisation of the people and resources required to respond to declared emergencies\*\*
  - (c) Coordinating and managing action to
    - i. Quickly and successfully contain and eliminate the source of the incident, e.g. through trace-back, product recall, quarantine, suspension of operations etc
    - ii. Communicate with and inform stakeholders in the safety of Australian seafood, e.g. consumers, public sector agencies, seafood industry firms and organisations, the media, etc
    - iii. Successfully address and recover from the industry impacts of the incident.
3. Test and continuously improve the Plan\*\*\*
4. Build the skills and capabilities of industry members responsible for implementing the Plan#
5. Coordinate action to implement the Plan when a food safety incident arises

#### Notes

\* The Plan needs to document the responsibilities of team members, guidelines for action, proformas for reporting etc.

\*\* Prepare a 'threat analysis' to identify the risks most likely to occur, estimate consequences and assess preparedness for successfully dealing with the various classes of risk.

\*\*\* For effectiveness of operation of Crisis Management and Recovery Teams their structure should mirror the structure of the organisation as closely as possible – as people will already be familiar with their roles. The capabilities needed on the team

are senior management/leaders (CEO, MD), corporate/public affairs, operations, security, legal, finance, investor relations, risk management + site location teams should be established as most incidents are likely to start locally.

\*\*\*\* To ensure speed, accuracy, effectiveness and credibility (including keeping the Plan up-to-date/consistent with changing circumstances and operating environments through quarterly or biannual review, and conducting After Action Reviews following actual or simulated emergencies)

## A training plan and budget is necessary.

## Appendix 2

## List of Attendees

NAME	COMPANY	PHONE	EMAIL
Alan Snow	SSA	1300 130 321	<a href="mailto:alansnow@seafoodservices.com.au">alansnow@seafoodservices.com.au</a>
Peter Moisel	P& C Moisel P/L	07 4151 1322	<a href="mailto:cmoisel@bigpond.com">cmoisel@bigpond.com</a>
Harold Figueron	Qld Health – Wide Bay	07 4197 7277	<a href="mailto:Harold_Figueron@health.qld.gov.au">Harold_Figueron@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Simon Bewg	Qld DPI	07 3239 3335	<a href="mailto:Simon.bewg@dpi.qld.gov.au">Simon.bewg@dpi.qld.gov.au</a>
Ian wells	Safe Food	3253 9836	<a href="mailto:iwells@safefood.qld.gov.au">iwells@safefood.qld.gov.au</a>
Tony Hurley	A Raptis & Sons	3249 7856	<a href="mailto:thurley@raptis.com.au">thurley@raptis.com.au</a>
Sid McKeown	Fishmac	4153 4800	<a href="mailto:fishmac@bigpond.net.au">fishmac@bigpond.net.au</a>
Gerard Neville	Qld Health	3234 1276	<a href="mailto:Gerard_neville@health.qld.gov.au">Gerard_neville@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Bryan Skepper	SFM	02 9004 1102	<a href="mailto:Bryans@sydneyfishmarket.com.au">Bryans@sydneyfishmarket.com.au</a>
Virgil Kelk	Qld Health, Toowoomba	07 4631 9829	<a href="mailto:Virgil_kelk@health.qld.gov.au">Virgil_kelk@health.qld.gov.au</a>
David Gould	Communicable Disease	3234 0913	<a href="mailto:David_gould@health.qld.gov.au">David_gould@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Gary Bielby	Qld Health	3234 0953	<a href="mailto:Gary_bielby@health.qld.gov.au">Gary_bielby@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Terry Moore	QH Gold Coast	5509 7206	<a href="mailto:Terry_moore@health.qld.gov.au">Terry_moore@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Ray Joyce	Qld Charter Vessels	5574 4966	<a href="mailto:info@marinelife.org.au">info@marinelife.org.au</a>
Bod Richardson	Creel Seafoods	0408 911 224	<a href="mailto:creel@powerup.com.au">creel@powerup.com.au</a>
Bruce Knevet	Sams Seafood	0418 714 051	<a href="mailto:bruce@sams.com.au">bruce@sams.com.au</a>
Jane Clout	Qld Oyster Growers Ass	0419 786 631	<a href="mailto:jclout@karingaloysters.com.au">jclout@karingaloysters.com.au</a>
Joan & Chris McIlwain	Capricorn Seafoods	07 5444 1416	
Kerry Bell	Queensland Health	07 3234 0952	<a href="mailto:kerry_bell@health.qld.gov.au">kerry_bell@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Ken McKenzie	MacKenzie Strategic	07 3289 0200	<a href="mailto:Mackenzie.strategic@bigpond.com">Mackenzie.strategic@bigpond.com</a>
John Bates	QH Scientific Services	3274 9101	<a href="mailto:John_bates@health.qld.gov.au">John_bates@health.qld.gov.au</a>
Sue Poole	CFT	3406 8689	<a href="mailto:Sue.Poole@dpi.qld.gov.au">Sue.Poole@dpi.qld.gov.au</a>
Duncan Souter	QSI	0417 795 684	<a href="mailto:DSouter@qsi.com.au">DSouter@qsi.com.au</a>
Jim Fogarty	MG Kailis	4035 6877	<a href="mailto:Jimfogarty@kailis.com.au">Jimfogarty@kailis.com.au</a>
John Burke	Safe Food	3253 9836	<a href="mailto:jburke@safefood.qld.gov.au">jburke@safefood.qld.gov.au</a>
John Olsen	QSI	3262 6855	<a href="mailto:jolsen@qsi.com.au">jolsen@qsi.com.au</a>
Russ Neal	ASIC	02 6281	<a href="mailto:rneal@asic.org.au">rneal@asic.org.au</a>



# FINAL REPORT – Project 2002/427

		0383	
Martin Breen	APFA	3255 1070	<a href="mailto:info@apfa.com.au">info@apfa.com.au</a>
Ted Loveday	SSA	3633 6777	<a href="mailto:tedloveday@seafoodservices.com.au">tedloveday@seafoodservices.com.au</a>
Richard Coutts	PBS	3398 6318	<a href="mailto:r.coutts@pbsolutions.biz">r.coutts@pbsolutions.biz</a>
Martin Perkins	QSMA	3344 2055	<a href="mailto:martinperkins@optushome.com.au">martinperkins@optushome.com.au</a>



## Appendix 3

## Queensland Contacts for the SEP

## Page 15 – Queensland SEC Team Contact Directory

Team Role	Designated	Contact Details
<b>Team Leader:</b> Duncan Souter	QSIA	Ph: 07 3262 6855 Fax: 07 3262 7650 Email: <a href="mailto:qsia@qsia.com.au">qsia@qsia.com.au</a>
<b>Alternate:</b> Martin Perkins	QSMA	Ph: 07 3344 2055 Fax: 07 334 2620 <a href="mailto:martinperkins@optushome.com.au">martinperkins@optushome.com.au</a>
<b>Spokesperson:</b> Jayne Gallagher	SSA	Ph: 1300 130 321 Fax 07 3633 6776 <a href="mailto:ssa@seafoodservices.com.au">ssa@seafoodservices.com.au</a>
<b>Alternate:</b> Alan Snow		
<b>Recovery Co-ordinator:</b> Alan Snow	SSA	Ph: 1300 130 321 Fax 07 3633 6776 <a href="mailto:ssa@seafoodservices.com.au">ssa@seafoodservices.com.au</a>
<b>Alternative:</b> Ian Wells	Safefood	Ph: 07 3253 9829 Fax: Email: <a href="mailto:iwells@safefood.qld.gov.au">iwells@safefood.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Communication and Media Co-ordinator:</b> Duncan Souter	QSIA	Ph: 07 3262 6855 Fax: 07 3262 7650 Email: <a href="mailto:qsia@qsia.com.au">qsia@qsia.com.au</a>
<b>Alternate:</b> Martin Perkins	QSMA	Ph: 07 3344 2055 Fax: 07 334 2620 <a href="mailto:martinperkins@optushome.com.au">martinperkins@optushome.com.au</a>
<b>Government &amp; Regulatory Liaison Co-ordinator:</b> John Burke	Safefood	Ph: 07 3253 9829 Fax: Email: <a href="mailto:jburke@safefood.qld.gov.au">jburke@safefood.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Alternate:</b> Kerry Bell	QLD Health	Ph: 07 3234 0952 Fax: 07 3234 1480 Email: <a href="mailto:kerry_bell@health.qld.gov.au">kerry_bell@health.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Consumer Services Co-ordinator:</b> Adrian Harrison	Sam's Seafood	Ph: 3633 4700 Fax: Email: <a href="mailto:adrianh@sams.com.au">adrianh@sams.com.au</a>
<b>Alternate:</b>		

## Page 16

Specialist Advisor Roles	Designated	Contact Details
<b>Technical:</b> Alan Snow	SSA	Ph: 1300 130 321 Fax 07 3633 6776 <a href="mailto:ssa@seafoodservices.com.au">ssa@seafoodservices.com.au</a>

Ray Joyce	Charter Fishing & Tourism	ph: 07 5574 4966 fax: <a href="mailto:info@marinelife.org.au">info@marinelife.org.au</a>
Gerard Neville	QLD Health	ph 3234 1276 fax: 3234 1480 <a href="mailto:Gerard_neville@health.qld.gov.au">Gerard_neville@health.qld.gov.au</a>
John Burke	Safe Food	Ph 3253 9829 Fax: <a href="mailto:jburke@safefood.qld.gov.au">jburke@safefood.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>Environmental:</b> Ted Loveday	SSA	Ph: 1300 130 321 Fax 07 3633 6776 <a href="mailto:ssa@seafoodservices.com.au">ssa@seafoodservices.com.au</a>
Ray Joyce	Charter Fishing & Tourism	ph: 07 5574 4966 fax: <a href="mailto:info@marinelife.org.au">info@marinelife.org.au</a>
<b>Legal:</b>		
<b>Public Relations/Issues Management:</b> Harold Figueroa	Qld Health	Ph: 07 4197 7277 Fax: 07 4197 7299 <a href="mailto:Harold_figueroa@health.qld.gov.au">Harold_figueroa@health.qld.gov.au</a>

**Page 71 - SEC and Spokesperson for Queensland**

Duncan Souter – QSIA	Suite 12, 699 Sandgate Road Clayfield QLD 4011	PO Box 392 Clayfield Qld 4011	07 3262 6855 ph 07 3262 7650 fax <a href="mailto:qsia@qsia.com.au">qsia@qsia.com.au</a>
----------------------	---	-------------------------------------	---

**Page 72 – SEC backup spokespeople for Queensland**

Martin Perkins -QSMA	33 Pankina Street Sunnybank QLD 4109		07 3344 2055 ph 07 3344 2620 fax <a href="mailto:martinperkins@optus.com.au">martinperkins@optus.com.au</a>
Jayne Gallagher - SSA		PO Box 403 Hamilton Queensland Australia. 4007	1300 130 321 3633 6776 fax <a href="mailto:ssa@seafoodservice.com.au">ssa@seafoodservice.com.au</a>

**Page 74 - No change to State Health Contacts**

**Page 77 – Queensland Agriculture Department contact**

Simon Bewg QDPI Animal and Plant Health Services	80 Ann St Brisbane QLD 4000	GPO Box 46 Brisbane Qld 4001	07 3239 3335 ph 07 3239 6994 fax simon.bewg@ dpi.qld.gov.au
--	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--

## Appendix 4

# LESSONS LEARNED

What does the information we have been given by the guest speakers, and the experience you gained in responding to the mock emergency, suggest as being necessary to best

- refine and adapt the national Seafood Emergency Plan to fit Queensland conditions; and
- Ensure quick and effective responses by industry to major food safety incidents involving Queensland seafood?

Draw on your experience with the mock emergency.

Then, for each aspect of emergency planning and response indicated in Worksheets 2 and 3, summarise in bullet form no more than three (3) key messages you believe to be most relevant for assisting the team that will be responsible for customising the national Plan for Queensland seafood emergency response purposes.

### 1. Identifying, Classifying and Declaring Situations as Emergencies

- *Need good working relationship between Qld health, Safe Food and the seafood industry.*
- *Need a clearer matrix which defines the level of the emergency and the transition between levels of emergency.*
- *What is the legal implication of industry declaring an emergency?*
- *Team leaders – Nationally and at State level have a pivotal role to ensure a speedy reaction to any 'emergency'.*
- *When is an emergency over?*
- *Should we include the production and circulation of a final report?*

### 2. Seafood Emergency Response Team Composition and Responsibilities

- *Peak body to coordinate initially.*
- *Contact details need to be updated regularly.*
- *Need very close contact between team members and the leader should liaise with other stakeholders.*
- *Roles of team members need to be clearly defined to prevent duplication of actions.*
- *Plan needs a further review to ensure decisions by team members can be made quickly.*
- *Need incident workbook with checklists for team members.*
- *Should activate the whole team in case of an emergency – it is easier to scale down than to scale up.*

## LESSONS LEARNED (Cont)

### 3. Coordination and Management of Operations – Before, During and After Incidents

#### **(a) Containing and eliminating the source(s) of an incident**

- *Identify and isolate the problem (use precautionary principle).*
- *Initiate voluntary product withdrawal and alert downstream receivers.*
- *Liaise closely with Qld Health.*
- *Liaise closely with the media*
- *Need to identify and list the powers of the team and identify legal mechanisms (Food Act)*
- *Clearly define lead role activities and behind the scenes activities.*
- *May need to sacrifice small sector of industry to protect the rest of the industry.*

#### **(b) Liaison/communication with each class of stakeholders in seafood safety**

- *A website for communication could be set up using the SSA system.*
- *Need to set up an email network (Emergency Group email) so everyone is informed at the same time.*
- *Recognise commercial rights*
- **Care** – for damage, **Share** – messages, **Fair** – to all parties, **Wear** – need for improvements
- *Need generic clear, honest media statements to be pre-prepared – deferring to professional opinions.*

#### **(c) Recovery from the industry impacts of an incident**

- *Need to start early. Don't wait for the downturn/impacts – assume they will happen and plan actions to minimise.*
- *Education plan for public, retailers, wholesalers.*
- *Have a plan for positive messages following any emergency – health benefits etc*
- *Proactive media work should be ongoing – eg good news stories.*
- *Need a communication strategy to maintain confidence in seafood.*

### 4. Testing, Capability Building and Continuous Improvement

- *Need to specify the frequency of the testing of the plan and who needs to be involved. Hard to role play – need to have designated SEC carry out exercise,*
- *Need to review plan after each incident – carry out analysis of actions in final report.*
- *Qld Health needs to be involved in the information process.*
- *Keep up with overseas trends and plans.*