



AUSTRALIAN  
RURAL  
LEADERSHIP  
FOUNDATION  
*LEADING THE NATION*

## Retrospective Final Report - Ian Knuckey

April 2010

### **My Vision:**

My vision is for vibrant, self-sufficient and individual communities that recognise their heritage and are proud to support and promote their local industries (such as commercial fishing) in the knowledge that they are environmentally sustainable and an important commercial and cultural asset for the community. The communities will nurture and educate their children to support the changing needs and expectations of their community industries and always seek out opportunities to improve the quality and attractiveness of rural Australian life.

*From the coast to the country,  
fostering sustainable rural communities  
where future generations of all Australians  
will be proud to live, work and play.*

### **My Motivation:**

I came into the fishing industry through a strictly government scientific background, being involved in fisheries biology and population dynamics research on a number of individual fisheries. I tend to be a hands-on practical person and I always find myself getting deeply involved with industry. As such, I could not have remained at university to undertake my PhD, instead I opted to leave uni and obtain my doctorate "in the field" working directly with industry members out on their boats. Therefore, as a scientist, I tend to have very good empathy with fishermen and can understand what they require from leaders in their field. Over the last few years of my work with government research agencies, I was getting frustrated that a significant amount of R&D and science I was doing had limited hands-on applicability to real issues facing the fishing industry. I believed that this, combined with the bureaucracy/ red tape/ staff management etc was ultimately stifling what I wanted to achieve with the fishing industry in terms of R&D and I ended up leaving government and setting up my own company to work directly with the fishing industry. In short, I believe that I have a great deal more to offer the fishing industry and their respective coastal communities than limiting myself to typical biological research in which I was trained.

I wanted to undertake the ARLP program because I believed it would help augment my government/scientific background in the fishing industry and help "round me out" in terms of my skills and experience and value to the fishing industry. I am passionate about developing and improving Australia's seafood industry and I often felt that there were a number of aspects of my experience and training that fell short of what I needed to "make a difference" and be more effective in pursuing my goals by understanding different perspectives of the industry. I felt that participating in the ARLP would help fast-track this process and also allow me to recognise and address areas in which I could develop personally to better enable this to occur.

### **My progress:**

Well, apparently, my involvement in the ARLP has not markedly improved my adherence to bureaucratic deadlines – hence the tardiness of this final report to FRDC (apologies to all). On the other hand, the ARLP did better equip me to recognise my own priorities and accept that they may not necessarily match those of others. I also now recognise that this balancing of priorities is not static – so when someone urgently requires the ARLP final report I have to re-prioritise accordingly. I had actually written some of the report in 2007 but not submitted it. I have added a section to include my 2010 reflections.

### ***Written in 2007***

I have now completed and graduated from the ARLP Course. It was during the last half of the course that I realised the full extent of commitment needed to undertake this course. Combined with my normal work commitments and travel for various fisheries projects, the added time and travel required to prepare and attend the Course was significant. At the time, this had a significant impact on both my business and especially my family life. This might not have been such an important issue except that I already travelled extensively for my business and the ARLP travel merely added to this at the expense of my family time. It was sometimes difficult to justify to my family that the Course had helped me understand the importance of a balanced life, when the same Course was further exacerbating that imbalance. Despite all of the value I have gained from the Course and the ongoing value of being a part of such a network as the ARLF, I was very glad when it was over.

I thoroughly enjoyed the Course and gained a lot of satisfaction from being a participant. I believe that I benefitted from the wide-ranging experiences and skills that were imparted which has been reflected on both a personal and professional level.

### ***Written in 2010***

It has been informative to reflect back on the value of the ARLP course some years after completion – as I have done by default. The passage of time better allows one to put what they have learnt into action and to provide a more balanced reflection as to the benefits of the Course. Reading the 2007 section above, I realised how “over it” I was when I completed the course and I was recoiling from the significant personal and financial cost (as a sole operator of a small business) of undertaking the Course. Time has enabled a more balanced reflection of the costs and benefits of participating in such a course.

It is difficult to break down and attribute certain actions and achievements to specific skills and experience gained from the ARLP. It is difficult to know to what extent I would have approached my personal and professional goals/projects differently had I not participated in the Course. Nevertheless, I know that my participation and learnings from the ARLP have had a significant positive influence on my approach to achieving my goals.

Of high importance to me at a personal level is that I have developed a better work/life balance which is of benefit to my family and me – and indirectly to my work. Despite still working hard and long hours, I am far better at allocating time to my family and not allowing work to encroach on that time. I have better developed my feelings about social justice and the role and expectation for the strong and privileged to care for and support those less fortunate. Our travel to South America with the ARLP helped to shape this at a personal level and can be partially reflected in my family’s decision to adopt a child from the Philippines – a five year process that began just as I was entering the ARLP and has only just been achieved with the allocation of 14-month old Rosemarie Ann to our family. We will be travelling to pick her up on the next month or two. We believe this will begin a relationship with another culture and community which will have long-lasting positive benefits to everyone in our (now extended) family.

The type of work I am doing in fisheries has also evolved from primarily a typical R&D provider role (admittedly one working closely with industry) to one in which I am endeavouring to improve the national R&D process to give the seafood and fishing industry (recreational, commercial and indigenous) greater opportunity to recognise and drive their own R&D priorities at a local and national level. The FRDC “Empowering Industry” project was the first step in this direction and has already made some significant progress. This is continuing in a current project which is endeavouring to set the process up as an effective and ongoing way in which industry’s ideas can be formalised and converted into reality. Not surprisingly – as with any change process – despite widespread support, there has been a level of resistance and concern from certain areas and people; some expected, others not. Previously, this would have been a considerable obstacle to me but various skills/experience/learning

from the ARLP have helped me to expect and cope with this and put in place ways to help address it. The Empowering Industry process is also throwing up a range of industry-driven projects that are well outside my formal training and experience. In such cases, I am comfortable to access and put together teams with the appropriate skills and experience.

A continuing emphasis of my work is to give industry a greater involvement in the research and management that supports their industry. Industry involvement in surveys and data collection is one such example; greater industry involvement in co-management of their fisheries is another. These were areas that I was involved in previously, but participation in the ARLP has reinforced my commitment in this area.

Since undertaking the ARLP course, I have taken up a mentor role for students in the National Seafood Industry Leadership Program (NSILP). Each year over the past 5 years I have mentored a student in the program and I get great enjoyment and satisfaction from this role. I see mentoring as a two-way process of benefit to both parties. I think there is opportunity for the ARLP to have a greater link to the NSILP in obtaining suitable applicants for the FRDC-sponsored positions.

From my fishery science background, the ARLP has assisted me to be able to understand, relate and influence people from the fishing industry that come from a vastly different background to that of my own. Through this, I believe that my capacity to assist the Australian seafood industry progress and develop into a viable, sustainable and profitable industry will be enhanced.

### **Return on Investment:**

I am appreciative of the opportunity provided to me by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation to undertake the Australian Rural Leadership Program. I remain committed to improving Australia's seafood industry and by undertaking the ARLP course, I have expanded and developed my networking ability, skills and experience. Through this, I believe I have developed the ability to shift my focus from particular fisheries to be able to apply my skills and experience in a coordinated and strategic manner to the issues that are faced by the seafood industry at a National level. Over the last 20 years there have been a number of government organisations, individuals and companies involved in the fishing industry that have already made considerable investments in my career development through their support and encouragement for projects that I have been involved with and in the trust and friendships that have developed over this time. The more I am involved with particular fisheries, the more I realise that most fisheries around Australia (and the world) are grappling with more-or-less the same issues with varying amounts of success. I believe that the suite of technical and leadership skills

that I have developed and are continuing to develop can be applied to these issues at a national level rather during the next twenty years of my career. The return on investment to both FRDC and the fishing industry lies in the value I can provide to the broader seafood industry in addressing and overcoming current issues and impediments so that it can perform and be recognised on an international level as a sustainable and prosperous industry that is utilising Australia's natural marine and freshwater resources in a sustainable manner for the good of the entire Australian community.

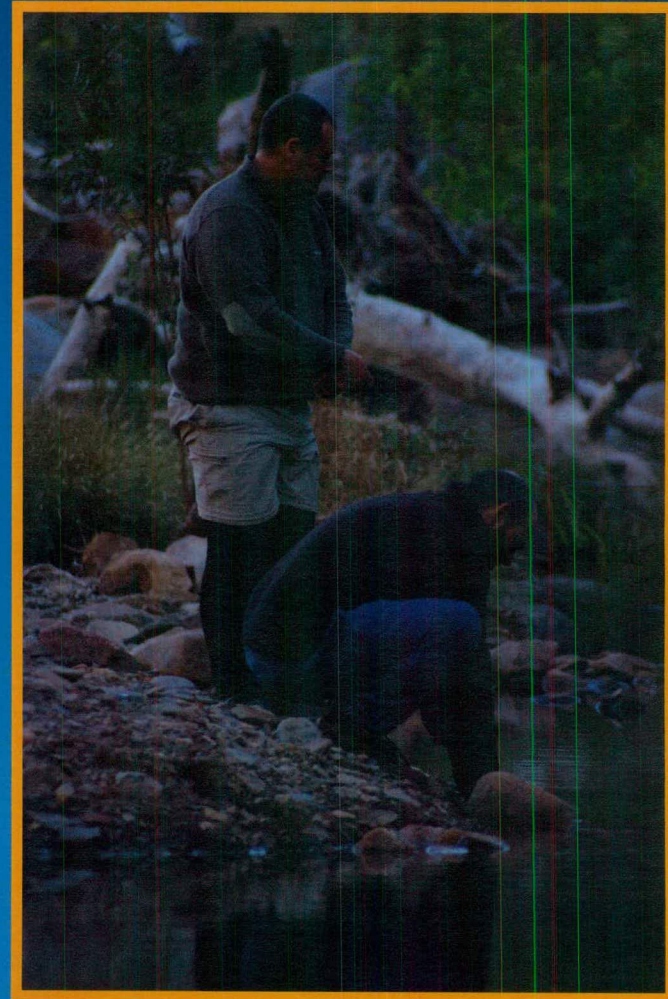
On reflection of my learnings from the ARLP, I have to conclude that it was an extremely positive and enjoyable personal experience and one from which I grew considerably. I feel privileged to have been allowed this experience and I thank the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation for their support.

# Australian Rural Leadership Program

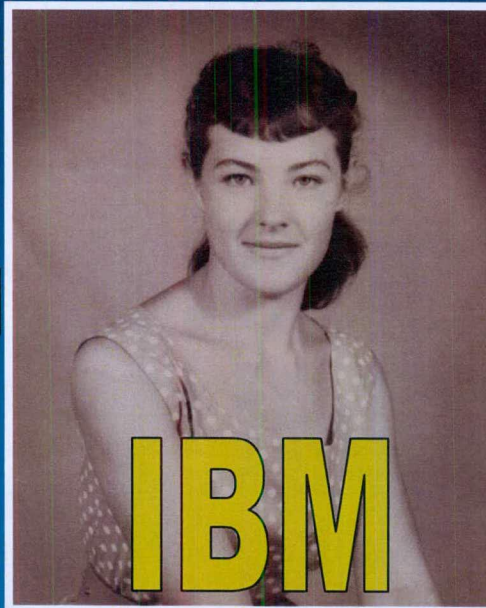
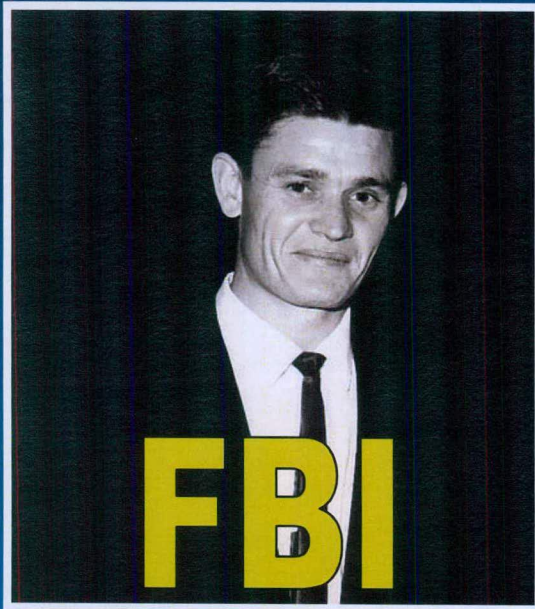
## Course 13

Mark Pagano

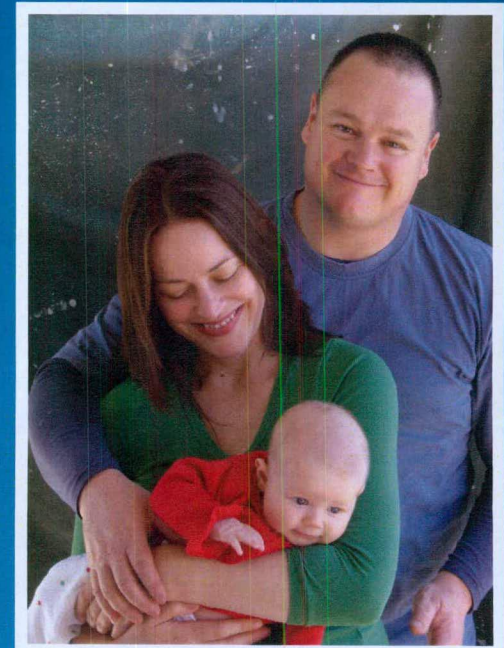
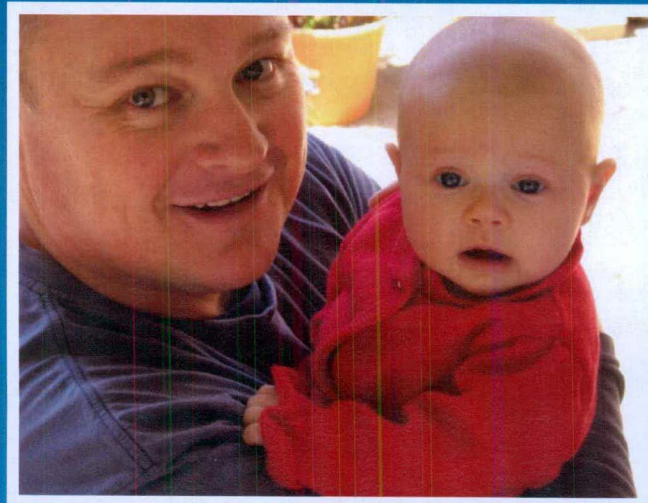
David Ellis



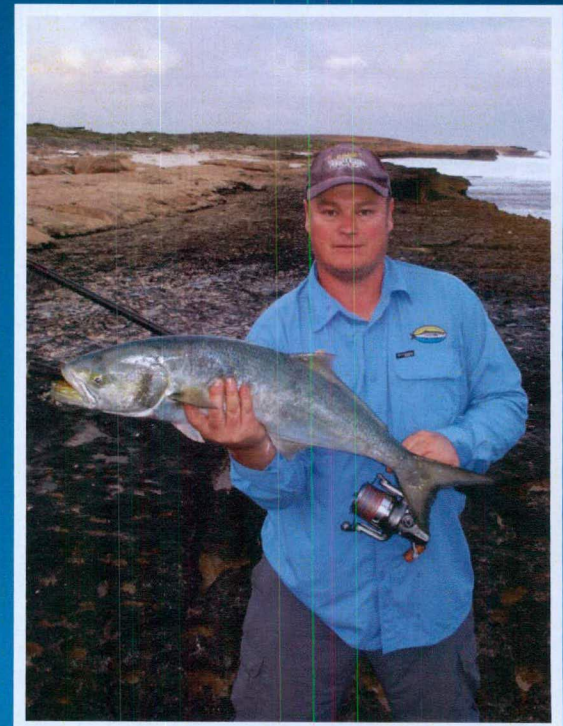
# Mark Pagano - Where it All Began



**My New Family**



# An Addiction Born





# Study Background

- Bachelor of Business - Mgt & Communications
- Bachelor of Science - Aquatic Res & Fisheries Mgt
- 1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours in Veterinary Biology
  - Coxswain
  - Open Water Diver



Funded/formally recognised (at times) by Government  
Preserving the future of recreational fishing and in particular the  
resources on which it depends

**Challenges:**

- Representative of V's Representing the Interests of Rec Anglers
- Managing expectations

## Boards and Committees

- Coral Coast Parks Advisory Committee - Ningaloo
- ACMA WA PZAC
- Developing New Fisheries Committee
- Metro Regional Rec Fishing Advisory Committee
- FRAB (WA)
- Barramundi and Threadfin Accord
- RLIAC Research Subcommittee
- Several MPA Focus Groups/Committees
- Curtin & Murdoch Uni Lecturing

# David Ellis - Background

Atlantic Salmon & mussels - TAS

Pearling - WA

SARDI Research - SA

SBT Farming

SBT Research Manager

Consultant - Finfish

Molluscs

Sardines

Higher Degree



# Boards and Committees

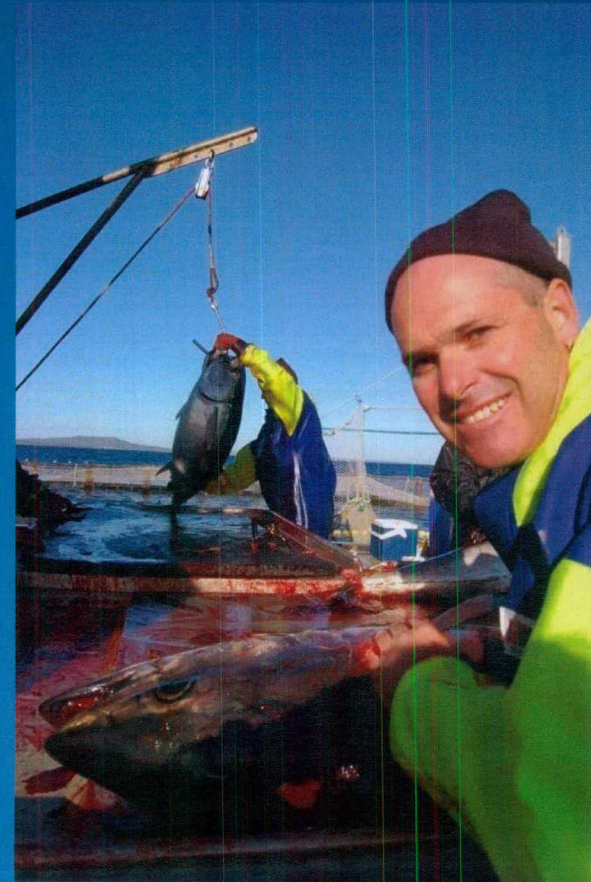
SAFRAB

Seafood Training Centre of Excellence

SBT Sub Program

FRDC People Development Reference  
Group

ERDB Fisheries Aquaculture Target  
Team



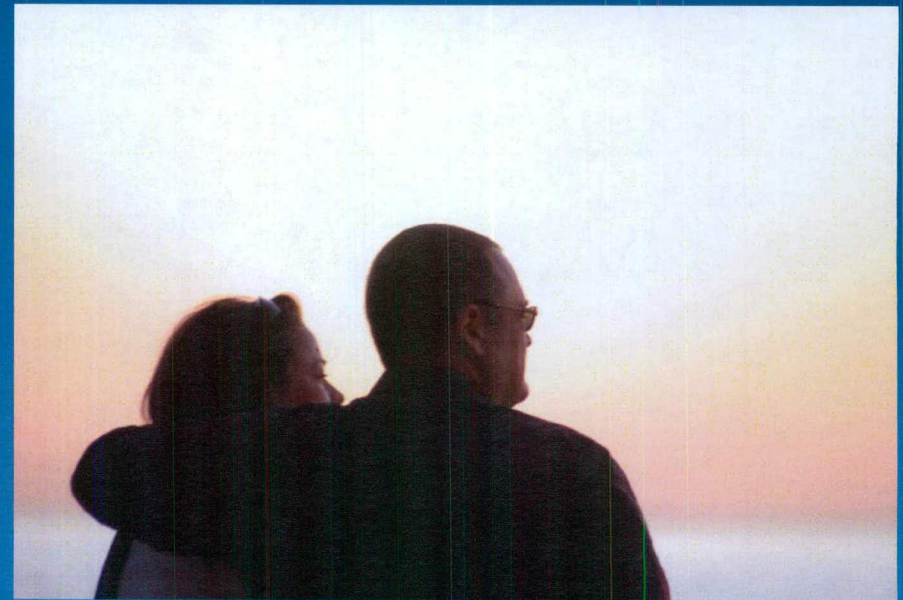
# Where did the investment go?

Kimberley Adventure Trip

Socialising

Overseas sojourn to South  
Africa

Learnings?



# ARLP Key Learning

Prioritising Life Commitments – Self Awareness  
Emotional Intelligence  
Media & Presentation Training  
Corporate Governance & Negotiation  
Conflict Transformation  
Health & Social Issues  
Indigenous Issues

# ARLP Learning in Action

## ACMA WA Submarine Cable Protection Zone

- Limited and stretched resources
- Strategic approach
- Media
- Negotiation

### Result:

An outcome that provided adequate protection for the submarine data cable whilst minimising the impact on the recreational boat fishing community



# Where to from here?

## Succession Planning

*“Leadership is vital to the success of any management advisory committee” ... Peter Rogers, WA*

*“We need succession planning and new leaders to take on roles in the seafood industry” ...Richard Stevens,  
Qld*





# Networking Rural & Regional Australia

## **10 Reef Safe Beef: Environmentally Sensitive Livestock Management for the Grazing Lands of the Great Barrier Reef Catchments**

Iain J. Gordon<sup>1</sup> and Brigid Nelson<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Sustainable Ecosystems, CSIRO – Davies Laboratory, PMB PO Aitkenvale, Qld 4814, Australia;*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries, PO Box 976, Charters Towers, Qld 4820,*

*Australia, E-mail: [iain.gordon@csiro.au](mailto:iain.gordon@csiro.au), Fax: 61 7 4753 8600*

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# The Future

## Young Future Leaders in Recreational Fishing

- Need
- Proposal
- Funding
- Recurrent project?
- Link nationally

# Indigenous young persons mentoring

Targeting Regional Skills program

6 Indigenous / 6 non indigenous  
young people per course

# How can we get the best out of Leadership Programs?

*Connectivity & Review*

**Was the FRDC investment into Mark &  
David worthwhile?**

**WATCH THIS SPACE**



## **“Reflections of My Journey”**

**ARLP  
Course 12**

**Our Vision  
“Prosperous Communities Through Innovation”**

**Our Mission  
“Our leadership will challenge boundaries and perceptions in ourselves, our communities and the Nation”**

What a journey of self evaluation, learning, challenges and changes to thought processes, leadership style and my life in general!!!

What makes a good leader? When I began this journey I had an understanding of leadership but through this ARLP experience I realise my knowledge of leadership was only miniscule. Now my expanded understanding of leadership is that;

Leadership is personal.

Leadership involves risk to you and can be very lonely.

Leadership is about understanding people, a team.

Leadership is about getting the team from point A to B and being able to motivate others along the way to continue until the job is done, whatever it takes.

A leader is a person who is in the world to make a difference. Who knows where they are going and in the context of where they have been and someone who knows they won't get anywhere unless they have good people around them to accomplish their goals.

Leaders make it happen not by luck but by good planning.

This ARLP journey has expanded my tool kit and opened my mind to the modern world of leaders and leadership styles. To be prepared to change direction in the process to achieve goals and the importance of never giving up. One small step at a time will achieve your goals.

Two of the very first of my key learnings was “Don't Assume” and “Trust the Process”. The next key learning was approach the whole experience with an open mind and learn to think outside the square.

Some key leadership learnings for me came in self management – emotional self control, the importance of not being reactive to the situation but responsive to the situation through understanding. Also by learning the importance of developing the ability to take a split second to decide what is the most appropriate thing for me to do and say now!

Personal key learnings have come from listening, learning, and sharing, then by personal reassessment and adopting changes. To share some of the learnings of importance to me have come from:

- ✓ Reassess the way I manage my thoughts, feelings and impulses
- ✓ Understand the importance of and learned to choose words more carefully
- ✓ Gaining some tools and understanding of the importance of avoiding making hasty judgements
- ✓ Refine, adapt and behave in accordance with my values, lead by example
- ✓ Understand the meaning of Ethics, refine my personal ethics and implement them in my everyday life
- ✓ Reinforce my understanding of the importance of following through on my promises no matter how long or difficult it is to achieve
- ✓ To be open to new ideas and adaptable in the face of change
- ✓ Continue to motivate myself to achieve my goals right through my life
- ✓ To Always take action to make the most of opportunities in the future
- ✓ Don't let enthusiasm outstrip my ability, know my strengths and weakness's
- ✓ Be careful not to adopt the silo mentality in my life, but be fluid in my thinking
- ✓ The value of wide communication now not down the track, keep my team informed
- ✓ Don't delegate my responsibilities, seek and accept them
- ✓ Ok to acknowledge/delegate action/activities in a given situation to a more skilled person, so surround myself with individuals for their capacity and know their skills
- ✓ Training to required task standards
- ✓ Make sound and timely decisions
- ✓ Divide activities into sections for detailed planning, never take shortcuts to planning, always do your homework prior to doing the hard yards
- ✓ Progress reporting at specific areas of planning program
- ✓ Report reviewing
- ✓ Achievement is 70% in the mind 30% in the planning/solving
- ✓ Be committed to the task
- ✓ Developing the courage to make the hard decisions and standing by my choices.

All these learnings/changes have given me the courage to challenge the system and the understanding that if it is not up to my standards, or if I am not happy, to move on. I have learned I can change myself, my leadership values or ethics, but I do not have to move along with the crowd.

Another key learning area for me has been in areas of industry and resource management with particular emphasis on the beef industry, but with adaptability and pertinence to the fishing industry.

What is it we want from agriculture and fishing? No longer is it just about producing food. There is a global picture.

In the beef industry we have many industries based around beef. By that I mean the industry is more mature in its holistic approach with the recognition of shift from a supply driven industry to a demand driven food chain. That there is an increasing power and concentration of power in the retail sector which leads into the concern of the consumer for quality, food safety and nutritional benefits that has resulted in the growing demand by these more discerning consumers for speciality and branded products. The resultant need to ensure the delivery of a quality food product as

opposed to a bulk commodity, has therefore enabling the industry to capture the premiums that are associated with this form of strategic maturity. There are many industry sectors and many people employed in producing the final table product.

Having said that, we now pay four times for our food, once each at the cash register, in taxes to support Research and Development, for cleanup environmental issues, and finally for social assessments/ fixes as rural and regional towns diminish through an ever increasing unviable rural agricultural sector.

As a result of the people factor involved in this production process there are other compounding issues. Some examples of these other issues could be, healthcare of the people, education, transportation, communication issues for families relating to the decentralisation of a working population into rural and regional Australia.

Then industry leaders must consider the holistic approach and flow on effect in the wider community to industry modernisation. For example, mechanisation of industries means fewer workers therefore less disposable incomes flowing into community economies. Smaller industry employment leads to wider community economic issues such as more expensive food, with the flow on effect of people eating less and not always wisely, wasting less and spending less on their food. Wider community employment diminishes because in today's economic environment many business decisions are made so triple bottom lines can be met and maintained. Everything in business is finance driven.

Environmental problems in food production, including the beef industry, are land degradation, climate change, draught, air pollution, surface water pollution, loss of biodiversity which influences the balance right through the food chain.

During our Brisbane session Professor Shaun Coffey, Chief CSIRO Livestock Industries, challenged us to really think what Australia's primary industry is to the economy, to the country, to the population. He challenged us to think what primary industry is really for and what are the solutions to the industry issues?

The five fundamental drivers in primary industry according to Professor Coffey are:

- ✓ Natural resources, checks and balances of nature, natural biological structures
- ✓ Social Capital, people, interactions and flows between people that create communities, the norms, values and attitudes.
- ✓ Human capital, stock of our knowledge, health, education, community participation.
- ✓ The physical environments and man made interventions.
- ✓ The financial capacity to plan life after retirement, interchange of goods for grain and other essential products.

We were asked "*what is driving the Australian beef industry? What is the industry's future?*" After our practical Queensland tours to the commercial feedlot enterprise and the beef export abattoirs I suspected that the Australian beef industry is facing quite a positive future. I had seen changes to the current operating environment, the adapt ion and modernisation of management practices. Management decisions such as traceability, productivity, specialisation and the use of limited resources all made with an industry focus on the demands of global supply and demand fundamentals. We delved into the Australian beef industry in much depth and I realise now that we are

well armed with sustainable qualitative benchmark measures after our Brazilian adventure.

After a very long flight from Sydney to Argentina then on to Sao Paulo, we were introduced to Ben our Austrade guide who would travel the whole study tour with us. Our first official lecture was delivered by Dr Ronaldo Veirano, Honorary Consul for Australia, based in Rio de Janeiro. Dr Veirano is a lawyer by profession and a Harley Davison rider by choice. A very imposing, charismatic gentleman, enthusiastic at our being in his country and keen to ensure we had a memorable time. Dr Veirano told us of the changing economy, the stabilization policies Brazil has introduced and their long term vision for the continuation of current economic partnerships and formation of joint ventures and new partnerships with global leading nations, particularly with Australia.

Dr Veirano discussed the general characteristic of Brazil and some comparisons with Australia. Considering the huge population numbers and land size differences between our two countries he was able to expand our general knowledge of his country and give us a good basic understanding of the culture of the many varied people and lands we were going to embrace on our tour.

Between 1950–2000 economically Brazil has made great strides in their general trade balances. By 2000 a stabilizing economy was beginning to show. 2001 the economy showed the beginnings of a trade surplus in GDP deficits with an increase up to 44 billion in 2005. However 2006 has seen a currency overvaluation which could show a downtrend in GDP.

1964 Brazilian agriculture products were big and have grown over the ensuing period. Industrial products have increased to now be Brazil's principal export earner. Much of this has been achieved through attitudinal changes by leaders of the country. The introduction of a policy of liberalisation and productivity, aggressive global marketing and the implementation of a realistic strategic approach to where Brazil wants to be in the world environmentally, economically, politically and culturally.

The evolution of Brazilian agriculture during the 1990s saw huge strides in structural reforms, trade liberalisation, deregulation of markets and the elimination of subsidies. With this came the economic stabilization and "The Red Plan (1994)"

Brazil still has a very high tax rate for all of 44%, very high interest rates, high borrowing and repayment regulations and difficult regulations regarding overseas companies establishing businesses in Brazil.

Our major focus of this study tour was however the beef and sugar industries of Brazil with a little on citrus fruit.

Some comparisons I have been able to draw from this tour between that the state of our beef industries are characterized by some of the following figures.

Australia has approximately 26 million head of cattle and a total value in excess of AUD5billion. Brazil has the largest commercial beef herd in the world, 170 million head, and an estimated industry value of USD30billion. Pre 2005 Australia was the larger exporter of beef but Brazil is openly committed to becoming the largest beef exporter in the world. Australia leads Brazil particularly in the areas of production and

export market development at present, but it would be unwise for Australia to not fully appreciate where Brazil is currently positioned and the huge potential of the Brazilian beef industry.

Brazil is recognised globally as a low cost producer of beef. In 2002 Brazil's beef production costs were approximately 60% lower than Australia's and 50% lower than the US.

We found on our tour that approximately 90% of the cattle herd in Brazil is based on the Zebu breed. Zebu is a *Bos indicus* breed that is well suited to the Brazilian climate (tropical and sub-tropical).

The scope for further advancements in the areas of achievable productivity advancements is vast, as are the advancements in the areas of breeding and management. Some big differences in the management of herds between the two countries are the use of genetics, and artificial insemination of herds in Brazil is considered standard practice. In fact, bull ownership is part of every astute investor's portfolio in Brazil we were told!

Another huge difference between the two industries is 95% of land in Brazil is suitable for agriculture without irrigation. There are no incidents of drought and climatic conditions are ideal for cattle production.

Feedlot is not a major feature of the Brazilian industry. Under normal seasonal conditions cattle are fed only in the 'dry' months. Feedlot expansion in Brazil is currently restricted by grain supplies. The majority of the grain grown is exported and there is the fact that cattle prices do not transparently reward grain – fed production.

Risk management of herds for both countries has its similarities but major differences too. The biggest differing issue is Foot and Mouth Disease. Brazil has undertaken a huge program to eliminate this disease not only from within its own borders, but from its neighbours' lands as well. They are achieving the elimination of the disease by vaccination of their herds and the supply of vaccine and educational programs to their neighbours. All Brazilian commercial cattle exported to the global market must now have a certificate verifying vaccination status, and there are controls on cattle movements.

Brazil and Australia have developed their global markets from entirely different perspectives. Australia has always exported unprocessed products, whereas Brazil initially developed its export markets in the areas of cooked and canned beef products and low cost cuts to less quality demanding markets. Brazil has increased its international marketing focus to include a variety of processed and value added beef products with a greater emphasis on fresh cuts. By comparison Australia still remains focused on the export of fresh beef, either in the form of high value cuts or as manufacturing grade frozen and fresh product.

Both countries had adjusted to global demands by becoming innovative in the adoption of food technologies, traceability and market aggression. The cultures of the two countries lead to different interpretations of the "norm". For example Brazilian exporters believe that most of the trade barriers they face are not sanitary but purely a form of thinly veiled protectionism. Australia has to date not had to "compete" on the

global stage with Brazil for market share but has had some exposure to competition within secondary markets such as in the Philippines.

There appears to be no doubt that Brazil remains one step behind Australia on most aspects but many of the challenges in the future it faces are also faced by Australia producers. Some of these challenges appear to be;

- ✓ Fragmented organisational structure and value chain
- ✓ Trade barriers
- ✓ Inexperience in international markets, (relationship building, marketing techniques)
- ✓ Logistical constraints
- ✓ Implementation of animal traceability
- ✓ Return of more traditional exporting countries
- ✓ Product quality and
- ✓ Disease constraints.

Sugar cane growth, sugar and ethanol production is also a very big Brazilian industry. In 2005, 95% of this crop was grown over 5 million hectares in the Central South region where irrigated land is plentiful. Cane plantings in Brazil over recent years have increased by 7% a year with an expectation that in 10 years time this figure will have doubled. Brazil produced 380million tonnes of cane while Australia produced only 35 million tonnes.

In Brazil sugar cane is grown for both the production of sugar for export and ethanol mostly for internal use but some is exported. Because of the higher export values of these commodities there has been recently a revaluation of the Brazilian Real.

Ethanol production in Brazil has been happening since 1980's, when world oil prices were high 93% of local vehicles were run on ethanol mixed fuels. When fossil fuel prices began to fall during the 1990's and early twentieth century ethanol production dropped away. However, post 2002 with the increases in fossil fuel prices changes have occurred in the balance of supply and demand for ethanol. Demand has gone up so high that supply cannot keep up. During the next three years Brazil estimates that they will build 90 new ethanol plants which will take their productive mill numbers to over 400, just in the central southern region alone.

In Brazil they use vehicle engines produced by such companies as Fiat, General Motors, Volkswagen, and others. These engines have a chip in them to read the fuel mixtures and adjust to use/combinations. The common engine size is 2.2 litre capacity. These vehicles can use 100% ethanol or gas. Brazil is selling approximately 1,800,000 vehicles a year. In 2005 50% and 2006 80% vehicles are Flexi fuel powered. By comparison Australia is missing the legislation to use ethanol to this extent. Queensland however has taken the initiative and is very interested in developing an ethanol industry using their sugar cane production.

Brazilian population consumes approximately 52 kilos of sugar per inhabitant. Australian industrial sugar production uses 80% of our production domestically. Brazil has increased its exports of sugar from 1993 to 2005 by 15 million tonnes.

In summary of our Brazilian trip my key learnings and comparisons to Australia are:

- ✓ Brazil's ability and flexibility to change and make things happen
- ✓ Their huge unused resources – capacity for growth
- ✓ The lack of understanding by Australia of Brazilian culture, economic capacity and political system
- ✓ The investment opportunities available in Brazil
- ✓ The scale of social, environmental and political issues in Brazil
- ✓ The similarities between many aspects of Brazilian and Australian environments
- ✓ Differences between the Brazilian and Australian bureaucracy and processes and
- ✓ Brazil's environmental awareness of the Amazon and the laws in place to minimize further degradation of the area.

In Australia we must add water. In Brazil they must add money. Brazil also has huge red tape, corruption and complexity problems leading to difficulties for foreign companies to establish businesses in their country.

Australia on the other hand seems hell bent on selling our assets and iconic businesses as quickly as possible to overseas investors!

Thankyou to Fisheries Research and Development Commission for the opportunity to participate in this amazing two year Australian rural leadership journey. Next week I commence employment with Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry so I am sure that my new skills will be extremely useful in my employment and I know they are helping to shape my personal future.