

## FINAL REPORT (DEVELOPMENT AWARD)

### AWARD CODE and TITLE

**2008/326.30** People Development Program: FRDC indigenous development scholarship – Paul King

**AWARD RECIPIENT:** Paul King

**ADDRESS:** PO Box 680 Thursday Island

**HOST ORGANISATION:** Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)

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**DATE:** 30 August 2011

### ACTIVITY UNDERTAKEN

The FRDC Indigenous Development Scholarship provided an opportunity for Paul King to help develop his skills and knowledge in what was required to manage his pearl farm located at Saibai Island. To aid Paul in developing his skills and knowledge, he had two mentors Shoichi Mizuno and Steve Cordeiro. As a result of this program Paul was able to take a positive approach to developing his business. Unfortunately, not all of the key learnings were address in this scholarship. Paul will need further development in the areas of human resource management and team leadership.

### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

*Keeping in contact is paramount. The sharing of grassroot ideas is important. Just the affordable help, the listening and solutions is great.* This comment by Paul certainly shows that the mentoring program was beneficial for him especially when it gave him an opportunity to learn from his mentors and their experiences. This program certainly met Paul's expectations and he was able to obtain valuable information on business planning, prioritising and the value of establishing a brand for his product. From a technical perspective it gave Paul the opportunity to re-evaluate his farm and the manner in which he manages his farm now and in the future.

### Background

In May 2008, Paul King was awarded an FRDC Indigenous Development Scholarship. This scholarship would support Paul over a two-year period and during that time Paul would have two mentors assisting him with the technical and the business aspects of handling a pearl farm.

### Need and objectives

The aim of this scholarship was to enhance Paul King's knowledge and skills in the management of pearl farming and business management.

The key areas Paul wanted to develop were:

- Farm management - understanding of culturing techniques required for pearl aquaculture.
- Project management – ability to develop strategies to focus on outcomes, provide direction for the business and aid in management decisions.
- Human resource management – team building and developing Paul’s skills to become a team leader.
- Develop personal skills – become a mentor in farm management and business management.

During the scholarship, it was determined that the human resource management objective was not a high priority. The focus for Paul was to develop his knowledge and skills in farm management.

### **Methods**

To assist Paul in addressing the four key areas it was agreed that he will need two mentors, one to cover the technical aspects (Shoichi Mizuno) and the other mentor (Steve Cordeiro) to address the business requirements.

The manner in which Paul engaged with his mentors was through organised meetings in Cairns, on site training at Saibai Island or discussions via the phone. It was agreed in the early stages for Paul to consult with his mentors on a weekly if not a fortnightly basis.

Any data relating to the management of the farm would be sent to Shoichi Mizuno on a monthly basis. Shoichi Mizuno would explain the results of this data and help Paul with any technical information that he required.

To help broaden Paul’s knowledge in pearl culture and to establish industry networks, he attended the 2010 Australasian Aquaculture Conference in Hobart.

### **Results/Discussion**

#### Benefits to Paul.

Initial discussions with Shoichi Mizuno and Paul it was agreed that there were a number of areas where Paul could develop his skills during the scholarship. Table one lists the topics covered by Shoichi Mizuno during the scholarship. Throughout the period of Paul’s scholarship, there were meetings in Cairns and two site visits at Saibai Island. During the farm visits, Shoichi Mizuno was able to provide on farm training for Paul. Some of the topics discussed during these on site visits were shell husbandry for pre and post operation, procedures for preparing the shell for the operation and disease monitoring.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Skills to be Developed</b>
Shell Management	Disease monitoring
	Turning Program
	Operation process
	Shell Husbandry
	Monitoring eg Water Quality, Data Collection, Epiphytic growth and shell growth

Water Quality	Temperature
	Salinity
Pearl Farm layout	Longline designs which are suitable for the site.
	Layout of lines within the approved area.

Table 1. Skills that Paul was to develop during his two indigenous Scholarship.

In regards to developing Paul's knowledge and skills in business management, Steve Cordeiro helped cover aspects that would help Paul's business in the long term. One of these areas was the development of establishing a trade name "Kisai Peals" and benefits this would have to Paul's company. Another item that arose during Paul's scholarship was a business proposal from an Okinawa pearling company. During this period, Steve was able to provide some advice to Paul about things he would need to consider before engaging the company and tactics in negotiation.

#### Difficulties experienced during the Scholarship.

During the scholarship it became quite clear that the tyranny of distance and remoteness of Thursday island was having a factor in Paul's development. Even though Paul had some contact with his mentors it was quite evident that one of the main issues that came out this scholarship was the lack of communication between Paul and his two mentors. It appeared that the cost to maintain contact via the phone and the inability to access a computer and communicate via email was a major factor.

From a hosts organisation perspective maintaining Paul's momentum during the scholarship was difficult at times. The outcomes may have been different for Paul if he had regular contact not only with the host organisation but also with his mentors.

## **Conclusion**

*Keeping in contact is paramount. The sharing of grassroot ideas is important. Just the affordable help, the listening and solutions is great.* This comment by Paul certainly shows that the mentoring program was beneficial for him especially when it gave him an opportunity to learn from his mentors and their experiences. This program certainly met Paul's expectations and he was able to obtain valuable information on business planning, prioritising and the value of establishing a brand for his product. From a technical perspective it gave Paul the opportunity to re-evaluate his farm and the manner in which he manages his farm now and in the future.