

# National Seafood Industry Leadership Program 2009

## Program Report



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## NSILP Program Overview

The National Seafood Industry leadership Program equips individuals with skills; networks and; a whole of industry perspective, giving them the opportunity to represent their industry make a contribution at a national level in the future. The program comprises three residential sessions over six months with participants making a commitment to undertake a significant industry project during that time. The NSILP design focuses on creating effective linkages between current leaders and participants through mentoring, industry information sessions and participation at program dinners.

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation has formed a partnership with Rural Training Initiatives to design and deliver the NSILP. Rural Training Initiatives has been part of the facilitation team and has delivered the seven years of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation funded national program. The program has now graduated seven groups of future industry leaders.

The NSILP is the only national seafood industry specific leadership program and was initially designed in consultation with seafood industry people through the work of the Australian Fisheries Academy and was delivered for seven years by Leading Industries. In excess of seventy graduates of all ages and from all sectors of the industry have benefited from the skills and knowledge developed during the program.

The course focuses on developing the skills that participants can apply at three levels – personal, business and industry. They are also encouraged to develop and implement plans associated with these three strategic areas. The NSILP participants will also be involved in a nationally strategic project.

Graduates have gone on to apply their skills to a variety of areas including regional network development, regional and state industry association boards and reference committees and effective business management. The content of the program ensures that participants are exposed to handling conflict, effective communication, efficient meetings, high performance team building, managing change and media training.

As part of the NSILP, participants are challenged with having to develop a project concept or strategies that will help achieve not only their vision for the seafood community but their mission for the group over the six month program.

## NSILP Participants 2009

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## NSILP 2009 Project

As a group, the NSILP 2009 participants agreed on the following vision and mission for the Australian seafood community and together devised a series of strategies to underpin this. The strategies focus on communication and education, conflict resolution and capacity building.

### ***Vision:***

A cohesive seafood community based on pride, ownership and respect

### ***Mission:***

Deliver a program to improve communication of the Australian seafood community through promotion, education and awareness.

### ***Strategies:***

1. The Australian Seafood Experience.
2. Communication to the next generation network to decrease conflict between industry players.
3. Training to increase capacity for decision making.

## Personal NSILP Experience

It has been a great privilege to have been able to take part in the 2009 National Seafood Industry Leadership Program. The experience for me has been challenging, empowering, informative, and confidence boosting and has provided me with a new set of skills that will enable me to grow from both a personal and professional perspective.

The program has given me a whole of industry perspective and introduced me to a wide network of key people within the Australian seafood community. It has been a great learning experience to be able to work with a group of diverse people from a range of sectors across the seafood industry and to be able to gain an understanding of their particular issues and points of view.

The delivery of the program is such where, from the start, each participant is encouraged to push themselves to a point where the experience is challenging and perhaps a little uncomfortable but at which learning is maximized. As a group, the emphasis was on working together as a team with minimal guidance from the facilitators. This, although demanding, meant that we had to step up very quickly and take responsibility and ownership for the task in hand which in turn made the learning experience all encompassing and extremely rewarding.

We engaged in a range of different workshops during the program, of which those highlighted below were for me the most significant in terms of the learning outcomes and the greater understanding I gained as a result.

What is leadership?  
Different leadership styles  
Communication and feedback  
Building teams  
Personalities  
Meetings  
Handling media  
Power and behaviour  
Lobbying  
Handling conflict  
Mentoring  
Networking  
Whole of industry perspective  
Introduction to current leaders within the industry

I particularly enjoyed the residential session in Canberra where we were able to engage with key industry representatives. One of the highlights of the program for me was the meeting that was set up in Parliament house with the Minister for Agriculture Food and Forestry (Hon. Tony Burke). This was a great opportunity for the group and provided us all with a new experience of the formalities of such a situation and how to engage an official figure such as the minister.



The program has given me the ability to define those leadership skills I currently possess and what skills I would like to gain or develop in order to progress further both personally and professionally. One of my goals is to have the courage of my convictions and to move to become an information provider rather than an information receiver. The NSILP program has given me the confidence to do this and the foundation to take the next step within my personal and professional development.

The most significant outcome for me as a result of the program would be that I have learnt that I am able to do much more than I thought I could. I now understand the vital importance of being prepared and knowing my own limitations. That I recognize that I can shape and influence those around me for the greater good, not by being the loudest or the most forthright but by employing the key leadership skills that I have that are described as more 'feminine', is very empowering for me.

I was part of the strategy group that worked together as a team on the project "The Australian Seafood Experience". We were a group of 8 participants, geographically spread from SA to far north QLD. Two of the most formative lessons in leadership were presented by the challenges of distance and time that we had to overcome to work together on our project. It was demanding, trying to dedicate time and resources to the project whilst juggling full time jobs and busy home lives, with the added difficulty of not being able to meet up. However the experience was uplifting as our group, despite representing diverse sectors of the seafood community, was committed and passionate about the project and the potential positive outcomes for industry.

We were able to deliver a comprehensive presentation of our strategy to members of the FRDC, Sydney Fish Market, Seafood CRC and other key industry representatives on the final day of our Canberra residential.



# Strategy Project – An Australian Seafood Experience

## Mission:

Deliver a program to improve the communication of the Australian Seafood community through promotion, education and awareness.

## Strategy Title:

An Australian Seafood Experience.

## Summary

The idea for an Australian Seafood Experience came from the brilliant experience that we had as a group with Adventure Bay Charters run by Matt Waller in Port Lincoln. We took his boat tour out into the bay and experienced farmed tuna close up and were able to swim with them in their sea cage. This personal experience was engaging and informative and left us with a good understanding of the industry we had been exposed to. We identified a great untapped resource in the seafood community of business value adding by encouraging locals and tourists within their community, to come and visit their businesses and engage in a close up experience of the product / production method / catch method / preparation method etc.

We determined that there is a desperate need for the Australian seafood community as a whole to “collectively delight” its consumers and customers. By breaking down the barriers between industry and the consumer by way of opening doors and welcoming the general public in to get a behind the scenes look at the industry, would foster greater understanding and insight in consumers for the community from which their Australian seafood comes from. The Eyre Seafood Experience Trail in SA is one such concept that has taken off and is a great example of an initiative where a small group of seafood producers / restaurants and retailers have come together with the support of the local tourism board to provide an exciting and positive seafood experience for locals and visitors to the area.

Our strategy project aim was to look at how this model might be rolled out on a national scale using a central website portal as the directory or interface to connect the subscribers and users.

## **Strategy Goal and Objectives:**

### **1. *Facilitate effective and efficient information sharing of national seafood experiences.***

- 1.1 Undertake a desk top audit of current Australian seafood trails and/or food trails.
- 1.2 Develop the basic model for a national website that supports and promotes seafood experiences regionally but which is also appealing to website visitors.
- 1.3 Investigate the short falls and/or obstacles encountered by others in the development of their seafood trails and associated websites.
- 1.4 Develop a template for regional tourism boards and businesses to ensure standardised information is included on the national website.
- 1.5 Identify possible bodies and/or organisations that could manage such a website in the future.
- 1.6 Identify potential subscribers and funders of the website.

### **2. *Improve community knowledge about the Australian seafood industry and the resources on which it relies.***

- 2.2 Improve the public's perception of the Australian seafood industry by highlighting the many unique and memorable seafood experiences available around the country.
- 2.2 Promote awareness of the Australian seafood industry through the provision of educational DVDs and other factual information which tells the seafood industry story.
- 2.3 Investigate the idea of developing an Australian Seafood Ambassador to promote and lift the profile of Australian seafood as a whole.
- 2.4 Identify other innovative ways to help promote readership and use of the website.

### **3. *Promote partnerships within the seafood industry on a regional and national level.***

- 3.1 Identify regional champions that will help coordinate participation and support at a local level.



- 3.2 Identify and list geographic clusters of seafood businesses located throughout the various states and territories which could offer a range of local experiences to visitors.
- 3.3 Develop a comprehensive database of local seafood industry businesses / individuals that would be interested in subscribing to a national website.
- 3.4 Promotion of a consistent message at a national level about the seafood industry.

### **Strategy Implementation Process:**

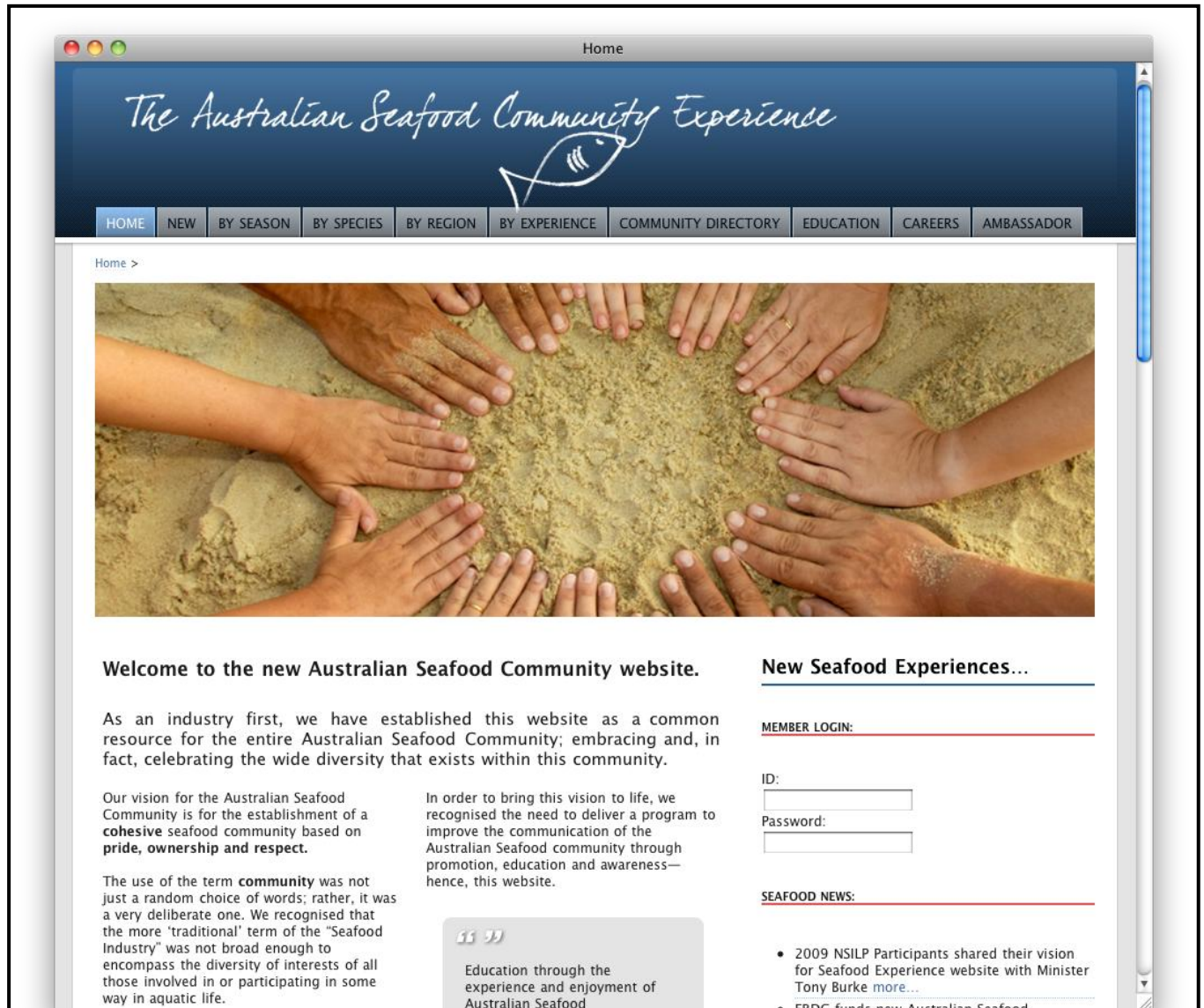
- Undertook a desk top audit of other seafood and/or seafood trails to ascertain their objectives, funding sources, membership, services offered, promotional tools, obstacles and secrets to ongoing success.
- Engaged with numerous seafood industry representatives.
- Highlighted potential funders and subscribers to the national website through verbal discussions with such people.

### **Strategy Outcomes:**

1. Identified the need for a collective, positive and consistent display of all things seafood at a national level.
2. Provided an idea that allows the seafood industry to showcase and communicate their product, knowledge and businesses.
3. Provided a basic structure / model for a national seafood experience website.
4. Developed the outline for an educational DVD and identified the need for an Australian Seafood Community Ambassador.
5. Gauged the interest in a comprehensive database of seafood businesses, individuals, subscribers and funders interested in any eventual national website.
6. Provided recommendations on how to avoid the pitfalls of other more regional seafood trail websites.

### **Strategy Next Steps:**

- A scoping study for a national seafood experience trail that provides a link between the Australian seafood industry and the wider community will need to be undertaken.
- Development of a National Seafood Tourism Strategy



*Demonstration Australian Seafood Experience website page*

## Acknowledgements

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