

# **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 and 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 that 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 areas. The NSILP participants will also be involved in a nationally strategic project.

Graduates have gone on to apply their skills to a wide 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.

**Overview sourced from the Rural Training Initiative Notes**

**Task**

On our first residential in Port Lincoln our first task was to come up with a vision and mission for the future of the national seafood community. With a large group of eighteen people from diverse backgrounds this was no easy task. After nutting out what we felt the vision and mission should be, as a full group we had to create strategies to achieve this.

**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

On the last day of the Port Lincoln residential, participants chose which strategy group they wished to work in. I chose strategy number 2 because I think that communication within my industry and between my industry and other industries could be improved.

## My Experience

The National Seafood Industry Leadership Program (NSILP) brings a diverse group of people from throughout the seafood industry together. Participants come from sectors such as recreational, indigenous, research, government, aquaculture and wild catch. Bringing all sectors together created a great opportunity for networking and learning from each.

Rural training Initiatives have been running the NSILP for seven years now, with over seventy graduates. The six month long program aims to improve the necessary skills that leaders in the seafood community require. For me the National Seafood Industry Leadership Program has been an extremely challenging experience. It has been great for me to work with such talented people from all different sectors. The skills that I will be able to take back to my industry will be invaluable.

From the first residential in Port Lincoln we were pushed as a group to work together and provide each other with feedback. With most of the exercises there was very little guidance from the facilitators. Although this was daunting at first it was a great way to make everyone as a group think quickly and take responsibility.

There was a vast range of content in NSILP that was spread over the three residential sessions. Some of the workshops were able to push me right out of my comfort zone, while other things I was quite comfortable with. The table below outlines the three residential sessions and where the program content fits in.

<u>Residential 1</u>	<u>residential 2</u>	<u>residential 3</u>
<b>Port Lincoln</b>	<b>Sydney</b>	<b>Canberra</b>
Identifying Leadership	Media & Messages	Looking Forward
Communication	Powers & Behaviours	Lobbying
Personalities	Teams & Leadership	Reflexion
Building Teams	Handling Conflict	The Next Step
Networking		
Leadership Theories		
Meetings		

One other aspect of the program is the internal and external mentoring. On the last day of the Port Lincoln residential we were asked to choose an internal and external mentor. I chose both of my mentors based on people who I thought were complete opposites of me. The aim of mentoring in regard to the program was to keep in contact throughout and after the program has concluded, to gain support and guidance.

I think the most enjoyable part of NSILP was the Sydney residential where we had the first day at the Sydney fish markets. I really enjoyed the tour and also that night we had our industry dinner in the Sydney fish market cooking school. That night I had my most upfront role of the program, I presented a profile of my industry and myself for all participants and guests.

The NSILP has shown me how to manage time a lot more affectively. It was a real struggle at times throughout the program juggling going abalone diving on the west coast (where I am out of contact for extended periods of time), tending to Tasmanian Abalone Council needs, and finding time to work on the NSILP strategy. The program has shown me to take time to become as prepared as possible and communicate as much as possible so the objective is always clear. I have also developed an understanding of how to help others use there strengths and to know what your skills and strengths are and how to put them to work in the best way possible.

My Strategy group consisted of four other people from four other states. The fact that we were unable to regularly meet to discuss our project became an obstacle itself. It was a challenge trying to keep all members in contact and manage our personal lives as well. It was satisfying in Canberra when everything came together when we presented our strategy to FRDC, Sydney Fish Market and the Seafood CRC.



Elaine Patton, Joey McKibben, Bo Carne  
Picture taken at the Sydney Fish Market cooking school

## **Strategy Project**

### **Strategy Title:**

Communication to the next generation network to decrease conflict between industry players.

### **Mission:**

To deliver a program that involves all sectors of the seafood community to decrease cross sector conflict on sharing of the resource.

### **Summary of Strategy:**

The idea to decrease conflict amongst industry players rose because of the range of people in the program. Of the five people in our strategy group, three were from wild catch fisheries, one from aquaculture and one from the recreational sector. The fact that we all had conflict in our industries gave us something in common.

As a strategy group we thought the best way to reduce conflict would be to educate people from the seafood community through a facilitated program. To begin our research, we outlined the five main sectors of the seafood community, which are aquaculture, environmental, indigenous, recreational and commercial (wild catch). As there were five people in our strategy we chose one sector each.

The next step was to contact peak bodies throughout Australia and ask them the following questions;

1. Does a program in conflict resolution already exist?
2. What are the major conflicts associated within your own sector?
3. What major conflicts can you identify within the seafood/fishing industry?
4. How do these conflicts between and within industry affect your sector?
5. Does your sector have any conflict resolution methods in place (formal/informal)
6. Does your sector have succession planning (training of next generation leaders)?
7. What conflict resolution does your sector incorporate into succession planning?
8. Would your sector consider becoming actively involved in decreasing conflict between key industry players (key players being those from recreational, wild catch, aquaculture, indigenous, government, environment), through the next generation with a formation of a national industry body?

Finding the appropriate bodies to contact became difficult as not all states have peak bodies, so we had to source our research from individual sectors.

The task of our strategy was to create a seafood community program that would bring people from all sectors of the seafood community together to work on resolving issues at hand.

### **Outcomes of the Strategy**

After talking to all individual and peak bodies, we had achieved wider acceptance from the seafood community, that there was a need for a program to at least bring sectors together who are in conflict over sharing of a resource.

At first we thought it would be a national program, but when talking to bodies realised that it would be better to run it as a state based project.

Rural Training Initiatives supplied us with a program outline called **Discontinuing Conflict A Seafood Pilot Project**. This program would be a three day course that would bring sectors together. Some of the content in the course would include

- Understanding conflict and knowing each other
- Building teams
- Effective Meetings
- Power and Behaviour
- Handling Conflict
- Templates for success
- Conflict is essential, how can it be positive

If the program was to get funding we would begin with running a pilot program in Tasmania as the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council (TSIC) showed a lot of enthusiasm towards the project and were a great peak body to work with.

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