

National Seafood Industry Leadership Program 2010

Ben Cameron, Jedd Routledge and Matt West

2010/712



AUSTRALIAN
SEAFOOD
COOPERATIVE
RESEARCH CENTRE

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PROJECT NO: 2010/712

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Ben Cameron (Cameron of Tasmania), Jedd Routledge (Natural Oysters) and Matt West (Australian Prawn Farmers)

PROJECT: National Seafood Industry Leadership Program 2010

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE:

Three CRC industry participants graduated from the national seafood industry leadership program in September 2010 and developed and implemented a 'mile in my shoes' strategy to engage members of industry. Groundwork has also been done in creating a 'all-in-one' training provider website (linking all training and funding) that will help the seafood industry up skill current staff and recruit potential staff.

**(PROJECT) OUTPUTS DEVELOPED AS RESULT OF TRAVEL GRANT/
INDUSTRY BURSARY:**

- Engagement strategy for industry
- PowerPoint presentation on strategy
- Presentation notes
- Vision workshop for APFA executives

ABOUT THE PROJECT/ACTIVITY

BACKGROUND AND NEED – There is a need for industry members to develop knowledge and skills for effective representation and to actively engage with decision making process that impact them. Industry members need to build skills to ensure they have a profitable, sustainable and socially responsible industry.

RESULTS – The National Seafood Industry Leadership Program provides a range of skills and knowledge for effective leadership and engagement with industry. It also provides a forum to interact with current industry leaders and learn from their experiences. As a result of the program, skills learnt and networks made are applied for the improvement of various aspects of industry.

INDUSTRY IMPACT

SUMMARY OF CHANGE IN INDUSTRY

The National Seafood Industry Leadership Program provided a wide ranging forum to engage with industry leaders from Australia. It also provided the skills and confidence to engage with these leaders at a personal and professional level.

Ben Cameron met with the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council, Tasmania's peak industry body, and had the opportunity to meet with the board of directors. They were able to share their experiences and advice for his future in similar roles. He has also taken on a position in the Tasmanian Oyster Research Council as a Director.

Matt West was already part of the Australian Prawn Farmers Association R&D committee when the program started. After the program, Matt was nominated and accepted a position on the executive APFA executive committee. It was here that he initiated and organised a vision workshop for executives of the Australian Prawn Farmers Association to create a united body within the organisation that would focus on strategic planning for the future of the industry. This was facilitated by Dr John Whiteoak from the University of the Sunshine Coast.

Jedd Routledge has used the opportunity to become a better leader in the family-run business "Natural Oysters" based in Coffin Bay, South Australia

As part of the team work with NSILP 2010, Ben Jedd and Matt developed a 'Mile in My Shoes' strategy that aims to engage members of industry on a personal level and improve understanding and cooperation (see attached brief and article). They also developed other ideas to encourage training in the seafood industry through making an easier portal to access the information on all training and funding opportunities.

WHAT FUTURE AND ONGOING CHANGES ARE EXPECTED?

There will be a greater engagement with key representative bodies and a more strategic approach to business matters and addressing industry concerns.

There will be an active continuation of “Mile in My Shoes’ concept with on-going funding to be sourced from external funding providers.

The program provided significant networks that will be used into the future to gain knowledge seek assistance and promote industry. The program will also be promoted to other industry members and assistance offered for those who participate.

There will be greater involvement in boards relating to enhancing the correct skills needed for industry.

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

IF NOT ALREADY HAPPENING, WHEN WILL THE CHANGES OCCUR?

Ben Cameron intends to take on an executive job on the council as soon as he has the relevant experience to fully act in such a role.

Matt West has already taken on an executive position with the APFA post NSILP, and initiated a vision workshop that has been professionally facilitated which aims to have a lasting impact on the APFA executives, uniting them as a team and creating a common goal for the future. If asked, Matt will also take on a higher role on the board.

WHAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THESE CHANGES WILL OCCUR?

For Ben Cameron the change is very high, as other council members have already demonstrated a desire for him to increase responsibility as a representative of younger oyster farmers. Jedd Routledge is aiming to follow in Ben’s footsteps as a representative of a “new breed” of oyster farmers that entrepreneurial and display good management skills.

For Matt West, the workshop will bring about change for the long term as the executives will now be working together towards their identified R&D priorities.

WHAT BARRIERS ARE THERE TO ADOPTION OF THESE CHANGES AND WHAT ACTION COULD BE TAKEN TO OVERCOME THESE?

There are significant barriers in the industry for change.

The seafood industry is dominated by an older generation with cultural attitudes and beliefs that do not always serve the best interest of the industry. Recent work has shown that a great number of industry representatives have been in their roles for over 20 years and the majority are 50+ years old. As a result there can be resistance to young people and new ideas entering the industry.

Young members are often very time poor and this can be a barrier for taking on representative/leadership roles or to even engage on issues impacting the sector. This combined with the feeling that 'nothing ever gets done' can be serious detractors for young people to get involved.

Effective communication and the NSILP Mentoring Program are two ways to address these barriers.

COMMUNICATION OF PROJECT/EXTENSION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

- Articles in Fishing Today.
- Face to Face communication at industry forums, conferences and meetings.
- Article in the Port Lincoln Times
- Workshop with Dr John Whiteoak for APFA executives
- Direct communication with the Queensland Skills Formation Strategy regarding approaches to up skilling current employees and recruiting future industry members

WHAT IS THE OUTPUT THAT NEEDS TO BE COMMUNICATED?

The key output to be communicated is that young people in the seafood industry need to develop skills to take on leadership roles and have influence in the decision making process that impact their industries. NSILP provides a fantastic opportunity to do this.

WHO IS/ARE THE TARGET AUDIENCE/S?

The target audience is young industry members (16-35), particularly business owners in the aquaculture sector.

WHAT ARE THE KEY MESSAGES?

NSILP provides a unique opportunity to learn leadership skills including communication, conflict resolution and decision making. It provided a practical way to apply and develop these skills through the team Vision, Mission and project work.

NSILP provided the opportunity to meet with industry leaders, other industry members and present to them your own sector. This networking was one of the key benefits to the course and it is this type of interaction that works to create a more cohesive industry.

WHAT IS THE CALL TO ACTION?

Stand up and be counted! If you want change in your industry YOU need to do it!

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Channel	Who by	When
Industry forums, such as Shellfish Futures and SAOGA conference.	Oyster Consortium CEO	In the lead up to and at the next Shellfish Futures Conference.
Email	Oysters Tas CEO	On going
Industry news	TSIC	Feb-March 2011 issue Apr-May 2011 issue TSIC Website ongoing
Newspaper – Port Lincoln Times	Jedd Routledge	Nov 2010
Various ABC Rural interviews	Matt West	Over last 6 months

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDBACK?

There were barriers in convincing employers that it was a worthwhile training event and that there would be measurable outcomes. There needs to be an information pack about how much is actually covered the benefits and what practical implementable skills the employee will come away with.

Although the sessions were excellent, some of the excursions lacked purpose. There are a lot of contacts that existed within the group to enhance some of the excursions or sessions. Maybe a call for help to enhance the schedule would not go astray.

FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED?

The industry needs to continue to provide mentoring and support for and require graduates to demonstrate how the program has benefited them..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jill Briggs and Chris Calogeras of Rural Training Initiatives
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Australian Seafood CRC

APPENDIX (IF APPLICABLE)

See presentation notes of the industry engagement strategy “A mile in my shoes”