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TASMANIAN SEAFOOD INDUSTRY NEWS
PRESIDENT REPORT

It certainly has been a busy couple of months for TSIC and the seafood industry sector associations.
In late May, the TSIC Chief Executive and I attended the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fishermen’s Association General Meeting in Launceston, with the TSIC CE having the additional role of official minute taker!

It was great to see a very well attended meeting with some 80 to go TRLFA members there. It was even better to see some younger faces in the crowd, with many ‘better halves of the fishes’, the wives, also in attendance. There was certainly some robust discussion and debate throughout the day. During early May, the TSIC CE also joined the TRLFA for their ‘Tour of Tasmania’ Port Visits. Yet again it was great to see such a good turnout to these meetings, most notably in the north of the state. I would like to thank Clive, John and the TRLFA Board for the opportunity to not only be part of these important forums, but for also providing TSIC with the opportunity to make a formal presentation at the port visits and the General Meeting.

Also in late May, the TSIC Project Officer attended a Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association forum held in the TSIC office, while earlier in May, I attended a Tasmanian Scalefish Fishermen’s Association meeting in Ross, which was also well attended. It was good to see this association attempt another approach at engaging with the scalefish industry, through the formation of species and gear type subcommittees, each with their own chair.

Over the last few months, the TSIC CE has also been supporting Oysters Tasmania through his role on the Shellfish Market Access Program (Shell-MAP) Implementation Working Group, which has been tasked with progressing the Tasmanian shellfish industry into the next era of cooperative management. Although this has been a long and arduous journey, we are hopeful of a positive outcome that will allow the Tasmanian shellfish industry to move forward with a world standard market access and food safety program that operates under the fundamental premise that shellfish farms will be open when they can be and closed when they need to be, with minimal time delays in between. In today’s climate, which is heavily influenced by harmful algal blooms, Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome, sewage and heavy rainfall events, this industry certainly needs to maximise their harvest days. We have a little more distance to travel in this journey, but TSIC will continue to support the Tasmanian shellfish industry as best we can.

I would like to remind people of the most recent Australian Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics, which show that Tasmanian seafood has a farm gate / beach price value close to $1 billion. This represents the largest share of Gross Value of Production (GVP) of any Australian state (30%) and represents an 11% increase in value from the previous reporting year. This figure is driven by the salmonid aquaculture industry (then reported as $731 million), the wild catch rock lobster fishery ($92.9 million), the wild abalone industry ($79.7 million) and the Tasmanian oyster industry ($21.2 million). Over the last 12 months had increased by $430 million. The primary drivers were increased mining exports, growth has been more than 30%, with a total value of $3.54 billion; while exports to China in the last 12 months had increased by $430 million. If you started taking into account the total capital value of the seafood industry, you would reach a figure well in excess of $4 billion.

Recent media in The Mercury newspaper also showed that, in the last 12 months, Tasmanian export growth has been more than 30%, with a total value of $3.54 billion; while exports to China in the last 12 months had increased by $430 million. The primary drivers were increased mining exports, seafood and forestry products.

Such figures certainly highlight the importance of wild catch and aquaculture products to the Tasmanian economy. And as we all know, we are a very important component of regional economies.

I think we should all be proud of the contribution that seafood makes to Tasmania. In my view, we are punching well above our weight. In saying that, we need to acknowledge that all sectors of our seafood industry are facing a diverse range of issues, challenges, risks and threats. Some are more manageable than others, some pose current or potential future risk. One thing is for sure, if we use our combined weight of value and employment, we are far stronger than being individual sectors. We must work together on our mutual agreed value - to ensure long-term environmental and economic sustainability from our marine resources.

I would like to end by assuring the Tasmanian seafood industry and the seafood industry associations that TSIC is here to help and support all seafood producers. We will tackle those industry-wide issues, such as AMSA, as best we can, and will support sector issues and concerns when asked or needed. We are only a phone call or a trip to the TSIC office away.

LINDSAY NEWMAN
Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing continues to be a priority issue for TSIC and the Tasmanian seafood industry following the release of results from a nationwide health and wellbeing survey conducted by Deakin University in late 2017.

These results showed that our fishing industry suffers rates of psychological distress almost twice that found in the normal population. The harsh reality of the situation is that there are a significant number of fishers and marine farmers in our industry who are suffering from mental health issues. I would be fairly confident in predicting that every person reading this article knows someone who is suffering; whether you realise they are suffering may be the question.

A couple of weeks before I wrote this article, the harsh reality of mental health hit me hard. I unfortunately had to deal with a situation where a very loved nephew who worked in our Tasmanian seafood industry made a very tragic decision. A decision that was made before he had the chance to get the help he desperately needed. It has affected me, my family, his work colleagues and his broader friendship base deeply. It is a situation I do not wish on any other family. What this horrible situation highlighted to me was that people can appear to be living normal happy lives, but in reality they are suffering from mental health issues.

Such issues are confounded by the ‘just ignore it’ or the ‘get on with it’ or the ‘just toughen up attitude’ that is prevalent within the male population. I am certainly not qualified to provide any counselling advice, but I do know that we need to continue the discussion around mental health at all levels, and keep the discussion on the table now and into the future. Talking to professionals, you soon discover that most people can make a full recovery from depression, although there is no proven way to recover, as it is different for everyone. There are a range of effective treatments, health professionals and things you can do for yourself that can help you recover and stay well.

Talk to a Mate; SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY; Support. Advice; Action; and it’s OK to not be OK are all slogans used about mental health. The key messages are, we need to talk about the issue, and those suffering (or those aware of someone suffering) need to seek help.

TSIC has partnered with Rural Alive and Well (RAW) Tasmania to progress some initiatives, promotional material and support for our seafood industry. More information about the services of RAW are provided on page 6.

During Mental Health Week (7-14 October) the Tasmanian seafood industry will hold a Mental Health and Wellbeing seafood cocktail extravaganza. The aim is to raise as much money to support mental health in our seafood industry through our partnership with RAW. More details to follow. If you are interested in sponsoring this initiative through cash donation or donation of an auction item, please contact me on 0407 242 933.

Workforce Development

Over recent weeks, TSIC has secured external funding to further support our workforce development and promotion initiatives, most notably the www.seafoodjobs.org platform launched in early June and promoted on page 5 of this issue of Seafood Industry News. The first is a project titled ‘Seafood Jobs Tasmania Stage 2’, funded through the Skills Tasmania Workforce Development Grant Fund. This project aims to develop a range of resources and information about career pathways and training in the seafood industry, and integrate these with the Seafoodjobs.org website.

The second project is titled the ‘Seafood – Virtual and Augmented Reality Project’, which is funded through the government’s Population Growth Strategy Small Grants Fund. The project aims to showcase, and immerse potential employees in, the seafood industry using both augmented and virtual reality technology at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival. To achieve this outcome, TSIC is partnering with local company Handbuilt Creative, which is doing exciting work.

The final project is a partnership with 26TEN, which aims to develop a Safety Management System template that is more suitable for people with poor literacy skills. We all know that an SMS is a relatively new, and hence difficult, concept for many in the seafood industry, so developing a template into something manageable for LLN level 1-2 will be a huge benefit for our industry. We aim to make this SMS resource available nationally.

Seafood House

We are well and truly near the final stages of developing a business case for the establishment of a new Seafood House building. The Seafood House concept provides an exciting opportunity to showcase seafood to the broader public, while at the same time house seafood sector groups and other seafood stakeholders under the one roof. We are in discussion with a number of entities about potential locations and other options for shifting from our current TSIC offices in Sandy Bay. We will report further on this exciting opportunity once a firm relocation option is finalised.

TSIC Project Officer

TSIC is in the process of recruiting a new part-time project officer to support our current TSIC staff and workloads. If you are interested, jump onto www.seafoodjobs.org to find out more.

JULIAN HARRINGTON
The workforce solution you have been asking for

Seafood Jobs is a sharing, caring, seafood community, developed and owned by industry – all at the touch of your fingertips.

The Tasmanian Seafood Industry workforce development plan and reference group have identified a number of gaps in the workforce, primarily about the need to attract and train the next generation. One of the projects that TSIC has developed to address this issue is an online platform that provides a one-stop-shop for employment and information about the industry, featuring a free-to-use jobs listing platform, jobseeker registration, access to training and events, employer directory and career mapping. The site is easy to use, and looks savvy enough to attract millennials to the workforce.

Employers have full access to the Jobseeker Register, a list of people who have signed up to the site and created an online résumé. You can search this list, download résumés, contact jobseekers and find right-fit people to meet your workforce needs. Think of the site as a direct link to a pool of people ready to work, and you can filter them by their skills, location and other categories. This online portal is completely free to use and should minimise and streamline a lot of the costly recruitment process. For example, a job advertisement on SEEK will cost around $300, while Seafood Jobs is completely free.

Jobseekers are presented with a professional and united seafood front, with real information about real jobs and real futures. They have access to training and opportunities for upskilling through the site. The site uses a ‘sharing economy’ concept, whereby its content is created and driven by its users, similar to Airbnb and Uber.

The site offers powerful tools for jobseeker profiling and employee scouting, and it acts as a community access point. Not only will the site provide information about employment, skills and training, and link workers with employers, it will also facilitate a rise in the professional profile of the seafood industry to a wider public audience. We hope the site can complement your HR process with a range of free tools, perhaps even bypassing the need to advertise at all!

The Department of Education will be using Seafood Jobs as their main port of call for seafood career information in schools, and it has embraced the industry’s move towards the online platform.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WILD CAPTURE SECTORS

Looking for a deckhand? Find a reliable worker, with full referee contacts and previous experience listed on the Jobseeker Register.

So why should you sign up?

FOR BUSINESSES

Seafood jobs gives you access to real jobseekers who are ready to work. Jobseekers on the Register are removed if their profile becomes inactive, or if they have found a job. Those of you who are not looking for employees can also benefit from the site by using the free advertising on the Seafood Directory. In addition, useful information for seafood businesses will be posted to user profiles about available grants and subsidies, ensuring that you are up to date with the latest tools.

Other benefits for businesses include:

- Access and filter online registrants based on your selection criteria using easy click menus such as: location, skill set, qualifications, experience.
- Advertise jobs for free.

- Or... don’t advertise at all, just select your candidates from the register.
- Find employees who are genuinely keen to work in your industry. They have signed up because they are interested in seafood.
- Access training programs and upskill your workers – this feature is coming soon.
- Promote your business on the Seafood Business Directory for free – make sure the right people find you. The directory is search engine-optimised for Google searches.

FOR JOBSEEKERS

Seafood Jobs gives jobseekers access to businesses and potential employers across Tasmania.

- Employers know you are genuinely interested in working with them if you have registered.
- Employers fill positions from the Jobseeker Register without having to advertise. They can shortlist candidates based on the details contained in the Online Résumé.
- Apply for positions that have been advertised on the site, and stay up to date with new postings through ‘Job Alerts’.
- Access to training programs and events (feature coming soon).

Visit www.seafoodjobs.org to sign up, and follow us at @seafoodjobs on Instagram.

If you have any questions or need a hand with signing up/advertising, please contact Emma at ahoy@seafoodjobs.org The site is brand new, and new content and features will be added weekly. Please let us know if you would like additional features, or if the site has problems.
About us

Rural Alive & Well Inc. is an incorporated not for profit organisation formed to create resilience and capacity of individuals, families and the community to react to challenging life experiences with particular emphasis on suicide prevention, mental health and wellbeing.

Our focus is providing outreach support to rural communities across Tasmania as well as working with the communities that we work in to undertake much needed community wellbeing initiatives. We are proud and honoured to service rural Tasmania.

Rural Alive and Well’s outreach program is a 24 hour a day service – 7 days a week. Our staff can come to you or alternatively we can talk to you over the phone. Our role is to offer a friendly ear in a difficult time, offer information, support and strategies to help as well as linking you to relevant services that can assist.

Our services are free and confidential. To talk to a Rural Alive and Well staff member please call:

1300 HELP MATE (4357 6283)

Our head office is located at 73 High Street, PO Box 74, Oatlands, TAS 7120 and can be contacted by calling (03) 6254 1092 or via email at admin@rawtas.com.au

Outreach Staff

Tony Barker
Outreach Team Leader North
0427 370 726
tbarker@rawtas.com.au

Jayne Pike
Outreach Worker
0439 689 430
jpike@rawtas.com.au

John Clark
Outreach Worker
0429 157 738
jclark@rawtas.com.au

Rhonda Gee-Mackrill
Outreach Worker
0418 473 293
rhonda@rawtas.com.au

Ruth Fisher
Outreach Worker
0458 032 813
rfisher@rawtas.com.au

Darrin Thurlow
Outreach Team Leader South
0428 333 517
darren@rawtas.com.au

Andrew Baker
Outreach Worker
0400 131 256
abaker@rawtas.com.au

Kristy Mayne
Outreach Worker
0428 145 319
kristy@rawtas.com.au

Martin Howell
Outreach Worker
0408 478 993
martin@rawtas.com.au

Administration/Projects

Liz Little
Chief Executive Officer
(03) 6254 1092
CEO@rawtas.com.au

Jacki Miller
Executive Officer/Events
(03) 6254 1092
jmiller@rawtas.com.au
events@rawtas.com.au

Amy Deans
HaRC Coordinator
0427 418 345
adeans@rawtas.com.au

Peta-Maree Davidson
Business Services Team Leader
(03) 6254 1092
0409 257 811
pdavidson@rawtas.com.au

Kylie Lawless
Administration Officer
(03) 6254 1092
adminassist@rawtas.com.au

Ebony DeJesus
HaRC Facilitator
0429 473 183
ebdejesus@rawtas.com.au

Ann Hughes
Project Manager Student Unit
0438 954 188
ahughes@rawtas.com.au
**Get off Facebook Twitter and other social media platforms to reduce anxiety and stress, farmers advised**

ABC NEWS 16/05/2018

Too much time spent on social media is increasing anxiety and stress for some primary producers, and they are being warned to reduce their online interactions and instead focus on what is within their control. Agricultural industry professionals say social media can have an unhealthy influence on farmers’ decision-making and moods during stressful times, and creates an unreasonable fear of missing out (FOMO).

Regional Men’s Health educator Owen Catto said there were increased levels of anxiety in the farming community, even with the knowledge that there was still plenty of time to grow a profitable crop. “If we suffer from a bit of anxiety anyway, it makes us more anxious because it creates second-guessing,” he said.

“Both in our personal and business life it can. There’s some good things about social media, but there’s the removal of people staying in the present.

With smartphones and improved mobile networks in some areas, access to the internet and social media has increased in regional Australia. Mr Catto said this could lead to an unhealthy amount of time spent on social media.

**Addicted to social media?**

Social media monitoring apps reveal the extreme levels of smart phone use. “How often is really important. People are on social media quite often, whether it’s in a workplace or a group of farmers, they’re just on it all the time.

“We know when we go home and we’ve got our own families and our own business partners, we’ve actually got to turn that off. You can’t have that stuff in your ear 24-7.”

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**Negativity is prevalent**

Greenough sheep and grain farmer Ben Royce would usually have his stock grazing pasture at this time of year, but instead he is still hand-feeding them hay.

There’s fascinating differences in the way we use our phones, as revealed by the ABC’s Science Week survey. He checks social media two or three times a day and is noticing more negativity.

“At the moment everyone is asking where the rain is, why is the airseeder broken and when is lunch coming,” he said. “It’s not a good feeling knowing that it hasn’t rained yet, but I’m still optimistic. When it’s green everyone seems to be a lot happier on Facebook.”

On the flipside, Mr Royce said being able to share frustrations with others in similar situations created a sense of not being alone.

**We don’t talk anymore**

Mr Catto said people were not having enough genuine face-to-face conversations.

"Whenever we get out to a face-to-face meeting and that social connectedness is happening, it’s just really powerful stuff and people cherish it ultimately,” he said.

“[Social media] will never replace face-to-face.

“We are social creatures and social animals, and without face-to-face we can’t get all those things that encapsulate having a conversation.”

Mr Catto said conversation was the first thing he recommended for a client who was concerned about anxiety.

“The first thing we say is talk to people around you that are important in your decision-making. Hopefully that’s direct family, then it might be your business advisor and accountant.”

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**Jetty By-laws addition**

On 29 July 2017 new Marine and Safety (Jetties) By-laws 2017, came into effect. One of the significant additions to the By-laws was the introduction of restricted areas on State jetties, whereby a person must not berth a vessel at a State jetty in excess of the time limit displayed on the facility without the prior approval of the Authority.

The introduction of the red restricted area will provide fair and equitable use of State jetties, preventing recalcitrant offenders from continually berthing at State jetties, and enable commercial and recreational vessel operators to access the facility.

The restricted time period currently displayed at State jetties is three days. If an operator requires a longer period on the restricted area, they must provide MAST with a legitimate reason why they require additional time, at which time MAST will consider their request. Exceeding the time limit displayed on a jetty may incur the issuing of a fine which totals two penalty points.

Restricted areas are being established at State jetties located at Kettering, Port Arthur, St Helens, Bicheno, Dunalley, Dover and Margate.

Also a reminder the yellow lines on the jetties are strictly for loading and unloading, and vessels must not be left unattended on these areas as you risk receiving an on the spot fine.


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**Jetty Talk**

**Negativity is prevalent**

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“The first thing we say is talk to people around you that are important in your decision-making. Hopefully that’s direct family, then it might be your business advisor and accountant.”
What inspired you to become involved in the seafood industry?

I was born in North Carolina on the Mid Atlantic Coast of the US in a small coastal community where fishing, farming and tourism were the industries. My father was a fisherman and the rest of my family are farmers. I grew up moving a lot as my dad followed various fisheries, out to Utah to be closer to Alaska for the salmon fishery and then to Costa Rica to chase tuna with Japanese green-stick style fishing. So as a child and young adult I lived and breathed the lifestyle. First time I worked as a fisherman was at 18 in Alaska, the year I graduated from high school. After that first season I was physically shattered, had made more money then I knew what to do with and had found my passion.

Where have you worked?

I have worked in a bunch of places. After four seasons salmon gillnetting in Alaska, completing my undergrad science degree and getting my skipper’s ticket, I worked as a freelance seafarer mostly on expedition yachts, superyacht deliveries, and professional fishing charters. This work took me from Cape Horn to Alaska and lots of places in between. Eventually, I made my way back into commercial fishing down in New Zealand doing various fisheries and travelling around the country for over a year. Then I made the decision to take my savings and go back for an advanced degree and found the fisheries program at IMAS. I graduated in November and got hired in January.

What’s your first memory of eating seafood?

Tuna and calamari. As a small child I actually didn’t think I liked seafood, and at a restaurant on the coast of North Carolina, my parents just told me it was chicken until after I finished. I loved it so much I was hooked.

What do you think will change in the industry over the next five years?

From my role as an observer in Tasmania and based on my previous experience, I think the biggest change will be the increased presence of technology. I think this will range from the introduction of digital logbooks for the fishers, digitally recorded length measurements for rock lobster for the observers, unmanned environmental observation platforms (such as Saildrones off Tasmania’s East Coast), increased underwater digital recording, and harnessing increased computing power to continue to improve our modelling. All of this moving towards more and more data about what is happening in the fisheries and marine environment. Thereby we will gain a better understanding of the ocean ecosystem that surrounds our state, a better understanding of our interaction with it, and how to optimise that interaction for the benefit of the environment and humans. That is just from a scientific perspective. More broadly, I think developments ranging from new diesel-electric fishing vessels to increased traceability and market differentiation technology are powering a whole raft of changes.

What is the main difference you see between the way American and Tasmanian fishers operate?

I actually think heaps about this and honestly, it’s hard to put into words what the difference is. In general, I think they are more similar then different, but there are differences. The first one you notice is differences in slang about vessel operations and names for pieces of gear. Beyond that, there are the simple technical/management differences in gear and boat design, driven by different target species, environmental and navigational factors, and so on. Also, in the US the fisheries vary greatly from region to region: fishers in Alaska are quite different to fishers in Louisiana in operation and culture. With Tasmania, I find the fishers remind me more of the Atlantic coast fishermen I grew up around. But again, the differences are greatly outweighed by the similarities.
It has been a busy period for Oysters Tasmania with lots of meetings! The most important of these was the recent meeting with Minister Sarah Courtney, who has been impressive with making time for all the seafood sectors.

She reiterated her support for the industry and agreed that to progress the new Shellfish Market Access Program (Shell-MAP) we need to have the overarching Management Committee with an independent Chair in place. She also admitted to loving oysters.

There are some newly established working groups, including biosecurity and tourism committees, which have had their first meetings. Following the outbreak of POMS at Gardners Bay, we are working with Biosecurity Tasmania and the Chief Veterinary Officer to discuss future responses to any new outbreaks of Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (POMS). The sub-committee is also looking at developing biosecurity awareness and practices more generally in the industry, as it’s worth protecting.

Talking of POMS, ASI has provided a recent update on their activities following the end of its season, which can be accessed at [https://tinyurl.com/y8kzbua2](https://tinyurl.com/y8kzbua2)

Reduction waste: Plastic recycling

An industry-led plastic recycling initiative is currently being considered with Oysters Tasmania organising an initial meeting with stakeholders in mid-June. Regional NRM facilitators, councils, and waste management groups will meet with industry representatives, to further investigate the feasibility of the project in partnership with a local contractor and recycled plastic manufacturer based in Victoria. The recycling project will focus on statewide disused oyster and mussel farming plastic, including baskets, tubes, clips, longline, plastic pipe and buoys. There is a significant volume of this material stockpiled at oyster sites, and it could be diverted from landfill. This innovative solution and contribution to sustainable farming practices could be a first for the oyster industry if it’s feasible.

Rapid biotoxin testing

Rapid test kits for biotoxins are another tool to help individual oyster and mussel businesses with harvest planning in areas potentially impacted by harmful algal blooms. As part of a federally funded project mentioned in the last magazine, training and proficiency testing in the use of Neogen kit has been completed. This was a SA Government initiative, supported by IMAS, Seafood Training Tasmania and Oysters Tasmania. It has seen subsidised Neogen readers and testing kits distributed across growing regions that have experienced harmful algal blooms.

The same farmer who sends his samples off to the lab on Monday morning also tests his oyster meats with a Neogen test, which gives a positive result with the presence of biotoxins. A positive test result means he will reconsider sending any harvested oysters to market until he gets back the official laboratory test result.

Thanks to Alison Turnbull and Navreet Malhi (PIRSA-SARDI) for coordinating the project, and to Sarah Ugalde and Juan Dorantes-Aranda (IMAS) for managing the proficiency testing and distribution of kits.

What do you love about oyster farming?

This question was posed to a small group of farmers the other day… and one replied that it was seeing the beauty of the estuary where he works close-up, especially the sunsets and sunrises. The next Monday he sent an example in:

As well as the beauty and romance, there’s a serious side to this story... the early morning rise every Monday means this farmer can submit oyster samples for biotoxin testing at the AST laboratory in Hobart. By Tuesday afternoon he has a screen test result that will give him a pretty good indication of whether there’s any potential biotoxins around, and a confirmed result by Wednesday afternoon. This is an important tool for managing harmful algal blooms and a good reminder of just one of the ways that industry is preparing for the next season.
Do you know where you can and cannot fish with different gear types?

- **X** Activity is not allowed at all (i.e. totally prohibited).
- **CA** Activity is allowable in accordance with a class approval from the Director of National Parks

Note: The South-east Marine Parks Network was formerly known as the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network. A class approval for commercial fishing in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network first came into effect on 01 July 2013. The current class approval was issued on 07 January 2015 and will remain in effect for the remainder of the 10 year term of the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network Management Plan 2013-2023, unless it is suspended, cancelled, varied or revoked sooner by the Director of National Parks.


For enquiries call the Director Marine Parks Management South, Marine Protected Areas Branch, Parks Australia on (03) 6208 2911.
Tasmanian State Scallop Fishery

Very unfortunately there will not be a Tasmanian scallop season this year or next year. The IMAS pre-season scallop survey report for last year was yet again considered at the SFAT AGM and General Meeting in Launceston on 15 May 2018 and the dismal results were confirmed by fishermen who were involved in the survey last year. There were 360 tows carried out by three vessels in April and May 2017 with special funding to ensure a good coverage of known and prospective scallop beds in the general areas of Circular Head, east of Flinders Island (including eastern Banks Strait), White Rock and Marion Bay.

The average catch density was exceptionally low in every area surveyed, with the highest density being 4.7kg of scallops (just a handful) for each square kilometre. No new recruitment was observed in any of the areas surveyed.

The ScFAC meeting last November supported a two-year closure of the fishery because of the very low biomass, and SFAT and DPIPWE separately communicated the position to industry people in January this year.

As a consequence of the IMAS survey assessment, there was no realistic opportunity for a commercial season, so DPIPWE and Minister Hon. Sarah Courtney agreed that the state scallop fishery should not open in 2018 and 2019 and advised industry accordingly. There are no plans for formal surveys to be undertaken until early in 2020.

 Opportunistic permits will be available to fishermen interested in surveying over the next two years but with no retained scallops.

It should be stressed that the low scallop biomass at present is not due to poor management or overfishing. Scallop fisheries worldwide are notorious for their variability in recruitment, with changes in stock abundance strongly influenced by environmental factors over which we have no control. The Tasmanian fishery is no exception to this and has historically been subject to highly variable annual catches and total fishery closures.

The SFAT negotiated a reduction in the fixed management fees and charges imposed by DPIPWE for 2018 (saving industry about $160,000 per year) and we are continuing our representations with the Minister to extend the 44% reduction into the 2019 re-licensing year.

With a very low resource and no likely income from the fishery in the foreseeable future, the SFAT Executive Committee continues to support the view that DPIPWE-imposed management costs need to be restructured so that they truly reflect the actual costs of seasonal management and should be aligned with the expected annual catch and income from the fishery.

DPIPWE is continuing discussions with the Department of Treasury and Finance regarding a sliding scale proposal for the fixed component of the scallop licence renewal fees for when there is an open season in the future. This would ultimately require an amendment to the Fisheries (General and Fees) Regulations 2016.

The low biomass since 2016 is extremely disappointing and a real blow to active fishermen, unit holders and processors. We have had closures in the past because of a lack of resource, most recently in 2009, 2010 and 2011, and we will probably have them again in the future but it is unfortunately all part of the highly variable nature of the fishery we are involved in.

Bass Strait Central Zone

Expressions of interest to participate in the 2018 biomass survey were sought by AFMA from all BSCZSF concession holders and active operators during April 2018, and nominations for seven vessels were received. An independent AFMA selection panel met on 18 April via teleconference to consider the survey plan and to select the vessel/s to undertake the ‘2018 Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery biomass survey’.

Subsequently the vessels Dell Richey 11, Northern Star, Rachel Maree and Odette C were approved as suitable, and the plan is to run two vessels at a time each with about three survey days, weather permitting, over a two-week period with observers on board each vessel.

The survey plan areas will cover 10 known beds and three exploratory areas across both eastern and western Bass Strait.

The surveys began in the week starting 21 May 2018 with initial results being very encouraging east of King Island, and Fishwell Consulting will prepare an assessment of the survey data for consideration by ScRAG and ScMAC members at meetings planned for 20 and 21 June.

If all goes to plan, we would be hopeful of receiving AFMA Commission approval to open the season around the second week of July, subject always to meat quality.

If that happens, scallop lovers in Tasmania and beyond can rejoice and will be able to continue to enjoy this iconic seafood species.
One system to navigate.

From 1 July 2018, services for domestic commercial vessel safety will only be delivered by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

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Visit AMSA.GOV.AU to find out how this affects you

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A new way to access national system services

From 1 July 2018, you will access domestic commercial vessel safety services from AMSA.

From 1 July, the quickest and easiest way to apply, renew or pay for certificates and other permits is via amsa.gov.au. If you need someone to answer a question or guide you through the application process, our AMSA Connect team is available from 8 am to 5 pm from Monday to Friday on 1800 627 484.

We have established offices in Hobart and Devonport where staff will be on hand to assist you with new processes and systems for applying for and renewing certificates and qualifications as well as technical advice about vessel and operations safety requirements. Our office in Hobart will be open from 9 am to 5 pm weekdays and Devonport will be open by appointment.

Simplified survey regime starting soon

In early June, AMSA will begin contacting vessel owners who hold a Certificate of Survey to let you know what survey regime changes mean for you. For many of you, we will be issuing an updated certificate outlining your new survey frequency category and new survey dates. AMSA is aligning the expiry date of new Certificates of Survey with your current certificate.

Under the new survey regime, your renewal survey will require both an in water and an out of water survey, including fully withdrawing both the propeller shaft and the rudder stock and bearing. The renewal survey is required every five years before you can renew your Certificate of Survey and, as a consequence, are grandfathered as non-survey vessels under the National Law. From 1 July, AMSA will not send a self-declaration to these vessel owners. These vessels are, however, required to carry specified safety equipment under the National Law standards and may be subject to spot audits by Marine Inspectors.

Applying, renewing and paying for your certificates

Towards the end of June, MAST will begin transferring applications to AMSA for processing. AMSA will begin processing your applications from July and posting your certificates to you as soon as possible after receiving your complete application and fee. If you have a question about your application, you can call AMSA Connect on 1800 627 484.

Certificates of survey and operation

From 1 July 2018, you will apply, renew and pay for your survey and operation certificates, exemptions, equivalent means of compliance and intentions to build via amsa.gov.au, using the new AMSA forms. You will complete and lodge your applications online with an option to pay on the spot using Visa or MasterCard, or through your bank or Australia Post using the fee advice provided after submitting your application.

When you renew your Certificate of Operation, you will be asked to declare that you have a documented Safety Management System in place that identifies the risks to the vessel; includes procedures to eliminate or minimise the identified risks so far as is reasonably practicable; and addresses the operation requirements that apply for the vessel.

Certificates of competency

From 1 July, you will apply and renew your application in person at one of the seven participating Australia Post shops around Tasmania (Devonport, Hobart, Kingston, Launceston, St Helens, Triabunna and Queenstown). You will use the new AMSA436 form available from amsa.gov.au, which will outline any other documentation you need to provide. You will also need to provide proof of your identity and pay the fee at the time of lodgement.

If you are completing a lower complexity Certificate of Competency course at Seafood Training Tasmania or the Australian Maritime College, they will be able to lodge your application with AMSA on your behalf if you meet all the other requirements including sea time and first aid.

Fees for services

The schedule of fees for services is currently being finalised after the feedback received during industry consultation. The final fees will be available on amsa.gov.au as soon as they become available. There will be no national system vessel levy charged in the first year, and the first subsidised payment will be due in mid-2019.

Find out more

Visit https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/transition-national-system for more information and updates about these changes, or follow us on Facebook.
**Tuna Champions**

IMAS research into the recreational fishery for southern bluefin tuna is underpinning a new national program to recruit recreational fishers as “Tuna Champions” to enhance stewardship of this iconic species.

The Tuna Champions program is led by the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation and IMAS, and it is funded by the Australian Government through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). IMAS scientist Dr Sean Tracey said recreational fishers could play a key role in helping to rebuild southern bluefin tuna stocks. “The program aims to ensure fishers respect and value southern bluefish tuna, to encourage fishers to embrace the role they and their peers can play as stewards of the fishery, and to enlist fishers to actively contribute to our knowledge of the species.”


**Beef, lamb, lobster or fish?**

A new study by a team of IMAS and Canadian scientists has found that catching most types of fish produces far less carbon per kilo of protein than land-based alternatives like beef or lamb. The researchers found that fisheries for small pelagic species such as anchovies and sardines emit a fraction of the carbon generated by red meat production. On average, global fisheries have a low-carbon footprint similar to that of poultry.

The research published in the journal Nature Climate Change provides the first global breakdown of wild fishery emissions by country, and compares the carbon impact of each nation’s fishing industry with agriculture and livestock production.

IMAS co-author Professor Caleb Gardner said Australia’s fishing industry catches comparatively low volumes and contributes just 0.5% of overall global emissions from fishing. “However, Australian fishers target proportionately more high-value crustaceans like rock lobsters and prawns, which are among the world’s most carbon-intensive fisheries on a per kilo basis,” Professor Gardner said.


**POMS Update**

The weather is getting colder, water temperatures are dropping and so the POMS season for 2017/18 is over. At the end of this third year of POMS disease activation in Tasmania, it is very pleasing to observe that most POMS-affected oyster farmers appear to be relatively upbeat and comfortable with their current operations. The latest POMS newsletter has been put together by Biosecurity Tasmania and IMAS, to provide up-to-date information on POMS in Tasmania and a summary of the research conducted by our scientists Dr Christine Crawford and Dr Sarah Ugalde.

Increasing opportunity to fish for kingfish in Tasmania

Yellowtail kingfish (Seriola lalandi) have steadily increased in popularity with Tasmanian fishers in recent years, leading IMAS researchers to investigate links between the presence and persistence of kingfish in Tasmania and ocean warming caused by climate change. IMAS PhD student Curtis Champion and his supervisory team have recently published the first study detailing how the Tasmanian coastal ocean has increased in suitability for kingfish over the past 20 years, and how these changes are likely to continue.

This study was designed to provide Tasmanian fishers with information that is relevant to their fishing activities. To do so, Curtis and his team calculated changes in the number of months per year that ocean conditions are suitable for kingfish in Tasmanian waters, which effectively defines the ‘window of opportunity’ that anglers have to target this species.

In 1996, ocean conditions were found to be suitable for kingfish for approximately 1 month of the year, but by 2016 approximately 2.5 months of the year were suitable. This means that the window of fishing opportunity for kingfish in Tasmania increased by around 1.5 months over 20 years. This study also used ocean forecasts to assess the likely future distribution and persistence of kingfish, which indicated that by 2040 the Tasmanian coastal ocean will be suitable for kingfish for approximately 4 months of the year.

Tasmanian anglers are encouraged to log observations of kingfish on Redmap (www.redmap.org.au). More information on this study, which is forthcoming in Marine and Freshwater Research, can be found here: www.publish.csiro.au/MF/justaccepted/MF17387.
New Logo and Name

For the last few months, STT staff and industry experts have carried out a thorough review of STT’s brand, online presence and future delivery possibilities.

As a result of these deliberations, we are pleased to announce our new trading name of SMT (Seafood and Maritime Training) and logo. The seafood and maritime industries are becoming increasingly dynamic and we are confident that this new branding will better reflect the full breadth of our clients’ needs and our expertise.

New Website

With the rollout of our new trading name and logo, we are also pleased to unveil our new website www.smt.edu.au. We have worked hard to ensure that the website does not become cumbersome or overly complicated but is more reflective of the training space in which we operate.

Guests to the website will be able to view our upcoming courses, meet our trainers, and download important forms and resources with the click of a button. Jump on and have a look around our new site and please feel free to forward any feedback on to us. We would like pictures of you in your workplace to put up on the site, so send them in.

Do you comply?

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Women on the Water

In exciting news for the seafood industry, SMT is thrilled to announce that applications are open for our new scholarship, ‘Women on the Water’. This scholarship is SMT’s way of recognising the important contribution that women make to our industry, as well as the under representation of women in our industry. We want to do our part to encourage women to seek career pathways in the seafood and maritime industries and to go on to become leaders in their field.

The scholarship will award the winning applicant a significant number of training courses free of charge, as well as on-the-job work experience with Huon Aquaculture and Tassal (see page 15).

Applications are open to all women either currently working in, or hoping to work in, the seafood and maritime industries, and applications can be lodged via our website at www.smt.edu.au, or you can call us at our office and we will email you an application form.

CONTACT OR ENROL AT SMT

03 6286 0400
enquiries@smt.edu.au
www.smt.edu.au
seafoodtrainingtas
HABs

**Winter is here and the time for Harmful Algal Blooms approaches.**

Are we ready? ‘As ready as we can be’ is the answer. TRLFA and DPIWTE have processes in place to identify any incursion of *Alexandrium tamarense* into the inshore waters of Tasmania, from King Island in the NW to Recherche Bay in the South.

*A. tamarense* is a species of dinoflagellate (marine plankton) known to produce a neurotoxin called saxitoxin. Ingestion of seafood contaminated with saxitoxin is responsible for the illness known as paralytic shellfish poisoning. The prescribed limit for seafood in Tasmania (in line with international standards) is 0.8 mg/kg of seafood flesh.

The State is divided into seven biotoxin zones under the Rock Lobster Biotoxin Plan and Decision Protocol document. The plan has been approved by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as a procedure to secure public health and critical market access. The intent of the plan is to ensure that no lobsters that are above the prescribed limit are marketed or exported.

In the unlikely event of a detection of PST in lobsters over the prescribed limit in the market, it is important to understand that the lack of a precise traceability system in the supply chain (especially when product is overseas) could trigger a product recall that could prove devastating to the whole southern rock lobster export market.

Initial detection of *A. tamarense* is through the monitoring of water samples and sentinel shellfish species. This is achieved by observing the results of shellfish farm monitoring through the Tasmanian Shellfish Quality Assurance Program (TSQAP) that reports the results of laboratory testing of water samples and sentinel species before any marketing of those species is permitted. The TRLFA is responsible for monitoring areas in the State where there is no sentinel data from TSQAP. In Flinders Island, Mike Nichols from Flinders Island Dive maintains mussel lines, and he harvests, processes and sends samples to the new State Government-funded Analytical Services Tasmania laboratory in New Town for testing. In the NE and E, Peter Poulsen performs the same services for Bicheno, Binalong Bay and Georges Rocks. In the Tasman Peninsular and Storm Bay areas, IMAS will be providing those services this coming year.

Data from Bass Strait is courtesy of the scallop fishery who test their product regularly to maintain their high food safety standards. TSQAP data is also available from King Island, Duck Bay and Montague in the NW.

The introduction of the Analytical Services Tasmania biotoxin laboratory is a boost for Tasmanian seafood producers. The laboratory conducts testing twice weekly, saving valuable time in providing results and reducing transport times. Previously, samples were sent to Sydney for testing and occasionally problems with courier services and arrival times resulted in significant delays of sample results and opportunities to resume harvesting.

Under the Rock Lobster Biotoxin Plan, data monitoring of sentinels through TSQAP is in place year round. TRLFA monitoring of areas with no TSQAP data begins in mid-June unless a positive detection in TSQAP data is identified beforehand. In that case, the TRLFA monitoring process response is automatically triggered.

The plan has a decision matrix for identifying when and where lobsters must be tested for PSTs. The use of sentinel data is ideal for the rock lobster fishery as it has been established that the uptake of *A. tamarense* by lobsters is a slow process compared to shellfish. This allows a window of opportunity for the testing of lobsters before they can reach the prescribed limit, thus ensuring public health and market access requirements. On the other hand, lobsters are slow to depurate following the end of a bloom, and fishers are faced with lengthy delays before lobsters are again ready for harvest.

When it has been established that lobsters need to be tested, the plan requires that the biotoxin area be closed for fishing until it can be identified that the PST levels are either not present or lower than 0.5 mg/kg.

**Samples above 0.8 mg/kg**

The zone continues to be closed to rock lobster fishing. Monitoring of sentinel data will continue to assess trends in the bloom activity, and schedule the next round of lobster sampling. The risk in adjacent zones will be assessed based on this data and sentinel data from each zone. This may trigger additional sentinel sampling or lobster sampling in adjacent zones if warranted.

It needs to be recognised that the decision matrix provides decision rules for a range of scenarios; however, not all outcomes and contingencies can be foreseen. Thus, some outcomes might not fall neatly into the decision matrix and decisions will need to be made in a manner that is complementary to the rationale behind the explicit management rules. For example, especially in cases when sentinel information or lobster results are trending consistently in an upwards direction, decisions may be made to sample earlier if it is clear that the bloom and PST results are increasing.

A bloom event is considered over when all biotoxin zones are open for fishing. This confirms that tested lobsters are below 0.5 mg/kg and trending down, and that sentinel data indicates that levels have dissipated to very low or are negative.
TASMANIAN SEAFOOD INDUSTRY NEWS

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Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council
ABN 61 019 555 604
PO Box 878, Sandy Bay TAS 7006
117 Sandy Bay Road, Sandy Bay TAS 7005
Chief Executive: Julian Harrington 0407 242 933
03 6224 2332
tsic@tsic.org.au
TasSeafoodindustry
www.tsic.org.au

TSIC DIRECTORS
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262 Argyle Street, Hobart TAS 7000
President: Joey McKibben 0428 992 300
Chief Executive: Dean Lisson 0419 599 954
Administration Manager: Jillian Freeman
03 6231 1955
admin@tasabalone.com.au

Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association
PO Box 898, Sandy Bay TAS 7006
President: Robert Langdale
0410 572 677
robert.langdale@bigpond.com

Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fishermen’s Association
PO Box 109, South Hobart TAS 7004
President: Clive Perryman
CEO: John Sansom
Secretary/Treasurer: Margaret Atkins
03 6234 2890 or 0427 477 284
johnsansom@bigpond.com
www.tasrocklobster.com

Tasmanian Scalefish Fishermen’s Association
PO Box 321, Somerset TAS 7322
President: Shane Bevis
03 6247 7634
vessseafood@hotmail.com
Secretary: Colleen Osborne
elosborne@bigpond.com

Scallop Fisherman’s Association of Tasmania
286 Windermere Road, Windermere TAS 7252
President: John Hammond 0429 130 238
Secretary/Treasurer: (Mrs) Jill Hammond
03 6128 1478

Tasmanian Rock Lobster Processors Association
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michael@salco.co
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smithk@garthfish.com.au

Aquaculture
Oysters Tasmania
PO Box 878 Sandy Bay TAS 7006
Chairman: Dan Roden
0418 134 638
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EO: Sue Grau 0438 601 057
management@oysterstasmania.org

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CEO: Adam Main
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Contact@tsga.com.au
www.tsga.com.au

Tasmanian Abalone Growers Association
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Chairman: Nicholas Savva
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admin@abtas.com.au

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