



21 August 2020

**To Oysters Australia Stakeholders**

Oysters Tasmania Oysters Australia NSW Farmers Queensland Oyster Growers Association	Australian Seafood Industries Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
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**Chairman's Report to Stakeholders**

The Board met on 19 August to consider a wide range of issues that are summarized below.

*Thanks to Bruce Zippel*

Although delayed due to Covid19, we thanked Bruce for his dedication as the previous Chairman of Oysters Australia and presented him with a plaque and gift.

*New Directors*

Following the resignations of Judd Evans and Giles Fisher, we welcomed Steve Bowley and Tim Pauly to the Board.

*Finances*

The bank balance on 31 July was \$44,000. Funds are available for the remainder of the year to meet our commitments. We also expect additional funding from FRDC through an Industry Partnership Agreement and projects to support market research and strategic planning.

The audited financial statements for 2019-20 were provided to the Board, having been approved out of session.

*Executive Officer Report*

Andy Myers reported on the following activities.

- *SAFEfish* – Planning for a Vibrio risk reduction workshop in Tasmania, Biotoxin Harmonisation Application to Food Standards Australia, Microplastics in Seafood
- *ABARES* – Attempts are being made to clarify how ABARES forecasts GVP of the oyster industry. We are also pushing for national fisheries & aquaculture reports to report dozens, rather than solely reporting in kg.
- National seafood industry mental health project – looking at participating in this project in NSW and linking to similar programs in other States.
- Correspondence from Senator Duniam, Minister for Forestry and Fisheries – requesting extension of Job Keeper payments.

### *Market Development with Seafood Industry Australia (SIA)*

The Commonwealth grant of \$4million to SIA for the “Eat Seafood, Australia” campaign will be an enormous boost to industry. Oysters Australia has actively engaged with SIA to build on the work we did with Brand Council and ensure we can gain maximum value from the national campaign. We were fortunate to have Veronica Papacosta (CEO, SIA) join the meeting. Her key messages were:

- A market strategy company has been selected through an EOI process.
- The aim is to develop an “Australian seafood” brand under which all seafood sectors can operate.
- It is intended to build a framework that can be supported in future with industry funds.
- Cash spent on delivery will be maximised, while design and admin costs will be limited.
- Funds will not be distributed to individual sectors.

Much more information will be provided in the near future.

### *Strategic Planning*

The results of the survey conducted earlier in the year have been collated. The report has been distributed through the States along with a request for additional input. Zoom meetings are planned for NSW, Tasmania and South Australia in early September. Other States are invited to attend one of the meetings (contact Andy if interested)

### *Country of Origin Labelling (CoOL)*

Country of origin labelling is currently mandatory in retail, but not in food service. There is currently a review into this legislation presenting an opportunity to close this loophole. A resolution was passed supporting CoOL, and a letter from Oysters Australia outlining this position will be submitted to the review.

### *Commonwealth AQUPLAN*

The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) has embarked on a task to build a new, five year AQUAPLAN to follow on from a similar plan that finished in 2019. AQUAPLAN is Australia’s national strategic plan for *aquatic animal health*. It represents a shared strategic approach to aquatic animal health that addresses the common goals and priorities of industries and governments.

It is now time for industry input to the plan. Documentation has been provided to State executive officers for use by those who wish to contribute.

### *National Aquaculture Council*

Oysters Australia is currently a non-financial member of NAC. Using FRDC funds, a consultant has been selected by NAC to review its future direction and method of operation. We will reconsider our membership status with NAC once the review is concluded. Meanwhile, some readers may be contacted for their opinions.

### *Research and Development*

The Board approved a project proposal from ASI Pty Ltd entitled *South Australian mortality trials*. The project will run for four years at a cost of \$332,000. The objectives are:

1. To increase the rate of genetic gains for SA survival
2. To investigate the relationship between environmental data and mortalities
3. To use the data generated to inform ASI and commercial breeding decisions
4. To develop industry agreed medium/long term breeding targets for SA survival

*Further Information*

I am happy to talk more about any of the above subjects. Alternatively, please feel free to contact Andy Myers or your state representative on Oysters Australia (see below).

I encourage you to share this report as widely as you see fit.

Please note that this report does not replace the formal minutes of the Board meeting.

Kind Regards,

Len Stephens  
Chairman  
0418 454 726

**Oysters Australia Board Members**

*New South Wales*

Caroline Henry, Tony Troup

*South Australia*

Gary Zippel, Steve Bowley

*Tasmania*

Ian Duffy, Tim Pauly

*Executive officer*

Andy Myers