

WAFIC Board Communiqué No. 2 - 16th September 2014

Following the first Board communiqué in May we have made significant progress towards the restructure of our key activities and improved management of our available resources.

The appointment of a Communications and Programs Officer and a Resource Access Officer in the past two months sees the new WAFIC structure fully staffed and the Board has already noticed improvements to the way we do business.

One of the most important issues we have addressed recently is signing off on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Australian Petroleum Producers and Exploration Association (APPEA). This MOU is the result of 18 months of work with APPEA and is designed to help us work collaboratively in relation to the ever-increasing volume of requests for information and other needs from the energy industry.

The MOU is not a silver bullet solution but it does represent an important first step in establishing a solid working relationship with that industry.

Another key development is the recent national statement of intent made by the Australian Fisheries Management Forum (AFMF) – an informal network of state and federal government agencies involved in managing fisheries and aquaculture in Australia.

The AFMF is comprised of the heads of Commonwealth and state/territory fishery management agencies, with observers from relevant bodies including the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). Its national statement of intent, that provides the commercial fishing industry with an understanding of management and policy directions on issues including, resource access, harvest strategy, third-party accreditation and regulatory reform, is welcomed by WAFIC and the results are awaited with interest.

On similar lines of industry collaboration, the Board notes that WAFIC has been formally accepted into membership of the Agrifood Alliance Western Australia (AAWA). The AAWA is an independent, industry-driven coalition of WA's peak agriculture and food-related industry bodies and provides a platform to identify and develop strategies and actions to enhance the profitability, competitiveness and sustainability of the WA agrifood sector.

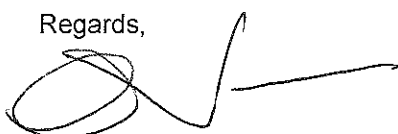
This is part of a wider strategic push by WAFIC to gain wider market recognition through measures that include active participation in the MSC assessment process, the Australian Made (Australian Seafood) program and potentially further involvement with the State Government's Buy West Eat Best initiative.

Finally, there was recognition at the latest Board meeting of the many concerns surrounding the issue of Country of Origin Labelling. The National Seafood Industry Alliance (NSIA) Alliance has made a formal submission to the Federal Government's Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee that is currently inquiring into the labeling of seafood and seafood products.

There is wide agreement in the fishing and seafood sector that greater government intervention is required to address identified shortcomings in labeling practices. The NSIA submission made four very clear recommendations: to create a specific section in the *Competition and Consumers Act* to deal solely with country of origin claims with regard to food, to maintain the current requirement for CoOL, to extend the CoOL requirements for seafood sold for immediate consumption (ie: dining venues or outlets) and to require that fish names are used in accordance with the Fish Names Standard. We will await the outcome of this federal committee's inquiry with interest.

The Board's next meeting will be in Fremantle on date 22 October. For clarification of any point contact WAFIC CEO John Harrison: ceo@wafic.org.au or 94327701.

Regards,



Clayton Nelson
Deputy Chairman