

WAFIC
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FISHING INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC

2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

Protecting, promoting and supporting the development of Western Australia's fishing community.

WE'RE FISHING FOR EVERYBODY

Contents

Our Mission 3
Message from the Chair 4
Message from the CEO 6
Year at a Glance 10
Our Board 12
Organisation Structure 13
Strategic Foundation 14
Strategic Pillars 15

Promote

Mental Health and Wellbeing 16
Community Engagement 17
Working with Government and Media 18
Commemorating our Heritage 20
Enhancing Online Presence 21
Celebrating Seafood Excellence 22

Protect

Cumulative Pressures 24
Call for Long Term Planning Model 27
Securing Resource Access 28
Go Ahead for Real-Time Reporting 29

Develop

Certified Sustainability 30
A Fair and Transparent Compensation Model 32
Exploring innovations in seafood 34
New Markets for Under-utilised Species 35

Represent

Industry Voices 36
Meeting with Industry 38
Research Opportunities 40
Industry Consultation Unit (ICU) 42
Safety and Training 44

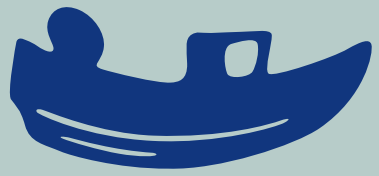
Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Income 49
Statement of Financial Position 50
Statement of Changes in Equity 51
Notes to the Financial Statements 52
Statement by Members of the Board 58
Independent Audit Report 59



Our **Mission**

WAFIC is the recognised peak body to protect, promote and support development of the commercial fishing industry.



Commercial fisheries

Supporting WA's food security and providing world-class seafood to the WA community



WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S MSC CERTIFIED FISHERIES

1. Western Rock Lobster
2. Mackerel Icefish
3. Heard Island & McDonald Island Toothfish
4. Exmouth Gulf Prawn
5. Shark Bay Prawn
6. Octopus
7. Abrolhos & Mid-West Scallop
8. Deep Sea Crab fishery
9. South Sea Pearls
10. Abalone
11. Abalone – Wild Enhanced fishery
12. Sea Cucumber

- Abalone
- Abalone – Wild Enhanced Fishery
- Abrolhos Scallop
- Crab
- Finfish
- Octopus
- Patagonian Toothfish/ Mackerel Icefish
- Prawns
- Scallops
- Sea Cucumber
- Shark
- South Sea Pearls
- Southern Rock Lobster
- Swordfish/Tuna
- Western Rock Lobster

- North Coast
- Gascoyne Bioregion
- West Coast
- South Coast

Message from the **Chair**

The 2025/2026 financial year has been a challenging period for the commercial fishing industry bringing with it significant upheaval, change and need for restructure.

The commercial fishing industry is a significant economic driver and delivers thousands of direct and indirect jobs throughout regional WA. Commercial fishers fish for everyone. They ensure fresh local seafood is available for those in our community who do not fish for themselves. These facts appear to be poorly understood by government or at least, not appropriately valued, despite WAFIC's and industry's exhaustive efforts communicating these simple truths.

The decisions in December 2025 to permanently close the commercial West Coast demersal scalefish fishery, end shark fishing in affected areas and end the Pilbara trawl fishery in addition to catch reductions of up to 50 per cent in other demersal fisheries represents a major disruption of, and structural change to, commercial fishing in Western Australia. These decisions have had a devasting impact on impacted commercial fishers and their families. The three weeks notice of the changes was unprecedented, with dire financial consequences for impacted fishers. Despite statements to the contrary, WAFIC had no prior knowledge of the closure of these fisheries. WAFIC, together with commercial fishers, learned about the decisions on the day of the government's announcement. With the decision made there has been no willingness on the part of government to review the decision and consider viable alternatives.

WAFIC supported commercial fishers to understand the decision and determine next steps while also making strong representations to government to review the decision and the science, and for immediate financial support for impacted fishers. In addition, WAFIC lodged a substantial submission on the Compulsory Fisheries Adjustment Scheme (CFAS). I would like to acknowledge the incredible work by WAFIC staff and the WAFIC Board during the challenging weeks and months that followed these decisions and which continue to this day.

In addition to its usual bimonthly meetings, the Board held six Special Board meetings to provide critical strategic direction on the demersal issue and other challenges faced by the organisation and commercial fishers over the last 12 months. As Chair I attended numerous meetings with impacted fishers and took many phone calls to hear directly from impacted fishers. It is clear there is a chasm between the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's (DPIRD) position on the science and what fishers are seeing and experiencing. It is critically important going forward that science methodology is understood and agreed by scientists and industry, and gaps in data collection are addressed.

In addition to managing these complex matters, the Board reviewed and improved internal governance providing the organisation with a stronger foundation. This has been a substantial body of work, and requires regular review going forward. While needing to transition to more proactive engagement, flexibility and the ability to respond appropriately and in a timely manner to emerging issues remains crucial.

The government's decision to cut WAFIC's funding in the new four year funding agreement is a significant blow to the organisation. This unquestioningly requires a significant restructure of the way WAFIC manages its business going forward. In the short time since the

"Commercial fishers fish for everyone. They ensure fresh local seafood is available for those in our community who do not fish for themselves."

decision, the WAFIC Board has begun the review work necessary for this restructure including consultation with members through a recently held workshop. Timing necessitates this critical task is now handed onto the new Board to progress.

In the face of adversity, it is important that we remember this is not the first challenge faced by our industry, and in a fast-changing environment and political climate, will not be the last. In the face of these challenges our industry has shown itself to be resilient and adaptable by pulling together and confronting each challenge head on. It is critical to the future viability of commercial fishing that industry pulls together.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the WAFIC operational team, past and present, for their dedication, hard work and genuine compassion shown to fishers during a devasting period for the commercial fishing industry. Their professionalism and willingness to deal with challenges and work through solutions is acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

Our Interim CEO, Ms Manue Daniels, warrants a special acknowledgement and the deep appreciation of the Board. Taking on the role of Interim CEO in such challenging circumstances takes a person of considerable conviction, expertise and strength. Ms Daniels hit the ground running, tackling not only the priority tasks but also tidying up many other pending tasks. The workload completed by Ms Daniels in her short time as Interim CEO has been considerable and noteworthy. On behalf of the Board and commercial fishers, I extend my sincere appreciation to Ms Daniels for her hard work and dedication.

I also extend my appreciation to WAFIC's former CEO, Ms Melissa Haslam for her efforts managing the most challenging and confronting period in industry's history and wish her the very best in her new position.

Finally, but certainly not least, my sincere thanks to the WAFIC Board. The workload over the last 12 months has been enormous. Your invaluable contributions, tireless efforts, commitment and strategic direction over this challenging period have been extraordinary. It has been a privilege to work with you.

In concluding and noting my time as WAFIC Chair is coming to an end, I would like to put on the record that it has been my sincere privilege to serve the commercial fishing industry. It has been a pleasure to meet so many talented and extraordinary people who have built impressive businesses and work tirelessly to deliver sustainably managed local seafood to West Australians. Their stories are truly inspirational. I wish each of you strength and smooth waters in your journey ahead.

Adele Farina
WAFIC Chair



Message from **the CEO**

It has been a significant and challenging time to step into the role of Interim Chief Executive Officer, with our industry continuing to navigate the far-reaching impacts of the fisheries management decisions announced in December, which blindsided us all.

This is not the first period of major change our industry has faced, and it will not be the last. Fishing businesses have always operated in a dynamic environment and have repeatedly demonstrated their capacity to respond to changing circumstances.

While the current challenges are substantial, the history of our industry shows that we can adapt and emerge stronger. These challenges also reinforce the importance of remaining united, informed and focused on the future.

I have spent more than 15 years representing the commercial fishing industry. Through that experience, I have seen first-hand the resilience, determination and practical problem-solving that define our industry.

It has given me a deep appreciation of the frustration and uncertainty many fishers are experiencing, but it also gives me confidence in our collective ability to adapt, develop practical solutions and chart a pathway forward.

Throughout 2025–26, WAFIC represented the commercial fishing sector across fisheries management, resource access, marine planning, compensation and regulatory reform.

The decisions announced in December 2025 changed the lives of many people across our industry. They included the permanent closure of the commercial West Coast demersal scalefish fishery, the removal of shark fishing access across affected West Coast areas, the cancellation of the Pilbara trawl fishery, and catch reductions of up to 50 per cent in other demersal fisheries.

These were not small adjustments. For some fishers, they meant the sudden loss of a livelihood built over decades and, in many cases, across generations.

Behind every licence is a person, a family, a crew and a network of regional businesses that depend on fishing. The speed and scale of these decisions left many people shocked and uncertain about their future.

WAFIC has worked alongside affected fishers, advocating for viable alternatives, fair and timely compensation, and management processes that genuinely involve industry. We support the need to manage fisheries sustainably, but sustainability must be pursued through transparent, evidence-based decisions that recognise the knowledge of fishers and the human, economic and community consequences of removing access.

WAFIC consulted affected licence holders and prepared a detailed submission on the proposed Compulsory Fisheries Adjustment Scheme (CFAS).

The submission argued that the allocated $20 million was insufficient to reflect the value of fishing rights, businesses and assets, as well as the lost income and broader supply-chain impacts arising from the permanent closures.

WAFIC proposed transparent and consistent compensation principles, including independent valuations, industry representation and recognition of licence value, lost earnings, affected business assets, ongoing costs and personal hardship.

The submission also presented an alternative Sustainable Demersal Fishing Action Plan involving a voluntary or targeted adjustment scheme, reduced industry capacity and revised management arrangements that would allow a sustainable commercial fishery to continue supplying locally caught seafood.

WAFIC participated in the Compensation Working Group established to develop an improved fisheries compensation framework. While the final report introduced Profit Adjustment Payments, solatium, multipliers and potential Asset Impact Payments, WAFIC remained concerned that the proposed approach did not adequately reflect the real economic impacts on affected fishing businesses.

Following an unsuccessful request to include independent valuation expertise in the Working Group, WAFIC commissioned an independent report on contemporary, market-aligned valuation methodologies. The report was provided to government to support the development of a more transparent, robust and economically defensible compensation framework capable of delivering genuine adjustment outcomes.

WAFIC's Fishing Industry Legislation Working Group prepared a submission on proposed amendments to the Fish Resources Management Act 1994.

It called for stronger and more enduring commercial fishing rights, improved transparency and accountability in decision-making, modernised licensing processes, catch reporting across all sectors, and fair compensation when fishing access is reallocated or reduced.

WAFIC secured a new four-year funding agreement at a significantly reduced level of annual funding. WAFIC's funding is now calculated as 0.5 per cent of the Gross Value of Production of managed commercial fisheries, less 70 per cent of 0.5 per cent of the Western Rock Lobster Managed Fishery's GVP.

The revised formula reflects the Government's decision to support the Western Rock Lobster Council's request and direct a greater proportion of funding to that organisation.

The consequences of fisheries management decisions extend far beyond licence holders and fishing operators. They are felt through reduced regional economic activity, disruption to seafood supply chains, business closures and increasing demand for financial, social and mental health support.

These impacts remind us that commercial fishing is not simply an industry sector. It is an important part of the social, economic and cultural fabric of Western Australia's coastal communities.

Commercial fishers are fishing for everybody. A reduction in local fishing capacity ultimately means less Western Australian seafood available to consumers and greater dependence on imported products. This raises important questions about food security, regional employment and the future of coastal communities.

Despite these challenges, there are reasons to remain optimistic. The future may not look exactly like the past, but that does not mean opportunities do not exist.

Our challenge is to identify and develop those opportunities while continuing to advocate for fishing businesses, the seafood industry and regional communities.

The recently released Futures of Seafood report makes a timely contribution to that discussion. While it is not a definitive roadmap, it identifies emerging opportunities and alternative approaches that could help strengthen the seafood sector and maintain connections across Western Australia's vast coastline.

Most importantly, it encourages a broader conversation about how we can reshape and rebuild the sector in a way that strengthens both its resilience and its influence.

The road ahead will not be simple, and progress will not happen overnight. However, I am confident that our industry has the experience, capability and determination to navigate these challenges and build a sustainable future.

Fishing has always been a people business. I encourage members to remain engaged with WAFIC and with one another. WAFIC will continue to reach out, listen and advocate, and I encourage industry members to participate in those conversations. Our greatest strength remains our ability to work collectively towards common goals.

Finally, I thank the WAFIC team for their professionalism, commitment and resilience throughout an exceptionally demanding year. Despite significant uncertainty and competing priorities, they have remained focused on supporting industry, representing members and maintaining WAFIC's essential work. Their contribution deserves recognition.

Manue Daniels

Interim Chief Executive Officer





Melissa Haslam steps down

During 2025–26, Chief Executive Officer Melissa Haslam stepped down after leading WAFIC through one of the most challenging periods in the sector's recent history.

During her time as CEO, Melissa was a highly visible advocate for Western Australia's commercial fishing and seafood industry. Her strong media presence helped raise public awareness of the pressures facing fishing businesses and regional communities, and the impact on the availability of locally caught seafood.

Melissa consistently championed the interests of commercial fishers during a period of significant policy and operational change.

On behalf of WAFIC and its members, we thank Melissa for her dedication, commitment and service, and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

Year at a Glance

We represented

42 meetings
Held with industry

We protected

2 fisheries recertified with MSC
Shark Bay Prawn, Scallop and Crab managed Fisheries and the Exmouth Gulf Prawn Managed Fishery

We promoted

2,172,348
Facebook views

9,442
Facebook followers
Up over 2000+ since last year

33,055
content interactions
Up 606.2% from last year

36
Oil and gas environmental plans reviewed and consulted

WAFIC stories **appeared 598 times in the media**

Generated the advertising equivalent of **$5.8million**

Reached more than **4.85 million people**

We developed

40 seafood stakeholders and chefs
Attended our Seafood Innovation Workshop, exploring opportunities to value-add, innovate, and utilise new technologies to reduce costs

Our **Board**

The WAFIC Board is made up of nine directors, including an independent chair. The Board meets six times per year, with additional meetings held for sub-committees or extraordinary issues.

Two Board seats were vacated this year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), with new Board members elected through a process of membership voting at the AGM.

In the 2025-26 Financial Year, the seats of James Brown and Adam Radford became vacant, with Alan Gray and Kym Coffey elected for three-year terms.

James Brown's contribution to the Board was recognised along with his continuing role in building the seafood industry in the Northwest region.

In April 2026, Manue Daniels commenced a leave of absence from the Board, which includes her role as vice-chair, to step into the Interim CEO position at WAFIC. Matt Benson-Lidholm was voted to fill the Interim vice-chair role as a temporary vacancy.



Adele Farina
WAFIC Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Forest Industry Federation of WA. Adele is a former Legislative Council member for the South West region, and has an active engagement with regional industries.



Matt Benson-Lidholm
Matt is a former State Parliamentarian and Interim vice-chair with experience in regional development and fisheries. He has a long family involvement in fishing on the South Coast and is the former Chair of SSPWA.



Kym Coffey
Kym has worked in the commercial seafood industry since 2002 and has experience with a diverse range of commercial fishing, pearling and aquaculture industries in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.



Wayne Scheggia
Wayne is a business and regional development consultant, with a successful record of business management, restructuring and transitioning. Wayne has served on the WAFIC Board since 2020.



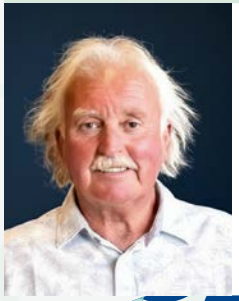
Phil Clark
Phil has a lifelong passion for seafood and is an outspoken advocate for local seafood supply. Phil has worked in almost every aspect of seafood and food service, from sales, through wholesale and even the occasional bit of fishing.



Nicholas Tee
From humble beginnings in seafood retail to the open ocean, Nick's career is a testament to his lifelong passion. His ultimate goal is to showcase the unparalleled quality of WA's seafood on a global stage.



Paul Catalano
Paul boasts extensive experience in post-harvest processing, international markets, supermarket drivers and direct retail.

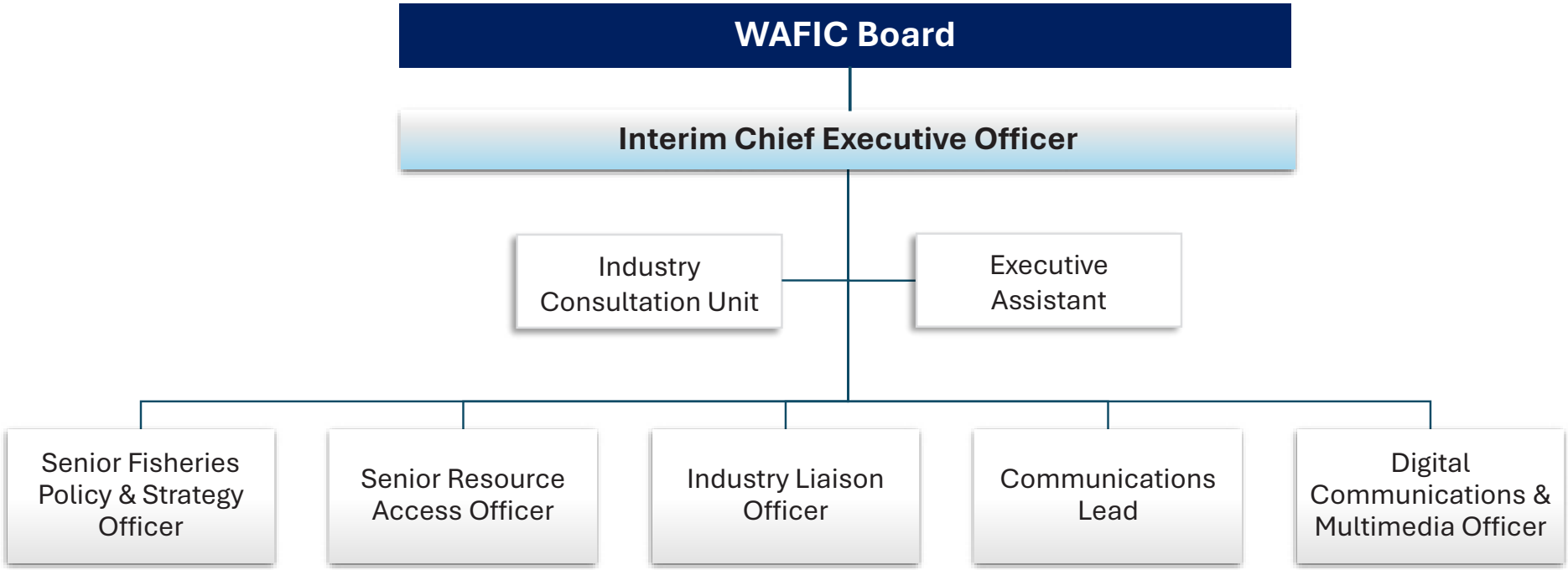


Alan Gray
Alan is an experienced director with a background in resource management and sustainable fisheries, alongside expertise in board governance. He also serves as a Non-Executive Director at the Tasmanian Abalone Council Limited.



Manue Daniels
Manue is an experienced director and long-time industry advocate who took a leave of absence from the Board and the role of vice-chair in April 2026 to step into the role of Interim CEO at WAFIC.

Organisation structure



Building on a strong **strategic foundation**

Over the past 12 months, WAFIC has successfully advanced its strategic priorities, building on the renewed direction established through last year's review of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

This process has enabled the Board to further strengthen the organisation's operational focus and expand engagement opportunities across Western Australia's seafood industry, while working in a highly contested operating environment.

Delivering on four key strategic pillars

The Strategic Plan 2025-2030 builds on the achievements of the previous plan and is guided by four key pillars: Protect, Promote, Represent and Develop.

These pillars provide a clear framework to maximise the viability of the commercial seafood sector, foster long-term confidence for investment, operations and promotion of the socio-economic value of commercial fishing. The pillars also allow channels to enhance community understanding of the industry's critical contribution to food security, regional employment and economic prosperity.

As the peak industry body, WAFIC has continued to demonstrate strong leadership in a complex and rapidly-changing operating environment.

A significant focus has been the finalisation of a comprehensive research program designed to better understand and communicate the opportunities and socio-economic contribution of the WA commercial fishing industry. The Futures of Seafood report will be released at the Seafood Directions conference in July 2026. In parallel, WAFIC continues to advocate for the development of an Ocean Planning Policy that will provide a long-term framework for sustainable co-existence between commercial fishing and other users of the marine estate.

Once established, these initiatives will provide a strong platform for the industry's future. They will help reinforce confidence in the sector, strengthen recognition of commercial fishing as an essential contributor to food security and support the industry's reputation as a sustainable driver of regional economies and employment.

Over the past year, WAFIC has also successfully delivered a renewed digital presence, including the launch of an updated website designed to improve communication with stakeholders and provide greater visibility of industry developments. The enhanced platform enables timely access to information on sustainability achievements, stock assessments, projects and broader industry news, ensuring stakeholders remain informed and engaged.

While significant challenges and uncertainty remain, the past 12 months have highlighted the opportunities available to industry.

WAFIC has continued to prioritise initiatives that support the growth and expansion of existing fisheries, encourage the adoption of new technologies and innovation, and increase the value of seafood products harvested, processed and packaged in Western Australia.

These efforts are helping to position the industry for long-term success, sustainability and prosperity.

"WAFIC has continued to prioritise initiatives that support growth"

Strategic **pillars**

There are four strategic pillars that provide the foundation of the strategic plan. These four pillars encompass everything WAFIC stands for in representing the commercial aquatic harvest and production industry.



PROMOTE

We will demonstrate the sustainability, contributions, threats and opportunities relevant to the industry



PROTECT

We will fight for access rights and certainty to support investment and the delivery of local seafood



DEVELOP

We will advocate for opportunities to develop aquatic harvest and associated activities to grow our contribution to the economy and food security



REPRESENT

We will speak with a strong voice on key issues, informed by strong industry engagement and evidence-based science.

Promote: Mental health and wellbeing

Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our fishing communities.

Western Australia's fishing communities have experienced significant change in recent years, with the introduction of expansive marine parks and sanctuary zones, along with the closure of several demersal, shark and prawn fisheries. The cumulative impacts of these changes have created uncertainty and challenges for many fishers, their families and the businesses that support them.

In recognising these pressures, WAFIC is committed to helping fishing communities better understand their mental health needs, build resilience, stay connected and access the support they need.

In partnership with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), WAFIC is delivering a range of targeted mental health and wellbeing initiatives across metropolitan and regional Western Australia.

DPIRD has provided $250,000 in funding to enable WAFIC to develop and manage a comprehensive mental health support program designed to assist fishers, fishing businesses and local communities as they navigate ongoing change.

The strategy takes a practical and community-focused approach, built around four key objectives:

- Raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing.
- Improving access to support services and resources.
- Training and empowering a network of trusted community advocates.
- Strengthening understanding of the valuable role fishers play in Western Australia's food security, culture and economy.

To deliver these important services, WAFIC has partnered with experienced Western Australian counsellors through the national Stay Afloat program, providing tailored mental health support to members of the fishing industry and their families.

WAFIC is also working alongside respected organisations such as the Regional Men's Health Initiative, which has an extensive network of support workers throughout the state.

Together, these partnerships ensure assistance is available to a broad cross-section of the fishing community, while also creating pathways to professional support for those who may need additional help.

As part of the program, WAFIC regularly shares mental health and wellbeing information, stories and resources with industry members.

The Stay Afloat team continues to engage directly with fishers, their families and other industry stakeholders, providing personal support and helping individuals access services when needed.

The response from the fishing community has been overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating the value of these initiatives and the importance of ongoing support. WAFIC remains committed to continuing these efforts and advocating for the wellbeing of the people who form the backbone of Western Australia's fishing industry.

In addition, Stay Afloat delivers Mental Health First Aid training for fishers and industry participants, equipping them with practical skills to support their colleagues, friends and families.

WAFIC staff and a growing number of fishers are undertaking this training, helping to expand a network of trusted advocates across regional Western Australia.

For more information, visit:
Stay Afloat - ww.stayafloat.com.au

Regional Men's Health Initiative
https://regionalmenshealth.com.au

Promote: Community engagement

Sharing seafood stories with our members and community.

While commercial fishing may be a relatively small industry, it plays an important role in the lives of Western Australians and has a strong voice within our communities.

WAFIC is committed to working alongside our members, industry partners, stakeholders and the media to share the stories, achievements and contributions of Western Australia's seafood sector with as many people as possible.

Each year, our team travels tens of thousands of kilometres across the state, connecting with regional fishing communities to ensure they remain informed, engaged and connected to the issues and opportunities shaping their industries.

Commercial fishing helps ensure local seafood remains available in restaurants, fish and chip shops, hospitality venues and homes across the state. It is a vital part of our food supply chain, regional economies and coastal way of life.

That's why our motto remains: *"We're fishing for everybody."*

As demand for sustainable and locally sourced food continues to grow, maintaining access to responsibly managed seafood resources is more important than ever. Every kilogram of fresh WA seafood supplied by local fisheries helps meet community demand while supporting regional jobs, businesses and food security.

Throughout the year, WAFIC has actively communicated on a range of important industry topics, including:

- Supporting fisheries through ongoing industry change and transition.
- Highlighting the economic, social and cultural contribution of fishing to regional communities.
- Advocating for a strong and sustainable future for Western Australia's fishing industry.
- Promoting the role of commercial fishers in supplying fresh local seafood to shops, restaurants and consumers.
- Supporting secure and sustainable access to fisheries resources.
- Demonstrating the contribution of commercial fisheries to the state's food security.
- Promoting the benefits of Country of Origin labelling for food service outlets and consumers.
- Encouraging balanced approaches to marine conservation, sustainability and fishing access.
- Supporting co-existence between commercial fishing and offshore development projects.
- Raising awareness of shark depredation and its impacts on fisheries.
- Showcasing high-quality, lesser-known WA seafood species to new markets and consumers.
- Promoting the achievements and value of Marine Stewardship Council certification.

Through these conversations, WAFIC will continue to champion the people, businesses and communities that make Western Australia's seafood industry one of the state's great success stories, while helping ensure future generations can continue to enjoy sustainable, locally caught seafood.

"It's important that the community hear our stories so they can better understand the role of commercial fishing in the supply of fresh local seafood"

Promote: Working with government and media

Method in the Media

While keeping industry members informed remains a core priority, WAFIC also recognises the importance of engaging with the wider community to build understanding of Western Australia's seafood industry and the valuable role it plays across the state.

Media continues to be an important partner in this effort, providing a platform to share industry stories, showcase achievements and foster meaningful conversations with the broader community. Through media engagement, WAFIC is able to communicate key issues while also hearing community perspectives from listeners and readers. This understanding allows us to strengthen connections between industry and stakeholders.

Over the past year, media outlets have helped tell hundreds of stories about the commercial fishing industry, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges facing the sector. These stories have covered a wide range of topics, from marine park planning and offshore wind farm developments to consumer-focused features that celebrate lesser-known seafood species and the people who harvest them.

Regional media has been particularly valuable in supporting community engagement. With their strong local knowledge and trusted relationships, regional journalists help facilitate informed discussions on issues affecting coastal communities, ensuring local perspectives are heard and shared.

Social Media: Building connections with a growing audience

Alongside traditional communication channels such as email updates, News Flashes, newsletters, podcasts, meetings, workshops and forums, WAFIC continues to expand its engagement through social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Instagram.

Social media provides an opportunity to quickly connect with industry members, seafood consumers, community groups and other stakeholders in real time. Its interactive nature encourages two-way conversations, knowledge sharing and greater collaboration, helping to strengthen relationships across the seafood sector and the wider community.

Throughout the financial year, WAFIC has seen strong growth in social media engagement. Facebook remains an important platform for connecting with seafood industry participants, while Instagram has helped introduce a broader audience to Western Australia's seafood sector, showcasing the people behind the industry and providing greater insight into where locally caught seafood comes from.

Through these channels, WAFIC is not only sharing industry and government updates but also working to increase public understanding of sustainable fisheries, the health benefits of seafood, and the positive contributions of commercial fishers to regional communities and the state's economy.

This growing engagement reflects increasing interest in Western Australia's seafood industry. Facebook now has more than 9000 followers, with strong growth across views, comments, discussions and overall engagement. Instagram has also continued to expand, reaching more than 2000 followers and creating new opportunities to connect with seafood consumers and community members.

These results demonstrate the value of ongoing collaboration and engagement, helping to foster stronger connections between industry, government and the broader public.

Working in partnership with government

The sustainable management of Western Australia's fisheries relies on strong partnerships between industry, government and the wider community.

As the agency responsible for fisheries management, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) plays a central role in ensuring WA's fisheries remain sustainable and productive for future generations.

WAFIC works closely with DPIRD to support evidence-based decision-making through open communication, information sharing and constructive collaboration. By working together, both organisations help ensure fisheries management decisions are informed by the best available information while recognising the economic, social and environmental importance of the seafood industry.

This collaborative relationship enables WAFIC to represent industry knowledge and experiences, while supporting DPIRD's commitment to sustainable fisheries management and healthy marine ecosystems for the benefit of all Western Australians.



Social Media

2,172,348 Facebook views

33,055 content interactions
Up 606.2% from last year

9,442 Facebook followers
Up over 2000+ since last year

Traditional Media

WAFIC stories **appeared 598 times**

Reached more than **4.85 million people**

Generated the advertising equivalent of **$5.8million**

Promote: Commemorating **our heritage**

Fishing Lives Lost at Sea Memorial inches closer.

WAFIC is a foundation member of the WA Fishers' Lost at Sea Memorial Association which was formed with the intention of collecting, researching, documenting and sharing stories of the hundreds of fisher men and women who have lost their lives in pursuit of the development and operation of commercial fishing in Western Australia since early settlement.

Thanks to the tireless work of our researchers and writers, the online library is now the largest online collection of stories about Western Australian commercial fishers. The National Museum of Australia has also accepted our website collection for preservation, helping to ensure these stories are protected for future generations.

The published stories can be found at https://www.flatsea.org/families

Now, with the website built and showcasing a growing number of stories, there is a desire to develop a memorial to honour those who were lost, but have never been found.

The aim is to build a monument, based on an Ocean Organ Memorial, to physically honour those who have been lost at sea and to give surviving families a place to come for remembrance.

An ocean organ is a living structure featuring pipes just under the water surface that force air through organ reeds. The movement of the sea generates waves and melodic sounds are created. The music changes with sea conditions allowing beautiful sounds to be cast across the waters.

The Association is now working with Fremantle Council and government stakeholders to explore the feasibility of locating the organ on the southern rockwall in Bathers Beach, Fremantle. The Ocean Organ will be connected to the Boat Harbour area by a walkway, which will highlight the stories of the lost commercial fishers. A feasibility study is underway.

If your family has a fishing history in Western Australia, we'd love to hear from you by emailing flatseamemorial@gmail.com.

You can visit the website at www.fisherslostatsea.org or www.flatsea.org

Promote: Enhancing **online presence**

WAFIC launches updated website.

The redevelopment of the WAFIC website was undertaken in response to consistent member feedback that the previous site was difficult to navigate and did not effectively meet the needs of our members or the organisation. The new website provides WAFIC with a clear, professional digital presence that better reflects our role in representing Western Australia's fishing industry.

The redevelopment focused on creating a simpler, more accessible and user-friendly experience, while also ensuring the website is built for longevity.

A key consideration was making it easier for the WAFIC team to maintain and update content internally, allowing members and visitors to access current information as the industry continues to evolve.

Key improvements include a new membership portal, a streamlined content management system and a more accessible design, including larger navigation elements suited to our industry demographic. These functional improvements have been complemented by a clearer presentation of WAFIC's purpose, role and priorities.

The new landing page places WAFIC's advocacy priorities and mission front and centre, giving visitors an immediate understanding of who we are, what we represent and the work we undertake on behalf of the industry.

The redevelopment also provided an opportunity to consider how WAFIC's brand and identity should evolve alongside the industry. With the fishing industry continuing to face rapid change, the new website provides a more contemporary platform for WAFIC to communicate, advocate and connect with members into the future.

"Providing an effective and engaging online presence is critical to communicating with our regional fishers and stakeholders"



Promote: Celebrating **seafood excellence**

The Western Australian seafood industry's commitment to excellence, innovation and continual improvement was recognised at the 2026 WA Seafood Industry Awards, held at Frasers Restaurant in Kings Park in May.

Hosted by the WA Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC), the event was made possible through the generous support of sponsors, including Gold Event Sponsor Taylor Marine, Silver Event Sponsor Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, as well as individual award sponsors and seafood contributor partners.

While many industry members continue to navigate significant challenges, the awards provided an important opportunity to come together and celebrate the outstanding individuals and businesses who continue to raise standards, embrace innovation and drive the industry forward. The event highlighted the determination, expertise and passion that remain the foundation of Western Australia's seafood sector.

Recognising excellence, sustainability and innovation, this year's event was held in a more intimate format than previous years, reflecting the current operating environment across the industry. Nevertheless, the calibre of nominees and winners demonstrated the sector's unwavering commitment to achievement and its ability to adapt, innovate and succeed in changing circumstances.

The WA Seafood Industry Awards remain one of the most significant events on the industry calendar, bringing together seafood professionals from across the State to recognise achievements, share successes and reinforce the strong sense of community that underpins the industry.

Attendees enjoyed an exceptional showcase of Western Australia's freshest, locally sourced and sustainably harvested seafood, highlighting the quality and reputation of the products that continue to earn recognition both nationally and internationally.

Winners from 13 award categories will automatically progress to represent Western Australia at the Australian Seafood Industry Awards, to be held in conjunction with the 2026 Seafood Directions Conference in Sydney.

The WA-only Deckhand Award continues to play an important role in recognising the contribution, dedication and professionalism of those working at the forefront of the industry. Established to celebrate the achievements of deckhands across the State, the Award acknowledges the vital role they play in maintaining the strength, safety and success of Western Australia's seafood industry.



Congratulations to our winners

Take Away Fish and Chips Award: Ocean and Paddock, Albany

Seafood Industry Producer (Small): Two Rocks Tentacles, Premium Octopus

Seafood Industry Producer (Large): Sea Harvest Australia

Seafood Business Award (Small): Black Pearl Oyster Shucking

Seafood Business Award (Large): Endeavour Foods

Health and Safety Award: Aquatic Life Industries

Research, Development and Extension Award: Bringing the Iconic Australian Herring to Food Service and Retail — FRDC, DPIRD, Curtin University, Fins Seafood and Albany Seafoods

Environment Award: Coral Futures Corporation

People Development Award: Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA), Turning the Tide Program

Seafood Industry Promotion Award: Seafood Innovation Workshop — FRDC and Don Hancey

Seafood Experience Award: Lobster Shack Cervantes

Deckhand Award: Isabel Waskiewicz

Michael and Patricia Kailis Award: Phil De Grauw



Protect: Cumulative pressures



Cumulative pressures and expanding opportunities of a changing marine environment.

Western Australia's coastline is undergoing unprecedented transformation, with rapid growth across coastal infrastructure, offshore oil and gas operations, renewable energy developments and other marine industries. While these developments present significant opportunities to support economic growth and long-term community benefits, they also create cumulative pressures on marine ecosystems and the industries that depend on them.

For Western Australia's commercial fishing industry, the challenge is not simply the impact of any single project, but the combined environmental, social and economic effects of multiple developments occurring across shared marine environments. Ensuring these pressures are properly understood, managed and mitigated is critical to protecting healthy oceans, sustainable fisheries and the State's seafood security.

Genuine, transparent and early consultation remains essential to minimise both direct and cumulative impacts on marine habitats, fishing operations and coastal communities. When undertaken effectively, consultation provides an opportunity to identify solutions that balance environmental protection, resource development and industry co-existence.

WAFIC actively monitors proposals along the State's coastline and engages with coastal development proponents, offshore oil and gas titleholders, renewable energy developers and key regulators, including the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA). Through this engagement, WAFIC seeks outcomes that safeguard marine ecosystems while supporting the continued viability of the commercial fishing industry.

As the offshore sector evolves, new opportunities are emerging through decarbonisation initiatives such as carbon capture and storage, as well as the growing focus on decommissioning ageing oil and gas infrastructure. These transitions present an important opportunity for industries to work collaboratively to deliver environmental improvements, innovation and long-term benefits for marine users.

WAFIC continues to engage with titleholders to explore practical solutions that support environmental stewardship while maintaining access and productivity for commercial fisheries. By working together rather than competing for marine space and resources, industries can identify approaches that deliver shared value and strengthen co-existence across the marine estate.

These discussions are focused on ensuring the changing offshore landscape can support sustainable economic development while maintaining the environmental integrity of marine environments. Healthy ecosystems are fundamental to productive fisheries, and careful planning today will determine how successfully multiple industries can operate together in the future.

This collaborative approach has already demonstrated positive outcomes. Through years of effective consultation between offshore petroleum operators and commercial fishers, WAFIC has found that titleholders who utilise its Oil and Gas Consultation Framework consistently demonstrate best-practice engagement, improve communication and help reduce consultation fatigue across the industry.

While some activities, such as seismic testing, remain challenging areas where stakeholder perspectives can differ, WAFIC has also observed growing interest from sections of industry in reducing environmental impacts, including efforts to minimise the benthic effects associated with offshore dredge spoil disposal.

However, not all developments have demonstrated the same commitment to avoiding environmental impacts. One example is the Optimised Mardie Project in the Pilbara region, which received Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) approval to dredge approximately 360,000 cubic metres of coral reef to facilitate shipping access. Further concerns emerged following changes that allowed large volumes of the dredged material to be disposed of at sea within a high-risk demersal fishery, despite previous approvals for land-based disposal.

Such decisions highlight the importance of conducting thorough assessments of cumulative environmental effects and ensuring that development outcomes align with broader sustainability objectives.

Balancing environmental protection with economic development remains one of the most important challenges facing marine management. Decisions that result in significant habitat loss or ecosystem degradation can undermine fisheries sustainability and raise questions about the consistency of government decision making policies across broader environmental and resource portfolios.

The diversity and scale of emerging offshore developments continue to present challenges, particularly as offshore renewable energy proposals gain momentum. Renewable energy will play an important role in Australia's transition to a lower-emissions future, and offshore wind developments have the potential to deliver significant environmental and economic benefits when appropriately planned and managed.

However, the location, scale and cumulative impacts of these projects require careful consideration. In Western Australia, interest continues to focus on the declared offshore wind area off Bunbury, where WAFIC remains actively engaged with the Offshore Infrastructure Regulator (OIR) and project proponents.



Protect: Cumulative pressures

To support effective engagement and coexistence, WAFIC has developed an Offshore Renewable Energy Position Statement and accompanying Guiding Principles. These documents provide a framework for consistent consultation, meaningful stakeholder engagement and the responsible sharing of marine space between renewable energy projects and established industries such as commercial fishing.

Adding to the cumulative pressures is the increasing number of desalination facilities being built, or proposed, in regional coastal communities. These projects support growing populations, industrial activity and water security, yet they often occur in areas that also underpin important commercial fishing and seafood production activities. Achieving balanced outcomes that support environmental sustainability, community needs and industry productivity remains essential.

Similarly, the proposed Westport development in Cockburn Sound has generated significant concern within the fishing sector following the release of environmental impact assessments into potential marine consequences.

The findings highlighted varying levels of environmental risk across a broad range of marine species and habitats, reinforcing the need for robust environmental safeguards and transparent decision-making processes. Large-scale developments of this nature exemplify the importance of considering cumulative impacts across entire ecosystems, rather than assessing projects in isolation.

WAFIC continues to contribute constructively through EPA assessment processes, Westport consultations and broader policy discussions, advocating for development pathways that minimise environmental impacts while supporting sustainable economic outcomes.

Compensation

Compensation for cumulative impacts remains an important issue for industries affected by marine development decisions.

Where access to fishing grounds is reduced, or commercial activity is displaced, due to marine parks, infrastructure developments or other marine uses, there must be transparent and equitable mechanisms to recognise these impacts. Fair compensation frameworks that can quickly support impacted fishers provide confidence to affected industries while supporting the broader social licence needed for major development and conservation initiatives.

Climate Change and Marine Heatwaves

Climate change is intensifying the cumulative pressures facing marine ecosystems and commercial fisheries.

Marine heatwaves, once considered relatively rare events, are becoming more frequent and intense, particularly in nearshore environments where warming can occur rapidly and persist for extended periods. These events affect not only target fish species but also the habitats, food sources and ecological relationships that support healthy and productive marine ecosystems.

WAFIC recognises that climate change represents one of the most significant long-term challenges facing marine industries and coastal communities. Effective adaptation, continued research and ecosystem-based management will be critical to building resilience and protecting the environmental values on which fisheries and regional economies depend.

Protect: Call for long term planning model

Fisheries uncertainty highlights need for long term planning.

State Ocean Planning Policy

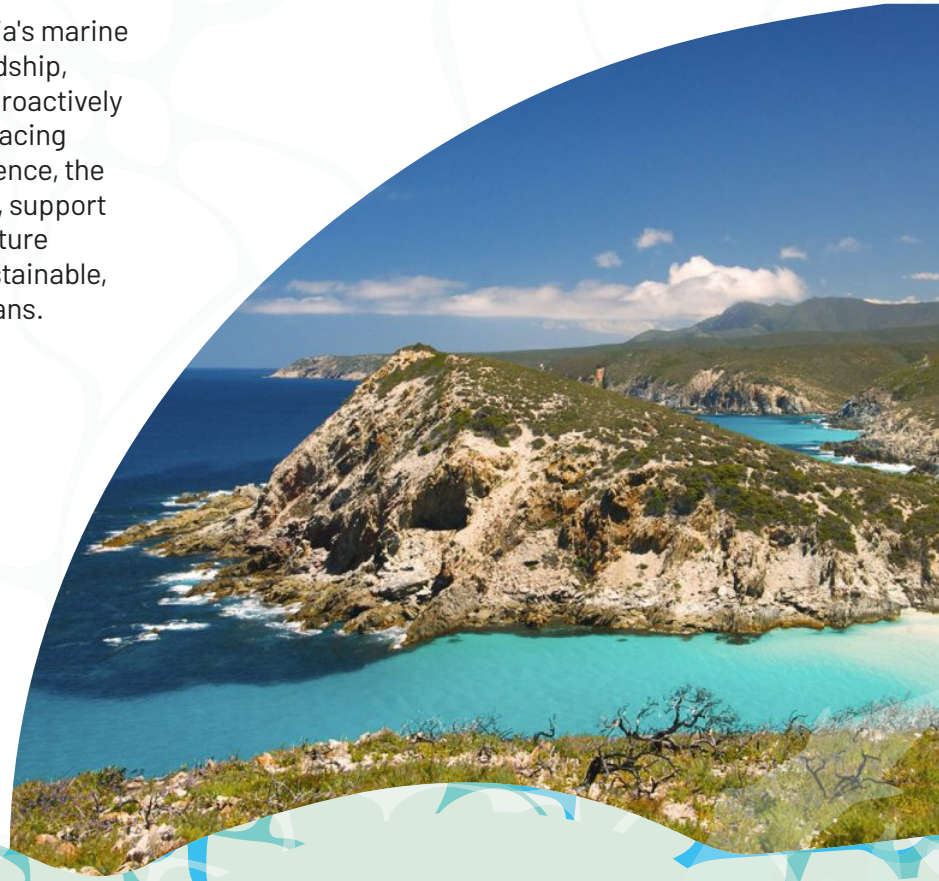
As demands on Western Australia's marine estate continue to grow, WAFIC continues to advocate for the development of a comprehensive State Ocean Planning Policy to provide a strategic and integrated framework for future ocean use.

Similar to land-use planning systems, such a policy would help identify and coordinate future locations for offshore energy projects, oil and gas developments, marine parks, shipping infrastructure, desalination plants and commercial fishing activities.

Importantly, it would allow cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts to be assessed within a broader strategic context rather than through isolated, project-by-project decisions.

A well-designed State Ocean Planning Policy represents a significant opportunity to strengthen environmental stewardship while providing certainty for industry, government and coastal communities. By creating a transparent, long-term vision for marine management, Western Australia can better balance conservation outcomes with sustainable economic development.

Ultimately, the future of Western Australia's marine environment depends on careful stewardship, collaboration and forward planning. By proactively managing cumulative impacts and embracing opportunities for innovation and coexistence, the State can protect its marine ecosystems, support thriving coastal industries and ensure future generations continue to benefit from sustainable, locally sourced seafood and healthy oceans.



Protect: Securing resource access



Securing long-term access for sustainable fisheries.

Resource access remains the highest priority across all sectors of commercial fishing. Without secure and reliable access to fishing resources, there is no fishing industry. Without long-term access certainty, fishers cannot confidently plan, invest, innovate, or support the coastal communities that depend on them.

Unfortunately, not all decision-makers understand the importance of access security in the way fishers do. For those whose livelihoods are directly tied to the ocean, access to productive, well-managed fishing grounds is fundamental. It underpins a sustainable, low-carbon seafood industry, yet access is increasingly diminished through competing demands, political interventions and often short-term planning decisions.

Restricting or removing access to nearshore fishing areas may appeal to some sections of the community, but these decisions often overlook the broader consequences. When fishing effort is displaced further offshore, operating costs increase, carbon emissions grow and safety risks are heightened. Often, the environmental and economic outcomes are contrary to the goals these measures are intended to achieve.

Examples of declining access are increasingly common. The industrialisation of marine and coastal environments, competition from non-fishing users, the expansion of marine parks and resource reallocation decisions driven by political considerations rather than sustainability outcomes have contributed to growing uncertainty for commercial fishers.

The challenge extends beyond the fishing industry. Reductions in access have economic and social consequences that flow through regional communities, seafood supply chains, tourism, hospitality, and potentially Australia's long-term food security.

Encouragingly, there is growing community recognition that fisheries closures and access restrictions will reduce seafood supply, increase costs, and create unintended impacts across sectors.

Co-existence is achievable. Fishing, conservation, recreation, tourism, renewable energy and other marine industries can all operate alongside one another, provided there is genuine collaboration and a commitment to long-term planning. Achieving this requires transparent decision-making that provides certainty and recognises the value of sustainable commercial fishing as an ongoing use of public marine resources.

Long-term access security gives seafood businesses the confidence to invest in vessels, equipment, people, infrastructure and new technologies.

Commercial fishers are innovative, but innovation relies on certainty. Businesses need confidence that they will continue to have access to resources if they are to make the substantial investments required to improve productivity, sustainability, and efficiency.

Western Australia has a proud history of fisheries innovation and has consistently been at the forefront of adopting world-leading practices. Examples include advancements in bycatch reduction, quota-managed fisheries, discard minimisation, gear innovation, promotion of underutilised seafood species, improved fuel efficiency, and ongoing efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

Wild-catch fisheries already deliver some of the lowest carbon emissions of any animal protein production system. When supported by science-based management and secure resource access, commercial fishing is both renewable and sustainable.

However, access certainty remains one of the foundations on which that sustainability depends.

Protect: Go ahead for **real-time reporting**

Government commits to real-time recreational catch reporting.

Throughout 2025-26, WAFIC continued to advocate for mandatory, real-time catch reporting for recreational fishers. Commercial fishers and charter operators have long been required to report their catches, and WAFIC maintained that reliable, contemporary information across all sectors is essential to sustainable and equitable fisheries management.

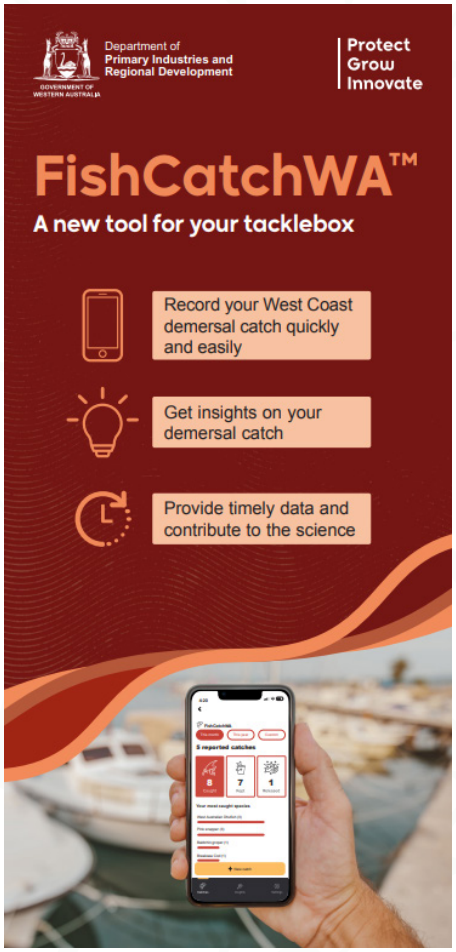
Recreational catch has historically been estimated through surveys, logbooks, boat-ramp interviews and other monitoring methods. While these methods provide important information, the time between fishing activity and the availability of catch estimates can limit their use for responsive management.

In October 2025, following public discussion about the future management of demersal fisheries, WAFIC publicly reinforced its call for mandatory digital reporting. The Government initially indicated that it would honour its pre-election commitment not to introduce mandatory reporting across all recreational fisheries. WAFIC continued to argue that reporting should be focused on boat-based recreational catches of at-risk species, rather than casual beach or jetty fishing.

On 3 December 2025, the State Government announced that real-time reporting of demersal catches would form part of its statewide reforms, with implementation planned before the West Coast Bioregion reopens to recreational demersal fishing in spring 2027. The Government subsequently confirmed that the new requirements would involve mandatory catch reporting.

This commitment represents an important shift towards more transparent, science-based management and reflects an issue WAFIC has pursued over many years. More timely catch information will help managers better understand total fishing mortality, assess the effectiveness of management measures and respond to emerging risks using contemporary evidence.

At 30 June 2026, the detailed reporting arrangements were still being developed. WAFIC will continue to engage with government to support a practical and credible system that produces reliable data and applies accountability fairly across fishing sectors.



Develop: Certified **sustainability**

Securing long-term access for sustainable fisheries.

Marine Stewardship Council

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) program is recognised as the global gold standard for independent, third-party sustainability certification and continues to play a pivotal role within the fisheries management landscape in WA.

Following on from the release of V3.1, MSC has launched a 'Fisheries Program Revisions' project in September 2025.

This project focuses on making necessary further revisions to the Fisheries Program documents to ensure they are delivering on the MSC Theory of Change.

The project brings together a wide range of external stakeholders including scientists, fisheries, technical experts and eNGOS, and substantial work on policy developments has already occurred.

Next steps are a 60-day public consultation on the proposed revisions will be held between 8 October and 8 December 2026. Mock assessments of the revised documents will also take place.

There are 11 MSC fisheries in Western Australia, with another two in Commonwealth waters operating in the Southern Ocean.

WA's MSC fisheries:

- Western Rock Lobster
- Exmouth Gulf Prawn
- Shark Bay Prawn
- Shark Bay Crab
- Shark Bay Scallop
- Deep Sea Crab fishery
- South Sea Pearls
- Abalone – Rare Foods Australia
- Sea Cucumber
- Octopus
- Abrolhos & Mid-West Scallop
- Abalone (currently self-suspended)

Commonwealth waters:

- Heard Island and McDonald Island Toothfish
- Mackerel Icefish

The changing WA Landscape

WAFIC is now the client for five Western Australian fisheries, including the Exmouth Gulf Prawn Fishery, Shark Bay Prawn, Crab and Scallop Fishery, Abrolhos Islands and Mid-West Trawl Fishery, West Coast Deep Sea Crustacean Fishery, and the Western Australian Octopus Fishery.



"11 WA fisheries hold MSC certification, which is more than any other state and well above the global average."

Throughout the 2025-26 Financial Year, WAFIC has overseen the delivery of a comprehensive client action plan and supported three independent audits, reinforcing its commitment to robust governance and continuous improvement.

A significant milestone was the successful amalgamation of three Shark Bay fisheries into one MSC certificate, representing a first for Western Australia and demonstrating a collaborative, innovative approach to fisheries governance.

Over the past year, the WA Octopus, West Coast Deep Sea Crab and Abrolhos scallop fisheries also completed their annual site visits with Conformity Assessment Bodies, all coordinated through the WAFIC office. These engagements provide valuable opportunities to showcase best practice management, transparency, and ongoing stewardship across the sector.

The Abrolhos Islands scallop and West Coast Deep Sea Crab fisheries have also progressed through reassessment this year, with positive outcomes anticipated following completion of the certification process.

The WA Octopus Fishery continues to emerge as one of Australia's stand out fisheries success stories and is among the nation's fastest growing fisheries. Industry and management stakeholders are investing in targeted research to strengthen operational efficiency and sustainability outcomes. This work is helping address key knowledge gaps, inform proactive management frameworks, and support economic policy settings that will foster long-term prosperity and resilience as the fishery continues to grow.

Following its MSC recertification last year, the WA Octopus Fishery continues to work closely with WAFIC, as the client, and DPIRD to deliver a client action plan that addresses several minor conditions over the coming years. This collaborative approach reflects a shared commitment to maintaining world-class sustainability standards and driving continual improvement.

Western Australia's abalone industry is also adapting to evolving market opportunities, with fishers reshaping their operations to capitalise on new export pathways. The sector is increasing its focus on Roe's abalone, and while they have currently decided to put the MSC Certification on hold, the fishery remains focussed on long-term market access and sustainability recognition.

Looking ahead

The Exmouth Gulf Prawn Fishery and Shark Bay Prawn Fishery, including the newly incorporated blue swimmer crab and scallop components, were successfully recertified, marking 10 years of participation in the MSC program. This achievement reflects a decade of strong governance, sustainable management, and industry commitment to continuous improvement.

As a result, these fisheries are now eligible for Recertification Assistance funding, through which MSC may contribute up to $60,000 or 75 per cent of audit costs. This support will help maintain certification outcomes while enabling ongoing investment in sustainability, transparency, and best-practice fisheries management.

"Independent sustainability monitoring and accreditation is becoming increasingly important for exports and environmental management."

Develop: A **fair and transparent** compensation model

After extensive delays in compensation payments associated with marine parks and other fisheries restrictions, WAFIC has been working with licence holders and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to develop a modern and effective compensation framework that can deliver fairer and more timely outcomes for affected fishers.

These discussions highlighted the significant challenges involved in establishing a reliable market value for units of entitlement in smaller fisheries. They also provided fishers with an opportunity to review the information held by the department on their respective fisheries, which would be used to inform any government-led compensation process.

In several cases, licence holders identified gaps in existing data and suggested additional information sources that could improve the accuracy and transparency of future compensation assessments ahead of any Voluntary Fisheries Adjustment Scheme being implemented.

A compensation working group has been established to improve the processes that underpin compensation assessments and payments. While decisions on compensation remain the responsibility of government, the group's focus is on ensuring future arrangements are timely, transparent, equitable and fit for purpose.

Past experiences have shown that some licence holders have waited close to a decade to receive compensation following fisheries closures within marine parks. This highlights the urgent need for a contemporary compensation model that provides greater certainty, transparency and efficiency, ensuring fishers are not subjected to prolonged delays when government decisions impact their livelihoods.





Develop: Exploring **innovations** in seafood

WAFIC partnered with the Food Industry Development team at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and the Sustainable Innovative Food Technologies (SIFT) Centre to deliver a Seafood Innovation Workshop, bringing together industry leaders to explore emerging opportunities, address key challenges and accelerate innovation across Western Australia's commercial seafood sector.

The workshop attracted approximately 40 seafood industry stakeholders, alongside leading Perth chefs, all united by a shared interest in unlocking new value streams and driving industry transformation.

Discussions focused on innovative approaches to value-adding, increasing product yield through advanced processing techniques, and adopting emerging technologies to enhance efficiency and profitability.

A key theme was the potential to reimagine underutilised local seafood species, creating new market opportunities while improving sustainability, affordability, and consumer access. Participants explored how innovation can help diversify product offerings and strengthen the long-term resilience of the sector.

The adoption of accessible and scalable technologies was a major focus, with SIFT showcasing a range of cutting-edge food processing solutions that can deliver significant business benefits, even for smaller operators with limited resources. These technologies demonstrated how strategic innovation can reduce costs, improve productivity, and support business growth.

Building on the momentum generated by the workshop, additional innovation-focused events are planned for 2026, including a market development workshop designed to foster collaboration, accelerate commercialisation opportunities and strengthen the competitiveness of Western Australia's food and beverage sector.



Develop: New markets for **under-utilised species**

As sustainability pressures increase on iconic seafood species such as dhufish and pink snapper, WAFIC has been working proactively with industry partners to identify innovative opportunities to diversify consumer demand and unlock the commercial potential of under-utilised seafood species with strong market appeal.

Through this initiative, WAFIC collaborated with a broad team of industry stakeholders and a senior researcher from Curtin University to reposition the Australian Herring from a largely overlooked commercial species into a value-added product for food service and retail markets.

The project successfully developed and brought to market 14 tonnes of premium crumbed herring portions under the Captain Redbeard Albany Herring brand. The product has since been launched across Western Australia through a growing network of retailers and hospitality venues, demonstrating strong consumer acceptance and market demand.

Building on this early success, distributors servicing the aged care, mining and retail catering sectors are now evaluating the product for broader distribution opportunities in both Western Australia and the eastern states.

The strong market response has provided producer, Albany Seafoods, with the confidence to significantly expand production for the 2026 harvest. The company is also innovating further by developing new product lines, including a flash-fried herring option tailored to health, institutional and mining sector requirements, alongside a retail-ready consumer pack.

This project demonstrates how innovation, collaboration and strategic market development can create new value from under-utilised fisheries resources while supporting sustainability objectives.

Its success was recognised at the 2026 WA Seafood Industry Awards, where the initiative received a category win, highlighting its contribution to industry growth and innovation.



Represent: Industry voices

New challenges with funding changes and Service Level Agreement.

WAFIC has worked closely with government to finalise a funding model and Service Level Agreement that reflects the evolving needs of Western Australia's fishing industry.

Negotiating WAFIC's new funding arrangements was a challenging process that continued towards the deadline. A new four-year funding agreement was ultimately secured, providing certainty about the basis of WAFIC's funding while requiring the organisation to operate within a significantly changed funding environment.

WAFIC's funding is now calculated as 0.5 per cent of the Gross Value of Production (GVP) of managed commercial fisheries, less 70 per cent of 0.5 per cent of the Western Rock Lobster Managed Fishery's GVP. During the negotiations, the Western Rock Lobster Council was successful in securing a greater share of the funding linked to its fishery's GVP. This resulted in a reduction in WAFIC's annual funding.

The reduction in funding means WAFIC will need to adjust and adapt its operations. WAFIC remains focused on maintaining strong, strategic representation and advocacy for the commercial fishing industry, while ensuring its priorities and activities are aligned with the resources available under the new agreement.

WA Fisheries Council

Under the charter of the Western Australian Fisheries Council, WAFIC is recognised as the peak industry body representing commercial fisheries across the state.

While the Fisheries Council did not meet during 2025-26, WAFIC maintained regular engagement with government through quarterly meetings with the Minister, addressing strategic priorities, fostering collaboration and receiving updates on government directions.

Amendments to the Fish Resources Management Act 1994 were progressed through an Industry Reference Group (IRG), in which WAFIC participated to represent industry's interests.

Fisheries Forum

In October 2025, the Fisheries Minister convened a Fishing Industry Forum, bringing together key stakeholders to explore a way forward for the fishing industry following stock assessment updates in the West Coast Bioregion.

Held at Parliament House, the Forum brought together representatives from across the sector, including WAFIC, Recfishwest and industry groups, providing a valuable opportunity for open dialogue, practical problem-solving and working towards balancing environmental sustainability with the ongoing viability of fishing businesses and coastal communities.

Industry participants engaged constructively and in good faith, contributing significant time, expertise and practical experience to the Forum. The outcomes differed from what many participants had anticipated from the discussions, and reinforced the importance of ensuring future consultation processes clearly demonstrate how industry feedback has informed decision-making.

Given the scale and extent of the decisions that followed, WAFIC did not consider the Fishing Industry Forum, on its own, to represent an adequate level of industry consultation.

Although The Minister advised that the information presented at the Forum and subsequent submission would be carefully considered before decisions were made on the future of WA's demersal fisheries the decisions did not reflect the collaborative outcomes industry had hoped for.

WAFIC remains committed to constructive engagement with government and to advocating for industry knowledge and concerns to be meaningfully considered.

Minister announces sweeping fisheries reforms

In a move that shocked the industry, the Minister announced sweeping closures and severe catch reductions across WA's demersal fisheries, including the closure of commercial demersal fishing and shark fishing in the West Coast Bioregion, a ban on trawling and catch reductions of up to 50 per cent in other regions.

The decision to close the West Coast region to commercial demersal fishing also transferred the available allocation to the recreational sector, creating a recreational-only fishery for the first time in Western Australia.

WAFIC expressed strong concern at the time, describing the decision as a "massive and irreversible shell shock" with potentially far-reaching consequences for fishing businesses, regional communities and the broader seafood supply chain. Many of those concerns are now being experienced across the industry, with businesses closing, confidence in future investment declining and flow-on effects emerging throughout regional Western Australia. Communities that have relied on commercial fishing for generations are facing increasing uncertainty about their future.

The Government announced a $20 million compulsory buyback package to support affected operators. While this provides some recognition of the impact of the reforms, WAFIC considers the funding insufficient when measured against the scale of the changes, the loss of forever income, stranded assets and the number of businesses affected.

The consequences extend beyond licence holders to seafood processors, wholesalers, retailers, hospitality businesses and the many other businesses that support the commercial fishing industry. The potential loss of employment and economic activity is particularly concerning for regional and coastal communities where alternative opportunities may be limited.

Commercial fishers have operated within government-established management frameworks, invested in reliance on those arrangements and adapted to changing regulatory requirements over many years. Understandably, many now feel that their past compliance and investment have not been adequately recognised in the transition process. This has contributed to growing frustration and concern about the long-term future of the industry, the security of regional employment and the ability of the next generation of Western Australian fishing families to remain in the sector.

WAFIC continues to advocate that commercial fishers, who have long operated responsibly within government frameworks and invested in adapting to regulatory change, deserve genuine partnership and support. WAFIC remains focused on securing a positive, sustainable future for the industry, regional jobs, and the next generation of Western Australian fishing families.



Represent: Meeting with industry

Annual Management Meetings

Each fishery in Western Australia may hold an Annual Management Meeting (AMM), where fishers are briefed on the science, current issues, fishery performance, risks and compliance issues.

Currently, not every fishery holds an AMM each year, as access to the process is subject to specific eligibility criteria. WAFIC has been advocating strongly for the value of the AMM process, and is calling for a return to yearly AMM for each fishery, to ensure fishers across all sectors have the opportunity to engage directly with government on the issues and opportunities affecting their fishery.

The meetings, which are officiated by the Industry Consultation Unit, are attended by fishers, as well as government fisheries managers, compliance officers and WAFIC.

The meetings are a valuable gathering of key stakeholders and provide an important forum to learn and collaborate.

Submissions

WAFIC regularly provides industry submissions on key issues, such as seismic testing, fisheries management changes and issues, spatial squeeze, wind farms, as well as coastal industrial developments including oil and gas.

In 2025-26, WAFIC provided submissions on:

- Demersal fisheries management
- Fisheries Resources Management Act (FRMA)
- Compensation
- Compulsory Fisheries Adjustment

In addition, WAFIC provided comments and submissions to a wide range of parties on Environmental Impact Assessments and seismic test proposals.

"WAFIC has been advocating strongly for the value of the Annual Management Meeting process to ensure all fishers across all sectors have an opportunity to engage directly with government."



Research opportunities

FRDC review of stakeholder engagement process

In November 2025, the Fisheries Research & Development Corporation (FRDC) undertook an external review of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) model to look at the best process to meet stakeholder needs, opportunities for improvement and options for alternate models.

The review was informed by a stakeholder consultation process.

FRDC paused the existing RAC process and any calls for investment opportunities until the review outcomes are delivered and considered in mid-2026.

Industry Partnership Agreements (IPAs)

Western Australian investment priorities through FRDC are also informed by advice of Industry Partnership Agreements (IPAs). IPAs are between the FRDC and a specific fishery to manage a suite of targeted projects over a specified time period against an agreed, industry endorsed, strategic R&D plan. Current IPAs affecting WA industry sectors include western rock lobster, pearls, abalone, oysters and prawns.

Some IPAs manage the entire FRDC contribution for that particular sector (e.g. WRL, abalone and pearls), whilst others manage part of their contribution within the IPA (e.g. prawns) with the balance managed within the RAC project funding process.

New FRDC Managing Director

Sean Sloan commenced as FRDC managing director on 25 August 2025.

Sean has held senior fisheries positions in the Commonwealth and State Governments of Australia and at the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency based in the Solomon Islands, involving management, research, assessment and development of fisheries and aquaculture resources. Having worked in fishing and aquaculture in Australia and internationally – and directly with FRDC – Sean has a deep understanding of the FRDC operating environment and has well established relationships with many of our stakeholders.

On behalf of all WAFIC members, I congratulate Dr Patrick Hone for his outstanding leadership of FRDC as Managing Director upon his retirement after 21 years in the role. His vision and stewardship has positioned FRDC as a globally respected research organisation.

FRDC projects of interest

Please see below some of the industry projects that are currently underway in Western Australia.

FRDC Project 2022-157 – The Bringing the iconic Australian Herring to the food service and retail market project investigated how Australian Herring can be transformed from a low-value bait species into a viable human-consumption product. The project developed processing and product concepts, resulting in a commercially-viable crumbed herring product that has created new market opportunities for WA fishers. This project was recognised at the 2026 WA Seafood Awards, acknowledging the partnership approach between Curtin University, Albany Seafoods, Fins Seafood, DPIRD and FRDC.

FRDC Project 2024-009 Exploring new resources for the West Coast Deep Sea Crustacean Managed Fishery (WCDSCMF) in WA aimed to identify new deep sea crustacean species within the fishery. Trialling a range of different trap types, several potentially commercial deep sea crustacean species have been discovered. One of the most exciting findings to date is golden crab (Chaceon granulatus), a large species with commercial potential that may supplement WA's existing crystal crab fishery. It is due for completion in 2027.

FRDC Project 2023-052 Novel fishery independent, biological and economic-processing methods to underpin expansion of Australia's fastest growing fishery, the Western Rock Octopus aims to develop new biological, fishery-independent monitoring, and bioeconomic management tools for the Western Rock Octopus fishery, helping it expand sustainably. It also aims to improve understanding of octopus populations, test camera-based survey technology, and support evidence-based fishery management.

FRDC Project 2024-072 Exploring new live Blue Swimmer Crab export markets: an integrated whole of chain approach seeks to determine whether a commercially viable live export supply chain can be developed for Blue Swimmer Crabs by assessing market opportunities, validating crab handling and transport methods. Also to identify pathways to access premium domestic and international market.

Brett McCallum,
WARAC Chair

Further information:

Further information on RACs and their functions can be found at: www.frdc.com.au/frdc-stakeholders/research-advisory-committees

Further information on the FRDC Research and Development Plan can be found at: www.frdc.com.au/research/rde-planning-and-priorities

FRDC Contacts:

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FRDC funded projects 2024/25 to the benefit of WA

Project Number	Title	Provider
2025-020	Workshop to determine fisheries management needs related to marine heatwave impacts | FRDC https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2025-020	Thalassa Consulting (inc DPIRD)
2024-055	BioInnovation Festival Aquaculture Research Development and Extension Workshop | FRDC https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2024-055	Aquaculture Council WA
2024-072	Exploring new live Blue Swimmer Crab export markets: an integrated whole of chain approach | FRDC	Curtin University
2024-051	Capability and Capacity: International Artificial Reef Study Tour | FRDC https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2024-051	Recfishwest
2024-022	Researching a multi-sector approach to seafood exports focusing on market access and market development needs | FRDC https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2024-022	Seafood Industry Australia
2024-009	Exploring new resources for the West Coast Deep Sea Crustacean Managed Fishery in Western Australia | FRDC https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2024-009	DPIRD

Industry Consultation Unit

The 2025/26 year represented a year of enormous turmoil for the WA Commercial Fishing Industry. Turmoil not seen since the highly controversial closure of the greater metropolitan area to commercial line fishing in 2007.

The closures of the West Coast Demersal Fishery, West Coast Gillnet Fishery and the cessation of the Pilbara Trawl Fishery early in 2026 represented a significant loss of highly regulated, commercially sustainable fresh fish to the vast seafood consuming population of Western Australia and beyond.

The 2025/26 year has been best described by many seasoned industry observers as one of great disruption, the likes which have not been seen since formal management of WA Fisheries was first introduced by the then colonial government's legislative council in 1879 to ban the use of dynamite as a means of harvesting estuarine fish in the Swan River.

No better example of how calamitous this decision was the determination to close the West Coast Gillnet Fishery. This fishery held their annual management meeting in mid-October 2025. This was the 14th annual management meeting facilitated by the ICU since 2011. Meetings license holders attended always in good spirit to openly exchange valuable research information with the departmental scientists. Not once was the minuscule catch of demersal fish in this fishery ever mentioned preceding the decision to close this fishery on the grounds of unsustainable demersal take.

Weeks after the mid-October management meeting the formal announcement was made this fishery would close by the end of the 2025. A positive meeting held in mid-October 2025 whereby license holders had all agreed in good faith to introduce electronic monitoring as a future management measure to be closed a month later. History will now record a degree of subterfuge was at play as the decision to close this hugely important fishery was not done on ecological, environmental, or indeed economic grounds.

A comparable situation occurred in both the West Coast Demersal and Pilbara Trawl. In the West Coast Demersal Fishery an annual meeting had not occurred since 2022, whereby there was a general acceptance by all license holders to follow the Gascoyne Demersal Fishery into an individual transferable quota system.

However, without any formal department follow up meeting this initiative did not proceed. For a commercial fishery which had grudgingly accepted and absorbed a closure from Lancelin to south of Mandurah in 2007, this was a bitter pill to swallow for the highly regulated commercial fishing industry.

With the closure of these fisheries, it is difficult to gauge how the department will undertake a stock assessment without the input of regulated catch and logbook data which has been provided by licensed holders over numerous years. However, equally concerning will be the loss of shared information between the license holder and departmental research scientists which occurred at the annual meetings.

Information emanating from license holders in face-to-face meetings is information which cannot be located by searching the internet or in textbooks. It is information harnessed from license holders over several generations. As the ICU can attest from facilitating these meetings over more than a decade this

"Compounding these issues and resource constraints has revealed opportunities and driven a need for fresh thinking."

information is not only vitally important to managing fish resources but equally important to managing the overall marine environment.

Aside from these staggering decisions in late 2025 the Industry Consultation unit reports major management meetings were held in various fisheries during the 2025/26 year coupled with multiple specific purpose meetings, working group meetings and statutory consultation engagements undertaken on behalf of DPIRD.

The ongoing Westport development also occupied much of the ICU's time over the past twelve months.

On a far happier note, the ICU wishes to record their congratulations to Phillip De Grauw on being this year's recipient of the prestigious Michael & Patricia Kailis Leadership Award.

The ICU has worked very closely with Phil in his capacity as a commercial member of the much-valued Gascoyne Harvest Strategy Working group. Primarily, through his leadership combined with wonderful input from dedicated departmental scientists this fishery is considered to be one of the remarkable success stories of a fully recovery fishery in WA.

I had the pleasure to introduce Phil at the awards evening held in May this year and had considerable pride in sharing with the audience not only anecdotal recollections of Phil's efforts over the years but also highlighted his highly valued community involvement.

The ICU also would like to take this opportunity to farewell license holders, who will be no longer fishing due to the respective closures and wishes to record the wonderful assistance they have provided the unit over the past fifteen years.

A relationship built on mutual respect and trust.

A relationship the ICU will indeed always cherish.

Angus Callander
Executive Officer



Safety and training

Safety and Training report

Safety for fishing vessels is regulated under two separate government jurisdictions.

- Marine safety – Across Australia, marine safety is managed on a national basis under a single jurisdiction through the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), which took over full management responsibility on 1 July 2018.

- Workplace Safety – within WA, Workplace Safety is managed by Worksafe under the Work Health and Safety Regulations (2020) and Work Health and Safety Regulations (2022).

Anyone working in the fishing, pearling or aquaculture industry, should make sure they are familiar with their responsibilities under both the occupational health and safety laws that apply in their state or territory as well as meeting the national marine safety laws under AMSA.

Marine Safety

The 'National marine safety management system' delivered by AMSA was the result of a 2012 whole-of-government agreement (state and federal) to 'harmonise' transport activities across Australia to reduce red tape, reduce costs and improve safety.

Marine safety refers to the regulatory arrangements applying to:

- vessel integrity
- safety equipment
- search and rescue
- operational area authorisations, and
- certificates of competency for masters and crew

The AMSA policy and regulation approach is focused on 'trust and verify,' which places greater responsibility on the vessel owner (including corporate entities) and its operators (skipper and crew) to manage safety on a vessel. Those demonstrating consistent safe vessel operations will be rewarded with reduced regulatory compliance (e.g. extended survey periods) and the resultant reduction in red tape and reduction in cost.

This approach recognises that safety and training needs to be specific to each and every individual fishing vessel or aquaculture operation. One size does not fit all.

Marine safety legislation requires individual vessel owners and operators to:

- identify the hazards that can cause safety issues,
- measure the level of risk from that hazard
  - likelihood of an accident and the
  - consequences of an accident;
- then assess how to mitigate/manage that risk through active management measures, such as standard operating procedures, training, at-sea-practice drills and emergency procedure drills.

All these aspects need to be formally documented in a 'safety management system' (SMS) designed specifically for the vessel.

Training is an especially important link to a vessel's safety management requiring owners to ensure their employees are effectively skilled to safely manage their specific role in a vessel's operations, especially on-board emergency procedures.

Workplace Safety

At the same time as 'marine safety legislation' is applied by AMSA, all fishing vessels and aquaculture sites are classed as 'workplaces' and subject to separate state jurisdiction work health and safety legislation. In WA, this legislation is managed by Worksafe (WA).

Workplace legislation also requires owners and operators to:

- identify hazards,
- measure the risk,
- then mitigate that risk through active safety management measures, such as standard operating procedures, training, at-sea-practice drills.

This must all be captured and formally documented in a safety management system (SMS).

A vessel safety management system can be one document covering off [both] marine and workplace legislative safety requirements.

" Training is an especially important link to a vessel's safety management, particularly on-board emergency procedures"



WAFIC's role in safety and training

WAFIC focuses its resources communicating to the fishing and aquaculture industry to inform:

- What safety and training issues are currently 'in-play' that will impact the industry?
- How industry can access the necessary information on an issue through direct links to:
  - government agencies,
  - websites,
  - consultation papers,
  - workshop,
  - written reports or research,
  - face-to-face port visits
- How industry can access guidelines, support expertise and legislative requirements to enable owners and operators (skippers and crew) to understand and apply the information to fit their specific vessel operations?

WAFIC provides the following services and communications to industry for marine safety, workplace safety and industry training:

- Analysis of government proposals, consultation with industry and development of submissions on behalf of the WA fishing industry.
- Latest news and important links are regularly published in WAFIC's monthly newsletter through WAFIC's social media channels and on the WAFIC website.
- Fishing industry sector body groups are regularly informed and requested to provide information to their sector members and provide targeted comments for inclusion in submissions.
- Direct emails sent to members.
- Workshops convened on matters of significance.
- Co-ordination between various government agencies and industry, including attending sector body meetings, port visits and annual fishery management meetings.

WAFIC actively participates in high-level consultation through direct representation on a range of state and national advisory groups on marine safety and workplace safety matters to ensure that WA fishing industry interests are clearly enunciated, represented and understood by authorities and decision-makers.

In 2025/26 WAFIC was actively involved in:

- AMSA National Safety Committee
- AMSA Regional Safety Committee (WA)
- AMSA Compliance Strategy 2026/27
- IMO Review of Mandatory Marking of Fishing Gear and Reporting Lost Fishing Gear
- Worksafe – Review of Man Overboard Code of Practice
- Logistics Training Council (WA) / Australian Industry Standards – Maritime Training Package (master/engineer training)
- Food, Fibre and Timber Training Council / Skills Impact – Seafood Training Package (seafood post-harvest)
- Seafood Industry Australia
  - Safety and Wellbeing Committee
  - Sea Safe (Maritime Safety Initiative)
  - Stay Afloat (Mental Health Initiative)

Major issues in 2025/26

In 2025/26 there have been several significant outcomes for industry or reviews commenced to note:

1. Mandatory marking of fishing gear

International Maritime Organisation (IMO) initiative to tackle ocean plastic litter to be implemented through MARPOL Annex V. This includes mandatory reporting of lost fishing gear.

There is no clear detail to date regarding the level of marking, reporting or data collection.

2. Fatigue management

Fatigue management is now required by regulators to be formally included in vessel safety management systems. There are no rigid rules to date but operators must build fatigue into risk assessment and hazard mitigation management arrangements/ guidance available from AMSA.

3. Drug and alcohol testing

Testing is now required by regulators to be formally included in vessel safety management systems. There are no rigid rules to date but operators must build drug and alcohol management into risk assessment and hazard mitigation management arrangements/guidance available from AMSA.

4. New AMSA Online Portal for applications for near-shore tickets.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has a new online application portal for near-coastal certificates of competency, which are available at **https://my.amsa.gov.au**

Industry are seeking stand-alone Industry are seeking a stand-alone watchkeeping competency for nominated crew trained on-the-job in line with task book or online modules.

This online application portal for Near-Coastal certificates of competency was developed with the goal of saving seafarers time by enabling seafarers to apply for their tickets online instead of having to travel to an Australia Post outlet to apply in person.

myAMSA uses the Australian Government's Digital Identity verification app, myID, to allow seafarers to securely log into their myAMSA account.

5. Risks to workers exposed to electrical hazards

WorkSafe inspectors have observed an increase in the number of electric shock or electrocution reports due to poor electrical installation and faulty electrical equipment and appliances.

6. Seafood Industry Australia Safety and Wellbeing Committee

A National Seafood Safety Committee was established to bring together representatives from wild-catch, aquaculture, post harvest, regulators, researchers and workplace safety experts.

A National workshop was held to inform SIA policy activity, strengthen collaboration across the sector and examine the practical safety challenges that industry is experiencing across the country.

A key theme is the need to strengthen safety culture across the seafood industry. Objectives include clearer, more consistent safety messages across jurisdictions, clearer communication about regulations, and closer collaboration with research organisations to ensure evidence is translated into simple, practical tools.

7. New certification rules for vessels to carry fishery observers

Observers are to be recognised as 'special personnel' as defined in Part B (General Requirements) of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV).

A vessel's certificate of survey or approval will now allow for the carriage of 'special personnel'. Vessel owners will need to apply to include special personnel numbers when their next Certificate of Survey is due for renewal.

8. Focus on stability: Owners must manage a vessel's stability and prevent capsize

AMSA has introduced the requirement for vessel operators to identify risks to vessel stability in their safety risk assessment and include management arrangements in their safety management system (SMS).

Competent persons, such as accredited marine surveyors and naval architects, are best placed to assess vessel stability.

Guidance for stability risks for fishing vessels can be found at https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/domestic-commercial-vessels/domestic-commercial-vessel-requirements/fishing-vessel.

9. Stay Afloat returns to support Western Australia

The WA Stay Afloat team are back on deck and working with WAFIC and industry members to help support those who may be struggling with balancing their mental health and wellness in the current operating environment. If you would like support or information, contact wa@stayafloat.com.au

10. AMSA national maritime stakeholder forum established

AMSA announced a new national industry consultation approach – the National Maritime Stakeholder Forum - for engaging with the maritime community.

The Forum will shape topics, identify key issues and inform the government understanding of sector priorities, supporting more targeted and meaningful engagement.

Many thanks to all staff at AMSA and Worksafe for their assistance to supporting WA's commercial fishing industry and WAFIC.

Brett McCallum

WAFIC Safety and Training Consultant

Financial Statements

Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc
For the Year Ended 30 June 2026

ABN 36 814 383 345

Statement of Comprehensive Income.....49
Statement of Financial Position 50
Statement of Changes in Equity 51
Notes to the Financial Statements 52
Statement by Members of the Board.....58
Independent Audit Report 59





STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
INCOME			
Consultation service		100,000	172,500
General income	9	73,681	24,815
Grants		607,992	-
Income from GVP		1,411,328	1,343,539
Interest income		74,225	87,298
Membership subscriptions		17,300	17,700
Other income		84,388	80,326
Project Management Fees		89,723	12,535
Reimbursements		63,997	40,098
Total Income		**2,522,633**	**1,778,811**
EXPENSES			
Depreciation expenses		27,775	18,583
Employment benefit expenses	10	1,072,111	1,294,853
Other expenses	11	1,424,958	1,056,736
Rental property expenses		10,428	12,540
Total Expenses		**2,535,273**	**2,382,712**
Profit (Loss) before Taxation		**(12,639)**	**(603,901)**
Net Profit After Tax		**(12,639)**	**(603,901)**
Net Profit after Dividends Paid		**(12,639)**	**(603,901)**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2026

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	1,068,631	2,301,560
Receivables	3	269,071	111,897
Financial assets	4	1,881,506	956,206
GST		4,259	847
MSC Audit		10,799	-
Total Current Assets		**3,234,266**	**3,370,509**
Non-Current Assets			
Receivables	3	3,742	6,257
Property, plant and equipment	5	46,520	68,892
Total Non-Current Assets		**50,263**	**75,149**
Total Assets		**3,284,529**	**3,445,658**
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Bank overdraft	2	-	2,642
Deferred income	6	148,087	446,078
Payables	7	162,439	154,120
Provisions	8	119,550	143,507
Total Current Liabilities		**430,076**	**746,348**
Non-Current Liabilities			
Payables	7	11,717	17,133
Total Non-Current Liabilities		**11,717**	**17,133**
Total Liabilities		**441,793**	**763,481**
Net Assets		**2,842,736**	**2,682,177**
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		2,842,736	2,682,177
Total Equity		**2,842,736**	**2,682,177**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	Notes	2026 $	2025 $
Equity			
Opening balance		2,682,177	**3,169,301**
Increases			
Profit for the Period		(12,639)	(603,901)
Other Increases		173,198	116,778
Total Increases		**160,558**	**(487,124)**
Total Equity		**2,842,736**	**2,682,177**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc for the year ended 30 June 2026

1. Basis of Preparation

In the opinion of the board, the association is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial report who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the Act.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements, AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows, AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors and AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures.

The Association is transiting to prepare consolidated financial statements. Consolidation is the incorporation of both internal and external financial statements as if they had operated as a single operation.

Material Accounting Policy Information

a) Income Tax

The association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(b) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue Recognition Policy. Revenue is recognised when the amount can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Association, and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue, as noted below, have been satisfied. Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts, and rebates. All revenue is stated net of the amount of Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Subscriptions

Revenue from the provision of membership subscriptions is recognised on a straight-line basis over the financial year.

Other Income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Association is entitled to it.

(c) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

Revenues, expenses, and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an expense item. Receivables and payables in the Statement of Financial Position are shown inclusive of GST.

(d) Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant, and equipment is carried at cost or fair value, less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment. Items of property, plant, and equipment acquired for nil or nominal consideration have been recorded at the fair value on the acquisition date.

(e) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand, demand deposits, and short-term investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

(f) Leases

At the lease commencement, the Association recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Association believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model, where the cost on initial recognition comprises the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated costs of removal and restoration, less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight-line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the Impairment of Assets Accounting Policy.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease.

The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease; however, where this cannot be readily determined, the Association's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured when there is a lease modification, a change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g., CPI), or a change in the Association's assessment of the lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

(g) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees up to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

2. Cash and Cash Equivalents	**2026**	**2025**
Bank Accounts	**$**	**$**
General Cash Reserve	99,493	136,214
General Cheque Account	251,888	30,892
General Term Deposit #1	303,675	299,358
Internal Cash Reserve	44,927	44,817
Internal Cheque Account	94,663	44,212
Operation Expenses Reserve	-	1,000,000
Petty Cash	92	92
West Coast Demersal Scalefish Bank Balance	-	(2,642)
Total Bank Accounts	**794,738**	**1,552,943**
Other Cash Items		
External Projects Cash Reserve	6,380	80,790
External Projects Cheque	62,031	8,437
Westpac Term Deposit #1	-	456,748
Westpac Term Deposit #2	205,481	200,000
Total Other Cash Items	**273,893**	**745,975**
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	**1,068,631**	**2,298,918**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

3. Receivables	2026	2025
Current	**$**	**$**
Accrued Interest	7,309	24,164
ATO Client Account	-	2,707
Prepaid Insurance	11,055	11,151
Trade Debtor	250,707	73,875
Total Current	**269,071**	**111,897**
Non Current		
Reimbursement Account (NCA)	3,742	6,257
Total Non Current	**3,742**	**6,257**
Total Receivables	**272,813**	**118,154**

4. Financial Assets	2026	2025
Current	**$**	**$**
AL & LSL Term Deposit	-	149,030
General Term Deposit #2	102,741	100,000
Internal Term Deposit #1	209,720	207,176
Internal Term Deposit #2	515,195	500,000
Term Deposit #7740	1,053,851	-
Total Current	**1,881,506**	**956,206**
Total Financial Assets	**1,881,506**	**956,206**

5 Property Plant and Equipment	2026	2025
	$	**$**
Plant and Equipment		
Plant and Equipment at cost	46,520	68,892
Total Plant and Equipment	**46,520**	**68,892**
Total Property Plant and Equipments	**46,520**	**68,892**

6 Deferred Income	2026	2025
Current	**$**	**$**
Grant funding - Unspent	148,087	446,078
Total Current	**148,087**	**446,078**
Total Deferred Income	**148,087**	**446,078**

7 Payables	2026	2025
Current	**$**	**$**
Export Marketing Bursaries (IDU)	-	-
Fisheries Improvement (IDU)	-	-
PAYG Withholding Payable	19,990	31,000
Provision - PPA GVP + Water Lease Fee	12,421	12,421
Provision Creditor Expenses	-	6468
Rounding	-	-
Wages Payable	1,538	-
Superannuation Payable	(690)	12,783
Trade Creditor	129,180	91,450
Total Current	**162,439**	**154,120**
Non Current		
Provision - Long Service Leave Non-Current	11,717	17,133
Total Non Current	**11,717**	**17,133**
Total Payables	**172,618**	**171,254**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

8 Provisions	2026	2025
Current	$	$
Annual Leave Provision	25,587	16,339
Current LSL Provision	32,275	31,402
Provision - Accrued Wages	5,191	15,497
Provision - Annual Leave	38,053	47,596
Provision - Long Service Leave - Current	15,444	32,674
Total Provisions	**119,550**	**143,507**

9 General Income	2026	2025
	$	$
ACWA Rental	150	3,040
MSC Rental	8,879	7,260
SLA Office Rental	10,428	12,540
Sponsorship Income	42,200	-
Ticket Income	(35)	55
Ticket sales	12,058	1,921
Total General Income	**73,681**	**24,815**

10 Employee Benefit Expenses	2026	2025
	$	$
Allowance	-	14,885
Wages & Salaries	969,406	1,176,424
Superannuation	130,540	137,939
Provision for Accrued Wages	(8,768)	15,497
Provision for Annual Leave	(294)	(22,085)
Provision for Long Service Leave	18,773	27,807
Total Employee Benefit Expenses	**1,072,111**	1,294,853

11 Other Expenses	2026	2025
	$	$
Accounting and Bookkeeping	43,384	8,933
Admin Overhead & Charges	145,524	52,633
Advertising	6,305	21,954
Audit Fees	8,500	10,500
Bank Charges	973	1,477
Bank Fees	1	1
Board of Directors Expenses	79,035	76,723
Car Hire	-	491
Chair's Honorarium	70,000	50,000

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	2026 $	2025 $
Cleaning	8,125	7,617
Computer Expense	26,043	22,609
Computer Software	-	372
Consultant Fees	78,643	209,776
Custom Charges	-	5,304
Demersal Campaign	30,300	-
Electricity	5,847	7,521
Event Catering and chefs	1818	-
Filing Fee	-	49
Fuel	1,337	248
Independent Funds	39,490	-
Insurance	17,323	18,716
Interest - ATO	(289)	-
Interest charges	3	-
Internet	3,990	-
IT Software & Licences	8,681	23,434
Labour	-	15,379
Legal Fees	47,696	18,581
Loss on Disposal Asset	-	1,504
MC for Events	540	-

	2026 $	2025 $
Meeting Expenses	13,586	32,519
Membership	48,018	34,442
Mileage	5,814	4,751
Mobile Phone Expenses	1,633	-
Motor Vehicle Maintenance	150	-
Office Equipments	2,124	2,704
Paid Parental Leave (Expense)	-	18,316
Parking Expenses	280	19
People Development	-	2,945
Photocopier	3,183	3,207
Postage	168	231
Printing	607	-
Project Equipment	59,390	9,795
Promotion (Expense)	89,320	5,560
Provision Creditor Accruals	(6,468)	6,468
Provision for Project Expense Non Current	173,198	116,778
Provision for PPA GVP & Water Lease Fee	-	(25,000)
Publication	300	7,240
Recruitment Expense	4,125	-
Rent & Outgoings	121,429	109,422
Repair Maintenance	-	1,684
Return of Excess Project Funds	157,496	812

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

	2026 $	2025 $
Salary - Projects	-	88,122
Sector Body Payments	-	25,000
Sponsorship	13,240	500
Stationery	1,013	2,785
Storage	16	2,170
Sundry Expenses	5,166	648
Telephone and Internet	2,149	8,538
Transport	1,704	8,571
Travel Expenses	32,411	25,650
Venue Hire	53,136	2,415
Vessel Hire	-	6,621
Website	18,500	-
Total Other Expenses	**1,424,958**	**1,056,736**

12 Net profit of WAFIC (Internal)

The net profit of the WAFIC (internal) for the year ended 30 June 2026 was $183,692.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc for the year ended 30 June 2026

The board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in note 1 to the financial statements.

The members of the Board declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, present fairly the company's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements; and
2. In the opinion of the members of the board, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.:



Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Chair

Dated 7 October 2026

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN FISHING INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

To the Members of the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc

We have audited the financial report of Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc. ('The Association'), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, the statement of comprehensive income, appropriation statement and statement of cash flows for the year 30 June 2026 then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Western Australian Fishing Industry Council Inc . has been prepared in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act (WA) 2015, including:

(a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2026; and

(b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and the Associations Incorporation Act (WA) 2015.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. .

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the registered entity's financial reporting responsibilities under the Associations Incorporation Act (WA) 2015. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibility of the Responsible Entities for the Financial Report

The directors of the Association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (WA) 2015 and the needs of the members. The Associations' responsibility also includes such internal control as the responsible entities determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so. The directors are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of responsible entities' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with responsible entities regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Name of Firm: Stirling Auditors
Name of Director: En Khong
Address: Suite 5, 216 Stirling Highway, Claremont WA 6010
Date: 29 October 2026





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