

## **Summary of the Fourth Meeting (16 June 2016) of the United Seafood Industries Task Force**

**Written by Chair of the USI Task Force, Martin Exel of Austral**

The USI Leadership Task Force met via teleconference to progress their report to the Industry Forum, which is to be held on 13th – 14th of July 2016 in Melbourne. The meeting concentrated on developing the structure of the national peak body, including discussions about how best to structure and select any board or council.

### **Vision and Mission**

The Task Force discussed the positive feedback received from industry on the draft vision and mission statements and reiterated the importance of the strategy and structure of the peak body being representative of these statements.

In order to provide clarity on what the peak body will achieve, the Task Force emphasised the importance of determining metrics for its success. It was agreed that these metrics should be developed by the peak body once it was established, but the Task Force thought that the vision, mission and outline of issues provided clear scope for measuring and reporting to wider industry on progress by the peak body.

### **Structure**

The Task Force also continued their discussion on structural models. It was agreed that a hybrid skills-based model was the preferred approach, as opposed to a ‘representative’ model.

The discussions centred around hybrid model structures that would best incorporate and facilitate a combination of skills and expertise to support the vision and mission, with members of the Board coming from any of wild-catch, aquaculture or post-harvest businesses, associations, and/or resource groups.

Possible options for structures such as a ‘council’ with elections, or a direct board were considered.

On balance, Task Force members favoured a smaller strategic board (5 to 7 members) at establishment, rather than a representative board or council. The Task Force considered different examples as to how such a board could be structured and elected.

One option that will be further developed is to have a small cost-effective strategic board with the skills required to determine a clear strategy, and then have an Executive Chair, along with an Executive Officer, as the mainstay for implementing the Vision and Mission. They would then have a clearly identified strategy, along with metrics to measure progress, to co-ordinate, communicate, and advocate on behalf of the industry.

The Task Force was particularly interested in a model that will offer stability in the immediate short term, while providing for flexibility in approaches, and designed so that it could “scale up” easily in response to demand if industry wishes in the future.

Establishing the strategic board could be done through an Implementation Committee, who would select the board members from an open application process. The board would then select the Executive Chair, and the Executive Officer. It was proposed that the Implementation Committee would comprise of one representative from each of the wild-catch, aquaculture, and post-harvest businesses, along with one representative from the current National Seafood Industry Alliance, and one member from the various resource sector groups.

A number of other details are being refined for consideration at the next meeting, which will be focused on funding approaches to ensure maximum possible participation in membership, while providing sufficient funds for the peak body to operate.

### **Communication**

The Task Force considered elements of a Communications Strategy, with agreement that wide engagement of the industry will need to take place after the recommendations have been made by the Industry Forum. The communication mapping is being developed and will be a useful tool in raising awareness and support for the establishment of the peak body.

### **Next Meeting**

The next scheduled Task Force meeting is on the 22nd of June 2016 and will be extended to allow time to fully consider recommendations.