

Summary of Sixth Meeting (30 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 further develop its final recommendations report on forming a national peak body.

The meeting concentrated on refining the report and finalising the terms of reference for the Implementation Group that is recommended to be established. As well as this, the Task Force considered how best to approach communication and engagement with the industry following the United Seafood Industries Forum.

Seed Funding

The Task Force considered how the body will attain sufficient guaranteed funding up front, and available cash for salary and other costs to get started. Some options considered were early payment of membership fees, avenues for accessing further government funding, having direct contributions and donations from larger companies and Associations, or some combination of all. The Task Force agreed that the issue of seed funding needs further consideration at the United Seafood Industries Forum, and that it should be highlighted in the report as a significant issue to be dealt with.

Implementation Group

The Task Force discussed the terms of reference for the Implementation Group that it proposes should be formed if the United Seafood Industries Forum agrees to move ahead with the process to establish a peak body.

Members of the Implementation Group ideally would include some people who have been involved in the USI Leadership Task Force, for continuity and clarity.

It was agreed that, rather than have a Communications Group as previously discussed, it would be more efficient for the Implementation Group to oversight the communications campaign.

With these considerations agreed upon, the Task Force then amended and re-ordered its Terms of Reference for the proposed Implementation Group.

Communication Driver

The communication 'driver' that the Task Force recommends was discussed in more detail. The idea behind the 'driver' is that there would be one person who could provide input to each jurisdiction, and coordinate the overall message and communications strategy around Australia.

Each association in each jurisdiction would be responsible for promoting the proposal using their existing networks, websites, linkages and also organising 'town hall meetings' to engage industry, where the 'driver' could attend to assist with the engagement and communication. The 'driver' would ideally be well regarded within industry, and with existing networks. The Task Force agreed that the 'driver' would be particularly valuable if s/he came from the post-harvest sector, as this sector has a substantial group of stakeholders who are not part of formal associations.

It was agreed there needed to be a single person in overall control of the communications strategy, with the task of achieving effective industry consultation on the proposal. Given the amount of work and time this role would take, the Task Force reaffirmed its view the person should receive some stipend for that work.

United Seafood Industries Forum

The Task Force is now finalising its peak body recommendations report. The preparation and event details for the Forum was also discussed, with the Task Force given an update on the status of RSVPs and an overview of the agenda.

Conclusion

This was the final meeting of the Task Force before the Industry Forum.

I would like to thank all members of the Task Force, and Inovact Consulting, for their work on developing the recommendations for the peak body project.

Martin Exel
Chair
1 July 2016