



The Prawn Report

Quarterly report of the Australian Prawn Farmers Association

PO Box 392 CLAYFIELD QLD 4011 699A Sandgate Road CLAYFIELD QLD 4011
Phone: 07 3262 9015 Fax: 07 07 3262 7650 E: helen.jenkins@apfa.com.au Web: www.apfa.com.au

January 2012

REFLECTIONS OF 2011

2011 started with floods and a damaging cyclone. While the floods affected the roads and ability for feed to get to the far North regions I am aware that some continue to suffer from the effects of tropical cyclone Yasi.

To those still affected I urge you to contact Wil Conn on 0438 498 279 and ensure that you have been able to take full advantage of grants and assistance that was offered. Some of these programs have been extended, namely the QRAA administered grant and loan recovery assistance measures as provided by the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. The new deadline is June 30, 2012.



Above: Cyclone Yasi hits with a vengeance....

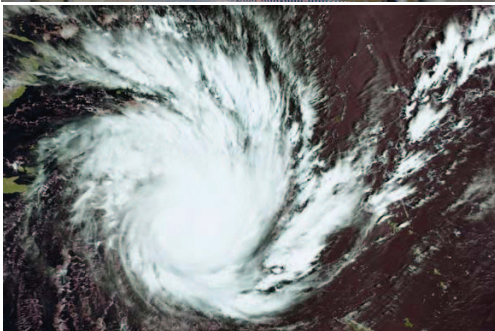
Some members and non-members may often wonder what the benefits of being a member of the APFA really are. I would like to point out a few of the benefits that all members have perhaps unknowingly been part of for 2011.

Your Executive Officer, Executive and R & D committees all work very hard, with time donated to come together to work on issues that ultimately benefit ALL prawn farmers. I have outlined key points from 2011 year that we have all worked on for the benefit of our members.

If there is something you would like more information on and cannot find reference on the website please do not hesitate to contact Helen Jenkins.

January 2011

- Preparations start for the Annual Conference.
- Floods had cut the Bruce Highway and the far North regions were desperate for feed. Liaise with DEEDI for possible solution to get feed. Mackay farms desperate.



Above: First came the floods (mmm lets hope no WSSV prawns escaped from this store!!!) and the Tropical Cyclone Yasi formation.

“Growing Australian Prawns”

www.apfa.com.au

- Provided submission to Senate inquiry into biosecurity and quarantine.

February 2011

Worked with Department of Employment Economic Development & Innovation (DEEDI) Far North Queensland branch to liaise with feed suppliers to ensure feed was able to get to designated areas.

March 2011

APFA worked with Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) and DEEDI to ensure disaster management issues were tabled for action. With the assistance of QFF – APFA were able to get funding for an Industry Recovery Officer (IRO) post Cyclone Yasi. Wil Conn transitioned into IRO with his Skills Formation Strategy coming to an end.

Wil's position was co-supported by the Queensland Seafood Industry Association, as the scope of this IRO position encompassed the aquaculture and seafood industries as well as small business.

- APFA Executive Board started to work on industry Strategic Issues document as a way to demonstrate to members that issues that affect the industry are targeted for the board to work on during their twelve month tenure,

April & May 2011

- Executive committee spent the second day, in Townsville, working together on strategic issues paper for industry.

- PPP Diploma training started to get rolled out to those willing to undertake training. In total 50 existing employees at various farms (included employees from other aquaculture sectors) thanks to LMC Training.

- Collaborative application submitted to Caring for Country – contributors/supporters were the APFA, ABFA, AIMS, CSIRO and DEEDI. Unfortunately the application was not successful despite high level encouragement to reapply under this program.

June 2011

- APFA worked with the Seafood CRC, Queensland Seafood Marketers

Association, Australian Council of Prawn Fishers and Curtin University to develop a marketing research project for a National Prawn Strategy.

- Annual promotional activity for eating Queensland Prawns on Queensland day. This year consisted of marketing campaign targeting specific retailers in specific locations. Report no 7 can be found on the APFA website under Marketing.

July 2011

- Prepared submission to DERM – Greentape Reduction Project. Note that submissions prepared by the APFA can be found on the APFA website under the ABOUT heading.

August 2011 (Sydney Conference)

- Attendance statistics – Day one delegates – 139, Day two delegates – 131. Welcome Reception Cruise – 146, Formal Dinner – 110. Exhibitors – 6. Presentations and photos from this conference are available at www.apfa.com.au/news.

September 2011

- Post disaster recovery QRITC made available Skill set training – short courses to build resilience against disaster. Some 70 existing employees from various aquaculture enterprises are taking advantage of this training - thanks to LMC Training for undertaking the delivery.

- Seafood CRC student/mentor program Sydney Fish Market. Each year the CRC provides a retreat where students and industry come together for learning and mentoring. This year included some famous chefs including Adriana Zumbo. Attendees were split into groups, each assigned a chef, given \$500 and challenged to buy all ingredients from the SFM and work with the group's chef to design and cook a menu to feed the whole group. This resulted in some very interesting concoctions. Over the two days activities attendees were being interviewed and filmed. Check out the link to see what happened. <http://vimeo.com/31411633>.

October 2011

- Seafood Directions 2011 held at the



Photos of the giant prawn cocktail can be found on APFA's facebook page. This consisted of 120 iceberg lettuces, 50kg prawn tails and 30 litres of cocktail sauce. Above, Gold Coast Chef Tim Oorschot hugs the Giant prawn cocktail at the Gold Coast Convention Centre who helped to construct cocktail.



Delegates from Seafood Directions enjoying lunch at Gold Coast Marine Aquaculture – Sunday October 23, 2011 tour



Maria Mitris delivering her message at Seafood Directions 2011

Gold Coast. 3 of APFA's members were eligible for the National award titles having won Seafood State Awards. GCMA proudly won the title for National R & D Award for work on domestication. Coral Sea Farms were runner up for the National Producers Award and Maria Mitris was runner up for the Young Achiever Award. Congratulations to all for a fantastic achievement.

- Excellent presentations were given to delegates from those within our industry. Thanks to Nick Moore, Maria Mitris, Dr Nigel Preston, Dr Richard Smullen for excellent presentations to an audience who traditionally has not heard our stories.

A highlight of this conference was the presentation of a giant prawn cocktail with prawns equally donated from the wild caught sector as well as the farmed sector. Huge thanks to GCMA, Warren Lewis, Raptis and Steve Murphy for each donating 30kg of whole prawns.

These presentations are available from the following link: www.seafooddirections2011.com/program.html

- Nick Moore presented at Seafood Directions 2011 focussing on "How can Fisheries/Aquaculture management enhance productivity?" He focused on four main areas as critical to our industry

– Protection, Education, Promotion and Support (PEPS yes another acronym).

Under the Protection slide Nick emphasised the critical need for biosecurity to be vigilant following the release of positive tested WSSV prawns into Australia in September 2010. He cited outbreaks of WSSV as follows: (note 3 more outbreaks have been added to this list since the October 2011 event).

24 April	Saudi Arabia
23 September	Mozambique
3 October	Mexico
30 November	Brazil – Rio Grande
4 December	Saudi Arabia (5th largest prawn development Jazan)
18 December	Brunei

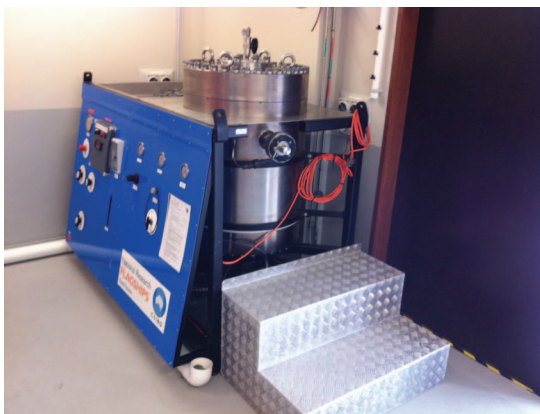
- Inaugural meeting in Townsville at JCU of NERP SELTMP – National Environmental Research Program to deliver a 3.5 year Social and Economic Long Term Monitoring Programme. APFA has been asked to be a participant of this project.

November 2011

Submission – National Food Plan. To view this submission view www.apfa.com.au/about.



Minister Tim Mulherin is interested in the latest equipment now available at Bribie Island complex



Above: The R & D committee will appreciate these photos– yes it's the TARDIS...the Triploid compression chamber.

December 2011

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies Tim Mulherin opened the new \$5.2 million Aquaculture Nutrition Research Facility on December 2, which included refurbishment of existing facilities at the Bribie Island Research Centre. Mr Mulherin said the opening was a boost for the Queensland aquaculture industry. "The aquaculture industry provides employment for a diversity of skills and currently contributes \$103 million to the Queensland economy. "The opening of this facility will help drive growth in the aquaculture industry with scientists at the centre conducting important research into improving prawns and barramundi stocks," Mr Mulherin said.

Following the opening the Honourable Tim Mulherin MP, Minister for Food, Agriculture and Regional Economies, hosted a Strategic Conversation on Aquaculture, at Bribie Island. Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) Associate Director-General, Robert Setter facilitated the forum.

If any member would like a copy of the minutes of this meeting please contact the APFA office on 07 3262 9015.

Successful application for a training grant under the National Workforce Development Fund. This application was prepared in conjunction with QAIF for training to be delivered to both aquaculture and seafood covering Diploma and Cert 111 & 1V training. More news regarding this latest round of available training will be released by LMC Training early January 2012.

Project proposal for National Prawn Strategy pitched to sales teams

On October 25 the Chair of the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC), the Hon. Harry Woods, announced to the National Seafood Directions Conference that the results from the last community perception study of the seafood industry was poor and that something needed to be done to rectify this situation. As a result, the FRDC has developed in partnership with its Representative Organisations, a strategy to promote the science and best practice that underpins the Australian seafood and angling industry and work with stakeholders to implement the strategy. The FRDC looks forward to working with its stakeholders to implement the strategy.

One of our Executive – Matt West, has worked extremely hard to develop a valuation model. Those who have attended our conferences have seen from presentations how powerful a tool this can be. A hand over of this tool was carried out in December 2011 and thanks must go to seven of our farms who contributed data to this new model. Average data will be mailed to these farms first weeks of January 2012. The Executive and R & D committees encourage all farms to take part in contributing to this data on an annual basis so that farm priorities can be evaluated to ensure that research dollars are spent in the best area possible. Very big thank you to Matt West for his creation.

Joint submission to the Productivity Commission issues paper Barriers to Effective Climate Change Adaptation contributed to by – Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA), Australian Prawn Farmers Association (APFA), Oceanwatch and Provision Reef.

2012 - YEAR OF THE FARMER

January 2012

• Fair work Australia wage review – January – what are your issues? APFA has a meeting scheduled for January 17 to discuss issues affecting farmers in implementing the current modern award. Please review the award and highlight relevant sections that require change to the Executive Officer prior to January 17 scheduled meeting. The Modern Aquaculture Award can be found at this link - www.fwa.gov.au/documents/modern_awards/award/MA000114/default.htm.

Changes to the WPHS laws – harmonisation are you aware of the changes? From the Queensland Justice Department comes the following advice:

Following consultation with the rural industry, unions and the community, the Queensland Government is proposing amendments to the Workplace Health and Safety Rural Plant Code of Practice 2004 relating to the safe use of quad bikes (previously known as all terrain vehicles or ATVs) and two-wheeled motor bikes on rural workplaces.

Key amendments include:

- 1) the wearing of an approved and appropriate helmet;*
- 2) ensuring operators are correctly trained;*
- 3) prohibiting children under 16 years of age from riding adult sized quad bikes; and*
- 4) ensuring suppliers provide information to prospective quad bike purchasers about selection and safe operation.*

The proposed changes are now open for public comment until 31 March 2012, so that individuals and organisations can have their say to ensure all issues affecting Queensland rural industry are considered

The proposed amendments and public comment can be sourced at www.worksafe.qld.gov.au, click onto "Events, resources and publications", then click onto "Public comment and consultation"

APFA will be preparing a submission for the proposed quad bike changes – members are urged to submit their own proposal to add weight to not implementing the changes.

February 2012

- APFA have been invited via Seafood CRC to attend a workshop to discuss possible implementation of a marketing levy. The workshop is designed to inform the CEO/Executive Officers of seafood industry bodies about all aspects of voluntary marketing levy collection. It is intended that the exec officers will then be in a position to pass this information on to their respective members in the most appropriate manner.

March 2012

- GBRMPA Reef Guardians – discuss possibility of prawn farmers being distinguished as a guardian in its own right – not joined with either fishermen or farmers as what we do and the regulations we adhere to, are unique in comparison to these other two groups.

May 2012

- Australasian Aquaculture Melbourne – May 1-4, 2012. More details can be found at www.aquaculture.org.au.

June 2012

- Go to the Queensland Prawns website for more information about the Queensland day promotion. Plans for 2012 have not yet been released but will be available at www.queenslandprawns.com

RESEARCH PROJECTS UPDATED

New

- Seafood CRC Project 2011/734: Controlling biofouling of pond aerators on marine prawn farms.

- Seafood CRC project 2011/761 Optimisation of viral clearance from broodstock prawns using targeted RNA interference.

- Request to vary CRC project 2009/724: *Genetic technologies to support a transformation to profitability and competitiveness in F. merguensis and P. Monodon.*

- Seafood CRC 20118/736 Australian Prawn Market Development Plan Call for Proposals.

- Potential benefits of technology providing real-time monitoring and recording of pond water pH, temperature and dissolved oxygen for potential future

uptake by other industry operators to drive productivity and profitability – funded by Australian Institute for Commercialisation (A division of QMI Solutions).

- Seasonal forecasting to improve resilience of prawn farms to future climate events (DEEDI Rural Resilience Industry Grant).

- Prawn farmers responding to Australia's changing climate (DAFF) – The Final report has been submitted for approval.

Existing or finalising

- Seafood CRC 2009/724 “Genetic technologies to support a transformation to profitability and competitiveness in *F.merguensis* and *P.monodon*” ongoing.

- Seafood CRC 2008/756 “Increasing seedstock production of domesticated giant tiger prawns (*Penaeus monodon*)” final report underway.

- Seafood CRC 2008/757 “Commercial production of all-female reproductively sterile Giant Tiger prawns (*Peneaus monodon*): Assessing their commercial performance in ponds” final report underway.

- Seafood CRC 2009/759 “Towards all female *P.monodon* populations using androgenic gland manipulations” terminated early due to poor results.

- Seafood CRC 2007/224 “Increasing the profitability of *Penaeus monodon* farms via the use of low water exchange, microbial floc production systems at Australian Prawn Farms and at CSIRO” final report underway

- Seafood CRC 2010/707 “Loss minimisation in farmed prawns through improvements in storage life and colour” is ongoing.

- Seafood CRC 2010/786 “Australian Prawn Farmers Association (APFA) Executive Redirection Challenge Project” The final report was handed to members at the AGM in Sydney.

- Industry Recovery Officer – Post Cyclone Yasi – Wil Conn appointed to this role March 2011. Transitioning from the Skills Formation Strategy role. This tenure was to finish at the end of December. Thanks to the efforts of Queensland Farmers Federation (QFF)

additional funding was granted to keep Wil employed as the Industry Recovery Officer until the end of March 2012.

To date, the IRO position has been successful in assisting nearly 200 impacted farms and businesses with their recovery needs under the NDRRA framework. This is in addition to funding that the SFS initiative and actions of the IRO have successfully attracted for the wider industry for workforce development related projects. The SFS and IRO programs have facilitated industry receiving over \$1 million dollars to deliver training to 172 industry personnel, so as to advance the productivity and recovery needs of the industry.

Key issues that are discussed with all levels of government at every opportunity include:

- State of the Bruce Highway – a disgrace that gets cut off at least once a year and the impacts on feed supply that the cut caused during the extreme weather events.
- Carbon tax – what it may mean for prawn farming, the commitment of the farming community to ensure environmental footprint is well managed and ensuring that research supports actions the industry takes.
- Prawn farming too heavily regulated – green groups who have the financial capability to deliver message that confuse the consumer and response from those who regulate our industry is silent.
- Biosecurity – in-depth discussion about the impacts for prawns farming if a disease like WSSV was ever to enter Australia. There needs to be difference between “free trade” v “fair trade” and that the prawn IRA should be changed to include testing for cooked products.
- From one of our key researchers - We must act now to secure our marine aquaculture sites and farmland and secure our own production of clean healthy food. In short we must give preference to our own locally grown food products over cheap imported products. If we grow to rely of imported food one

day in the not too distant future we will awake one morning to the alarming news that those countries who currently export food to us have found a more pressing use for it, feeding their own people!!!!

- Regulation from Canberra particularly SEWPAC and development conditions that are imposed on aquaculture eg Guthalungra conditional approval.

Of recent note a change to the Parliamentary Secretary.....

New Parliamentary Secretary announced

The Hon. Sid Sidebottom MP has been appointed as Parliamentary Secretary, replacing the Hon. Dr Mike Kelly AM, MP Member for Eden-Monaro.

The move was announced on 12 December by Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard MP as part of broader changes to the ministry and the cabinet. Mr Sidebottom served as a Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for Primary Industries from 2001 to 2003 and Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries from 2003 to 2004.

Senator, the Hon. Joe Ludwig, will remain in his role as the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Full details on changes to the ministry are available on the Prime Minister's website www.pm.gov.au.

Thanks to all members for your continued support – without that the Association does not exist.