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# From the President

TIM HESS, AM

## A tribute to Una Rockliff

It is with extreme sadness that we have lost one of the more prominent members of the Tasmanian seafood industry, Una Rockliff OAM.

Una was the 'Una' in Petuna and together with her husband of 73 years, Peter, formed a partnership that covered virtually every aspect of our industry, from wild fishing to aquaculture, processing and marketing. She was a pioneer in bringing females into a male-dominated industry and she was respected by all levels of government both federal and state. Some of Una's notable achievements included being the inaugural Chairperson of the ladies auxiliary, as part of the Professional Fishermen's Association of Tasmania, and as a member of the steering committee formed by the federal government that set up the Australian Seafood Industry Council.

Una had a passion and desire for Petuna to produce the best seafood, whether it be for the local Tasmanian retail market, orange roughly being exported to the USA, or ocean trout being produced for some of the finest restaurants both in Australia and around the world.

Una will be deeply missed by her family and all who knew her.

## A welcome to our new Minister – Gavin Pearce

On behalf of Seafood Industry Tasmania, I extend a warm welcome to Gavin Pearce MP as Tasmania's new Minister for Primary Industries and Water.

Minister Pearce is a dedicated Liberal representative for Braddon, and as a former federal parliamentarian, he brings a wealth of experience in regional development and community advocacy. Coming from a farming family, Gavin has a strong connection with primary industries and I am sure he will be a champion of sustainable seafood production and innovation.

Seafood Industry Tasmania welcomed the opportunity to brief Minister Pearce on seafood's key issues and challenges. Central to our discussion was the need for government to provide ongoing support to the commercial seafood sector, among the challenges of collaborative leadership.

Congratulations Minister Pearce.

## Seafood Industry Tasmania Strategic Plan

Seafood Industry Tasmania is excited to announce the development of our 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, a roadmap to steer Tasmania's world-class seafood sector towards a sustainable and prosperous future. It would be easy to say the plan will be all about opportunity, growth and success, but the reality is our industry needs to address a growing number of emerging challenges and threats. From resource sharing, political stability (and support) to marine heatwaves and workforce stability, nothing is off the agenda.

The Board will work with consultant Integrity Governance to develop a draft Strategic Plan, which will then be offered to the broader membership for review and ultimate endorsement at the 2026 AGM. During the development of the Strategic Plan, Integrity Governance will conduct a targeted workshop with the Board and make direct contact with key industry stakeholder organisations.

This strategic roadmap will help guide Seafood Industry Tasmania and industry through a dynamic and challenging period to further enhance Tasmania as a global leader in sustainable seafood production.

## Tenth Tasmanian Seafood Awards

The stage is set for the 10th Tasmanian Seafood Awards, to be held on Friday 31 October. Held every 2 years, the Awards are a milestone celebration honouring excellence across the state's world-renowned seafood sector. This prestigious event, which highlights innovation, sustainability and the hardworking people driving our industry, will showcase winners in 14 categories, from primary producers and large businesses to standout seafood experiences and dining outlets.

Tickets for the gala event have sold out, reflecting the immense enthusiasm from industry stakeholders, partners and supporters eager to join this landmark occasion. To have over 200 tickets already gone is an incredible outcome, and all praise must be given to our amazing Project Manager, Lek. Well done on such a successful result, and I am sure the evening will be every bit as successful.

Well done, Lek.

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## Breathe, Stretch & Connect: A wellness afternoon with SIT and WISA

On Wednesday 27 August, Seafood Industry Tasmania (SIT) and Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA) hosted a yoga and networking afternoon, attended by women from across the seafood industry. The event aimed to promote wellness, self-care and connection.

Held at Udara Movement Studio in central Hobart, 12 participants were guided through a calming, all-levels yoga class. The session offered a chance to pause, breathe and reconnect. The quiet environment and purposeful, in-the-moment movement created a sense of ease — but don't be fooled by the gentle vibe. The full-body stretch and muscle engagement made it a surprisingly intense workout, and many of us felt it the next day (in the best way!).

After yoga, the now relaxed group transitioned into informal networking over light refreshments. The women represented a diverse range of roles — from factory crew and hatchery managers to professionals in environmental science and sustainability. The afternoon provided a welcoming space to share ideas, offer support and build strong industry connections.

The event was a success and a gentle reminder of the importance of building industry connection and encouraging self-care and mental wellness in the seafood industry.

SIT and WISA are always looking at creative ways to support women in the industry — a wonderful day and thank you to all that came.

### Interested in future SIT/WISA events?

Call 6224 2332 or email [sit@sit.org.au](mailto:sit@sit.org.au)  
[instagram.com/udaramovement](https://www.instagram.com/udaramovement)

## Western rock lobster's new FishOps app

*FRDC News 26 September 2025*

The world's first certified sustainable fishery is going digital, with the Western Rock Lobster Council (WRL) launching its new FishOps app which is set to transform fishing, data collection and supply chain traceability.

What started as a simple reporting tool has grown into a one-stop-shop digital hub designed to make life easier for fishers and improve the quality of industry data.

"FishOps gives fishers a single place to plan trips, track their pots, record catch and manage costs like fuel and bait," explains WRL IT Program Manager of Industry Digital Strategy, David Pietersen. "It also links directly to the WRL member portal, so fishers no longer have to enter the same details multiple times. It's streamlined, practical and designed around how people work."

A centralised digital system that meets industry, government and research needs — sounds good doesn't it!

# Introducing Jane McGann

**Executive Officer, Tasmanian Rock Lobster Council**

It was great to sit down and welcome Jane McGann in her new role as Executive Officer of the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Council.

Born in Beaconsfield, she was raised in Tasmania, as well as up and down Australia's eastern seaboard and abroad, as she and her family moved with father's military career. Jane holds a strong sense of place and connection to the island she always called home.

Growing up with siblings and a family full of cousins, she describes her upbringing as lively and loud — one that fostered a strong sense of responsibility to others, that no doubt shapes how she works alongside people today.

With a background in biochemistry & microbiology and a PhD in immunoparasitology, Jane has a solid foundation in science — and a real knack for making complex ideas easy to understand. She's passionate about helping fishers engage with the science that underpins their work, so they can make confident, informed decisions.

Jane's vision for TRLC is simple, but powerful: a strong, supported workforce and a fishery that's resilient for generations to come.

"I'm here to listen, learn, and help build something that lasts — not just for today's fishers, but for the next generation too," says Jane.

A career that took Jane across continents — from Ford Motor Company in Detroit, where she gained insight into business processes and the value of blue-collar work, to teaching hands-on science in a Montessori school in Ohio. Returning to Australia, she stepped into a C/O role at a boutique architectural firm, building strong governance skills and a talented and engaged workforce. Following this, she joined the Seafood Industry Tasmania (SIT) team as project manager.

Jane's broad experience gives a strong edge in leadership. She's approachable, values respectful communication, and advocates for both fishers and science — she can be a trusted link between sectors with her integrity, clear listening, and follow-through. As she puts it, "I want you to understand — whether you're a fisher, a politician, a researcher or a regulator — what is going on, what is of concern, and what we're doing about it."

Her current priorities include helping the board develop a strategic plan to guide TRLC's direction, supporting the viability of the East Coast fleet, and helping fishers better understand complex science like biomass and CPUE. She's focused on making sure everyone has the tools they need to engage confidently with policy and research.

Looking ahead, Jane is excited to be a part of, in the building a sustainable fishery and fishing workforce, while continuing to promote Tasmanian rock lobster as a premium product — both locally and globally.

For young or emerging fishers, Jane offers a reminder of what makes this industry so special: with how it's one of the few remaining trades where people still work directly with nature, harvesting a wild, untouched product. It's a proud legacy to be part of — and one worth continuing.

Jane welcomes conversations with anyone — members, non-members, or anyone curious about the industry. Her door is always open.

After meeting with Jane, it's clear she brings experience and insight to the role but notably a genuine care for the people in and future of, the industry. Leaving with a strong impression, it's easy to see that Jane will be a positive in the TRLC and to the wider Tasmanian seafood industry.

## Most expensive seafood in the world!

Ever wondered what the most expensive 'legal' seafood in the world is? We did, so we used several Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs to tell us what the top-5 most expensive seafood items in the world are.

But of course, we need a disclaimer, as the list was generated by AI, with no other research or cross-references. But hey, it's AI, what could go wrong!

1. **Almas Caviar** — considered among the priciest caviar in the world. It comes from rare albino Beluga sturgeon, primarily from the Caspian Sea. Prices up to US\$30,000-\$35,000 per kilogram have been reported. Caviar from other species is also on the list, but will not be included in this list.
2. **Bluefin Tuna** — prized for its fatty toro cut used in high-end sushi, the record sale for a 277 kg bluefin was \$3.1 million.
3. **Glass Eels (elvers / baby eels)** — very high demand in Asia and Europe, limited supply and intensive harvesting sees prices between US \$3,000 - \$5,000 per kg.
4. **Gooseneck Barnacles (Percebes)** — these 'dinosaur toes' are harvested from dangerous rocky intertidal zones, costing up to \$500/kg for their oyster-like taste and extreme scarcity.
5. **Fugu (Pufferfish)** — a Japanese delicacy requiring licensed chefs to remove deadly toxins, seasonal availability and cultural thrill drive prices to \$280+ per serving.

# Vale Una Rockliff

## Seafood Industry Tasmania acknowledges with deep respect the passing of Una Margaret Rockliff OAM on 15 September 2025.

Una was a distinguished figure in Tasmania's seafood sector, whose contributions have left a lasting imprint on the industry and community.

Together with her husband Peter, Una co-founded Petuna, a family-owned enterprise that has grown to become one of Tasmania's most recognised names in fishing and aquaculture. Her leadership, commitment, and foresight were instrumental in the development of sustainable practices and the advancement of aquaculture in the region.

As a tribute to Una, we thought it fitting to print her Eulogy, delivered by her son-in-law and Seafood Industry Tasmania President, Tim Hess.



## Eulogy for Una Margaret Rockliff

I feel deeply honoured to be invited to present the eulogy for my mother-in-law, Una Margaret Rockliff OAM.

I had the privilege of knowing Una for 54 years — 38 of those working alongside her in the family company, Petuna. She lived an extraordinary life. I will share just a glimpse of it with you. One of her final requests was apparently to 'remind Tim to keep it short', so I'll do my best.

Una was born in Ringarooma and later moved to Bridport with her family. Her father, Eli, was a successful builder and part-time fisherman.

It was in Bridport that Una met Peter. He had sailed his little fishing boat, the Alva, around from Port Sorell for the fishing season and set up camp on the foreshore.

His arrival caused quite a stir among the young ladies in town, Una included. As the story goes, she and a friend were standing on the bridge watching Peter tie up his boat. Her friend had set her sights on him, but Una had other ideas ... and the rest is history — 74 years of it, in fact.

At just 18, Una married the dashing 20-year-old Peter. Together, they raised three children — Dianne, Neville, and Sallyann. Their family grew to include 12 grandchildren and, in time, 31 great-grandchildren.

Dianne, Neville and Sally-Anne often talk about the way their Mum prepared for Peter's return from sea. The house would be spotless, the lawns freshly cut, and everything in perfect order. She would dress the children immaculately, making sure they looked their very best, and she herself was always beautifully presented too. The moment they spotted Peter's boat making its way into port, Una would gather the kids and hurry them down to the wharf, all of them full of excitement to welcome him home.

They also remember the warmth of family barbecues and gatherings with friends. Una would inevitably end up at the piano, playing away while laughing and singing, her voice carrying through the room. She was the heart of those gatherings, the life of the party, bringing music, laughter and joy wherever she was.

Family was the absolute centre of Una's world. She was often described as a mother hen, always watching over her brood. Many of you will remember her reciting "The Little Red Hen and the Big Black Rooster" — not forgetting the gander!

Peter was a highly successful fisherman, and in the early days Una sometimes crewed with him. There's a wonderful photo of her proudly holding a big barracouta on the Rowanna. Their partnership — both in life and business — was remarkable. Together, they officially founded Petuna in 1949. Peter's exceptional fishing skills (earning him the nickname "Dead Eye") were perfectly complemented by Una's sharp business mind, warm nature, and unshakable strength. She was charming, gentle, and kind — but also decisive and tough when the situation called for it.

Una had that rare ability to lead with conviction, making sure everyone understood not just what needed to be done, but why. Her leadership extended well beyond the family business. She was the inaugural President of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Professional Fishermen's Association of Tasmania, represented the state on the Australian Fishing Council Steering Committee, and served on the South East Australian Trawling Advisory Committee — the largest trawling grounds in the country. In 1988, she was named Tasmanian Businesswoman of the Year.



Together, Una and Peter were recognised with some of the industry's highest honours: the Order of Australia Medal in 2004, induction into the Seafood Industry Hall of Fame in 2017, and the Industry Ambassador Award that same year.

One of their boldest moves was transitioning from deep-sea trawling to aquaculture in 1991. Petuna went on to pioneer the farming of Ocean Trout, which became one of the most sought-after fish in Australia and overseas.

Una loved being known as "Una from Petuna," and she was much loved by customers everywhere.

On a personal note, working with Una for nearly four decades gave me countless memories. When we returned from Melbourne, I asked where my office would be. She pointed to a single desk with one phone in the middle and said, "This is our desk." For two years we sat facing each other across that desk. I think I resigned at least six times!

We shared many adventures together: travelling to the USA to sell Orange Roughy, where introducing her as my mother-in-law always raised eyebrows; and visiting Canberra to meet politicians and bureaucrats, or loyal customers across the mainland. She charmed them all — with her stories, her jokes, and even her songs. And of course, she loved a good prank, whether on customers, politicians, or friends.

Una passed away on September 15th, and tributes have poured in from far and wide. She will be remembered for her leadership, resilience, and lifelong contribution to the seafood industry — but above all, for her love of family

Even though Una may not be here, she still managed to call the shots right to the end. In true Una fashion, and due to logistical reasons, her casket had to be delivered to her by skipper Phil in the fish truck on Saturday. And of course, it wouldn't have been complete without her usual touch — her hair and makeup lovingly done by Bee and Tammy. Thank you both; we know she would have truly appreciated it.

We all loved her dearly, and I know I'll especially miss her frequent phone calls, always wanting to know where we were and what we were up to.

Rest peacefully, Una. Yours was truly a life well lived, and a legacy that will never be forgotten.



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# From the Chief Executive

**JULIAN HARRINGTON**

## TRLC port visits

In early October, I joined the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Council for their port visits. Hearing direct industry input on key rock lobster issues is invaluable and will greatly assist both the TRLC and Seafood Industry Tasmania to develop policy and submissions.

The most notable discussions were about the draft rock lobster harvest strategy and management of the East Coast fishery. Both topics are confounded by many factors, notably where you fish, vessel size and business model. The outcome is conflicting industry perspectives on how we move forward. Overlay this complexity with an environment of broader conflicting views among different marine users (i.e. recreational vs commercial) and conflicting government social and economic objectives, and you can wonder will we move forward or continue to kick the can down the road?

While SIT policy is primarily focused on the interests of our members, wild catch fishers, marine farmers and seafood processors, it is still difficult, if not impossible, to develop clear and focused policy on different issues or processes.

So how does SIT develop a submission on topics such as the draft rock lobster harvest strategy? In the first instance we identify the 'no brainers' — the conclusions that all in industry can accept as positive (or negative) for industry. These either come from, or we ground truth them with, the sector associations.

SIT also strongly believes in providing a voice to all members, so we will provide all perspectives on an issue. We will often weight these perspectives based on the level of support or provide qualifiers around the area, vessel size or part of industry supporting (or not) a proposal. This ensures fairness, inclusivity and, in turn, legitimacy of our submissions.

## Shellfish Futures

In mid-September, I attended the annual Shellfish Futures conference in Hobart. The conference provided a great diversity of information, from the current harmful algal bloom issues in South Australia to the issues happening in Pipeclay Lagoon.

Congratulations to Oysters Tasmania, notably their CEO Duncan Spender, on another successful conference.

## Can we expect another marine heatwave this summer?

Marine heatwaves are being forecast for Tasmanian waters this summer (2025–26) as part of ongoing long-range outlooks issued by CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology. These public forecasts indicate elevated risks due to persistently high sea surface temperatures in Australian waters since mid-2024.

NRE will be conducting a number of workshops in preparation for the upcoming marine heatwave season in TAS. The workshops will provide an update for the upcoming season, will work through stakeholder concerns, risks to various fisheries, and potential response actions and support for sectors.

I urge all seafood sectors to take this forecast seriously, as a marine heatwave could bring significant impacts across all marine sectors.

## Sea Change Australia

Sea Change Australia brings together fishers, aquaculture producers, industry, managers and researchers to facilitate knowledge exchange and co-develop climate-resilient options for strong and healthy fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Australia.

Project lead Professor Gretta Pecl says, "The project will take a deep dive into particular parts of the industry to figure out exactly what their climate challenges are and what the possible solutions to those challenges might be."

One of the components of Sea Change Australia is an online platform (<https://seachangeaustralia.org/>) which provides a diverse range of climate information and adaptation stories. There is also a section where anyone can jump online and ask any climate-related question, and an expert will answer your questions. Experts may be scientists, managers or industry themselves.

I encourage you to jump online and ask a question.

## Expired pre-USL Code certificates

AMSA exemption 31 allows the holders of an expired pre-USL Code certificate to continue to operate under exemption. AMSA has updated this exemption, and requires all holders of a pre-USL certificate to reapply before 31 January 2026.

To reapply you will need to complete an AMS 758 application, and include either a medical self-declaration or a Certificate of Medical Fitness (AMSA 1850) signed by your GP.

Please contact the SIT office if you require further information.

## The Chef's Garden

Seafood Industry Tasmania, through the support of the Tasmanian Government, has again sponsored The Chef's Garden Series 2.

The series revolves around Chef Massimo Mele and his love of Tasmania, Tasmanian producers and the products they grow or harvest. By sponsoring the program, we can tell the seafood story. In this series, Massimo explores oysters and mussels at Freycinet Marine Farm; calamari, urchins and periwinkles at the Bay of Fires; and explores the fishing village of Stanley, visiting Three Friends Abalone farm, TOP Fish and Hursey Seafoods.

Episode 1 aired on Sunday 5 October. All episodes can be viewed on the Network 10 platform.

**The Stay Afloat Tasmania seafood industry mental health and wellbeing initiative is proudly supported by our official sponsors**





# Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania Inc.

BOB LISTER

It has been a struggle for most scallop fishermen this season so far with limited stock available in Tasmanian waters but with mostly magnificent scallop meats and generally poor results from Bass Strait.

## Tasmanian Fishery

This fishery commenced on Saturday 14 June with the open area being the North-West Scallop Area north of Bluff Hill Point on the west coast and west of Point Sorell on the north coast of Tasmania.

The excitement only lasted a matter of days and because of poor catches scallop fishermen looked elsewhere for more favourable harvesting areas.

Following an exploratory survey the Lower East Scallop Area opened on 24 June with high hopes although it was generally agreed that there was once again limited stock in the area.

Over a short period the general area centred around Marion Bay became uneconomic to harvest and two vessels completed a preseason survey of the east coast from south of St Helens point. An IMAS targeted survey was organised which eventually enabled this new area to open on 19 July.

Vessels were harvesting in this large area from Eddystone Point to Probation Point north of Schouten Island with a closed area from Long Point to Butlers Point which is generally off-shore from Bicheno.

Initially meat weights were very good but as expected this area also only lasted for a few weeks and starfish were a constant menace.

After successful negotiations the Bicheno closed area was opened from 5 September and as a consequence the area from Grants Point north to Eddystone Point was closed as the scallop spawning biomass area.

Whilst meats were very good and splitters and processors were happy this open area once again did not last long and most vessels stopped harvesting on or about 22 September as the resource had become mostly uneconomic.

All five vessels had previously conducted a research survey from 9 to 11 September comprising 286 tows north of Eddystone Point to Babel Island, and west to Ringarooma Bay with mixed results as identified in an IMAS assessment of the survey data.

The only area identified below the discard rate of 20% was north of Eddystone Point which will be considered for opening with the area east of Flinders being potentially the spawning biomass closed area. These areas are currently under consideration pending an IMAS assessment of the potential of the region and establishment of a suitable TAC for the open area.

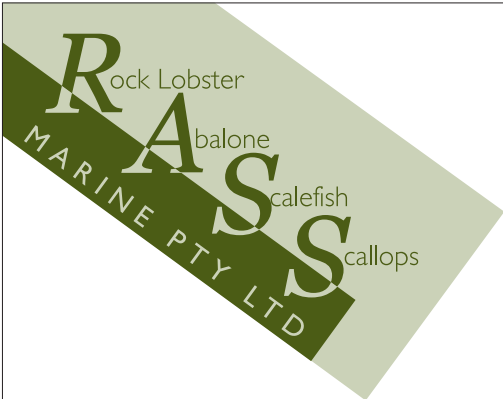


## Bass Strait Central Zone

The fishing season opened on 12 July and early reports were generally good but the eleven-armed seastars have mostly impacted harvesting particularly when present in high densities.

Generally it was felt that because of catches comprising of starfish and dead shell and the distance to unloading ports that the preference was to harvest in Tasmanian waters and that is the situation to date.

No vessels operating out of Tasmania are currently harvesting scallops in Bass Strait waters.



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# Oysters Tasmania

DUNCAN SPENDER



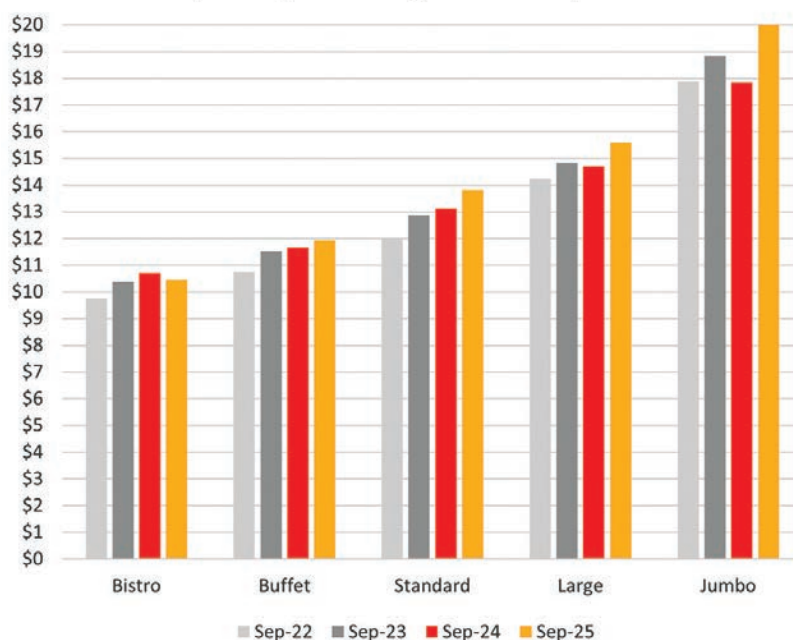
## Shellfish Futures

Highlights of our annual conference held in Hobart in September include:

- Seeing Tassal's remote operations centre and Mure's presentation of our product on our walking tour.
- Raising issues with Federal Minister Julie Collins, State Minister Gavin Pearce, and State Shadow Minister Janie Finlay.
- Updates on research, including investigations in Pipe Clay Lagoon, and on interstate developments.
- Insights from our panel of transport and shipping partners.
- Having a go on SMT's simulators.
- Telling ASI what we want in our oysters.
- Insights from Colin Johnston, then open discussions with our Department, on our industry's future.
- Updates from our suppliers and trade tables.
- Frank discussions on levies.
- The results of our survey of growers on oyster prices and sizes are shown in the charts.

Thank you to all sponsors, presenters, auction-bidders and attendees.

Farm gate prices for a dozen Pacific oysters  
Reported by Tasmanian growers each September



## Sensors

Oysters Tasmania's government-funded contract with SenseRight to install and check on salinity sensors is coming to an end. We propose that on-water checks of the sensors now be done primarily by growers. Bob Milne, OT's Industry Development Officer, is contacting growers to confirm the accuracy of their hand-held salinity meters and to then ask them to do periodic checks at their sensor site. To volunteer to do checks with your hand-held salinity meter please contact Bob.

## Parliamentarians

Oysters Tasmania has introduced our industry in meetings with our new Minister, Gavin Pearce, and with Craig Garland MP and staff of Peter George MP. Minister Pearce has agreed to take on the tasks previously on the plate of Minister Abetz, including responding to red tape reduction requests and concerns about access to finance.

Minister Duigan is yet to agree to reduce red tape re oyster farmers dealing with Crown lands, but Oysters Tasmania will persevere on this issue.

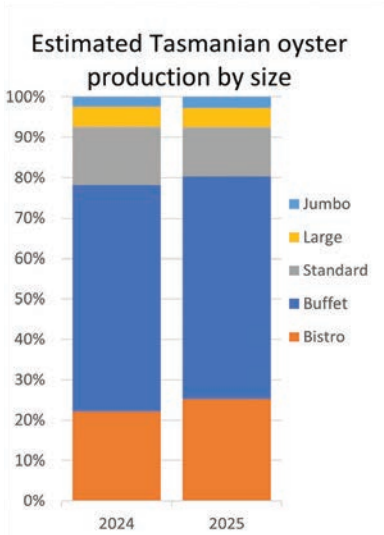
## Departmental engagement

Marine Resources Branch hosted a Harmful Algal Bloom workshop in August, is hosting a Summer Preparedness workshop in October, and is sharing and gathering views on the future of our industry more broadly. The Branch is also interested in extending the Storm Bay hydrodynamic and 'biogeochemical' modelling, potentially in ways of relevance to the oyster industry. Growers with views on any of these matters are encouraged to get in touch with Marine Resources Branch and Oysters Tasmania.

## Mortalities across the nation

Oysters Australia hosted a workshop in August on unexplained mortalities. Growers shared their views on mortalities in places like Pipe Clay Lagoon, the Hawkesbury, and Port Stephens. Researchers and vets from around the nation presented on what they thought was needed. Options arising from the workshop include establishing a national investigative framework with stages for early data collection and case definition, the application of traditional diagnostics, and the application of advanced diagnostics. Working out the details and finding the money remain outstanding issues.





## Victoria

Victorian officials are progressing plans to farm both Pacific oysters and Sydney rock oysters in Victoria. Oysters Tasmania has met with these officials to outline the case for disease surveillance in Victorian wild Pacific populations, for Victorian contributions to national research and development, and for Victoria meeting best-practice, but high-cost, food safety standards.

## Michael Cameron scholarship

Oysters Tasmania is again offering \$4,000 to an oyster industry member to support professional development.

The Michael Cameron scholarship is named in honour of an oyster industry pioneer whose contribution to the Tasmanian oyster industry went well beyond Cameron of Tasmania.

Applications are due to Oysters Tasmania by year's end.

## Online food safety course

Remember that online shellfish food safety courses remain free only for the next couple of months. You can do a 3-hour intro course or an 8-hour supervisor's course, all at a time of your choosing. Do the 8-hour course and ShellMAP will let you do grower sampling, so your bay can get a better closure trigger. Get in touch with Oysters Tasmania for the links.

# Tasmanian Abalone Council Ltd

DR JULIAN AMOS, CEO



No question — this has been a difficult year. Market conditions in China have been challenging, and issues in the water remain problematic.

As reported in the previous edition, our primary export market is China, and that market is presently experiencing issues associated with the high level of availability of homegrown aquaculture product, and exposure to product from other countries. We have recognised the need to lift the profile of Tasmania as a source of fresh wild-caught product, and the Board, in association with the marketing company Honey & Fox, has embarked on a social media campaign.

A significant Fisheries and Seafood Expo is to be held in Qingdao (a coastal city between Shanghai and Beijing) at the end of this month, and three of our processors, in association with Trade Tasmania, will be present on a Tasmanian stand to help promote Tasmanian abalone. The TACL will also be present at that Expo, and we are working to integrate our social media campaign with that Expo.

In the water, algal blooms remain a concern, and the experience in South Australia, where inshore fishing has been decimated, has prompted NRE to consider a response from Tasmania should such a situation arise here. Industry is engaged in discussions with the Department and these discussions are continuing. Meanwhile individual blocks have experienced elevated levels of biotoxins and have been closed for a period. Divers and processors have been kept informed on a weekly basis.

Debate is continuing between NRE and fishery sector groups, including ourselves, regarding the nature of communicating and the receiving and giving of advice ongoing. A new Abalone Fishery Consultative Group has now been established and has representatives from SIT and TarFish, as well as TACL. NRE and IMAS representatives will also be there. The first meeting was in August, and a second meeting is scheduled for this month.

The TACL has also sought a more direct representation, and a new Advisory Group will also meet this month, with NRE and TACL representatives.

Top of the agenda will be the new Harvest Strategy, and our bid for Marine Stewardship Council certification. A preliminary assessment has now been completed, and a decision now needs to be taken regarding full certification.

One matter that needs to be resolved is the development and acceptance of a Recovery Plan that will enable blocks that have been closed to be reopened, including the East Cast. Obviously it will need to ensure sustainability is protected, but such a plan needs to cover all fishing, including recreational fishing.

The recent State election returned a parliament with the same constituency, which led to the continuation of a minority Liberal government. However, there has been a Cabinet reshuffle, and a new Minister for Fisheries, Mr Gavin Pearce, has been appointed to replace Eric Abetz, who has moved to take on the Treasury portfolio. I take this opportunity to thank Eric for his time as our Minister.

Finally, the TACL will be holding its Annual General Meeting in Hobart on 8 November, and notices have been circulated to all members.

With best wishes





# Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association

SUE GRAU



The Commercial Dive fishery officially opened at the beginning of September with the sector currently hand harvesting the native Shortspined Sea Urchin *Helio* (*Heliocidaris erythrogramma*). The industry also hand harvests wavy periwinkles (*Lunella undulata*).

The Tasmanian Commercial Dive Association (TCDA) works closely with researchers and government to ensure the long-term sustainability of these fisheries. The industry has initiated voluntary closures and reduction in catch limits for *Helio* and periwinkles. This season, some of the areas fished for *Helio* have already reached these limits and have been closed by NRE.

The Longspined Sea Urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*), a pest species known as Centro, is targeted for consumption later in summer when its roe, called “uni” around the world, is at its most delicious. Centro, a species that has moved from its natural home in NSW, is a significant threat to the Tasmanian marine environment and to other fisheries.

The TCDA is an important participant in a collective effort to manage the Centro threat in Tasmania, through harvesting or removal. We are excited to be attending the Tasmanian Seafood Awards at the end of October after being nominated alongside the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) for the Kelp Restoration Project.



*Hai Loong Seafood Exporter Award*

Our work ensuring the long-term sustainability of our native marine species and restoring our marine environment highlight the dual TCDA objectives of sustaining a viable fishery and ensuring a healthy environment in which it operates.

We would like to congratulate Hai Loong Seafood for its Regional Exporter Award in the recent Tasmanian Export Awards. Hai Loong is one of the seafood processors that prepares Tasmanian urchins for consumption around the world.

The TCDA is currently building improved linkages with seafood processors who are eligible for associate membership and are a vital component of the sector and its supply chain.



*Helio harvested early in the season*

# Tasmanian Rock Lobster Council

JANE MCGANN, EO



## Port visits

Port visits were completed in September and October, with the TRLC meeting with fishers and licence holders across the state. We were delighted to have SIT's Julian Harrington join us, demonstrating clear commitment from both organisations to continue working together for the benefit of the rock lobster fishery. In addition to SIT, the TRLC also invited IMAS to provide updates on rock lobster fishery research, and NRE Tas to give an update on the 2025–2026 quota year and to provide attendees with an opportunity to hear about the draft rock lobster harvest strategy.

There was lots of good feedback from the meetings for inclusion in the TRLC submission for the draft strategy.

## Changes to research pots

After years of asking, IMAS has elected to change their requirements for research pots. Fishers will now be allowed to use their own pots providing they are meshed in accordance with the guidelines provided by IMAS. This simple change will enable IMAS to gather more length frequency from fishers, which will help improve biomass estimates for rock lobsters. Previously, fishers had to use IMAS's own research pots, which weren't suitable for some areas around Tasmania's coast.

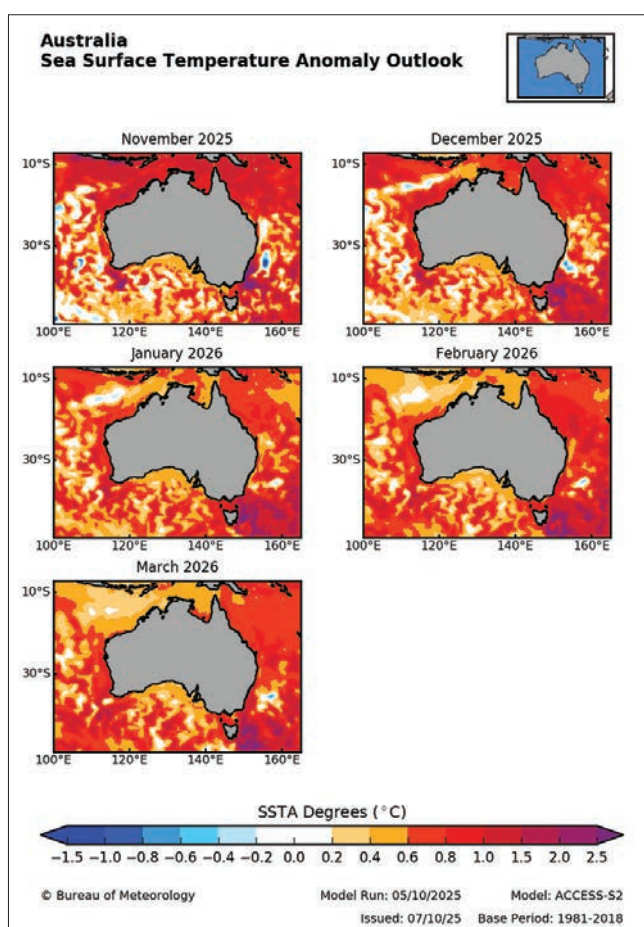
If you are interested in participating in research pot activities, please contact IMAS's Ben Quigley ([benjamin.quigley@utas.edu.au](mailto:benjamin.quigley@utas.edu.au)).

## Trans-Tasman Lobster Conference

The title of the biennial Trans-Tasman Lobster Conference, *harvesting opportunities and grappling with change*, held in Melbourne in August, resonated with all attendees. Whether considering the New Zealand rock lobster fishery, or Australia's western, southern, eastern or tropical rock lobster fisheries, change has been the only constant since the last meeting in 2023.

The precarity of our industry, with mostly a single large export market, was emphasised by the knowledge that while southern rock lobster is back into China, tropical rock lobster remains shut out. We are only a market disruption away from losing access to our most important market.

At the conference, ANU's Dr Darren Lim spoke about strategies to minimise the risk of losing market access. These strategies include lowering the chance of intensifying the risk (1) by having a single professional voice speaking clearly and calmly to politicians, (2) by becoming a harder target through world leadership as a sustainable fishery or by having a crisis plan, (3) by reducing the impact of a market disruption through having alternatives, and (4) by seeing trouble coming (being engaged and having a plan).



## A rock lobster working group

From Dr Lim's presentation, supported by other speakers, it seems clear that Australia's rock lobster fisheries can only benefit from closer communications. While we have friendly rivalry, there is plenty of common ground to be found between jurisdictions and species. At the end of the conference, all of Australia's rock lobster peak bodies met and agreed to create an informal working group to identify common interests and where we can collaborate to the benefit of all. The first meeting is scheduled for mid-November.

## Marine heatwave

Once again, we are at risk from a marine heatwave (MHW) this summer. Two years ago, we were very lucky not to be unduly affected by the last heatwave as the warm water stayed out at sea rather than move to inshore waters. We can't assume we will be as lucky this summer. NRE Tas has arranged for marine heatwave preparedness workshops at the end of October for individual sectors, including the rock lobster fishery.

The Bureau of Meteorology has lots of information on [sea surface temperatures](#) that can be accessed on its website. The FRDC will run marine climate briefings for the 2025–26 summer period starting on 24 October. These online presentations are a great opportunity to learn more about what to expect and are interesting in themselves. If you want to attend the briefings, please email Jamie Allnut ([Jamie.allnut@frdc.com.au](mailto:Jamie.allnut@frdc.com.au)) or let me know.

The TRLC will monitor the marine heatwave and provide updates to the rock lobster fishery as needed.



# Institute for Marine & Antarctic Studies



## Scientists release 65 captive-raised red handfish into the wild

In a major step for marine conservation, scientists have released 65 captive-raised red handfish into the wild to bolster the declining population near Hobart.

“This moment represents an incredible effort by many people over many years. We’ve given the red handfish the best possible chance of survival, and every release helps us learn more and work towards recovering the species,” said marine ecologist Dr Jemina Stuart-Smith, who co-leads the red handfish research and conservation program at the University of Tasmania’s Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS).

The program is principally funded by national organisation, the Foundation for Australia’s Most Endangered Species (FAME), with support from the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

Before releasing the handfish into the wild, scientists have been working to restore their natural habitat and improve the ecological conditions for the species.

“Red handfish are facing many threats, and their extremely limited population and a severely degraded habitat has made them particularly vulnerable to extinction,” Dr Stuart-Smith said.

Associate Professor Andrew Trotter, who leads the conservation breeding program for red handfish at IMAS, said the team was happy to raise the fish in captivity, but excited to see them released to their natural habitat.

“They’re wild animals and belong in the sea,” Associate Professor Trotter said. “It’s very rewarding to see the project enter the next phase, and this is an important step towards the species recovery.”

FAME’s CEO, Tracy McNamara, is delighted that FAME’s support has made this milestone possible. “This achievement is a testament to the IMAS team, whose dedication is proving that even a species as close to extinction as the red handfish can be given a future,” she said.

“It shows that when you believe in dedicated teams with expertise, great things can happen. FAME is proud to support their efforts and to back bold conservation that delivers lasting recovery for Australia’s most endangered wildlife.”

Read the full story: <https://tinyurl.com/43t4r67p>



*A super happy IMAS handfish dive & aquaculture team after releasing the handfish, by Jeremy Smith*



*Andrew Trotter inspecting the fish before release, by Jemina Stuart-Smith*



Charting policy  
for a sustainable  
ocean

From the fjords of Norway to the reefs of Bali, Andrew Sullivan's PhD is taking him around the world as he investigates how nations are developing policy for a sustainable ocean.

His research is part of an investigation into how countries are managing their ocean spaces — research to help inform future ocean governance.

"Managing the ocean is a complex task because there's so many different aspects to it," said Andrew, who is a PhD candidate IMAS and the Centre for Marine Socioecology.

"In early 2023, I attended the 5th Symposium on the Effects of Climate Change on the World's Ocean in Bergen in Norway. That provided a great opportunity to see where the science was at and what was happening in the international space around climate change and ocean science.

"It was there that I learned more about the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which is also known as the Ocean Panel," Andrew said.



"It started out with the heads of state of 12 countries, which has now grown to 18 member countries, who voluntarily got together to say we want to be more ambitious when it comes to ocean management, and we want to encourage other countries to do the same and help effect change."

Andrew's research focuses on understanding the origin of the Ocean Panel, how it was established and importantly how different countries are implementing the commitments.

"The key commitment Ocean Panel members have made is to develop sustainable ocean plans which is a plan to manage 100% of waters within their national jurisdiction," he said.

"My research will examine how different countries are implementing their commitment around sustainable ocean plans. What does that look like? What are their governance structures? How do they involve the different ministers and different agencies that are responsible for ocean management? What has changed because of their membership of the Ocean Panel?"

"There's some good lessons that hopefully will come out of the research about what works well and what doesn't, or at least what might be worth trying."

With over 25 years' experience working in fisheries for government and industry, Andrew has seen firsthand what good and not-so-good ocean governance looks like.

"Ocean policy isn't just about managing resources. It's about people's lives and livelihoods. In many parts of the world, we're talking about coastal communities that rely on the ocean for their livelihoods, and in some cases, for subsistence," he said.

Read the full story: <https://tinyurl.com/yasb3pvt>



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# Seafood And Maritime Training



## SMT hosts in-house Master 45 Orals once again

SMT was proud to host AMSA's in-house Master 45 Orals again this year, giving our students the opportunity to complete their assessments in the same environment as their training took place.

For many, sitting their Orals can be a daunting experience. But as graduate Luke Bosworth explained, having the chance to sit them at SMT was a real advantage:

"Even though the lead-up was stressful, being able to sit my Orals at SMT meant I could access my trainers beforehand, ask questions, and clarify anything I was unsure about. SMT's streamlined approach to the course meant all the important material was covered well."

Ben Wood, another successful candidate, agreed that the support in the lead-up was invaluable:

"Having the opportunity to brush up on the course content and attend the Orals prep day was beneficial. The Master 45 course expanded my knowledge around vessel size, capacity, and industry operations. I'm especially grateful to my trainers, Ben Tucker and David Kinder, for their clear explanations and depth of knowledge."

With his new Master 45 qualification, Ben is already exploring exciting career opportunities within the Tasmanian aquaculture industry and beyond, as well as considering further study in MED qualifications or even sharing his own skills as a trainer in the future.

For Ryan Wilson, the familiar environment at SMT made all the difference:

"It's helpful to sit your Orals somewhere familiar, with staff you know and resources on hand to brush up on your study. Everyone at SMT is invested in your outcome and wants you to succeed. The trainers were flexible in their delivery, adapting to suit each learner and helping you to understand the material."

Congratulations to Luke, Ben, Ryan and all our trainees who successfully passed their Master 45 Orals this year!



2025 Master 45 M students and trainers

## Beer 'n' Sims at Shellfish Futures

As part of the Shellfish Futures conference held on 11–12 September, SMT hosted a special Beer 'n' Sims night.

On the Thursday evening, delegates were welcomed into the SMT classrooms to enjoy a drink and try their hand at our state-of-the-art maritime simulators. These simulators are the same ones used by SMT's Master students to gain hands-on experience in manoeuvring and navigating larger vessels without the risk, time, cost and logistics of taking a physical ship out to sea. And, of course, all from the warmth and comfort of the classroom.

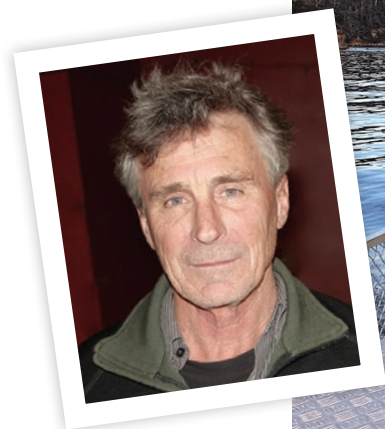
There was a fantastic turnout, with many Shellfish Futures delegates eager to try their hand at steering a vessel. Some wondered if it would be like playing a Nintendo system, only to quickly discover the realism and challenge of navigating the vessels.

The night was a great success, combining networking, a bit of fun, and a unique chance to experience the technology behind SMT's maritime training.

*Bottom, right: Olivia Wynn, Carynn Manicom, Julian Harrington*







Mick Hortle (left) on site

## Saying goodbye – retiring trainer profile: Mick Hortle

SMT sends a fond farewell to our Certificate IV in Aquaculture trainer Mick Hortle as he enters retirement.

Mick has had an illustrious career and is recognised as a pioneer of the salmon industry in Tasmania. Over the past 13 years with SMT, he has been instrumental in developing and delivering a wide range of programs that have shaped the training opportunities available in the aquaculture sector.

Mick began by launching a Certificate IV in Aquaculture program in partnership with Huon Aquaculture, before becoming deeply involved in delivering the Certificate III in Aquaculture. He then went on to design and deliver the highly successful Shellfish Management Certificate IV in Aquaculture, which has supported countless learners and contributed to the growth of the industry.

SMT thanks Mick for his dedication, expertise and the invaluable role he has played in building programs that continue to benefit students and industry alike. His knowledge, passion and commitment have left a legacy.

We wish Mick all the very best for a well-deserved and happy retirement.



Regional Coxswain Deck in Smithton in 2024

## Meeting demand: regional course opportunities and MED2 growth

**SMT is committed to supporting training opportunities in regional areas across Tasmania.**

This year we have successfully facilitated courses in Smithton and Strahan, with more regional delivery planned. Looking ahead, a Coxswain Deck course in St Helens will be running in early December. If you're in St Helens and interested in being part of our Coxswain Deck course, please head to our website [www.smt.edu.au](http://www.smt.edu.au) to fill out an application or call us on 6286 0400 for more information.

This year SMT has also had to put on an additional MED2 course in September 2025 to help meet demand and to support industry growth.

By expanding our MED2 and continuing our regional course offerings, SMT maintains its support of industry growth and ensures training is accessible to learners across the state.





# Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania



## Marine Resources Public Engagement and Consultation Policy

We recently published a policy which describes how we conduct public engagement and key stakeholder consultation, as well as how our public consultation process works.

The primary objective of this policy is to outline how Marine Resources conducts public engagement and key stakeholder consultation, including:

- The ways Marine Resources engages with the public and why;
- The ways Marine Resources undertakes public and key stakeholder consultation; and
- How our public consultation process works.

Read the policy on Fishing Tas: Marine Resources Public Engagement and Consultation Policy [here](#).

## REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING

FISHWATCH  
☎ 0427 655 557



*The Aquaculture Branch presenting at Shellfish Futures*

## Harmful algal blooms

Tasmania maintains active monitoring programs for algal blooms and ensures the safety of seafood for consumers. A dedicated workshop was held in August with government, industry and researchers to enhance response readiness.

## Draft rock lobster harvest strategy

The Draft Rock Lobster Harvest Strategy is open for public consultation and we're seeking your feedback. The consultation period has been extended until 11:59pm on 22 October 2025. You are welcome to make an additional submission or revoke and replace a previous submission.

## Shellfish Futures

We were pleased to attend Shellfish Futures on 11 and 12 September 2025. Thanks to everyone who took time to engage with Aquaculture Branch staff; your insights, questions and conversations were valuable.

Aquaculture compliance officers presented an overview of the Aquaculture Compliance & Inspection Program to shellfish growers and industry representatives. Officers outlined program objectives, regulatory requirements, inspection processes, compliance trends and the role of industry in meeting regulatory standards.

We also ran a hands-on pre-consultation workshop for a Tasmanian Shellfish Aquaculture Plan (Shellfish Plan). The goal was to gather information on what is most important to industry to inform our first draft. The room was split into small (species) groups. Groups were prompted with draft themes and asked to discuss and share their ideas, facilitated by a chair and captured by a scribe. Early engagement means any Shellfish Plan is built with industry input from the start, setting the stage for a Shellfish Plan that's well rounded and implementable.

## Commercial fisher convicted on 2 charges

On 15 July 2025, Mr Albert WYATT in the Hobart Magistrates Court pleaded guilty and was convicted of 2 counts of Taking Rock Lobster from a Marine Nature Reserve contrary to Rule 12(2) of the Fisheries Rules 2019.

The charges resulted from investigations that revealed between 28 August 2023 and 30 August 2023 that Mr WYATT took fish in State waters, namely rock lobster within a Marine Nature Reserve, namely Saddle Bight, Port Davey in Tasmania located within the Southwest National Park.

We provide fishers with mapping of all seven Marine Nature Reserves located in State waters, including Port Davey. All reserves are protected areas and, in general, fishing by any method is prohibited; however, in the Port Davey Marine Reserve some restricted recreational and commercial fishing is allowed.

Mr WYATT received a fine totalling \$18,340 which resulted in Mr WYATT being allocated 94 demerit points.

– Fisheries Compliance and Licensing Branch

## Avian influenza (bird flu)

Bird flu is a contagious, viral disease affecting wild, commercial and domesticated bird species and other animals. Report sudden or large numbers (more than five) of sick or dead birds or other animals to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888. Learn more at <https://nre.tas.gov.au/BirdFlu>

## Contact

Laura Fatovich, Marine Industries Engagement Specialist (Prospect Office) [laura.fatovich@nre.tas.gov.au](mailto:laura.fatovich@nre.tas.gov.au)

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### Tasmanian Scalefish Fishermen's Association

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03 6247 7634  
vessseafood@hotmail.com  
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### Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania

286 Windermere Road, Windermere TAS 7252

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03 6328 1478

### Tasmanian Rock Lobster Processors Association

President: Ash Marshall  
sit@sit.org.au

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admin@salmontas.au  
www.salmontasmania.au

### Australian Abalone Growers Association

EO: Nicholas Savva  
eo@aagai.com.au

## Government

### Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)

www.afma.gov.au

### Australian Maritime Safety Authority

www.amsa.gov.au

### The Bureau of Meteorology

www.bom.gov.au/marine/index.shtml

### CSIRO - Marine and Atmospheric Research

www.cmar.csiro.au/research/mer.html

### Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)

www.agriculture.gov.au

### Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

www.dcceew.gov.au

### Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC)

www.frdc.com.au

### Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)

www.foodstandards.gov.au

### NRE Tas - Marine Resources (Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania)

nre.tas.gov.au

### Wild Fisheries Enquiries

Matt Bradshaw (acting) 0457 097 534

### Recreational Fisheries Enquiries

Kylie Chatfield (acting) 0448 738 918

### Commercial Dive, Marine Plants and Shellfish Fisheries

Sharna Rainer 0457 124 668

### Commercial Fisheries Licensing

03 6165 3000

### Permit Enquiries

Holly Rickards 0476 799 222

### Abalone Enquiries

Matt Bradshaw 0457 097 534

### Scalefish, Squid and Octopus Enquiries

Andrew Warmbrunn 0475 635 841

### Scallops, Giant Crab or Rock Lobster Enquiries

James Parkinson 0457 005 376

### Aquaculture Enquiries

Rachel McKay 0447 150 261

### Emergency Animal Disease Hotline

1800 675 888

### Biosecurity Enquiries

03 6165 3777

## Training

### Seafood and Maritime Training (SMT)

www.smt.edu.au  
03 6286 0400

## State

### NRE Marine Resources (Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania)

www.nre.tas.gov.au  
www.fishing.tas.gov.au

### Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS)

www.imas.utas.edu.au

### Marine and Safety Tasmania

www.mast.tas.gov.au

### Natural Resource Management South

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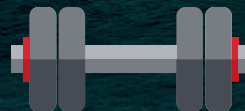
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