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From the President

TIM HESS, AM

Seafood Awards

During the evening of Friday 31 October, I had the pleasure of attending the 10th Tasmanian Seafood Awards. Seafood Industry Tasmania has hosted the Awards since 2009, and I am not the only person to say that this was our best event ever.

You can find a full rundown of the Awards and Award winners in this issue of *Seafood Industry News*. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our SIT staff.

On behalf of the entire Tasmanian seafood industry, I extend a heartfelt thanks to Lek Krongsing, our Project Manager, for the outstanding organisation and seamless delivery of this year's Seafood Awards Gala Dinner event. From the decorations to the flawless run sheet, every detail reflected Lek's professionalism and SIT's commitment to excellence. Thanks also to our Office Manager, Alaina, for unwavering support, always lending a hand to ensure everything was completed expertly and on time.

The event was not only a resounding success, but a truly memorable celebration of our industry's achievements.

2025: A year that flew by

It has only just hit me that this is the last issue of *Seafood Industry News* for 2025. My gosh, the year has flown. As I reflect over the last 11 months, I cannot help but be proud of what Seafood Industry Tasmania has achieved and delivered on behalf of industry. We haven't always won the battles (SE Marine Park Review springs to mind), but we certainly put up a good fight.

As we move into 2026, we have some emerging challenges that could splinter industry unity. So, it is timely to remind everyone that in an industry as diverse as seafood, where wild-catch fishers, marine farmers, seafood processors, chefs, scientists, managers and all the other marine stakeholders all bring different priorities to the table, we need to be constantly reminded that our common ground is far greater than our differences. We all depend on healthy oceans, thriving ecosystems, and markets that value quality and sustainability. We share the same fierce pride in feeding people exceptional food, the same respect for the unpredictable power of the sea, and the same determination to leave our fisheries and farms in better shape for the next generation. When we focus on those shared values, stewardship, excellence, and a deep connection to the sea, the things that once divided us become the strengths that unite us and carry the entire Tasmanian seafood community forward together.

UNITED WE STAND; DIVIDED WE FALL.

Happy, safe and prosperous festive season

With 2026 just weeks away, I would like to wish everyone a happy, safe and prosperous festive season.



Mark Hursey and Valerie Hursey accepting Jim's Recognition Award (image courtesy of Nina Hamilton Photography)

Vale James Alexander (Jim) Hursey Senior

At the Seafood Awards, I had the absolute honour of presenting a posthumous Recognition Award to James Alexander (Jim) Hursey Senior, the father of SIT Director Mark Hursey.

Jim helped pioneer the Tasmanian abalone fishery and, across more than 70 years in seafood, he carved footholds in rock lobster, giant crab and scalefish, and in doing so built a family legacy that continues today.

In the early 1970s, he and his beloved Valerie, his wife of 67 extraordinary years, anchored their lives in Stanley, where they built a fleet of iconic red boats that still line the Stanley wharf today, a living testament to Jim's vision and valour.



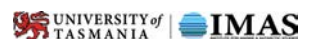
Jim Hursey at work

Hursey Seafoods, the award-winning seafood restaurant, was established in 1987, born from the family's unshakable spirit even amid profound loss. Nestled under The Nut, at the edge of Stanley's historic wharf, this waterfront haven has become a seafood icon of the North West.

For Stanley and its surrounds, Hursey Seafoods is not just a restaurant; it is the economic anchor that employs generations, draws wanderers from all around the world to savour Tasmania's purest seafood, and elevates the region as a national jewel of sustainable seafood.

It was with immense honour that I presented the Special Recognition Award to James Alexander (Jim) Hursey Senior.

Official Sponsors of Seafood Industry Tasmania News



Stay Afloat 10th Tasmanian Seafood Awards

Images: Nina Hamilton Photography



Tasmanian Seafood Excellence shines at the 10th Stay Afloat Tasmanian Seafood Awards

The energy was high and the sense of pride unmistakable as 200 guests gathered at Hobart's Wrest Point Hotel on Friday 31 October to celebrate the 10th biennial Stay Afloat Tasmanian Seafood Awards.

The evening began with a relaxed welcome drink reception and a chance for familiar faces from across Tasmania's seafood community to reconnect before the formalities began. As guests took their seats, Indigenous fisher and Seafood Industry Tasmania (SIT) Vice President Bryan Denny delivered a Welcome to Country, acknowledging Tasmania's deep cultural and environmental ties to the sea.

This was followed by a welcome from SIT Chair Tim Hess, who reflected on how far the industry has come since the very first awards in 2009. "Tonight is especially significant, marking the 10th Tasmanian Seafood Awards – a milestone reached over 16 years, since our first celebration back in 2009.

"Since the first Awards, Tasmania's seafood industry has adapted and continues to thrive. Our strength lies in the industry's collaboration across wild-catch fisheries, aquaculture, processors, exporters, management and research, and all other seafood stakeholders.

"Together, we've built not only a resilient industry but also careers, communities, and a shared identity around one of Tasmania's most valuable natural resources – seafood."

The Hon Gavin Pearce, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, formally opened the evening, praising the industry's resilience and its contribution to Tasmania's economy, regional communities and identity. He emphasised the importance of the people behind the industry, acknowledging their dedication and the need for strong mental health and wellbeing support across the sector, highlighting the pivotal role of Stay Afloat Tasmania. He also reflected on the essential contribution of Tasmania's seafood to regional communities and the broader state economy. Events like this, he noted, shine a light on the hardworking people who make Tasmania's seafood industry what it is today.

Celebrating the heart of the industry

Over the course of the evening, 14 awards were presented, each recognising excellence, innovation and leadership across every facet of Tasmania's seafood sector.

The night's highest honour, the Industry Ambassador Award, went to Stuart Richey of Richey Fishing for his decades of leadership, stewardship and governance that have shaped and strengthened Tasmania's seafood industry.

The Young Achiever Award was presented to Jock Mure of Mures Tasmania, whose entrepreneurial drive and leadership embody the next generation of the Tasmanian seafood industry.

Commitment to safety, innovation and sustainability

Tassal Group took home two major awards, reflecting their continued leadership across multiple areas of the seafood sector. The organisation received the Large Primary Producer Award for its innovation and commitment to sustainable aquaculture, as well as the Health and Safety Award for its Switch On to Safety campaign, which promotes a strong culture of workplace safety and wellbeing.

Environmental innovation was also recognised through the Saving Native Species – Giant Kelp Restoration Project, which received the Environmental Stewardship Award. A collaboration between IMAS research scientists and the Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association, the project is pioneering the restoration of Tasmania's iconic kelp forest using science, industry expertise and community effort.

In the Research, Development and Extension Award, recognition went to Scientific Leadership in Reopening Australia's Live Lobster Export. This initiative played a crucial role in rebuilding export markets and safeguarding industry livelihoods during one of the sector's most challenging periods.

Meanwhile, Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA)'s Turn the Tide Program was honoured with the People Development Award, celebrating its inclusive, high-impact approach to leadership, mentoring and professional development across the seafood workforce.



Environmental Stewardship Award
Saving Native Species – Giant Kelp Restoration Project



People Development Award
Turn the Tide Program – WISA

Showcasing Tasmania's seafood experience

The Gotta Love Tassie Seafood Awards once again celebrated the unique ways Tasmanians bring the best of local seafood to the table and tourists alike.

The Restaurant Award was presented to Mures Upper Deck, recognised for its exceptional dining experience, provenance-driven menu, and commitment to showcasing Tasmanian seafood at its finest.

The Fish and Chips Award went to Hursey Seafoods in Stanley, praised for their freshly caught gummy flake, golden crispy chips and welcoming service.

The Seafood Experience Award was awarded to Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures, whose on-water tours blend education, storytelling and hospitality to offer guests an unforgettable taste of Tasmania's freshest seafood.

Celebrating local business and community leadership

Bay of Fires Lobster and Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures shared the Small Business Award, both demonstrating growth, innovation and dedication to showcasing Tasmanian seafood to visitors. Mures Tasmania was named winner of the Large Business Award, recognised for its longstanding commitment to quality, sustainability and tourism excellence.

Brendon 'Squizzy' Taylor received two awards – the Promotion Award for his tireless efforts in promoting Tasmanian seafood through community engagement and social media, and the Small Primary Producer Award for his commitment to sustainable fishing practices and leadership within the local community.

Special recognition awards

Garry Kerr is recognised for his dedication to capturing Australia's maritime soul through documentary storytelling, preserving the voices, adventures and history of Australia's fishing, sailing and naval pioneers for future generations.

Paul 'Sticky' Richardson is honoured for more than four decades in Tasmanian fishing and over 20 years of dedicated service in representational roles, including 12 years on the TSIC/SIT Board. Known as a thoughtful and courageous advocate who asked the 'sticky' questions, his leadership and contributions have strengthened the broader seafood industry.

James Alexander (Jim) Hursey is recognised for over 70 years of pioneering contributions across abalone, rock lobster, giant crab and scalefish, shaping a legacy that continues through the Hursey family and their iconic Stanley-based operations. His vision created economic opportunity, community pride and the celebrated Hursey Seafoods, now a landmark of Tasmania's North West.



Gotta Love Tassie Restaurant Award
Mures Upper Deck



Gotta Love Tassie Seafood Experience Award
Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures



Gotta Love Tassie Fish and Chips Award
Hursey Seafoods



Health and Safety Award
Switch on to Safety – Tassal's Wristband Campaign



Small Primary Producer Award
Brendon 'Squizzy' Taylor



Small Business Award
Bay of Fires Lobster



Large Primary Producer Award
Tassal Group



Small Business Award
Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures

Leadership Award

The Hon Gavin Pearce presented the Leadership Award to Julian Harrington, recognising his values-driven leadership and tireless advocacy shaping a stronger, united and resilient seafood industry of Tasmania. As the Chief Executive of SIT, Julian has built bridges between government, industry, research and community. He is a trusted and respected voice for Tasmania's seafood industry.

Throughout the evening, guests enjoyed fine Tasmanian seafood and local wines. The Stay Afloat theme remained a strong undercurrent, reminding everyone of the importance of wellbeing and connection within the industry.

These types of events are not possible without the generous support of our amazing Award Sponsors.

Our Gold Sponsors:

ADEC Kedge
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The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
The Tasmanian Rock Lobster Council Limited

Our Silver and General Sponsors:

The Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies
Marine Solutions
Seafood and Maritime Training
Tasmanian Abalone Council
TasPorts
Tassal

And those businesses who have generously donated seafood for our canapés and mains:

Tasmanian Oyster Company and Yumbah/Cameron of Tasmania for the oysters, T.O.P Fish for the octopus, Richey Fishing and Tasmania Blue Seafood for the Tasmanian scallops, Salmon Tasmania and Huon Aquaculture for the salmon, Peter and Una Seafoods for the Salmon pearls and ocean trout, Mures Fishing for the bluefin tuna and blue-eye trevalla.

Thanks to our award and food sponsors for your generous support of Seafood Industry Tasmania.



Large Business Award
Mures Tasmania



Young Achiever Award
Jock Mure



Research, Development and Extension Award
Scientific Leadership in Reopening Australia's Live Lobster Export



Industry Ambassador Award
Stuart Richey



Promotion Award
Brendon 'Squizzy' Taylor



Leadership Award
Julian Harrington



Recognition
Paul 'Sticky' Richardson



Recognition
James Alexander (Jim) Hursey



From the Chief Executive

JULIAN HARRINGTON

Stay Afloat Tasmania is Alive and Well

During recent conversations with industry, a couple of people have expressed disappointment that Stay Afloat has not been refunded.

I can assure you that the Stay Afloat Tasmania program is ongoing, funded by the Tasmanian Government until 2029 and delivered by Rural Alive and Well Tasmania in partnership with Seafood Industry Tasmania and seafood stakeholders.

It is important to clarify that the Stay Afloat Tasmania program is external to the Stay Afloat Australia program, delivered by Seafood Industry Australia. National funding for Stay Afloat Australia concluded on 30 September 2025, and services from this program into most states have paused.

For those who do not know, Stay Afloat originated in Tasmania, the concept being developed by Seafood Industry Tasmania in early 2018 (then Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council) and a formal partnership forged with Rural Alive and Well shortly after.

To reiterate, Stay Afloat Tasmania continues bigger, better and stronger than ever before.

Need support? Then call 1300HELPMATE.

Banded Morwong Forum

On Wednesday 26 November, I attended the annual NRE Banded Morwong (BMW) Forum, where we were presented the most recent BMW stock assessment and provided with updates on several BMW research projects. This forum was a great example of how a co-management approach to managing a fishery can create improved stewardship and, more importantly, sustainable outcomes.

The IMAS stock assessment shows that spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated to be at 40% of initial (virgin) biomass, with a high level of confidence (90% probability) that SSB will remain above 36% over the next five years. This exceeds the limit reference point of 30% SSB.

The stock assessment model assumes there is a deepwater, unfished stock, with some mixing between the fished and unfished stocks. There has been some uncertainty as to whether this assumption holds (i.e. is there a deepwater stock?). Preliminary results from PhD candidate Maya Lovelock-Dodos has provided evidence that a deepwater stock does in fact exist. Using a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) they showed good populations of BMW in the 30-40 m range, and fish were seen out to 70 m. The next stage of this project is to determine movement of these deepwater fish into shallower water.

So, stocks of BMW are sustainable and the management tools implemented for this fishery are highly effective. A co-management success story.

SE Marine Parks grant offers

At the time of writing this article, I was contacted by several fishers questioning the "letters of offer for the South-east Marine Parks Network Fishing Business Assistance Grants" they had received from the Australian Government - Parks Australia.

The 2025 South-east Marine Parks Network Fishing Business Assistance Program (SEFBA) grant round opened on 26 November 2025. Acceptance packs, including letters of offer, details on individual grant calculations and information on how to accept, have been mailed directly to eligible commercial fishing authorisation holders.

Grants can be accepted up until **9 pm AEDT on Thursday 22 January 2026.**

Eligibility and grant offers have been determined by analysis of commercial fishing catch history in areas where commercial fishing is no longer allowed.

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) used data from three financial years where catch was highest to calculate the average income from areas you are no longer allowed to fish. This amount was multiplied by an assumed profit margin of 30% and again by 5 to provide 5 years of assistance.

While Seafood Industry Tasmania questions the methodology used by ABARES, believing it could grossly underestimate compensation, we encourage fishers to make decisions based on the offer placed in front of them.

For more information visit <https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/about/fisheries-assistance>.

If you would like to discuss your offer (or lack of an offer) further, please contact me on 0407 242 933.

Tasmanian Seafood Awards

At the recent Tasmanian Seafood Awards, I was honoured to accept the Tasmanian Seafood Leadership Award. I am deeply grateful to those who organised such a meaningful Award, and to Chef Massimo Mele for the extra little surprise that accompanied the Award. This Award reinforces my responsibility to keep listening, learning and advocating for our amazing industry.

The Award takes pride of place in my living room at home. But to be honest, this Award is not mine alone. It also belongs to the incredible staff I have had during my Seafood Industry Tasmania journey. Lek, Alaina, Michelle, Jane, Emma and Courtney to name a few, and our tenants from the TRLC, Oysters Tasmania and the TCDA. And of course, the multitude of Board members I have worked with over the last 15 years. I would like to highlight Lindsay Newman and Tim Hess, the two Presidents who have guided my journey, mentoring me, supporting me and trusting in me.

Thank you everyone, words cannot describe how proud I am to receive this Award.



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



Making Waves: WoW Opens Doors to Life on the Water

From October 20–22, Tasmania’s seafood and maritime sectors joined forces for the 2025 Working on Water (WoW) program—an immersive, hands-on experience designed to spark interest in marine careers. Since its launch in 2008, WoW has become a standout initiative, giving students a rare chance to explore pathways in aquaculture, fisheries, marine science, and maritime operations.

This year, more than 40 students from schools across the state spent three action-packed days touring facilities, meeting industry leaders, and getting a real taste of life on the water. From stepping aboard vessels to chatting with scientists and dissecting fish, the program offered an authentic look at the roles that keep Tasmania’s marine industries thriving.

At its core, WoW is about opening doors—connecting classroom learning with real-world opportunities and showing young Tasmanians there’s a place for them in these vital industries. It sparks curiosity, builds confidence, and helps students imagine a future in a sector shaping Tasmania’s economy and environment.

Students said the program was “very valuable,” giving them a clearer picture of how the industry works and the careers available. Many left feeling motivated, confident, and excited about where these opportunities could lead.

For some, it was their first real look behind the scenes; for others with family ties to the sector, WoW offered a fresh perspective and sparked big ideas about the future.

Special thanks to the Seafood Industry Tasmania team and program organiser Lek Krongsing—and to the presenters, hosts, and coordinators including IMAS, Huon Aquaculture, Tassal, Skretting, Mures, and many more. Their generosity and enthusiasm made this year’s program a success.



DAY 1

- Presentations from Oysters Tasmania and Tasmanian Oyster Company
- A tour of the Seafood and Maritime Training (SMT) vessel Navigator
- A career talk with Tasmania Marine Police/Tour of Vessel
- A behind-the-scenes visit to TasPorts, including tug and tower operations
- Rotations through Tassal’s feed centre, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, and ADEC Kedge
- A visit to the Maritime Museum in Hobart

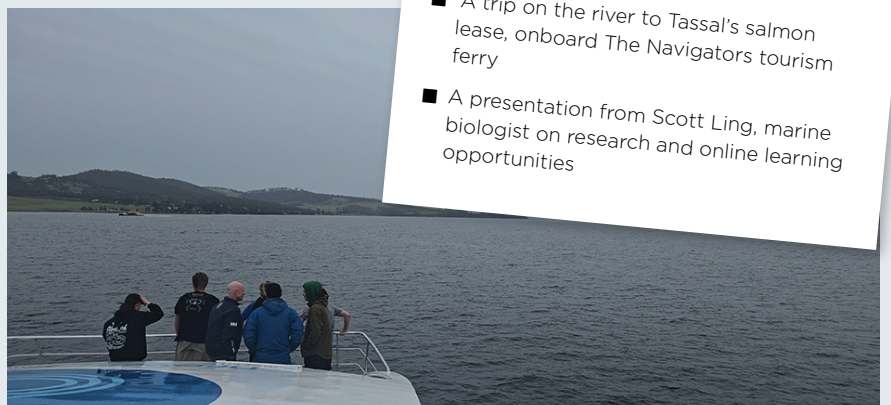
DAY 2

- A factory tour at Mures Fishing in Cambridge
- A visit to Skretting, where students learned about aquafeed production
- Lunch and a business chat with Jock Mure at Mures Lower Deck
- A deep dive into marine science at IMAS Taroona, including dissections, microscope activities, and facility tour, and pathway presentation



DAY 3

- A tour of Huon Aquaculture’s Forest Home hatchery
- Onboard tour of vessel “Cuttlefish” with Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures
- A trip on the river to Tassal’s salmon lease, onboard The Navigators tourism ferry
- A presentation from Scott Ling, marine biologist on research and online learning opportunities



Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association

SUE GRAU



The Tasmanian Commercial Dive Association (TCDA) plays a unique role in Tasmania's seafood sector. It works to maintain a viable commercial dive fishery while also delivering direct environmental benefits for the wider community.

A key part of this work is the collective management of the longspined sea urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*). This pest species, known locally as 'Centro', has spread south from its natural home in NSW and now threatens the Tasmanian marine environment and other fisheries. Significant overgrazing by Centro has impacted on the once-thriving giant kelp forests in the state.

Centro is central to our stories in this article, demonstrating our role in protecting and restoring our reefs and kelp forests.



Image; Nina Hamilton

TCDA wins the Environmental Stewardship Award

The Tasmanian Commercial Divers Association (TCDA) is proud to have received the 2025 Tasmanian Seafood Award for Environmental Stewardship alongside the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS). This recognised the work of our divers in the restoration of giant kelp in our state.

Although there were only two organisations named, the Nature Conservancy of Australia, NRM South, CSIRO and SIT were also integral to the project.

The TCDA thanks the FRDC for sponsoring the award and congratulates all the divers and collaborators who played a role in this important project.

Incentivised Centro fishing program

The Abalone Industry Reinvestment Fund (AIRF) funds the Incentivised Centro Fishing Program, providing a small financial incentive based on the weight of Centro

removed. While Centro is typically targeted for consumption later in summer when its roe is at its peak, divers are also encouraged to remove it from areas or at times that are not commercially viable. This may include, for example, areas that are more remote or where Centro is more difficult to harvest.

Following TCDA advocacy, the incentive has been increased to support removal in some of the more remote areas. The program officially starts on 1 December 2025.



FIM

FIM is a leading seafood brokerage, advisory and consultancy group in Australia with a combined experience of over 80+ years in the fishing industry – a 'one stop shop' for all seafood investments.

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Alan (Tank) Gray ☎ 0417 357 005 ✉ tankgray@bigpond.com

Oysters Tasmania

DUNCAN SPENDER



Blue Economy Project

Oysters Tasmania's Blue Economy Project has begun.

Oysters Tasmania is inviting Tasmanian growers with deep water to partner us in a limited number of deep-water oyster farming trials, which will be the core of the project.

Oysters Tasmania is also inviting additional Tasmanian growers, including big and small intertidal farmers, to gather and share data about how they are farming and their growth and survival results. The data will be anonymised and will allow you to see how your farm stacks up against other farms with similar set-ups. The data will provide a benchmark against which the deep-water trials will be assessed.

The selected growers will be asked to share their data via a farm management and data collection platform. Oysters Tasmania, partnering with Blue Farm Intelligence (miShell), will support any selected growers not currently using a farm management platform to get on board. We see getting information from whiteboards onto dashboards as a great way for farmers to pick up new insights about their farms.

Oysters Tasmania may also be able to offer some additional environmental measurement, such as Chlorophyll a, to participating growers.

We encourage all Tasmanian growers to get in touch with Oysters Tasmania to find out more.

Export listing

ShellMAP will be compiling, and sharing with the federal department, the evidence showing the effectiveness over many decades of our water-based food safety regime. Hopefully the result will be that, when an area is closed and then reopened on the basis of environmental conditions (e.g. rainfall, salinity), the federal department keeps the area on the export-approved list, without requiring meat testing.



Ian Duthie

Long service

Ian Duthie has racked up more than 20 years of volunteer service on the Board of Oysters Tasmania (and its precursor), and Ben Cameron more than 10 years. We have given each a bottle of Waubs Harbour 'maritime' whisky from the old hatchery site at the Gulch as thanks.

TasWater

Oysters Tasmania has called on the federal airport environment regulator to enforce pollution limits on TasWater's Cambridge sewage treatment plant, which is on airport land. Oysters Tasmania appreciates TasWater's continuing engagement with the oyster industry in oyster growing areas.

Biotoxins

In response to a call from Oysters Tasmania, ShellMAP has introduced a new schedule for mandatory biotoxin tests that better reflects regional and seasonal risks. In some instances, the frequency of mandatory tests is reduced. Growers can continue to submit samples more often than mandated if they wish.

Florfenicol

Without any consultation with the oyster industry, the federal government has approved, and the state government has allowed, the salmon industry to use Florfenicol, an antibiotic, in Tasmanian waterways. Oysters Tasmania has called on the state government to take a more assertive role, particularly if monitoring detects active Florfenicol in other species sampled at a distance from salmon pens. Oysters Tasmania will closely assess the monitoring results as they come in.



Ben Cameron

Tasmanian Rock Lobster Council

JANE MCGANN



TRLIC Meeting

The TRLIC held its AGM and October member meeting at the Wrest Point Convention Centre. Presentations were given by IMAS, NRE, the TRLPA and the CSIRO. Four member ballots were held on the topics of increasing membership fees; cessation of translocation; continuing a delayed start for the north-east and east coast catch cap areas; and, in the absence of translocation, applying an identical levy to support data related to catch sampling and biomass assessment. All motions passed and are now in the hands of the department to progress.

On vessel management of live southern rock lobster

With the likelihood of a marine heatwave affecting Tasmanian waters this summer, it is important for all fishers to take steps to ensure the health of their catch. A handy deck guide, *On Vessel Management of Live Southern Rock Lobster*, is available to all rock lobster fishers. This Best Practice Guide provides clear direction on collecting and handling stock, sorting and grading, stocking densities (which change with water temperature and water flow rate), holding tank requirements, water quality monitoring, landing and offloading and transporting rock lobster.

On Vessel Management of Live Southern Rock Lobster Best Practice Guide



If you would like a copy of the guide, please contact Jane (eo@trlic.au) to arrange a physical or electronic version (or both), whichever suits you best. The TRLIC has also uploaded a series of videos on best practices which are easily accessible through our [Facebook](#) page.

Rock lobster success at the Seafood Awards

The rock lobster industry was a big winner at the 10th biennial Tasmanian Seafood Awards. The TRLIC was a gold supporter for the Awards, which included sponsoring the Small Primary Producer Award. In addition to this, four of our members won awards in four categories; we were the subject/beneficiary of another award; and a long-time stalwart of our industry was the recipient of a recognition award.

Hursey Seafoods continued their fine tradition of exceptional seafood dining, winning the Gotta Love Tassie Fish & Chips Award.

The award is presented to a traditional take-away-style fish and chip outlet that has demonstrated excellence in consistently serving customers with quality seafood, and providing them with an overall positive seafood dining experience.

Bay of Fires Lobster, owned by the Rainbird family, was co-winner of the Small Business Award (the other recipient was Tasmanian Wild Seafood Adventures). The award is presented to a seafood business employing fewer than 10 full-time-equivalent staff, involved in any segment of the supply chain, that has demonstrated business growth, innovation, excellence in product, service and marketing, and that has contributed substantially towards a positive future for the seafood industry.

Squizzy Taylor, known around the world in the Aussie Lobsterman TV show, won the Small Primary Producer Award. The award is presented to a seafood primary producer employing fewer than 10 full-time-equivalent staff that has demonstrated excellence in the sustainable production of quality seafood through innovation in fishing or aquaculture practices, and that has contributed substantially towards a positive public profile for the seafood industry.

Squizzy also won the Promotion Award, which is presented to an entity that has demonstrated excellence in developing and undertaking promotion activity that has contributed substantially towards improving the public profile of seafood and/or the seafood industry.

Alison Turnbull and her team (Sarah Ugalde and Quinn Fitzgibbon from IMAS, and Andreas Kiermeier from SPICT) won the Research, Development and Extension Award for Scientific Leadership in Reopening Australia's Live Lobster Export. As Ali noted, "The project was a huge effort involving industry and government partners across four industries in seven Australian jurisdictions." It was Ali and her team's work that ensured Tasmania's rock lobster are back in China, our most important market.

The final rock lobster industry recipient was Jim Hursey. Jim received a posthumous Special Recognition Award for more than "seventy years of pioneering contributions across abalone, rock lobster, giant crab, and scalefish, shaping a legacy that continues through the Hursey family and their iconic Stanley-based operations. His vision created economic opportunity, community pride, and the celebrated Hursey Seafoods, now a landmark of Tasmania's North West." Sadly, Jim died just before the event; his award was accepted by his family.

Scallop Fishermen's Association of Tasmania Inc.

BOB LISTER

Fishermen have enjoyed a good season so far in five different areas around the Tasmanian coastline with meat quality being exceptionally good however in many instances scallops have not been in the dense volumes that makes harvesting economically profitable.

Tasmanian Fishery

The five vessels in this fishery were very active from 5 September in the general area offshore from Bicheno however this turned out to be short lived to the point that most vessels stopped harvesting on or about 22 September due to catches being disappointing.

Following research survey results and negotiations with NRE Tasmania a new area north of Eddystone Point and south of Gull Island was opened from 10 October with a 1000 tonne TAC and with an estimated biomass of 10000 tonnes. Yet again this area was only fished for a few weeks as catch rates soon dropped off and fishermen looked west to Ringarooma Bay as a next harvest area.

Unfortunately, NRE Tasmania were reluctant to support opening the Ringarooma Bay area despite a limited research survey having been undertaken a month or so earlier. The reasons for not opening another area were that a targeted survey was required and there was not enough time to plan, coordinate and analyse survey data before the planned season closure on 31 December.

So, fishermen were left with harvesting along the east coast at levels that were only marginally profitable and indeed one vessel left the fishery as a result.

This is certainly unfortunate as the retail market for quality scallop meat is once again very strong and we cannot meet the demand without a new area in which to harvest.

Bass Strait has been a big disappointment this year with only limited catches from several attempts to locate good beds both east of King Island and east of Flinders Island.

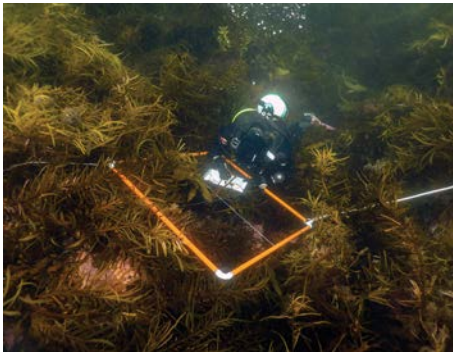
One matter of serious concern is the presence of starfish in most Tasmanian and Bass Strait waters. They are mostly the eleven arm variety with some northern pacific sea stars mixed in with them. Often called the underwater cane toads of the ocean unfortunately scallop harvesters are very inefficient at catching sea stars. We need an IMAS research project to identify economic uses for harvested sea stars be it for fertiliser or mediational uses etc because they are certainly becoming a major pest in the scallop fishery.

On 21 November I attended a forum organised by SIT about the controversial use of an antibiotic called Florfenicol in the aquacultural salmon industry. Whilst the current permit relates to southern Tasmanian waters well away from any known commercial scallop grounds should you have any concerns please send me an email and I will try to get a response from the regulatory authorities.

Well, that is all for this year. On behalf of our President John Hammond and the SFAT Executive Committee I wish you all a fabulous Christmas and a safe and profitable New Year with hopefully great catches in 2026.



Institute for Marine & Antarctic Studies



IMAS scientist conducts a Rapid Visual Assessment (RVA), a tool developed by IMAS.

Bringing current science together for evidence-based aquaculture management

A new literature review series brings together current scientific research on how marine farming interacts with marine environments – and it will help to inform the sustainable management of the aquaculture industry in Tasmania.

Developed by the University of Tasmania's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and launched this week, the Aquaculture Environment Review Series collates the published scientific literature on the environmental effects of aquaculture in Tasmania and globally.

"The aim of the series is to support sustainable planning and regulation of marine farming in Tasmania, while providing a reference source for anyone

interested in how aquaculture interacts with the environment," said Dr Camille White, a researcher with the Aquaculture Environment Interactions program at IMAS.

"It offers an accessible, evidence-based resource that highlights what we know, where gaps remain, and how management can continue to evolve to support long-term environmental and economic sustainability."

The first release of the series is presented in four parts:

- General Introduction
- Ecological effects of finfish aquaculture on soft sediments
- Ecological effects of finfish aquaculture on the water column
- Ecological effects of finfish aquaculture on shallow temperate reef ecosystems.

The Aquaculture Environment Review Series will be regularly updated as new scientific information emerges. It will ultimately cover all forms of existing and proposed marine-based aquaculture in Tasmania.

"Aquaculture plays an important role in Tasmania's economy, but its continued success relies on sound science and careful management," said Dr White.

"Understanding how farming practices interact with surrounding ecosystems is vital to ensuring the industry remains sustainable into the future."

Read the full story: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7huwsi>

What's your climate question?

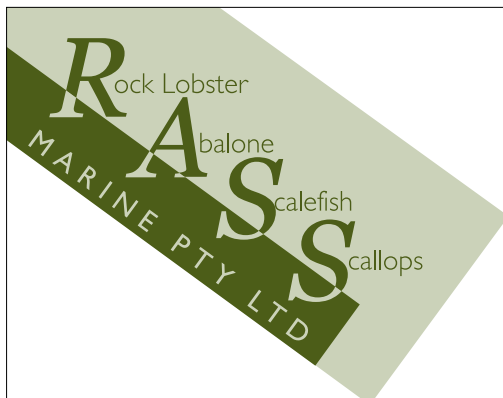
Sea Change Australia has launched a national call for questions from the country's seafood sector.

The call invites commercial and recreational fishers, aquaculture operators, processors and supply chain workers to ask their most pressing questions about climate change and how to adapt.

Submitted questions will be matched with responses from experts in the Sea Change Australia Expert Network – a national collective of more than 60 specialists across science, industry, Indigenous knowledge systems, and policy.

Responses will be published on the Sea Change Australia website to build climate literacy and support practical adaptation across the sector.

Submissions are open year-round. Submit your questions at <https://seachangeaustralia.org>



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Fisher-friendly tech gives giant crab science a claw up

A stereoscopic camera system that mimics human vision, combined with artificial intelligence (AI), is transforming how scientists and industry collect important data on giant crabs across southern Australia.

The new technology is enhancing data collection in Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian giant crab fisheries, which have faced challenges obtaining biological data because of small fleet sizes and high cost of deploying observers.

The fisher-operated imaging system was developed by researchers at IMAS and trialled onboard fishery vessels. It offers a practical, low-cost way to capture information on crab length and sex, data essential for stock assessments.

“The research addresses a critical gap in data availability,” said Dr Scott Hadley, project lead and population dynamic modeller at IMAS.

“Giant crab fisheries across southern Australia lack consistent and representative length-frequency data

due to small fleet sizes and operational constraints that limit observer coverage.

“Without length-frequency data, management has relied heavily on reference points based on annual catch rates.”

Trials showed the two-camera system combined with AI produced highly accurate length measurements, with 95% of size predictions having a maximum error of 4 mm, while a third camera identified sex classification with 95% accuracy.

“Fishers adopted the system quickly and operated it independently, collecting nearly 1,600 crab images over a few fishing trips on two vessels, with 245 manually recorded to monitor models’ accuracy,” said co-investigator and IMAS researcher Dr Rafael León.

“We expect those numbers to increase significantly across fishing seasons, and after two or three years we will have sufficient information to start upgrading the stock assessment. Data collection using this approach will be a routine practice for this purpose.”

Read the full story: <https://tinyurl.com/5n9y7jdv>




IMAS lead technician Ben Quigley with giant crab. Credit: IMAS


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Seafood And Maritime Training



Fishing to Stay Afloat and back again: Chris Claridge's journey

After spending more than a decade working on fishing boats, Chris Claridge has seen plenty of change in the fishing industry. "Ten years I jumped on board Diana with Mures, been off and on for 10 years," he says.

When COVID hit in 2020, fishing wasn't an option, so Chris took the opportunity to work with Stay Afloat, a national mental health support initiative for the seafood industry. "I had a fantastic five years," he recalls. "I learnt a lot about myself, a lot about the industry, and about the ongoing struggles and challenges you don't always see while you're out at sea."

As a Reach Out Worker, Chris spent his days on marine farms and fishing boats, talking one-on-one with industry workers, hosting mental health sessions, and encouraging people to seek support and learn new skills. "Within those five years, there were probably about 10 to 15 people we helped and encouraged to get their tickets through SMT," he says.

Returning to the ocean

After five years with Stay Afloat, Chris felt the call of the sea again. "I just missed the ocean," he says, "as much as I love Stay Afloat – and it's still a huge passion of mine, mental health within the seafood industry."

When asked how his time with Stay Afloat will help him back on the water, Chris said, "It's given me a better understanding of what people are going through and taught me to take a non-judgemental approach. If someone is struggling to learn or take instructions, it may not always be about ability;

sometimes there's something else going on. Take the time to get to know that person. Everyone's got a story to tell."



Christopher Claridge during Master<24 NC simulator practical

Back in training

Returning to sea also meant upskilling. Chris decided to undertake his Master <24m course through SMT, though the idea of stepping back into a classroom was formidable. "I was scared about walking through the front door," he admits. "I'd been procrastinating about doing this ticket for about six years. But it was great to finally take that step."

For Chris, the transition hasn't always been easy. "It's been very daunting, I won't lie. I struggle with self-doubt, anxiety, a bit of depression at times and then you throw ADHD into the mix. Sitting in a classroom is hard because of what my brain tells me. But it's been fantastic. I was extremely nervous the first day, but having the right teachers and the right people around you, each day you walk in you feel a little more comfortable."

That support has helped him rediscover confidence. "I've walked away with a greater knowledge and realised that self-doubt I had – there was no need for it. The teachers are very approachable. I might not always understand something straight out of a textbook, but having one-on-one time and being shown things in a hands-on way makes a big difference."

Chris says the extra effort pays off. "Coming in an hour early to go over something you didn't understand the day before – it helps so much. You get out what you put into the course."



Master<24 NC practical day on 'Navigator': Dimitrios Giovanoglou (left), Christopher Claridge (right)

Looking ahead

Chris hopes to use his new qualifications to explore different roles within the seafood industry. "I'm not done with fishing, but I'm not getting any younger – it's time to take that next step. If I'd had to travel to Launceston or elsewhere to get my ticket, I probably never would've done it. But after meeting so many SMT people through Stay Afloat, I felt comfortable and supported."

Looking ahead, Chris is keen to gain more experience across vessels and roles. "After I get my tickets, I'm going to push myself – work on different boats, spend more time in the wheelhouse, and see what it's like being a skipper."

Just because you're a great deckhand doesn't mean you'll be a great skipper. It's about ongoing learning and building confidence. I'm looking forward to getting back to sea, applying what I've learnt, and continuing to grow."

Finfish production and husbandry course brings fresh faces to aquaculture

Seventeen learners recently completed SMT's Finfish Production and Husbandry course, held during the final week of October.

The program, part of the Certificate III in Aquaculture, brought together a diverse mix of participants from across Tasmania's aquaculture sector, from finfish farms to hatcheries, all eager to deepen their skills and take the next step in their careers.

Delivered at SMT's training rooms with a combination of theory and practical components, the course included hands-on water quality activities that reflected real-world aquaculture operations. The group's enthusiasm and varied experience levels made for an engaging and collaborative learning environment.

"It was great to have such a diversity of backgrounds and roles in the group. All with different backgrounds and goals, people from hatchery, feed centre, fish health as well as works crew but with a shared interest in the future of aquaculture. As well as people coming from a variety of locations across Tasmania including the West Coast," said trainer Carryn Manicom.

While many of the learners are at the beginning of their aquaculture careers, this training represents an important foundation for those aiming to become supervisors, divers or leaders within the seafood industry.



Certificate III in Aquaculture trainees in Finfish Production classroom

The group's strong turnout and mix of perspectives reflect the continued growth of Tasmania's aquaculture sector and the increasing number of people keen to develop their skills through formal training.

With a new cohort of learners ready to learn, the future of Tasmania's aquaculture workforce looks bright, driven by people who are eager to learn, grow and contribute to a thriving industry.

Michelle graduates NSLIP

SMT would like to congratulate our very own Operations Manager, Michelle Dolbey, for graduating from the National Seafood Industry Leadership Program (NSLIP). Michelle is the first SMT employee to complete the program while employed at SMT.

The program is funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) and developed, managed and delivered by Affectus Pty Ltd. Now in its 25th year, NSLIP focuses on developing personal, business and national-level leadership skills within the seafood industry. Its aim is to provide participants with the tools and understanding needed to positively influence their own future, their organisation's future, and the future of the Australian seafood industry.

Michelle was motivated to join the program to deepen her understanding of the industry and strengthen her connections within it. She undertook the program for personal development and to inspire more people at SMT to get involved. Michelle enjoyed meeting new people, gaining exposure to different sectors, and having the opportunity to step away from the day-to-day demands of work to reflect and learn.

Michelle was part of the marketing group, an area she chose specifically because it was outside her comfort zone. Their project, Simple Aussie Seafood, used social media to encourage more people to cook simple and easy Australian seafood recipes. Since launching in Canberra, the project has received significant interest, with aquaculture companies keen to have their products featured. Michelle and her group will continue to manage the project and hope to release an electronic cookbook of the most popular recipes in the future.

The project was both challenging and rewarding for Michelle. She faced her nerves around public speaking, balanced her project commitments with her group's responsibilities and her own workload, and developed key skills in time management. Completing the program was especially fulfilling as she gained new skills, particularly



in social media, and enjoyed working with a variety of personalities, many of whom have become lifelong friends.

Michelle's biggest takeaway from the program was her personal growth: "I can do more than I think I can, if you push yourself." When asked what she would say to someone considering the program, her response was, "Go for it. Do it! You'll be outside your comfort zone, but you will grow."

2026 courses and end of year closure

Needing training or thinking of upskilling in 2026? Our course offerings for 2026 are now up on our website www.smt.edu.au. There you can get information on upcoming courses and what it means to study at SMT, and apply .

If you have any other questions, our administration team would be happy to help and are available via phone 03 6286 0400, email enquiries@smt.edu.au or you can visit our Salamanca office (2a Gladstone Street).

The SMT office will be closed from Wednesday 24 December 2025 and will be reopening on Wednesday 14 January 2026.

SMT wishes everyone a warm, wonderful holiday season.



STAY AFLOAT

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ruralaliveandwell.com.au

The Stay Afloat program was created by the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council and runs in partnership with Rural Alive & Well. Together we are able to ensure our seafood industry continues to thrive for generations to come.

The program centres around providing the industry with one-on-one support to individuals in their own environment, whilst also delivering education and awareness activities to increase protective factors and reduce the risk of suicide.



Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania



Marine stressors (summer preparedness) workshops

During October and early November 2025, Marine Resources hosted a series of industry workshops focused on marine stressor preparedness. These sessions were tailored to three key sectors: wild fisheries, shellfish aquaculture and finfish aquaculture.

Attendees were briefed on the upcoming summer marine forecast by CSIRO, indicating significant ocean warming and high likelihood of marine heatwaves. Information on harmful algal blooms was also presented, outlining similarities and differences to marine heatwaves.

Thank you to the industry representatives and participants who shared their knowledge and ideas for responding to marine stressor events.

Stay updated by visiting Fishing Tas. This is where you can also read the [Tasmanian Marine Heatwave and Related Event Response Plan](#), which guides Tasmania's decision-making and coordination in response to marine heatwaves and related events.

Antibiotic treatment – administration of Florfenicol

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority has approved salmon producers using Florfenicol in the South-East Biosecurity Zone. The antibiotic Florfenicol has previously been used in Tasmania in small quantities between 2007 and 2010. Veterinary science indicates Florfenicol is effective in combating *P. salmonis*. *P. salmonis* is a marine bacterium which causes disease in salmon.

We are continuing to work with the seafood industry on mitigating risks to market access and product integrity. When we make decisions related to fisheries management, we engage with your representative body to understand your perspectives. However, we do know that there can be times when we do not receive advance notice of treatment, and this may mean that quick decisions need to be made. These are difficult decisions and we do our best to weigh the competing perspectives and risks.

You can view a live map of treatment locations on [LISTmap](#). For more information visit the [NRE Tas website](#).

REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING
FISHWATCH ☎ 0427 655 557

2025 Salmon mortality event

The EPA and NRE Tas have prepared a report that outlines the post-event reflections, learnings and actions that have been gathered through a multi-agency operational de-brief process.

The [Reflections and Learnings Report](#), like other best practice critical event operational debrief processes, is focused on future improvements.

Importantly, the report informs the community on what is understood to have occurred, what is being done to prepare for this summer, and how regulatory coordination in being strengthened ahead of any future marine events.

The report identifies 10 actions, focused on continuous improvement. Three of the 10 actions are led by the salmon industry.

Scalefish Rules Remake

In 2026, NRE Tas will be proposing changes to the *Fisheries (Scalefish) Rules 2015* (the Scalefish Rules) through the Scalefish Rules Remake. A remake is an opportunity to improve how we manage the fishery. The main aim of the 2026 Scalefish Rules Remake is to support the recovery of depleted and depleting species.

We recently asked the public for feedback on issues with the current Scalefish Rules and ideas for how they could be improved. After we consider that feedback, we will draft proposed changes to the Scalefish Rules. You can have your say on these proposed changes during public consultation in 2026. Any rule changes that are made will take effect on 1 November 2026.

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>

Recreational fisher convicted

On 22 September 2025, Mr Thu Thanh NGUYEN in the Court of Petty Sessions Devonport, was convicted of 1 count of Trafficking in abalone contrary to section 264A(1) of the *Living Marine Resources Management Act 1995*.

On 13 April 2022 a routine vehicle inspection was conducted prior to a vehicle boarding the Spirit of Tasmania where 9 boxes of fish were detected and retained by authorities. The fish were taken to a licensed Tasmanian fish processor who confirmed one box contained a total of 181 undersized abalone.

If you do not hold a fishing licence (recreational abalone), you may only possess up to 5 abalone on land without a receipt. Mr NGUYEN did not hold a fishing licence (recreational abalone).

Mr NGUYEN pleaded guilty and was convicted and sentenced to 10 weeks imprisonment, wholly suspended for a period of 2 years, and received a mandatory special penalty totalling \$33,032.50 which resulted in Mr NGUYEN being allocated 190 demerit points.

Contact

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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

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Emergency Animal Disease Hotline

1800 675 888

Biosecurity Enquiries

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www.smt.edu.au

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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

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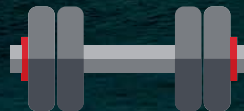
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