

FRDC briefing notes for stakeholders - February 2016

1. FRDC organisational restructure update

Most key stakeholders are now aware that the FRDC has embarked upon a significant review of the organisation and how it delivers services to end users (and funders).

The new FRDC business model has been informed by reviews commissioned during the term of the last FRDC board, and consultation with stakeholders. Significant considerations included:

1. the recommendations arising from the review of the FRDC's regional advisory process (Fisheries Research Advisory Bodies - FRABs) to strengthen accountability and improve regional engagement and ownership;
2. review of FRDC's organisational design to accommodate and prepare for functions arising from changes to the Primary Industries Research and Development (PIRD) Act, with a greater emphasis on extension, delivering services from commercialised R&D outputs, and marketing;
3. federal government's commitment to implement a decentralised model – relocation to regional centres; and,
4. possible co-location partners, and accessibility at reasonable cost to the geographical spread of industry stakeholders.

The new business model will comprise of a head office in Canberra with spokes in one, two or more jurisdictions; with the first regional office being established at the Adelaide Wine Centre.

Minister Joyce and Assistant Minister Ruston announced the new regional offices in media released 10 February. The media releases can be viewed at:

- <http://www.agricultureminister.gov.au/Pages/Media-Releases/boosting-regional-communities-with-relocation.aspx>
- <http://assistant.agricultureminister.gov.au/Pages/Media-Releases/research-relocation-a-cause-for-celebration.aspx>

The FRDC is looking forward to delivering the following elements of the new business model:

1. Establishing a regional office located at the Adelaide Wine Centre with both Wine Australia and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC). The initial staffing in the office will be four to six staff members. FRDC will work with both Wine Australia and GRDC to establish shared services at the site.
2. Creating a regionally located support unit for the regional Research Advisory Committees (RACs) (formerly Fisheries Research Advisory Bodies), employing staff in Adelaide to replace functions previously outsourced to eight separate providers.
3. Moving to direct delivery of services where this is more cost efficient and effective than outsourcing. The first example of this is the direct FRDC management of the Status of Australian Fish Stocks reports (www.fish.gov.au) – this has been very well received by stakeholders.
4. Working with Regional Australia Institute, Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, AgriFood Skills Australia and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal in establishing a Regional Australia Hub in Canberra. With the move to regional locations, FRDC staffing numbers in Canberra will decline over the next few years.

The decision on establishing further regional offices will be carefully planned and phased, with the Adelaide office being used as a model for the establishment of future regional offices. In establishing any new regional offices the FRDC's strong preference will be to co-locate with aligned Research and Development Corporations

FRDC EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The FRDC are looking for three people to fill roles of *Project Manager (2)* and *Project Officer* in the new Adelaide office.

Applicants should be suitably qualified as per the selection criteria and have a background relevant to fisheries research. Experience and qualifications a key attribute of the FRDC culture is being able to establish and maintain good relationships with staff and stakeholders. This attribute is highly valued.

Primary objective of the role:

Work with FRDC Research Advisory Committees to undertake management of all aspects of research, development and extension. This will include strategic planning, identifying priorities, and creation through to completion of projects. Monitoring and evaluating progress to ensure successful completion and delivery of their objectives.

Applications close by **13 March 2016**.

For more information on the positions and how to apply visit the Career page - [/about_frdc/career_centre/](#)

First Adelaide staff member starts work:

Wayne Hutchinson is the first staff member to join the FRDC and be located at the Adelaide office, as Project Manager – Research. He started on 1 February 2016 and brings an extensive background in aquaculture to the team.

Wayne joins the FRDC from the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) where he was Subprogram Leader, Propagation and Systems, for the Aquaculture Program.

2. FRAB review outcome

In October 2014, the FRDC commissioned a review of jurisdictional Fisheries Research Advisory Bodies (FRABs) to identify better practice and better outcomes from stakeholder consultation; and how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the FRAB network.

Based on this review and consultations with stakeholders, the FRDC board decided that the FRDC would take over the management and running of the FRABs— now called Research Advisory Committees (RACs) – to achieve more direct regional engagement and visibility.

The new arrangements are intended to give the RACs greater autonomy and flexibility but also address accountability gaps. Three new staff members will be employed and will oversee the eight RACs. The objective is to deliver improved regional engagement and delivery of services including extension and commercialisation of research and development across the country.

Membership of RACs will consist of members from the end users and expertise in RD&E. Nominations for FRAB membership and the role of chair will be assessed and approved by a panel comprised of stakeholders including the director of fisheries (or equivalent) from that jurisdiction and the FRDC.

During the transition of the new RACs (first half 2016), existing chairs and current members of FRABs will be rolled over to the interim RAC. Within the next twelve months the chair and membership will be reviewed to ensure that it meets the new membership requirements.

3. FRDC's 2015-20 RD&E plan

The FRDC is now well underway implementing the RD&E Plan for 2015-20. Work on the 2016 Stock Status Reports is progressing well and work is progressing on the establishment and work program for a new and emerging aquaculture subprogram. There is still some work to be done on priority 2 around productivity and profitability but there is continued work on small scale fisheries under this priority and the FRDC is progressing the establishment of some other related activities.

Refer: [/research/RDEPlanningandPriorities/RDandE Plan 2015-2020/Pages/RDE%20Plan%202015-2](/research/RDEPlanningandPriorities/RDandE%20Plan%202015-2020/Pages/RDE%20Plan%202015-2)

To see an overview of the plan

visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eD4xZlJbiZ4&feature=youtu.be>

4. Industry Partnership Agreements (IPAs) update

Industry Partnership Agreements are a growing part of the FRDC's business. They provide individual sectors with greater certainty of long term investment against their RD&E plans.

The FRDC IPAs can be found at: /research/advisory_groups/Pages/default.aspx

5. Productivity Commission Inquiry

Minister's Morrison and Ruston announced a Productivity Commission inquiry into the regulation of the Australian marine fisheries and aquaculture sectors on the 23 December 2015. More information and how to make a submission can be found at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/fisheries-aquaculture>.

Below is an extract from the Terms of Reference:

In undertaking the inquiry, the Commission is to have particular regard to impediments to increasing productivity and market competitiveness of the Australian fishing and aquaculture industries, including:

1. The extent to which enhanced and improved use of cross jurisdiction and multi-jurisdictional regulatory regimes, information and service sharing can improve the economic efficiency and the ecologically sustainable use and management of fisheries resources.
2. The extent to which harmonisation or integration of environmental, management and compliance arrangements could improve the effective and efficient operation of the fishing industry and delivery of fisheries policy and environmental outcomes.
3. The extent to which accreditation schemes or recognition of equivalency could reduce the regulatory burden and increase productivity.
4. The extent to which greater use of cost recovery arrangements is applicable and informs the cost of delivering fishery production, conservation and other community service obligations.

5. The extent to which fisheries management regimes align with and protect the interests of the wider community (in particular, the balance between commercial, recreational, indigenous fishing and conservation interests, and consumers' interests).
6. The extent to which fisheries management regimes support greater participation of Indigenous Australians, provide incentives to Indigenous communities to manage their fisheries, and incorporate their traditional management practices in the fishing industry.
7. The degree to which cross jurisdictional regulatory arrangements are transparent, accountable, proportionate, consistent, effective and targeted.
8. The degree to which cost effective and practical non-regulatory mechanisms could be expanded to achieve fisheries management outcomes.

6. Status of Australia Fish Stocks (SAFS) reports update

The FRDC will internally oversee the management and development of the Status of Australian Fish Stocks Reports (SAFS). The reports bring together available biological, catch and effort information to determine the status of Australia's wild catch fish stocks against a nationally agreed reporting framework and provides a resource to inform the general public, policy makers and industry on the sustainability of stocks.

In 2015 the FRDC changed how SAFS would be managed into the future, internalising this function within the Corporation. The FRDC's Dr Carolyn Stewardson has taken on the role of managing the day to day operations and is now the first point of contact for SAFS at the FRDC.

As part of the management Dr Carolyn Stewardson will work with agencies from across Australia to increase the coverage of the 2016 report to include almost eighty species, a major improvement from the sixty eight in the 2014 reports. This will see the coverage of the reports increase to over 90% of the annual catch and value of Australian wild-capture fisheries.

Governance of SAFS is overseen by a SAFS Advisory Group comprising members from each jurisdiction, and is supported by the Australian Fisheries Management Forum.

Under the new management structure, the Advisory Group held its first meeting to progress 2016 Reports by teleconference in December 2015. The FRDC held face-to-face visits with individual jurisdictions throughout February 2016 to discuss the reporting process, timeline on reporting requirements, roles and responsibilities of authors and technical queries.

The FRDC is continuing to extend information on SAFS to the general public through its social media platforms (FRDC and Fishfiles Facebook and twitter), and a partnership with Andrew Ettinghausen which will showcase a short segment on a species in each episode of his Channel 10 TV show Escape with ET (see – <http://tenplay.com.au/channel-ten/escape-with-et>).

The SAFS 2016 program will:

- Develop methods and progress the inclusion of equivalence.
- Need to confirm compatibility and equivalence of alternative classifications, and agree on approaches for recognising/incorporating such equivalence in SAFS reports.
- Specify minimum specification for status assessments to strengthen the evidence base used for classifying stock status in SAFS reports.

- Scope the further development of risk based approaches to address uncertain classifications to expand on the current weight of evidence approach, with particular focus on small scale fisheries.
- Move towards a web-platform/database capable of receiving and using dynamic information input.
- Provide further guidance around the 'Environmentally Limited' classification.
- Continue to update the Indigenous Reference Group (IRG), AFMF, National Seafood Industry Alliance (NSIA), Recfish Research, Social Sciences and Economics Research Coordination Program regarding the reporting criteria.

7. Key events 2016

15 to 17 Feb	FRDC Board Meeting, Port Lincoln, South Australia	02 6285 0400
6 to 8 Mar	Seafood Expo North America/Seafood Processing North America, Boston, US	www.seafoodexpo.com/north-america
26 to 28 Apr	Seafood Expo Global/Seafood Processing Global, Brussels, Belgium	www.seafoodexpo.com/global
10 to 11 May	FRDC Board Meeting, Sydney, New South Wales	02 6285 0400
23 to 27 May	7th World Fisheries Congress, Busan, Korea	www.wfc2016.or.kr/english/main/index.html
11 to 15 July	International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade Conference, Aberdeen, Scotland	www.iifet-2016.org
15 to 17 Feb	FRDC Board Meeting, Port Lincoln, South Australia	02 6285 0400

8. FRDC board meeting dates

Date	Location
15-17 February 2016	Adelaide/Port Lincoln
10-11 May 2016	Sydney
24-25 August 2016	Canberra
22-23 November 2016	Canberra