

# FINAL REPORT

FRDC Project 2002/428

National Seafood Emergency Management Plan : Western  
Australian Trial Workshop



Australian Government  
Fisheries Research and  
Development Corporation



SEAFOOD SERVICES  
AUSTRALIA



WAFIC  
Western Australian Fishing  
Industry Council Inc.



Department of Fisheries  
Government of Western Australia



Fish for the future

Don Nicholls, Martin Perkins, Richard Coutts and Janet Howieson

## NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

**2002/428          National Seafood Emergency Plan – West  
Australian Trial Workshop.**

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

**Mr Don Nicholls  
WA Seafood Quality Management Initiative  
Department of Fisheries  
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WA 6850**

### Objectives:

1. Test the draft manual plan in a desktop exercise.
2. Introduce all the nominated team members and alternates to the plan and train them in the use of the plan.
3. Use learned experience to tailor the manual further in West Australia.

### OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE:

1. Slide show for the workshop was tailored to suit the seafood industry and in particular to suit West Australian conditions.
2. Handouts detailing the workshop procedure were produced.
3. Copies of the National Seafood Emergency Plan for all the attendees at the workshop were produced.
4. Guest speakers were recruited to 'set the scene' by identifying potential outcomes from an emergency if it was not controlled and also to illustrate case studies of food safety outbreaks that have occurred.
5. A scenario was developed that would enable the workshop participants to test their reaction to an emergency and also to ensure that the reaction was consistent with National guidelines.
6. The workshop to develop the West Australian State SEP was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2004.
7. The West Australian plan was developed and a commitment was made by WAFIC, the peak industry body in West Australia to maintain the State based plan which will be linked to the National SEP.
8. Volunteers who will work together to maintain the plan were recruited from the attendees at the workshop.

## Acknowledgments:

SSA / FRDC for funding the project  
Martin Perkins – Seafood Consultant (Co-facilitator)  
Richard Coutts – Primary Business Solutions (Co-facilitator)  
Kim Leighton – West Australian Department of Health  
Alan Snow – SSA, for contribution of case study

## Background:

A National Seafood Emergency Plan was produced in 2001 and the individual States (apart from South Australia and Queensland) have not tested their capability to handle an emergency that could jeopardise the future of the seafood industry.

There is a commitment from Industry leaders throughout Australia to develop and test a plan that could minimise the damage to industry that would arise from a major food safety incident involving Australian seafood.

## Need:

Failure to deal quickly and effectively with a food safety incident may result in costly trade disruption and threaten the financial viability of seafood suppliers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and food service providers.

The Seafood Emergency Plan was developed through Seafood Services Australia to provide a proactive and simple step-by-step response and recovery guide, should an emergency occur.

West Australia has participated in the initial stages of the SSA national plan and is keen to ensure the framework is established in this state.

## Objectives:

1. Test the draft manual plan in a desktop exercise.

*The workshop that was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> March carried out a mock emergency to test the draft manual in a specialised West Australian scenario. The results were impressive – all teams carried out the scenario and developed plans to cope with the emergency and also counter any potential fall-out to the industry without jeopardising the serious side of the outcomes of an emergency.*

2. Introduce all the nominated team members and alternates to the plan and train them in the use of the plan.

*The attendees at the workshop were potential team members (see attached list of attendees in **Appendix 2**). The workshop was the perfect opportunity to introduce Industry representatives to Government bodies. The WA Department of Health is the lead agency in West Australia in the event of a food safety emergency. The workshop was an opportunity to view a scenario from the industry perspective where the*

*food safety aspect can be dealt with to community expectations and the industry is also protected from future fall-out.*

3. Use learned experience to tailor the manual further in West Australia.

*The West Australian section of the manual will be substantially changed and up to date contacts will be provided to SSA in **Appendix 3** so that in the unlikely event of an emergency all the correct contact details will be available. These contact details will be updated on a regular basis (annually) by WAFIC, so that SSA can incorporate them in the National Plan.*

### **Methods:**

The draft manual as designed by SSA and Campbell Crisis Management and Recovery was introduced to a “Team” of Industry and Government players who were then involved in a ‘real life’ seafood emergency. Richard Coutts and Martin Perkins (Co-facilitators) conducted a desktop workshop with the team and were able to refine the draft manual as an outcome. The WA Department of Fisheries and the WA Department of Health would be closely involved in the management of any seafood emergency and were active participants in the workshop.

### **Results/Discussion:**

Government and Industry worked well together producing excellent responses to the scenario. If it had been a real life food safety incident then we believe it was handled in such a way that the media would have the answers they wanted and the community would have known the truth. Most importantly - the reputation of the seafood industry domestic and export would have been preserved.

### **Benefits and adoption:**

The major benefit of the project in WA has been to produce industry and government agreed strategies to handle a seafood safety emergency. WAFIC has agreed to update the WA contact details annually, to advise ASIC and SSA of the revised contact details and also to adopt any new findings from future workshops in other states. Imported seafood was the cause of the emergency in the scenario set at the workshop and the participants soon realised that any bad news story from imported seafood will also affect the domestic industry. However there are potential benefits in encouraging industry to “buy local” with confidence in the quality of their purchased product.

The adoption by industry in WA was outstanding and a considerable number of industry members are now aware of the National Seafood Emergency Plan. The chance of WA

Department of Health referring to the plan in the event of an emergency has increased enormously.

**Further Development:**

WAFIC have nominated their office as the control centre in the event of a seafood emergency. They are also willing to provide all the functions of the control centre using their staff. The alliance between WAFIC, WA Department of Health and WA Department of Fisheries has been strengthened by the emergency workshop and we see this relationship developing more in the future.

**Planned outcomes:**

The planned output of the workshop was to develop the manual for use in the event of a seafood emergency and have trained staff in place to manage any such emergency. The outcomes of the workshop were the formalisation of the contacts needed to have an operational manual and also to succeed in training a large group of staff across Government and Industry.

**Conclusion:**

In the risk analysis for the project one of the major threats was identified as a lack of commitment by industry. This was proven to be wrong – the seafood industry showed that they were committed to developing and using a SEP.

**References:**

Seafood Emergency Plan (SEP) – October 2001  
Queensland Seafood Emergency Workshop Report - 2004  
Foodborne outbreaks associated with seafood, Jan 2001 – June 2003.  
Food Industry Recall Protocol – FSANZ 2002  
Emergency Response Workshop – Campbell Crisis Management 2001  
Ground rules for working together – Primary Business Solutions

**Intellectual Property:**

National Seafood Emergency Plan – SSA & ASIC

**Staff:**

Martin Perkins – Co-facilitator.  
Richard Coutts – Co-facilitator.  
Janet Howieson – WA Department of Fisheries

## Appendix 1

# PURPOSE OF SEAFOOD EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (SEP)

To minimise the damage to industry that would arise from a major food safety incident involving Australian seafood.

## STEPS REQUIRED TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Once industry leaders/senior business management is convinced it wants a crisis management and recovery capability, and commits to providing leadership, personnel, funding, equipment, training and other support, the key elements for achieving this are:

1. Establish a Management Committee to provide leadership and ensure operational capability
2. Develop a Plan that addresses the 'before', 'during' and 'after' aspects of:
  - (a) Rapid identification, assessment and declaration of potential emergency situations\*
  - (b) Mobilisation of the people and resources required to respond to declared emergencies\*\*
  - (c) Coordinating and managing action to
    - i. Quickly and successfully contain and eliminate the source of the incident, e.g. through trace-back, product recall, quarantine, suspension of operations etc
    - ii. Communicate with and inform stakeholders in the safety of Australian seafood, e.g. consumers, public sector agencies, seafood industry firms and organisations, the media, etc
    - iii. Successfully address and recover from the industry impacts of the incident.
3. Test and continuously improve the Plan\*\*\*
4. Build the skills and capabilities of industry members responsible for implementing the Plan#
5. Coordinate action to implement the Plan when a food safety incident arises

### Notes

\* The Plan needs to document the responsibilities of team members, guidelines for action, proformas for reporting etc.

\*\* Prepare a 'threat analysis' to identify the risks most likely to occur, estimate consequences and assess preparedness for successfully dealing with the various classes of risk.

\*\*\* For effectiveness of operation of Crisis Management and Recovery Teams their structure should mirror the structure of the organisation as closely as possible – as people will already be familiar with their roles. The capabilities needed on the team

are senior management/leaders (CEO, MD), corporate/public affairs, operations, security, legal, finance, investor relations, risk management and site location teams should be established as most incidents are likely to start locally.

\*\*\*\* To ensure speed, accuracy, effectiveness and credibility (including keeping the Plan up-to-date/consistent with changing circumstances and operating environments through quarterly or biannual review, and conducting After Action Reviews following actual or simulated emergencies)

## A training plan and budget is necessary.

## Appendix 2

### List of Attendees

NAME	COMPANY	EMAIL
Janet Howieson	Department of Fisheries	<a href="mailto:jhowieson@fish.wa.gov.au">jhowieson@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Tina Thorne	Department of Fisheries	<a href="mailto:tthorne@fish.wa.gov.au">tthorne@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Steve Wall	Department of Fisheries	<a href="mailto:swall@fish.wa.gov.au">swall@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Heidi Greif	Department of Fisheries	<a href="mailto:hgreif@fish.wa.gov.au">hgreif@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Andrew Beer	Department of Fisheries	<a href="mailto:abeer@fish.wa.gov.au">abeer@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Don Nicholls	National Food Industry Strategy	<a href="mailto:dnicholls@fish.wa.gov.au">dnicholls@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Kim Leighton	Department of Health	<a href="mailto:Kim.Leighton@health.wa.gov.au">Kim.Leighton@health.wa.gov.au</a>
Russ Neal	Australian Seafood Industry Council	<a href="mailto:russ.neal@asic.org.au">russ.neal@asic.org.au</a>
Dan Machin	Aquaculture Council of WA;	<a href="mailto:acwa@wafic.org.au">acwa@wafic.org.au</a>
Richard Stevens	WAFIC	<a href="mailto:r&amp;d@wafic.org.au">r&amp;d@wafic.org.au</a>
Brad Armstrong	WAFIC	<a href="mailto:brada@wafic.org.au">brada@wafic.org.au</a>
Graeme Stewart	Shark Bay Prawn Trawlers Association	<a href="mailto:graemestewart@dodo.com.au">graemestewart@dodo.com.au</a>
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Dylan Skinns	Newfishing	<a href="mailto:dskinns@newfish.com.au">dskinns@newfish.com.au</a>
Barbara Bell	Newfishing	<a href="mailto:bbell@newfish.com.au">bbell@newfish.com.au</a>
Fan Chung	Catalanos Seafoods	<a href="mailto:fan.c@catalanoseafoods.com.au">fan.c@catalanoseafoods.com.au</a>
James Riley	Town of Bayswater	<a href="mailto:james@bayswater.wa.gov.au">james@bayswater.wa.gov.au</a>
Richard Coutts	Co-facilitator	<a href="mailto:r.coutts@pbsolutions.biz">r.coutts@pbsolutions.biz</a>
Martin Perkins	Co-facilitator	<a href="mailto:martinperkins@optushome.com.au">martinperkins@optushome.com.au</a>
Peter Rutherford	Department of Agriculture;	<a href="mailto:prutherford@agric.wa.gov.au">prutherford@agric.wa.gov.au</a>
Christine Halais	Food Safety Consultant;	<a href="mailto:chalais@inet.net.au">chalais@inet.net.au</a>
Tony Gibson	WAFIC	<a href="mailto:tgibson@wafic.org.au">tgibson@wafic.org.au</a>
Timothy Lo	Sealanes	<a href="mailto:timothylo@optusnet.com.au">timothylo@optusnet.com.au</a>



## Appendix 3

### West Australian Contacts for the SEP

#### WA SEC Team Contact Directory

Team Role	Designated	Contact Details
<b>Team Leader:</b> Graham Short  <b>Alternate:</b> Dan Machin	WAFIC  Aquaculture Council of WA	Ph: 08 9244 2933 Fax: 08 9244 2934 Email: <a href="mailto:gshort@wafic.org.au">gshort@wafic.org.au</a> Ph: 0438 964 303 Fax: 08 9244 2934 <a href="mailto:acwadan@wafic.org.au">acwadan@wafic.org.au</a>
<b>Spokesperson:</b> Richard Stevens  <b>Alternate:</b> Kim Leighton	WAFIC  WA Department of Health	Ph: 08 9244 2933 Fax: 08 9244 2934 <a href="mailto:R&amp;D@wafic.org.au">R&amp;D@wafic.org.au</a> Ph: 08 9388 4920 Fax: 08 9385 8119 <a href="mailto:Kim.leighton@health.wa.gov.au">Kim.leighton@health.wa.gov.au</a>
<b>Recovery Co-ordinator:</b> Barbara Bell  <b>Alternative:</b> Dylan Skinns	Newfishing Australia  Newfishing Australia	Ph: 08 9202 2424 Fax 08 9443 7750 <a href="mailto:bbell@newfish.com.au">bbell@newfish.com.au</a> Ph: 08 9202 2456 Fax:08 9443 7750 <a href="mailto:dskinns@newfish.com.au">dskinns@newfish.com.au</a>
<b>Communication and Media Co-ordinator:</b> Rae Burrows  <b>Alternate:</b> Don Nicholls	WA Dept of Fisheries  National Food Industry Strategy	Ph: 08 94827293 Fax 08 94827298 <a href="mailto:rburrows@fish.wa.gov.au">rburrows@fish.wa.gov.au</a> Ph: 08 94827391 Fax:08 94827389 <a href="mailto:dnicholls@fish.wa.gov.au">dnicholls@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
<b>Government &amp; Regulatory Liaison Co-ordinator:</b> Kim Leighton  <b>Alternate:</b> Don Nicholls	WA Department of Health  National Food Industry Strategy	Ph: 08 9388 4920 Fax: 08 9385 8119 <a href="mailto:Kim.leighton@health.wa.gov.au">Kim.leighton@health.wa.gov.au</a> Ph: 08 94827391 Fax:08 94827389 <a href="mailto:dnicholls@fish.wa.gov.au">dnicholls@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
<b>Consumer Services Co-ordinator:</b> Glenn Dibbin <b>Alternate:</b> Timothy Lo	WA Mussel Producers Assoc  Sealanes	Ph: 0411224682 <a href="mailto:Glenn1@iinet.net.au">Glenn1@iinet.net.au</a> Ph:0401 840 920 <a href="mailto:timothylo@optusnet.com.au">timothylo@optusnet.com.au</a>

Specialist Advisor Roles	Designated	Contact Details
<b>Technical:</b> Richard Stevens	WAFIC	Ph: 08 9244 2933 Fax: 08 9244 2934 <a href="mailto:R&amp;D@wafic.org.au">R&amp;D@wafic.org.au</a>
Fan Chung	Catalano Seafood's	Ph: 08 9379 3044 Fax: 08 9379 3055 <a href="mailto:fan.c@catalanoseafoods.com.au">fan.c@catalanoseafoods.com.au</a>
Kim Leighton	WA Department of Health	Ph: 08 9388 4920 Fax: 08 9385 8119 <a href="mailto:Kim.leighton@health.wa.gov.au">Kim.leighton@health.wa.gov.au</a>
Janet Howieson	WASQAP	Ph: 08 94827396 Fax: 08 94827390 <a href="mailto:jhowieson@fish.wa.gov.au">jhowieson@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
<b>Environmental:</b> Rob Tregonning	WA Department of Fisheries	Ph: 94827375 Fax: 94827389 <a href="mailto:rtregonning@fish.wa.gov.au">rtregonning@fish.wa.gov.au</a>
Jane Latchford	WA Department of Environment	Ph: 92780463 Fax: 92780586 <a href="mailto:Jane.Latchford@environment.gov.au">Jane.Latchford@environment.gov.au</a>
<b>Legal:</b>		
<b>Public Relations/Issues Management:</b> Jo Ledger	WAFIC	Ph: 08 9244 2933 Fax: 08 9244 2934 Email: <a href="mailto:jledger@wafic.org.au">jledger@wafic.org.au</a>
Barbara Bell	Newfishing Australia	Ph: 08 9202 2424 Fax: 08 9443 7750 <a href="mailto:bbell@newfish.com.au">bbell@newfish.com.au</a>

#### Page 71 - SEC and Spokesperson for WA

Graham Short - WAFIC	WA Fishing Industry Council (Inc) 6/41 Walters Drive Osborne Park 6017 Western Australia	PO Box 55, Mt Hawthorn Western Australia 6915	08 9244 2933 08 9244 2934 fax <a href="mailto:gshort@wafic.org.au">gshort@wafic.org.au</a>
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#### Page 72 – SEC backup spokespeople for WA

Richard Stevens - WAFIC	WA Fishing Industry Council (Inc)	PO Box 55, Mt Hawthorn Western Australia 6915	08 9244 2933 0419 195 510 08 9244 2934 fax <a href="mailto:R&amp;D@wafic.org.au">R&amp;D@wafic.org.au</a>
Dan Machin- WA Aq Council	WA Fishing Industry Council (Inc)	PO Box 55, Mt Hawthorn Western Australia 6915	0438 964 303 08 9244 2934 fax <a href="mailto:acwadan@wafic.org.au">acwadan@wafic.org.au</a>

## Appendix 4

### LESSONS LEARNT

*(written comments from workshop participants at conclusion of workshop)*

What does the information we have been given by the guest speakers, and the experience you gained in responding to the mock emergency, suggest as being necessary to best

- refine and adapt the national Seafood Emergency Plan to fit W.A. conditions; and
- ensure quick and effective responses by industry to major food safety incidents involving W.A. seafood?

Refer to your notes on Worksheet 1 and draw on your experience with the mock emergency.

Then, for each aspect of emergency planning and response indicated in Worksheets 2 and 3, summarise in bullet form no more than three (3) key messages you believe to be most relevant for assisting the team that will be responsible for customising the national Plan for W.A. seafood emergency response purposes.

#### **1. Identifying, Classifying and Declaring Situations as Emergencies**

- *Grading of incident essential*
- *Mechanism to act quickly*
- *Rapport/interface with other States and national.*
- *Should classify whether A, B, or C depending on whether situation is at a local/state or national level. Also be aware that the emergency classifications can change (e.g. from A to B) during the course of an emergency. This needs to be monitored.*
- *Moving target – can change from day to day*
- *Need to be ahead of the ball – minimise damage by up front acceptance of problem and positive fix-it strategies*
- *Never underestimate the power of the media*
- *Immediately advise relevant authorities/stakeholders when a situation becomes known*
- *Internal industrial audits are helpful to identify potential or existing issues*
- *Declaration of emergencies may require input from external agencies*
- *Need agreement to link with Westplan Health in place*
- *Promotion of the need for enterprise level recall protocol*
- *AQIS imports*
- *Extent of problem A, B or C?*
- *Immediate liaison with Health Department and Fisheries Department*
- *Prepare public response and tell the truth*
- *Precise*
- *Based on accurate information*
- *Need clearer guidelines (criteria) for the definition of a classification (A, B, or C)*
- *Level B (most often the case) need to define national input. Can often be deleterious and duplicate effort. Needs to be defined, and national members shouldn't get involved unless*

*requested or there's an impact on their jurisdiction.*

- *Terminology in Plan should be consistent with other national Emergency Response Plans (Aquavet Plan etc)*
  - *Get it in hand quickly – industry reports incidence*
  - *Imbed the media*
  - *Document actions*
  - *Flow chart of options*
  - *Must be based on an honest, informed assessment of the emergency*
  - *Declaring situation is important to ensure appropriate involvement of team members i.e. composition is dependant on nature of emergency*
  - *Area/population affected*
  - *Time lapse since outbreak*
  - *Identify scale of issue early on to give appropriate category (e.g. liaise with other states to see if have similar problem)*
  - *To what degree is the threat likely to affect the population and any specific at-risk subgroup?*
  - *Is the threat localised or dispersed and is it likely to persist?*
  - *What can the public, retailers and industry do to protect or minimise the threat?*
  - *Restrict considerations to only what is known (make no assumptions).*
  - *Restrict advice to the media only to what is absolutely known and confirmed. Don't allow the media to run the agenda.*
  - *Communicate with all sources (potentials included) to determine the extent and validity of know information. Communicate that known information only.*
  - *Further clarify “trigger” or criteria for federal involvement.*
  - *Identify time risks with weekend and after hour's notification network.*
  - *Direct access to state leadership from notifying authority eg Health Department.*
  - *Check accuracy of information provided on the situation*
  - *Check reliability of the source of information*
  - *Utilise a competent risk assessor in clarifying the situation*
- 2. Seafood Emergency Response Team Composition and Responsibilities**
- *Team Leader be a WAFIC person (WAFIC has cross-sector representation/industry)*
  - *Must have Public Health as a key player!*
  - *Fisheries and other agencies be included*
  - *Maybe scope for a larger 'Advisory' Team, then a smaller active Response Team*
  - *10 person expertise based team with different roles to handle most situations*
  - *Contact and inform all government/environmental bodies to ensure all stakeholders are aware of the emergency*
  - *Some roles overlap/conflict (Spokesperson/Media Coordinator)*
  - *Technical members – need to cover various experts, e.g. health, production*
  - *Some roles could be covered by one person, e.g. Consumer Services Coordinator, Damage*

*(Recovery) Coordinator*

- *Emergency Team – Consumer Service Coordinator duties may be done by Communications and Media Coordinator*
- *Response must be transparent*
- *Response should be timely*
- *Bring contacts up to date*
- *WAFIC ownership + ongoing update*
- *Keep linked to national*
- *Keep linked to Westplan Health contact number – promote the link.*
- *Led by WAFIC CEO – contact R. Stevens at WAFIC*
- *Other advisors – technical (as appropriate), Environment (G. Leyland), Legal (as appropriate), Media (WAFIC PR Consultant), if Aquaculture (A??WA) CEO*
- *Team should be made up of people who have had good experience in the appropriate field*
- *Require commitment and dedication*
- *Composition is OK, and will be varied depending on circumstances*
- *The team member checklists are not clear. They should clearly differentiate between ‘internal responsibilities and tasks’, and ‘external’ ones*
- *Some team members will have to be government as they hold the expertise (i.e. legal, technical, media) in some cases. This may cause duplication with government response teams*
- *Need to promote a cooperative approach between industry and government*
- *Have media templates ready*
- *Need responsible person to manage contacts*
- *Have MOU with all relevant bodies*
- *Appoint Team Leader*
- *Delegate further tasks to members*
- *Maintain two way communication flow.*
- *Need to match individual strengths to team roles*
- *Some overlap between team member roles, e.g. PR, Communications and Media Coordinator and Media Spokesperson*
- *The content of the media liaison/statement must be considered by all team members, for example – legal, technical*
- *Any statements/response from members must remain topical and inclusive of views/inputs of other team members*
- *Plan for different stages of action dependent on the level of perceived risk*
- *Identify all key personnel that require to be kept up to date using both email and sms*
- *Keep media statements simple and focused on the issues and industry “proactive” responses*
- *The team seems somewhat unwieldy. This makes communication resource hungry.*
- *Requires commitment by all members that communication goes through one source.*

- *Needs consideration of response to international (export) emergencies.*
  - *Regional differences – North/Metro/South West*
  - *Communication strategy & network within industry may need assistance.*
  - *Improve/update contact lists*
  - *Technical advisor in food safety (two) for risk assessment*
  - *Legal advisors (two) for check on source of information and content of media releases*
  - *One government representative for liaison with government body*
  - *One communication person*
- 3. Coordination and Management of Operations - Before, During and After Incidents**
- (a) Containing and eliminating the source(s) of an incident**
- *No secrets*
  - *Open and accountable*
  - *Recall of products – isolate the source and eliminate further distribution of the source*
  - *Trace it back to its origin*
  - *Speed essential*
  - *No hasty or misinformed decisions*
  - *Minimise panic factors among public*
  - *Continuous improvement*
  - *Continuous update of relevant information*
  - *Thorough review of causes/reasons for an incident and amend practices, procedures, policies as required.*
  - *Take instructions from Department of Health's clinical results*
  - *Take action based on facts only*
  - *Take samples and obtain accurate diagnosis*
  - *Raise public awareness cautiously*
  - *Can take considerable time to track a source so need interim precautionary approach – but one which doesn't unnecessarily damage industry*
  - *Containment essential before public response*
  - *Identify industry/members affected by incident and collect all relevant information about it.*
  - *Implement industry training for food recall plans and development of food QA plans*
  - *Monitor and assess source of emergency and determine if it remains under control*
  - *Single desk structure is paramount*
  - *Ensure SEC doesn't have a 9-5 mentality – must be 24-7*
  - *Think laterally*
  - *Legal implications*
  - *PR and product image*
  - *Critical evaluation of information provided*
  - *Action plan with priorities*

- *Follow up on effectiveness of actions*

**(b) Liaison/communication with each class of stakeholders in seafood safety**

- *Appoint expert communicator*
- *Maintain a relatively high profile via industry journals (let all stakeholders know who are the players)*
- *Must communicate as quickly as possible with all relevant bodies to isolate/contain the emergency*
- *Precise/accurate communication with media to eliminate “bad media”*
- *Listen to experts – never assume*
- *Integrity*
- *Timely*
- *Balanced presentation of facts*
- *Very important*
- *Include stakeholders on the team if they are big/important enough, e.g. Department of Health etc.*
- *Critical that people know who to contact*
- *Critical that people know how an incident will be managed*
- *Honest communications supportive to industry*
- *Industry needs associations so can focus communications (not having to go to all fishers/all retailers etc)*
- *Essential that this remains topical and considered. While intention is not to hang offenders ‘out to dry’, the interests of industry must be paramount.*
- *Establish network and maintain a link of email and sms contacts for industry and government.*
- *Keep all key players up to date especially with briefing and advanced notice of media statements.*
- *Requires contact details to be kept up to date*
- *different levels of understanding and sophistication ie fisher to marketer.*
- *Need sophisticated Media Strategy*
- *Must have agreed protocol in place(signed off by industry) to enable swift action*
- *Delay public comment as long as possible*
- *Communicate clearly with major stakeholders*
- *Communicate only the essential*

**(c) Recovery from the industry impacts of an incident**

- *Training!*
- *Advertising!*
- *Consumer education!*
- *Media releases highlighting the positives, promoting the positives and identifying the actual problem, i.e. imported product versus local*
- *Can be long winded*

- *Could affect viability of company and create unemployment*
- *Compensation takes too long to alleviate No 2*
- *Strategic Plan review*
- *Revitalise existing practices causing problem.*
- *Develop alternatives if possible*
- *Need to measure impacts*
- *Once impacts measured get resources to improve or return product demand*
- *Outline benefits of industry*
- *Restore public confidence*
- *Do a consumer survey first to measure impact and then decide if need promotion*
- *Ongoing educational programs for all sectors re quality assurance*
- *Can depend heavily on the proactive activities of industry*
- *A heightened awareness among stakeholders of their responsibilities and the best course of action in an emergency*
- *Advertising?*
- *Editorial?*
- *Survey of consumer attitudes with media story after survey*
- *Allow perception to “die away” or find a “stopper” to carry on the perception*
- *Source of funds for media promotion*
- *Concentrate on facts from technical reporting/diagnostics*
- *Take time to make good plan*
- *Kick in at appropriate times*
- *Sustain recovery*
- 4. Testing, Capability Building and Continuous Improvement**
- *Hope never have to test*
- *To achieve team needs to maintain momentum*
- *Continuous improvement needs dedicated person to monitor accuracy of the plan as well as team + industry input*
- *Good planning is essential – reduces the risk*
- *Continuous research and continuous industry commitment = continuous improvement*
- *Desktop trials test the response*
- *SEMP badly needs updating*
- *Should include links to state Emergency Response Plans (government and industry)*
- *Needs ownership, and regular review*
- *Require a debrief*
- *Establish ongoing QA program'*
- *Establish greater tests in WA*
- *Review plan often*



- *Have mock situations to keep team members up to date/fresh.*
- *Revolves around continued “interrogation” of networks, protocols and attitudes*
- *Must have a routine “drill” in order to test the Group response once the members/representatives established*
- *Good network/promotional group*
- *Team to meet on regular basis to work on test cases*
- *Emergency trials*
- *Build up relationship with local media*

## Appendix 5

### Media Release from each group

#### Scenario 1 – Group 1

Tuesday – am

Following an alleged report of a food poisoning incident, potentially associated with seafood at the Merlin Hotel on Saturday night, industry is working closely with the department of Health to ensure public health and safety.

The Department of Health are currently conducting its' investigations. The results of these investigations will be available shortly.

We urge any members of the public who experience nausea, diarrhea etc after eating seafood to contact their local doctor.

Media spokesperson – Dan Machin

Media co-coordinator – Tony “G”

#### Scenario 2

##### **Kamikaze oyster shooter risks WA Seafood Industry's Reputation**

- Results from the Department of Health investigations have cleared all WA seafood in the Food Poisoning. “WA Seafood is safe to enjoy by all consumers”.
- The Dept of Health results have shown that the event was caused by imported edible oysters, possibly combined with excessive alcohol consumption.
- Industry has referred the matter FSANZ and AQIS to ensure a thorough investigation into the breach of importation standards. Expert virologist – Bruce Phage – The imported oysters were contaminated with Norwalk virus---- the Pearl oyster meat -----
- There have been no further incidents

#### Scenario 1 Group 2

1. The WA SEC is in continuous communication with our colleagues in Melbourne to determine if WA seafood is implicated in this event.
2. As a precaution we have asked WA suppliers of seafood to withhold supplies of these products until the actual cause of the problem is known.
3. Assure the public that the industry operates at the highest international standards.
4. Industry contact – Richard Stevens
5. WA Health contact – Michael Jackson

#### Scenario 2

1. The illness has been traced to two sources: excessive alcohol consumption and, possibly contaminated imported oyster meat.
2. No further cases have been reported and we have contacted the proper authorities in the Northern Territory to take the appropriate action.
3. The seafood loving public can be assured that they can continue to enjoy WA seafood in safety.
4. As a result the WA Senators and Representatives will be the first people to eat fresh WA seafood in Canberra tonight.

### **Scenario 1 – Group 3**

WA Seafood Industries are investigating suspected food poisoning following Dockers celebration dinner.

In co-operation with the Dept of Health and local Government, tests and checks are being undertaken on all food items and the premises where the function was held.

At this stage there is no firm indication of the cause – however as a precautionary measure in the interests of public health the various businesses supplying product for the function have put a voluntary temporary hold on supplies from the same batches.

This includes lobster and mussels supplied for the “Taste of WA” promotion to be held in Canberra tonight. Substitute WA products including marron and Dhufish have been flown to Canberra as replacements.

### **Scenario 2**

#### WA Seafood – still clean and green!

Results of pathology tests following the outbreak of food poisoning among the Fremantle Dockers have identified Norwalk virus. All WA seafood consumed at the function including lobster, mussels and pink snapper were found to be free of any viral contamination.

Investigations have revealed that the oyster meat used in the oyster shooters was in fact imported pearl oyster meat from Japan and was the source of the virus.

Local producers confirm that frequent testing is a routine part of their QA protocols and this would identify any such problem before any product reached retail or hospitality outlets.

The Health Dept has confirmed that there is no evidence of any long term health effects from this virus.

The importers have been approached and advised to instigate an immediate recall of all products in the consignment.