



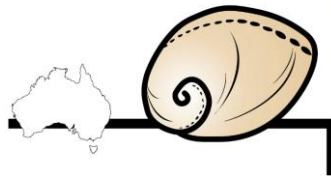
Australian Government

**Fisheries Research and
Development Corporation**

4th National Abalone Convention 2008

Project No. 2008/330

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ABALONE COUNCIL AUSTRALIA LTD



4th NATIONAL ABALONE CONVENTION
“Today, Tomorrow & Beyond – Vision & Vigilance”
PORT LINCOLN
17th – 19th September 2008

BACKGROUND

The 4th National Abalone Convention was held in Port Lincoln, South Australia from 17th –19th September, 2008. An organising committee comprising members of the Abalone Council Australia Ltd (ACA), PIRSA Fisheries and the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) was responsible for organising the Convention. It was agreed that the services of Strategic Management Consultants Pty Ltd would be used to deal with sponsors, venues, etc on a more personal level. The venue for the Convention was decided as the new Port Lincoln Hotel in Port Lincoln.

THEME

“Today, Tomorrow & Beyond – Vision & Vigilance” was agreed as the theme for the Convention, given the unfortunate situation with respect to the devastation caused through Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis (AVG) infestation. The theme also relates to the vision that the industry must have in order to achieve the higher priority goals and objectives in its Strategic Plan.

SPONSORS

Total amount received from sponsorship was \$58,700.

SPEAKERS

The organising Committee met several times in order to finalise the speakers making sure they offered information from a broad range of topics within the theme. There were four main conference sessions – Markets, Pests & Diseases, Management and Research. Local speakers, national and international speakers gave presentations. The organising committee was keen to ensure there were specific topics covered in an attempt to attract a large number of delegates to the Convention.

REGISTRATION & DELEGATES

Registration brochures were distributed to approximately 1,200 industry participants, researchers, managers in May 2008. The Committee had set a target of 150 attendees, and certainly hoped to get a large contingent of South Australian attendees, given that the Convention was being held in Port Lincoln. Registrations certainly met expectations, and were broken down as follows:

123	Full Registration Delegates
11	Partner Registration Delegates
60	Social Registration Delegates
22	Speakers
8	Sponsor/Exhibitor Delegates
224	Total Attendees

Hotel accommodation was available to be booked through Convention Registration, with three venue options being offered. Convention satchels and name-tags were distributed to delegates on arrival at the Registration desk. Satchels contained a range of information from sponsors, a Convention pen, and a full program of the event.

SOCIAL PROGRAM

In conjunction with the Conference sessions a social program was offered. This commenced with a welcome cocktail party at the Port Lincoln Hotel with hors d'oeuvres included some fine quality South Australian wild abalone. The abalone was prepared and cooked in the function room, enabling delegates to enjoy the delicacy as it was freshly cooked.

The final social event was the gala dinner, held on the evening of Friday 19th September at the Convention venue, the Port Lincoln Hotel. For the organising committee this was the culmination of a lot of hard work. The dinner was attended by 168 people and was a very enjoyable evening. The evening was serviced by a pop/rock duo which got a lot of people up to the dance floor during the night and the highlight was a session by comedian David Cummings whose act was that of a global marketing expert that had everybody rolling in their seats with laughter.

FINANCES

The Convention received funding of \$9,500 from the previous Convention in order to commence activities. The final balance of the account is approximately \$37,000. The organising committee has met recently and agreed to pass on the equivalent amount to commence proceedings for the 5th Convention to the host state of that event, and also agreed to pay the organisers – SMC Pty Ltd for their work done in organising the Convention upon receipt of an invoice.

PAPERS

Copies of presentations have been distributed to all delegates.

KEY OUTCOMES

The four main conference sessions – Markets, Pests & Diseases, Management and Research provided plenty of “food for thought” for attendees of the Convention. Each session was followed by a question and answer session, providing attendees with the opportunity to probe presenters further on topics raised in the presentations. A highlight for many in attendance was the live dissection of an abalone, shown by projection to the screen, conducted by Ellie Watts from the Cawthron Institute in New Zealand and Jeremy Cooper from New Zealand Paua Industry Council. Dr Peter Cook was, as per previous Conventions a key speaker, giving attendees the current figures on production of wild/farmed abalone and also estimates on illegal product in the market.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Organising Committee was satisfied with the overall success of the Convention, and agreed to continue hosting future Conventions, approximately every 2-3 years. The Organising Committee discussed the need to present speakers on a wide variety of topics, and were conscious of the need to offer speakers which are of interest to a wide cross section of persons from all sectors of industry. The Organising Committee realise the importance of “moving with the times” and offering speakers which are relevant to current day issues to all abalone producing states.

CONCLUSION

The organising committee is certainly satisfied with the Convention, it was well attended, speakers were of a high calibre, the social program was appropriate and the venue and catering were certainly to our expectations.

Michael Tokley
Chair – ACA Ltd

Melinda Mullen
Administration – ACA Ltd