



## Australian Southern Rocklobster Industry

### USA Market Platform ready to facilitate trade

**"In January 2007, Clean Green certified Australian Southern Rocklobster fishers can bring in their large (2kg+) rocklobster for live export to USA and supply high-end USA accounts" Mr Matt Muggleton, Southern Rocklobster Limited's (SRL) Market Development Manager announced today.**

"For the first time Australian Southern Rocklobster will be branded with a Clean Green horn tag and tracked and traced along the supply chain, through an industry managed program to position certified Clean Green Rocklobster as the finest in the world" he said.

The SRL USA Market Development program aims to increase the average value of all Australian Southern Rocklobster to \$50/kg by 2011. SRL is the peak industry body owned by licence holders in SA, Victoria and Tasmania. The program will initially focus on the larger animals, which for years have been returned to the water in order to harvest the smaller higher value lobsters demanded in Chinese markets.

"The infrastructure has been established (USA tanking system, traceability hardware and software, tamperproof tag, bank accounts and credit insurance), the supply chain partners engaged and approximately 80 Clean Green certified fishers have committed to supply a small portion of their catch to the program" Mr Muggleton said.

"The platform is now established and SRL is ready to facilitate trade of Clean Green certified rocklobster - it's now up to the fishers, SRL and supply chain partners to



convert this opportunity into reality', said Mr Muggleton

SRL is approaching all Clean Green certified fishers seeking commitment to supply with many more still to be contacted.

"The more fishers that contribute lobster the greater the capacity to manage supply and individual risks. SRL is committed to maintaining constant communication with the fishers supplying product to ensure both the market and fishers supply requirements are satisfied", he said.

Mr Muggleton noted that "the program will diversify industry risk, reduce pressure on inshore fishing and create, for the first time, a product – "the Grange of all rocklobster harvested worldwide".

"The opportunity has been consolidated in the USA with one high-profile account ordering nearly 750kg per week of the 2kg plus animal," Mr Muggleton added.

"I would like to take the chance to thank each of the fishers and supply chain

#### HOT SPOTS

- ❖ SRL's Market Development Program is ready to facilitate trade
- ❖ High-end account willing to take 750kg 2kg+ lobster per week
- ❖ Support from fishers, SRL management team and supply chain partners required for success

partners who have supported the start up or implementation phase of the market development, for the long term benefit of all industry members" he concluded.

Certified Clean Green fishers wanting to commit product and/or additional information, please contact Matt Muggleton - 0417 012 872 or Justin Phillips - 0400 281 904.

- ❑ SRL to invest \$2m
- ❑ Consortium requests \$37m from Australian Government
- ❑ Program to increase Profitability

## Seafood CRC proposal – a new research investment opportunity

The Australian Southern Rocklobster industry will be a key investor in the Australian Seafood Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) if a proposal by a seafood industry/research consortium is successful.

The consortium has asked the Australian Government for a \$37 million investment over seven years — out of a total planned investment in the CRC of \$136 million.

Many national CRC proposals were eliminated during eight months of intense competition, concluding with an intensive interview in mid-November.

Chairman of the consortium, Peter Dundas-Smith, said he and his colleagues were “quietly confident” of the consortium’s prospects of success. The CRC will start next July if it’s among the successful contenders announced in late December by the federal Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop.

The CRC’s activities will span the entire seafood value chain, from aquaculture and wild-harvest production, through post-

harvest to the consumer. Collectively, the CRC’s industry participants represent more than 90 per cent of the seafood industry’s gross value of production. Independent economic modelling has predicted that during the 10 years after starting up, the CRC will directly and indirectly add \$2.4 billion to the Australian economy and will generate more than 2,800 new jobs.

“The CRC will be concentrating on two things”, Peter Dundas-Smith said. “The first is research that’s tightly focused on the needs of specific CRC investors. The second is bang for buck. It will be a very commercial organisation, with industry in the majority on the Board, and will be backed by top researchers around Australia.”

Southern Rocklobster Ltd (SRL) will be one of 20 “core” participants in the CRC that will make significant commitments to research in their particular field and will be a CRC company member/shareholder. SRL will invest around \$2m in a range of CRC projects over 7 years.

Under a program to increase profitability of seafood value chains, research activities will improve the efficiency of rocklobster fisheries — including through lobster



Senior industry people were at the forefront in bidding for Australian Government investment in the proposed Seafood CRC

translocation and minimisation of weight loss during transport and processing. Successful research outcomes should contribute to increasing the industry’s gross value of production by more than \$100 million per annum.

The SRL overview of CRC projects can be found at [www.southernrocklobster.com](http://www.southernrocklobster.com). For further information about the CRC, go to [www.seafoodcrc.com](http://www.seafoodcrc.com) or contact Peter Dundas-Smith on 0419 628 500.

## New Management Plans for SA Lobster Fisheries

The South Australian Northern and Southern Zone Rocklobster Fisheries Management Committees are currently in the process of developing a five-year harvest strategy, which will be incorporated into the new management plan for the fishery. PIRSA Fisheries has worked extensively with commercial fishery representatives in developing the draft harvest strategy, which is scheduled to be released for public comment early 2007.

Importantly, it will be proposed in the draft strategy that the Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) will be set using decision rules. These decision rules will have clear reference points to indicate whether the fishery is performing at above or below desired levels. Performance will be measured using catch rate (CPUE) and pre-recruit index (PRI) on a regional level. The fishery will be broken down into the three key areas of the fishery, and data will be analysed for each of these areas, as well as for the whole fishery.

This move to finer spatial scale analysis of the fishery will formalise a major change in the management of the fishery. The change is designed to ensure that the regional differences in the way the fishery performs are taken into account. This will ensure that good performance in part of the fishery does



not mask problems in other areas overall. Vice versa, if an area is under-performing but the fishery overall is healthy, then the TACC can be set taking this into account.

Catch rate will be measured using logbook data and pre-recruit index will be measured using returns from the voluntary catch

sampling program. All fishers are therefore urged to be involved in the catch sampling program, so that decisions are made using quality information.

Further information contact Kelly Crosthwaite 0421618828 or Adrian Linnane 0423027357

# New project to produce lobsters in the hatchery

**"The hatchery rearing of lobsters for aquaculture and fisheries enhancement recently received a big boost with the award of a major grant from the Australian Research Council (ARC) to the Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute (TAFI) at the University of Tasmania" Dr Arthur Ritar Senior Research Fellow University of Tasmania said today.**

## HOT SPOTS

- ⌘ SRL investment to secure intellectual property
- ⌘ \$570,000 grant for hatchery rearing
- ⌘ Southern rocklobster cultured from eggs

*Eastern rock lobster pueruli and juveniles produced in the laboratory at TAFI in 2006.*



Scientists at TAFI have produced Australia's first cultured southern rock lobsters from eggs in 2004 when lobsters "Peta" and "Buzz" were cultured through the difficult metamorphosis stage. Today, they are almost big enough to breed the next generation of domesticated lobsters. In 2006, scientists and technicians at TAFI successfully cultured 139 eastern rocklobster - another temperate species of rocklobster.

Dr Ritar said "hatchery production of eastern rocklobster is an Australian first and has taken our work to another level.

"This species showed high survival during hatchery rearing and has a juvenile growth rate comparable to tropical lobsters, but is arguably much better tasting and preliminary results suggest they are likely to be the most commercially attractive species to farm in cooler climates worldwide" he said.

The culture success was due to several improvements in technology protected under the intellectual property arrangements with the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC). The results have generated national and international interest and TAFI, FRDC and Southern Rocklobster Limited (SRL) are currently negotiating long term commercialisation arrangements.

Dr Ritar said "the new ARC project will target key elements of hatchery rearing, especially ozonation to prevent diseases that plague the delicate larval stages of rock lobsters in the hatchery and develop the fine control and understanding needed for mass culture".

The \$570,000 ARC grant comes on top of the funding from the FRDC, which has supported lobster propagation across Australia since 1998. The project starts in 2007 and will continue for three years and is partly funded by Southern Rocklobster Ltd.

Mr Roger Edwards Southern Rocklobster Limited (SRL) Executive Officer said "we are investing in the technology to secure a stakeholding in propagation intellectual property rights and guarantee our fishermen members the opportunity to develop this in harmony with the wild harvest".

"Optimising the lobster harvests is our second highest strategic priority after market development and our investment in the ARC project will place SRL as the lead commercial partner" he added.

The Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries and Water is also a stakeholder supporting the project through its interest in establishing new species for aquaculture.

The project is collaboration between TAFI and the University's School of Chemistry which has specialist skills in separation science, using world-leading technologies to determine barely detectable molecules, such as those produced by ozonation. An important output from the new project will be the measurement and control of the critical products of ozonation.

"Of course, bringing commercial lobster aquaculture and the possibility of enhancement of the wild fishery closer to reality is the most important long term outcome of the project" Dr Ritar concluded.

### Contact details:

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Mr Roger Edwards  
Executive Officer SRL  
Mobile: 0418 806 103



**The 5th National Rock Lobster Congress will be held in Cairns on August 16th & 17th 2007.**

Attendance is already confirmed from all states of Australia plus New Zealand and PNG.

If you are a fisherman, Buyer, Processor, Exporter or Scientist this Congress is for you.

**Further information from jamesfogarty@cairns.net.au**

# Australian Global Lobster Market Database - Supporting Informed Market Decisions

Data collection for the Australian Global Lobster Market Database (AGLMD) is well underway, with data flowing in from countries around the world on a regular basis. The Global Lobster Market Database project is funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) and commenced in September 2006.

Chairman of Western Rock Lobster Development Association, Mr. Tony Gibson today said, "this project started as an initiative to assist the WA marketers to get an overview of the bigger picture and now we hope to provide this information to the wider industry, by extending the same opportunities to the Southern and Tropical Rock Lobster sectors".

The collection of data such as this has been underway since June 2004, although previously focused on countries competing with, and purchasing Western Rock Lobster. The project involves developing the database of official trade data on the import and export of lobsters for use by all the Australian lobster industries. The data will be used to build up a profile of what competing countries are doing in the long term, with the aim of using the information to help the industries with their decision making.

"Information from the database will be updated regularly, and quarterly reports will be sent to stakeholders." Mr Gibson added.

Mr. Gibson also clarified "the project is not about telling the individual companies when or where to send their product, but having the database may assist with making these decisions easier, as this is the first time data such as this has been collected and collated on a regular, formal basis. The database

will be developed with the stakeholders, to ensure the information is as applicable and reliable as possible".

"We are also seeking feedback and input from the Australian lobster industry as to what they see is valuable and helpful to ensure the marketing sector can make the best decisions for the future of the industry" he said.

Some examples of information gathered to date are:

1. Historic data sets for Australia as a whole, and for all the individual states as separate entities have also been accumulated, with values, quantities and price information, as well as state and country of origin and destination information.
2. Information from Brazil on the monthly lobster exports from 1997 to 2006 has been recently added to the database and is showing a cyclical trend in export quantities. Brazil is one of the largest competitors with Australian lobster in the American market, and a precursory look at the data also shows an increase in the total volumes exported over time.
3. Information collection from Canada and China is also underway – for example Canadian exporters, who are one of the major Homarus lobster producers for the

## HOT SPOTS

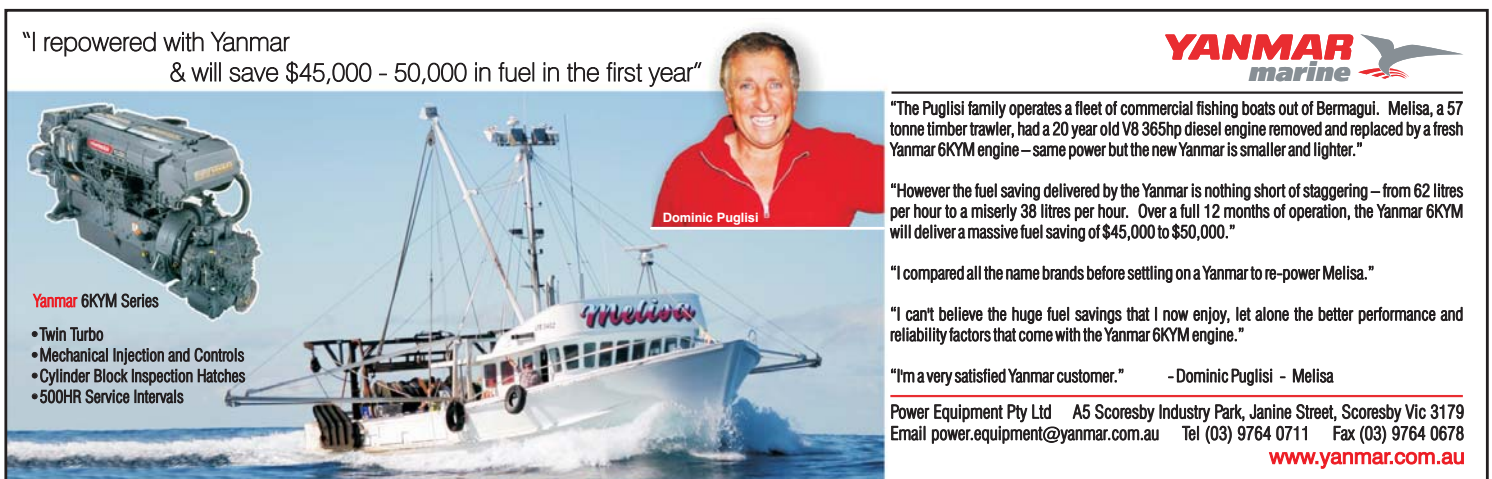
- ❑ Profile of competing countries built
- ❑ Official database of imports and exports
- ❑ Canada exports more than \$10m Kg

American, Asian and European markets, now export in excess of 10 million kg of frozen lobster annually, and more than 26 million kg of live lobster to more than 70 countries.

4. China, emerging as a major importer, is showing an average increase in the imported quantity of frozen spiny lobsters of 66% per annum since 2000, and in increase of 53% per annum of live spiny lobsters imports over the same period according to the official Customs statistics. Growth in exports of frozen spiny lobsters to neighboring Asian markets and the US market from China are also increasing, although not at the same rate as the imports.

The database is currently under construction and queries on the current information can be lodged through WRLDA, by contacting Alice Hurlbatt on (08) 9492 8831.


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**Dominic Puglisi**

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"However the fuel saving delivered by the Yanmar is nothing short of staggering – from 62 litres per hour to a miserly 38 litres per hour. Over a full 12 months of operation, the Yanmar 6KYM will deliver a massive fuel saving of \$45,000 to \$50,000."

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# Victorian Industry Comes Clean & Green

Australian  
Southern Rocklobster



The first Clean Green training course was conducted at the Portland Yacht Club on November 9th and 10th. Seven Victorian boats have now joined over 200 participants in South Australia and Tasmania. The course was conducted by Matthew Muggleton and Justin Philips from SRL with specialists Paul McShane and Tanya Adams lecturing on environmental management and workplace safety.

Food safety is also a component of the course. Participant skippers completed the induction of their crew in the SRL food safety plan. Matthew advised that Primesafe have indicated they will recognise SRL auditing for food safety in the future.

Some equipment being demonstrated had never been seen in Victoria before. One example is the 'bilge rat' which looks like a bit like a French stick. It is placed in the bilge and soaks up oil and diesel, but not water, for later disposal on land. This simple device allows vessels to comply with world's best environmental standards

Skippers were taught the principles of risk assessment in OH&S and inducted their crew in the use of safe work practices through identification and minimisation of risks. Each boat is provided with a comprehensive manual that is customised by the skipper for his particular boat.

A trainer from SRL will spend time with each boat in the coming months to ensure that each vessel is ready for an independent 3rd party audit. The next course is scheduled for April 2007.

Contact:  
David Lucas VRLA Executive Officer  
Mobile 0438 701 588 or Justin Phillips  
SRL's Clean Green Program Manager on  
0400 281 904



## Rocklobster Peak Body Appoints Industry Leader to Board



Independent Chairman of Australia's peak southern rocklobster industry body, Southern Rocklobster Limited (SRL), Mr Roger Cotton, today announced the appointment of Mr Kim Skeer, SA lobster fishermen to its Board.

The southern rocklobster industry generates up to an estimated 3,000 jobs, \$180 million in exports and nearly \$1/2 billion in economic activity across regional South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania.

Southern Rocklobster Ltd was formed to specifically coordinate new market and product development for the southern rocklobster industry.

"Mr Skeer has nearly 20 years experience in the industry and has developed a detailed understanding of global lobster markets through extensive travel around the world as a participant in our market development program" Mr Cotton said.

Mr Skeer is currently a member of the SA Southern Zone Rocklobster Fishery

Management Committee and sits on the SA Rock Lobster Advisory Council.

Mr Cotton said "he looked forward to Mr Skeer joining Southern Rocklobster Ltd as an industry specialist and contributing to the market and industry development programs for the benefit of the industry and the thousands of families in regional communities that depend on it".

Mr Skeer said "Southern Rocklobster is the finest lobster in the world and I see my challenge as contributing to marketing programs that reflect this, while ensuring strong industry support and direction for the SRL Board and programs".

"Under sustainable quota management of our stocks, a strong and viable industry future depends primarily on building the lobster price in international markets" he concluded.



The  
Australian  
Southern  
Rocklobster  
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Strategic

Plan Version 2, 2006-2011  
is now available on line.

Download from  
[www.southernrocklobster.com](http://www.southernrocklobster.com)  
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## Board Members

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Australian Government  
Fisheries Research and  
Development Corporation



Roger Cotton  
Independent Chair

## Cotton's Comment

I am extremely pleased to announce our market facilitation program will commence in January 2007. SRL will facilitate the supply of fully branded and certified Clean Green Australian Southern Rocklobster to new customers at a substantial premium to industry. The platform elements of supply, chain logistics, traceability system and bar-coded tags are in place, and new customers are ready to receive the product.

This is a major step forward for industry away from the commodity supplier status to that of niche marketers. I must take this opportunity to applaud our MOU partner the FRDC, as this would not have been possible with the support, funding, encouragement and guidance provided by FRDC.

Previously I have highlighted the need for industry to move to a contracted or managed supply model to support the market development program. I am delighted that over 90% of Clean Green certified licence holders have indicated a commitment to supply product to the program from across our 3 member States. Maintaining and now delivering on supply commitments is fundamental to a successful launch of the program and the future development of alternative market options.



My thanks go to the Clean Green members supplying product to the program and to all our supply chain and service partners who have made a substantial investment in supporting this major innovation for our industry.

While on the Clean Green program it is pleasing that the program is now truly national, following completion of the first Victorian Clean Green training program in November. Congratulations to our Victorian members.

Another key area rapidly progressing is that of lobster propagation. I am delighted to announce SRL's new partnership with the Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute to progress propagation of temperate lobster species (See article in this issue). SRL funding through our MOU with FRDC has enabled us to contribute to a successful Australian Research Council funded project over the next 3 years.

It is imperative that the industry secures a stake in lobster aquaculture and captures the opportunity to invest in and manage the development of the technology going forward. Of critical importance will be the management of any new supply of propagated lobster to market in a way that harmonises with wild

harvest production and marketing. Investing now and being a leader and manager of the development, is the way industry can control its destiny in this area.

We are currently in the process of establishing a long term R&D program linking to the FRDC Enhancement and Aquaculture program and expect to finalise commercialization rights in the new year. Decisions about the level of investment in R&D will be made in 2007 at our annual R&D planning and prioritisation workshop.

SRL seeks to value add every licence holder R&D dollar through a range of funding channels. To this end SRL has been active in supporting the development of the National Seafood Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) initiative (see article in this issue). The CRC will provide additional funding and resources for our major R&D investment platforms of market development and optimizing the harvest. We have committed around 50% of our MOU funding beyond June 2007 to the initiative should it be successful, on the basis that it is matched and committed to SRL programs. Our thanks go to the many people who have contributed to bringing the initiative together.

Our Annual General Meeting was held in September and I am delighted to welcome Kim Skeer, a SA Southern Zone licence to our Board. Kim has already shown great commitment to our programs through his contribution to the USA and European Seafood Expo activities. Kim replaces Andrew Ferguson who has been pivotal in the establishment and startup of SRL and in particular guiding the strategic approach to market development adopted by the Board. We thank Andrew for his invaluable contribution. Copies of the Annual report can be downloaded from our website.

Finally I can announce the release of the final Australian Southern Rocklobster Strategic Plan which was signed off by our R&D partner FRDC in October. Copies of the plan can be downloaded from our website. The plan will guide SRL R&D investments and projects over the next 5 years. Thank you to all who contributed to the revised plan.

In closing I wish you and your family a festive and safe Christmas and New Year. There is no doubt in my mind that in years to come, 2006 will be looked upon as a watershed for the industry, a year when the culture and structure of the way we do business changed substantially. Thank you for your ongoing support.