

SOUTHERN ROCK LOBSTER LIMITED

BACKGROUND

SRL is the peak national industry body for the Southern Rock Lobster industry with a focus on sustainable biological, economic and social development of the industry. To achieve this, SRL:

- (a) invests in RD&E and other activities that support the Industry Development and Management Plan;
- (b) represents the southern rock lobster industry on national policy issues as directed and agreed to by its members.

SRL addresses broad Natural Resource Management (NRM) issues (e.g. the methodologies of harvest strategies, resource allocation, quota setting etc.) but does not involve itself in individual State-based management determinations, unless directed to do so by its members.

SRL's membership consists of the peak state industry bodies for the Southern Rock Lobster industry; the South Australian Rock Lobster Advisory Council Inc. (SARLAC), the Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fishermen's Association Ltd (TRLFA) and the Victorian Rock Lobster Association Inc. (VRLA).

SRL has a Board consisting of an independent Chair, industry representatives nominated by SRL's members and independent Directors appointed for their knowledge and expertise of matters related to SRL's activities. The SRL Board has authority to make investment decisions on behalf of its members.

SRL was formed to assist in the development of the Southern Rock Lobster industry, including contracting to provide research and development and other activities on behalf of its industry members.

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (IPA)

SOUTHERN ROCK LOBSTER LTD (SRL) has entered into an IPA with the FISHERIES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (FRDC) which covers arrangements for the delivery of its strategic plan – SRL Strategy 2022.

Both SRL and FRDC recognise the need for the sustainable development of the Southern Rock Lobster fishery in accordance with ESD goals and principles, which include biological, economic and social objectives.

Key elements of the IPA are described below.

ACTIVITIES NOT INCLUDED IN THE IPA

It is recognised by both parties that the Agreement does not necessarily include all activities related to the delivery of the RD&E Strategy and that SRL can, and may, undertake RD&E and other activities outside the scope of the IPA that contribute to the delivery of the RD&E Strategy as determined from time to time by the RD&E Committee and endorsed by the SRL Board. SRL has no obligation under the Agreement to notify or seek prior approval from FRDC in undertaking such activities but will provide annual reports to the FRDC and SRL Boards.

OBJECTIVES

The Parties agree that the IPA will provide the following benefits:

- (a) certainty in relation to the planning, investing in and managing of RD&E and other activities and the extension and adoption of the results of those activities;
- (b) a focus on delivering the goals of the SRL RD&E Strategy, which incorporate RD&E and other activities that are linked to biological, economic and social outcomes in accordance with ESD;
- (c) a longer term, program oriented approach to Southern Rock Lobster RD&E and other Activities;
- (d) maximisation of the level and speed of the adoption of the results of RD&E and other activities; especially in areas where change is needed;
- (e) effective industry change management;
- (f) guaranteed access to the Australian Government matching of contributions, less any FRDC charges;
- (g) increased leverage of industry funded investment in RD&E and in other activities for which contributing Government funding is available;
- (h) best practice governance and continuous improvement;
- (i) efficiencies and cost savings in RD&E program/project delivery.

SRL is committed to the following objectives:

1. Supporting relevant State and Commonwealth agencies in ensuring that the Southern Rock Lobster fisheries in Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria are managed on an ecologically sustainable basis and that they comply with relevant fishery management plans;
2. Investing in targeted RD&E and other activities that support and assist in delivering the Industry Development and Management Plan and the associated RD&E Strategy. Issues that may be included in the Industry Development and Management Plan and the RD&E Strategy include:
 - i. Sustainable development of the industry;
 - ii. Maintenance of resource access and property rights;
 - iii. Increases in productivity and profitability;
 - iv. Improved community relations;
 - v. Market development, market access and market research;

vi. Improved safety and training;

vii. People development across the entire supply chain

At a minimum the following matters will be covered:

- i. an assessment of the operating environment including strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities, and including current and future trends and implications
- ii. risk management
- iii. collaboration with other sectors on priority RD&E issues of mutual relevance
- iv. a broad overview of the priorities and outcomes from stakeholder consultation; and an explanation of the extent to which those priorities are covered
- v. key strategies, objectives, investment priorities and planned outcomes
- vi. activities (tasks or projects) to achieve the planned outcomes
- vii. key deliverables that will contribute to achieving the planned outcomes
- viii. performance indicators that enable progress being made towards achieving the planned outcomes to be monitored and reported upon
- ix. how extension, technology transfer and commercialisation of R&D will be addressed; including demonstrating how extension and adoption are incorporated into the planning and approval processes
- x. estimates of income and expenditure

3. Implementing a rigorous and transparent planning, monitoring and evaluation process for the development, assessment and monitoring of RD&E projects that address the issues identified in the Industry Development and Management Plan, the supporting RD&E Strategy and its associated priorities.

4. Establishing an extension and adoption strategy and annual operational plans that will facilitate the uptake of the results of research and development activities undertaken by SRL to the benefit of the industry.

The FRDC is committed to its objectives that derive from Section 3 of the PIRD Act. They are to facilitate funding and administration of fisheries RD&E to:

(a) make provision for the funding and administration of research and development and industry promotion relating to primary industries with a view to:

- i. increasing the economic, environmental and social benefits to members of primary industries and to the community in general by improving the production, processing, storage, transport or marketing of the products of primary industries;
- ii. achieving the sustainable use and sustainable management of natural resources;
- iii. making more effective use of the resources and skills of the community in general and the scientific community in particular;
- iv. supporting the development of scientific and technical capacity;
- v. developing the adoptive capacity of primary producers; and
- vi. improving accountability for expenditure on research and development activities in relation to primary industries.

- (b) make provision for the funding and administration of marketing relating to fisheries sectors and to products of primary industries.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Under the IPA the SRL has developed a southern rock lobster RD&E Strategy (SRL Strategy 2022) that:

- (a) supports and contributes to the goals of the Industry Development and Management Plan;
- (b) is consistent with the national Fisheries and Aquaculture RD&E Strategy (especially the research provider network), FRDC's RD&E Plan, and the relevant RD&E priorities of the Australian government;
- (c) has consideration for a balance of RD&E both across the FRDC's program areas and having consideration for the following:
 - i. national, jurisdictional and sector-focused projects
 - ii. long- and short-term project timelines
 - iii. low- and high-risk projects
 - iv. tactical and strategic initiatives
 - v. blue sky and applied projects
 - vi. domestic and international relevance;

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION COMMITTEE (R.D&E COMMITTEE)

SRL has appointed an R,D&E Committee that consists of:

- An independent chair (currently Prof Colin Buxton)
- Representatives of the three member states drawn from the SRL Board
- Representatives from the management organisations in the three jurisdictions, and
- Representatives of the major research institutions in the three jurisdictions.

The RD&E agenda is developed by the SRL RD&E Committee in close collaboration with industry, research partners, and other key stakeholders as identified by FRDC;

The RD&E Committee reviews the RD&E Strategy each year, and develops the following year's proposed Operational Plan and RD&E investment proposals that deliver the outcomes of the RD&E Strategy;

The RD&E Committee is responsible for technical monitoring of projects under the IPA, including review of project Milestone Reports and making recommendations to FRDC as to their acceptance or otherwise. Through the Executive Officer, the RD&E Committee reports to FRDC. Financial monitoring of projects will be the responsibility of FRDC;

The RD&E Committee through the EO provides a written report to the SRL and FRDC boards annually on the performance of the collaborative investment program and:

- I. To work together to develop and implement an evaluation framework
- II. To commit to continual improvement of the processes and procedures that underpin this agreement.

FRDC 2016-410: SOUTHERN ROCK LOBSTER PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT FOR A NATIONAL RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT & EXTENSION (RD&E) PROGRAM

Background

Southern Rock Lobster Ltd (SRL) was formed in 2004 as the national industry research, development and extension (RD&E) body for the Southern Rock Lobster fishing sector. SRL has undertaken the RD&E Planning and Management through a project agreement (2010-402) with FRDC since 2011. This agreement was based on the Industry Partnership Agreement (IPA) that was signed in July 2010 by the FRDC, SRL, PIRSA (Primary Industries & Regions South Australia) and DPIPWE (Department Primary Industries Parks Water and Environment - Tasmania).

For five years preceding the first IPA (up until June 2010) SRL and FRDC had established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to guide investment in, and to manage R&D and to adopt R&D results.

The completion of Project 2010-402 coincides with the renewal of the current IPA arrangement in consultation with its member bodies: South Australian Rock Lobster Advisory Council (SARLAC), Tasmanian Rock Lobster Fishermen's Association (TRLFA) and Victorian Rock Lobster Association (VRLA). There was support for SRL to expand its functions and take on a broader industry service body role as well as continuing to maintain responsibility for the planning and management of RD&E in the Southern Rock Lobster Fishery.

In the first year of the IPA, SRL held a planning workshop from which the outcomes were incorporated into the Southern Rock Lobster Strategic Plan 2011-2016. This plan established the R&D priorities in a focused framework under three clearly defined Objectives:

The Strategic Plan was reviewed three times during the life of the project with the annual operational plan being reviewed and amended annually according to priority issues.

Over the life of the project 2010-402 the R&D strategic focus has been able to identify and target the investment in projects to produce outputs relevant to the industry. The total investment has been \$4.7 million with projects addressing key issues such as :

- Sustainability - puerulus settlement, ecosystem interactions with urchins
- Production - lobster translocation , spatial management (northern zone SA, regional controls)
- Reducing cost and improved efficiency - new quota management and electronic log book technology,
- Market price - market diversification , trade issues with key markets including contributing to free trade discussions
- Product quality - seasonal controls, reducing the risks of bio-toxin events, condition and live transport survival
- Improving management systems - using bio-economics for issues like spatial management
- Communications - fact sheets, website, newsletter
- Continuing to build Trans-Tasman collaboration and partnering in projects

The latest strategic planning process commenced in February 2016 through a meeting of SRL and provides a vision for future development of the industry through the project proposed here.

This proposal is based on new IPA arrangements and will continue to strategically focus on the R&D priorities that SRL partners (FRDC, SARLAC, TRLFA and VRLA) and stakeholders identify for the continued success of the fishery.

Need

The Southern Rock Lobster industry has a complex array of business structures. Many of the quota units or catch shares are owned by small family businesses while an increasing amount is owned by larger companies. Catch is taken by around 625 vessels and packed and processed by a number of different companies. The large and complex array of firms across three States means there is a need for leadership in prioritising and coordinating the investment in and managing industry RD&E.

For the past three years the value of the catch (producer prices) has increased from \$176 million to \$228 million with the 2013/14 year the highest on record with 2014-15 likely to be higher again. Profitability has increased at a greater rate than this trend in revenue would indicate, because of gradual improvement in catch rate. There is opportunity to further increase the financial return from the resource through improvements in price and reduction in costs. Research investment tends to have an exceptional ROI in this industry due to the scale of the fishery.

In 2012, SRL partnered with the Australian Abalone industry to form the Seafood Trade Advisory Group (STAG) to primarily address issues regarding exports to China. This proved timely as the negotiations for a China - Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) became a Government priority and the STAG contributed significantly to successful inclusion of lobster and abalone. This agreement is expected to create substantial change in the SRL fishery in the future and we need to be well prepared to respond.

This project will build on the existing capacity to deal with Southern Rock Lobster RD&E needs in a strategic and efficient way. The industry will benefit from continued collaboration with the New Zealand Rock Lobster industry on R&D projects will continue under this project including sharing R&D initiatives with other Australian Rock Lobster representative bodies.

Objectives

1. Coordinate Southern Rock Lobster RD&E planning and management so that RD&E is strategically prioritized and delivered cost-effectively.
2. Deliver a corporate structure, resources and processes for SRL that ensures:
 - a) Leadership focusing on continuous industry development through the delivery of the SRL Strategic Plan
 - b) A strategic focus on maximising profitability across the value chain within the limits of sustainability of the resource,
 - c) High level governance at the operational, planning and strategic level; and
 - d) Effective engagement of all stakeholders in planning and building SRL's value proposition to ensure further development within the fishery and relevance of SRL's functions
3. Engage with Southern Rock Lobster Processors and Exporters (post-harvest sector) to establish a representative body and processes for contributing to industry development, RD&E initiatives and representation of this body on the SRL Board.
4. Communicate consistent information and the extension of R&D outputs to support and promote the adoption of new technology, science and other project outcomes through mediums such as the SRL Newsletter, website and fact sheets.

Methods

In relation to the funding associated with this application, in addition to the industry 0.25% AGVP contribution provided to the FRDC, there is a commitment of a further \$300,000 in unmatched contributions from Tasmanian and South Australian industry across this 4-year project. It is the intent to increase those unmatched funds from SRL industry in South Australia and Victoria in years 2 to 4 of the project. These funds will continue to be provided to the FRDC for management and will

be used to offset components of the SRL management project and other RD&E undertaken for SRL industry needs.

Objective 1: Coordinate Southern Rock Lobster RD&E planning and management so that RD&E is strategically prioritized and delivered cost-effectively.

Resources: Independent Chair/Director RD&E, Principal investigator, SRL Board, State Departments of Fisheries, administrative services, office facilities, communication equipment, industry networks and research partners.

This element of the project will support annual strategic RD&E planning and investment program management. The process will be led by a RD&E subcommittee comprising SRL Industry Board members, a State Department manager representative from each of South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and the SRL Independent Chair/Director RD&E. The committee will be supported by the Principle Investigator (EO).

This project will commence with a new Strategic Framework for the Southern Rock Lobster industry that will also include an updated RD&E strategy that combined will:

1. Align with the National RD&E Plan
2. Establish the priority issues of each strategic objective to be incorporated into the Annual Operating Plan (AOP)
3. Deliver coordinated extension

Annually the RD&E Committee will:

1. Develop an AOP to deliver the outcomes of the RD&E Plan, including details of investments for the subsequent financial year and, where possible, leverage the research funds contributed under the Partnership Agreement by other means.
2. Develop program priorities and initiate project applications based on the available budgets and in line with the strategic RD&E investment priorities
3. Review projects in progress for performance against milestone reporting requirements.
4. Review completed projects for outputs, effectiveness and value for money.

In support of the RD&E committee, SRL will through this project:

1. Provide an independent Chair/Director (the Co-Investigator) with expertise in the area of fisheries RD&E management and/or sustainability to lead the RD&E Committee.
2. Provide appropriate resources to support the Committee with the capacity to arrange meetings, prepare and /or provide relevant meeting documents, record meeting outcomes, develop the Strategic Plan, RD&E programs and projects and AOP.
3. Submit the Strategic Plan, AOP and individual projects within the AOP to the FRDC for approval.
4. Consult with suitably qualified and experienced research providers for project proposals based on RD&E priorities to ensure the best possible outcomes.

In support of the RD&E Committee State management agencies will:

1. Provide a management representative to the RD&E Committee and fund the costs of participation (dependent on budget constraints).
2. Ensure the committee operates in conjunction with other key stakeholders, research partners and appropriate resources.
3. Adopt the RD&E outputs where appropriate to their jurisdiction.

The annual planning cycle will be implemented with the following steps:

1. State fishery agencies will provide the SRL Board with a nomination for a management representative to RD&E Committee.
2. SRL Board confirms appointment of Independent Chair, SRL Directors and Fishery managers to the RD&E Committee.

3. Committee seeks input to RD&E plan from relevant stakeholders.
4. RD&E Plan to include:
 - a. review current plan and progress
 - b. assess regional priorities
 - c. establish outcomes desired and time-frame
 - d. identify funding stream options
 - e. produce revised plan for approval
 - f. develop and approve Annual Operating Plan (AOP)
 - g. submit AOP and project applications to FRDC for approval
 - h. identify other R&D funding options/agencies and suitable projects
5. In the life of this project at least two workshops are to be conducted with relevant stakeholders to review and update the RD&E Plan and strategic objectives and priorities.

Objective 2: Deliver a corporate structure, resources and processes for SRL that ensures:

1. Leadership focusing on continuous industry development through the delivery of the SRL Strategic Plan
2. A strategic focus on maximising profitability across the value chain within the limits of sustainability of the resource,
3. High level governance at the operational, planning and strategic level; and
4. Effective engagement of all stakeholders in planning and building SRL's value proposition to ensure further development within the fishery and relevance of SRL's functions.

Resources: Independent Chair/Director RD&E, Principal investigator (EO), SRL Board, administrative services, office facilities and communication equipment.

The SRL Board will:

1. Establish and maintain direct links to grass-roots fishers, processors/exporters and other key stakeholders through the State networks to communicate priorities and projects.
2. Make the Strategic Plan and Annual Operating Plan publicly available and build awareness about R&D goals and priorities.

In terms of reporting, monitoring and governance, the SRL Board will:

1. Engage with all stakeholders in the delivery of the SRL Strategic Plan and RD&E plan that supports the overall strategic goals.
2. Ensure high level governance experience is maintained on the Board and further develop that governance experience and ability by:
 - a. Conducting governance reviews
 - b. Director succession planning that would encourage and enable young industry members to join the Board of SRL prior to the mandatory expiration of the term of existing Board members.
3. Engage accounting and bookkeeping professionals
4. Host an open annual general meeting to present and annual report and audited accounts.
5. Develop annual budget and provide up to date financial reports and projections
6. Review project outcomes.
7. Undertake an annual independent audit of finances.

Objective 3: Engage with Southern Rock Lobster Processors and Exporters (post-harvest sector) to establish a representative body and processes for contributing to industry RD&E initiatives and representation of this body on the SRL Board.

This element of the project will:

1. Assist in establishing a formal structure for the post harvest sector to constructively engage with each other and other stakeholders to address common issues.
2. Ensure the Southern Rock Lobster post harvest sector is organised and representative in contributing to industry development, promotion and market profiling and research opportunities.
3. Facilitate cash and in-kind contributions from the processing-exporting sector in support of their specific project and RD&E needs.

Resources: as per objective 1 and 2.

This element of the project will involve considerable communication with processor exporter entities through SRL's state based member organisations.

Objective 4: Communicate consistent information and the extension of R&D outputs to support and promote the adoption of new technology, science and other project outcomes through mediums such as the SRL Newsletter, website and fact sheets.

1. Establish a list of stakeholder contacts that can provide assistance with preparing relevant articles with an emphasis on extension articles from R&D outcomes
2. Communicate with State Industry Associations for material to prepare articles regarding key industry developments and of general interest
3. Prepare articles of general industry/SRL matters of interest
4. Review and update the list of industry and stakeholder contacts to distribute the SRL Newsletter.
5. Distribute Newsletters through surface mail and circulate electronically
6. Review and update the SRL website as required
7. Review and update SRL promotional material (Fact sheets) with relevant information

Performance Indicators

The performance indicators for this project are:

Objective 1:

- Appointment of RD&E Committee Confirmed annually
- Strategic Plan and RD&E is reviewed and updated (twice in the life of the project)
- Annual Operating Plan is produced annually and high priority high returning projects that deliver the plan are approved and undertaken
- Completed projects are reviewed and assessed for outputs, effectiveness and value for money
- Projects that contribute to underpinning the GVP and viability of the industry are undertaken
- Fishery sustainability ensure compliance with the EPBC Act

Objective 2.

- Provide leadership focusing on continuous industry development through the delivery of the SRL Strategic Plan
- Deliver a strategic focus on maximising profitability across the value chain within the limits of sustainability of the resource,
- Provide a high level governance at the operational, planning and strategic level;
- SRL Board operates with a full complement of competent Directors
- SRL operates within budget
- SRL meets all statutory and funding agency reporting requirements

- Industry involved in planning and priority setting
- Broad stakeholder representation and input at strategic planning

Objective 3:

- Establishment of a processors/ exporters (post harvest) forum with a regular planned meeting schedule
- Processor/exporter input into the SRL strategic planning and priority setting process
- Actively contributing to project development, implementation and take-up of outputs
- Establishing a mechanism to contribute to promotion and market profiling activities

Objective 4:

- Two editions of the SRL News will be produced per year over the life of the project communicating consistent information on R&D project outcomes and to keep stakeholders across each jurisdiction properly informed on matters of local, state and national interest.
- Extension of R&D outcomes to promote adoption
- Regular updates on the SRL website
- Promotional material (Fact sheets) reviewed and updated

Risk Analysis

Risks that have been identified to the successful achievement of the Objectives are:

Continued support: Having the State Fishery Agencies and Rock Lobster associations' ongoing support is a critical element for ensuring the success of the regional approach to RD&E. This will be managed jointly by the Chairman and Executive Officer of SRL.

Research Co-operation: The cooperation between State-based research providers has also been identified as a key element in achieving cost-effective RD&E outcomes. This risk will be managed by appointment of a RD&E Director who will be a member of the Board of SRL and will have responsibility for managing this risk.

Balancing priorities: Achieving a balance between Government and industry priorities in allocating the available R&D funds is likely to be an ongoing challenge which will require ongoing management. The priorities out of the strategic plan and the role of the credible highly qualified Director to lead the process who is independent of Government and industry is aimed specifically at mitigating this risk.

Other threats include:

Loss of key staff: This will be managed through normal recruiting processes.

Loss of broad industry support: This will be managed through EO liaison and development of a dedicated extension program in the first year of the project

Outputs and Outcomes

The outputs from the project will be as follows:

- Leadership to deliver new Southern Rock Lobster Strategic Plan
- Strong focus on the continuous 'development' of the industry
- Southern Rock Lobster Strategic Plan – reviewed bi-annually (X2 workshops)
- RD&E Plan – Priorities and Annual Operating Plan (AOP) reviewed annually
- Alternative R&D Funding streams and leveraging opportunities
- Current project commitments completed
- Proposed projects reviewed
- New projects commenced
- Completed projects reviewed for outputs, effectiveness and value for money
- Extension of R&D to support adoption of comes
- Annual report and financials presented - Annual General meeting held
- More effective representation from post harvest sector
- Post harvest sector input into industry promotion and market profiling opportunities

The project involves extensive leadership in communication and engagement across all industry sectors (producers, processors and exporters) to ensure broad industry awareness of, and involvement in, the annual RD&E planning and management cycle. In addition key stakeholders i.e. industry, managers, research partners and funding agencies will be communicated with and involved in the planning process.

The outcomes of the project will accrue to Fisheries managers, research partners and the commercial Australian Southern Rock Lobster sector. The project will provide the resources, structure and process to deliver the following outcomes:

1. Cost effective whole of species RD&E planning and priority setting
2. Cost effective engagement with relevant stakeholders
3. Investment in RD&E projects with high rates of return and high probability of success
4. Explicit and transparent project development process.
5. Leadership and development across the supply chain

The project will be the continuation of an efficient "one-stop-shop" for planning, managing, funding and monitoring Southern Rock Lobster research projects linked to the national RD&E strategy will result. Continuing improvement in the quality and co-ordination of projects undertaken will also occur with a focus on industry leadership and development.

Extension

The Objective of the Plan are:

1. To inform all relevant stakeholders the Southern Rock Lobster RD&E Strategy and Priorities
2. To communicate to all relevant stakeholders the R&D projects that have been approved and commenced
3. Provide a forum for Principal Investigators to present project outputs – outcomes
4. To communicate and promote the adoption of project outputs-outcomes to all Southern Rock Lobster industry stakeholders

Target Audiences are:

1. Research providers relevant to Southern Rock Lobster
2. Rock Lobster Producers and Processors/Exporters
3. Government fishery management agencies in relevant jurisdictions
4. General Public

Key Messages are:

1. The agreed and supported strategy and priorities for Southern Rock Lobster R&D programs
2. The industry government partnership and investment in R&D
3. The outputs – outcomes from R&D projects
4. Southern Rock Lobster a Successful and Sustainably Managed Fishery
5. Informing of general developments that of a local, state, national and international interest

The methods to deliver the message to the target audience are:

1. Workshop to engage stakeholders in the strategic planning and priority setting process
2. Dissemination of information through State rock lobster industry bodies of projects approved/commenced and outputs-outcomes
3. Direct Communication to Relevant Stakeholders of Strategic Plan and R&D priorities
4. Identify forum for project providers to present their output – outcomes
5. Use of the SRL annual report, website and Newsletter as well as industry and FRDC publications
6. Produce two SRL News per year to assist in disseminating all of the above information

ACTION PLAN

1. During Project
 - a. Hold workshop and communicate updated Strategic plan and priorities
 - b. Arrange Presentation of R&D Project results to RD&E Committee and prepare articles for dissemination – Newsletters website
 - c. Produce two editions of the SRL News publication per year
 - d. Update Fact sheets and support displays and relevant industry events
2. After Project

It is anticipated that SRL will continue to be the lead organisation for managing and coordinating R&D in the Southern Rock Lobster fishery following this project and will promote R&D activities and outputs-outcomes, past, current and what is proposed in the future.

Evaluation

As a part of its annual R&D strategic planning review and priority setting process, SRL will monitor the success of communicating the key messages to all relevant stakeholders.

Consultation

This project proposal follows on from the Project Agreement Southern Rock Lobster national RD&E Planning and management (Project No 2010/402) that commenced in October 2011 and was based on the first five year Industry Partnership Agreement that was signed in 2010. For four years prior to that, a project titled Southern Rock Lobster Industry research and development planning, implementation and extension (project No 2006/215) was undertaken.

With a nine year history on making a significant contribution to the strategic planning and management of Research, Development & extension (RD&E) in the Southern Rock Lobster fishery SRL is well placed and supported to continue in this role.

At the beginning of project 2010/402 there was significant change with SRL making new appointments to the roles of Chair and Executive Officer. The incumbents to these roles have made a very concerted effort to communicate and consult with all the key Southern Rock Lobster fishery stakeholders during the past five years. SRL has been very focused on maintaining and building on relationships with all industry stakeholders.

Following a mid-term review of SRL's project performance SRL undertook extensive consultation with its member associations (SARLAC and TRLFA) and key government fisheries agencies during 2014. While a lot of the discussion focused on activities that SRL could undertake to provide a broader level of service through assuming responsibility for more generic 'national' industry issues, there was total support to continue to manage and coordinate the national Southern Rock Lobster RD&E program.

During the project 2010/402 SRL has enhanced Trans-Tasman collaboration with the NZRLIC and there is now regular dialogue on sharing costs on R&D and other industry projects.

Dr Gary Morgan recently stepped down from Chair of SRL and was replaced by another outstanding fisheries scientist, Prof Colin Buxton. This appointment has been endorsed by Industry and assists with providing new ideas and energy to SRL.

In the past year the Victorian industry peak rock lobster body VRLA re-joined SRL which now operates with the total support of the industry across the three Southern Rock Lobster producing jurisdictions.

Project Staff

Principal Investigator: Justin Phillips (SRL EO)

Co-investigator: Colin Buxton (SRL Chair)

Project duration

4 years

Project Budget

2016/17	\$197,400.00
2017/18	\$177,900.00
2018/19	\$178,900.00
2019/20	\$207,000.00

The above budget includes a \$54,400.00 p.a. from industry in addition to the .25% R&D levy contribution from industry