

Information sheet 1 Common terms used by the seafood industry

Principal source: FRDC Annual Report Glossary

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia (AFFA) - the Commonwealth department having portfolio responsibility for agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

aquaculture - farming of fish or aquatic plants.

Australian Bureau of Agriculture & Resource Economics (ABARE) - Australia's largest applied economic research agency specialising in commodities.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) - the Commonwealth statutory authority responsible for the management of fisheries under Commonwealth jurisdiction.

The Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC) - the peak body for the Australian Seafood Industry. ASIC's charter is, on behalf of the seafood industry, to promote long term viability, industry development and commercial success of industry members in a climate of resource sustainability.

biodiversity - biological diversity: variability among living organisms - including genetic diversity, diversity within and between species, and a diversity within ecosystems.

Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS) - Information on fisheries resources and management.

bycatch - Species and sizes taken incidentally in a fishery where other species and sizes are the target. Bycatch species may be of lesser economic value than the target species, and are often discarded over the side of the boat - though some with commercial value are retained for sale. In addition to fish, bycatch species include marine mammals, seabirds, weed and coral. Non-targeted species that can be harvested legally and for which there is a market; commodities (for example, fish oil, fish leather) resulting from processing that is intended chiefly to produce other products.

bycatch reduction device (BRD) - a modification to fishing gear to reduce the catch or kill of bycatch species during fishing operations.

co-management - a more inclusive approach to fisheries management that takes into account not only the views of government agencies responsible for fisheries but also those responsible for the environment, industry development, science, and regional and urban planning; and industry, community and special-interest groups.

corporate governance - the management process concerned with structures and processes for decision-making, and with controls and behaviour within organisations that support effective accountability for performance outcomes.

crustacea or crustaceans - arthropod animals, characterised by a hard, close-fitting shell that is shed periodically. Includes prawns, crabs, lobsters, shrimps, bugs and freshwater crayfish.

ecologically sustainable development (ESD) - Using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained and the total quality of life - now and in the future - can be increased.

ecosystem - a community of organisms interacting with each other, and the environment in which they live.

exclusive economic zone (EEZ) - the zone extending outwards from the baseline of continental Australia and its island territories to 200 nautical miles into the surrounding waters. Australia's EEZ was declared in 1994 under the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982, the main international instrument that regulates marine fisheries. The declaration conferred the right to explore and exploit, and the responsibility to conserve and manage, the living and non-living resources of the zone.

fish - living aquatic vertebrate and invertebrate organisms, including marine mammals and reptiles, and such organisms after they have been harvested.

fishery - a class of activities by way of fishing, including activities identified by reference to all or any of:

- a species or type of fish
- a description of fish by reference to sex or any other characteristic
- an area of water or seabed
- a method of fishing
- a class of boats
- a class of persons; and/or
- a purpose of activities, as determined by the relevant management authority.

fishing industry - includes any industry or activity conducted in or from Australia concerned with: taking, culturing, processing, preserving, storing, transporting, marketing or selling fish or fish products. The industry comprises three sectors:

- The commercial sector. All enterprises and individuals associated with wild-catch or aquaculture resources and the various transformations of those resources into products for sale. Also referred to as the "seafood industry", although non-food items such as pearls are included among its products.
- The recreational sector. All enterprises and individuals associated – for the purpose of recreation, sport or sustenance – with fisheries resources from which products are derived that are not for sale.
- The traditional sector. All enterprises and individuals associated with fisheries resources from which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people derive products in accordance with their traditions.

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) - national organisation responsible for planning, funding and managing research and development programs and facilitating their dissemination, adoption and commercialisation.

GVP - gross value of production: the average gross value of fisheries production for the three preceding years.

landed value - the value of a product at the wharf or aquaculture tank, before value-adding. When referring only to aquaculture, the equivalent term of "farmgate value" is usually used.

Oceans Policy, Australian - a Commonwealth Government policy, initiated in 1998, that aims to develop an integrated, ecosystem-based approach to planning and management for all ocean uses. Implementation is mainly through regional marine plans for areas based on large ecosystems, which are binding on all Commonwealth Government agencies.

seafood community - the seafood industry plus government departments and agencies who work in support of the industry.

seafood industry - includes any industry or activity conducted in or from Australia concerned with: taking, culturing, processing, preserving, storing, transporting, marketing or selling fish or fish products. The commercial sector comprises enterprises and individuals associated with wild-catch or aquaculture resources and various transformations of those resources into products for sale.

Seafood Services Australia (SSA) - Seafood Services Australia provides an Australia-wide service to people who catch, farm, process, transport, wholesale, retail, export, import or cook seafood. The service encompasses:

- information and advice on technical issues
- guidance on food safety, and on quality and environmental management and standards
- assistance with adding value to businesses through developing new products and processes.

Seafood Training Australia (STA) - the education and training arm of the ASIC. STA's primary task is to increase the skillbase of workers in the seafood industry. This is being achieved by introducing competency based training through the Seafood Industry Training Package which covers all sectors of the Australian seafood industry.

STA's major roles are to:

- provide advice to government and other agencies on the training priorities for all sectors of the Australian seafood industry and
- assist with the development and marketing of the industry's Training Package and learning materials to support the uptake of vocational training programs.

sustainable - a characteristic of a process or a state that can be maintained indefinitely.

value-adding - any activity that results in products and services becoming more valuable or competitive, thus increasing financial returns or other desired outcomes.

Women's Industry Network Seafood Community (WINSOC) - a community-based network of women working in all sectors of the seafood industry. Its objectives are to:

- recognise and enhance the skills of women
- develop effective partnerships with government agencies and other industry stakeholders
- create a supportive environment to ensure women reach their potential
- actively encourage the involvement of women
- provide community education on all aspects of the seafood industry.

Information sheet 2 Finding handout materials and further reading

Local fisheries compliance officers may have handy material

Finding handout materials

Whenever you are holding an event or giving a presentation it's a good idea to give your audience some information about the industry to take home to reinforce your key messages.

Local industry profiles presented as a fact sheet or brochure are great promotional tools to use as handouts.



There is plenty of help out there. It's just a matter of finding it. State and territory fisheries departments and government agencies and organisations associated with the seafood industry are the best starting points for handout materials for events. Most information is focused on their organisations. However some of it is useful to you in getting various messages across about the industry.



There may be a nominal cost for some publications. Before approaching an organisation decide what handout or promotional information you are after. Prepare an outline of who your target audience is and then decide what information they want or that would appeal to them. Estimate the number of people who may be there to ensure you have enough to go around. You'll get the best results if you can demonstrate that it's good promotion for those providing the handouts.

Websites are a great time saver for getting a lot of information, but ensure that the information and sources are credible before distributing it. If you don't have access to the internet you may be able to use resources at your local library or an internet café.



Further reading

The following publications provide additional useful reading. However, for quick access to further information, it is recommended that you look in the websites for the government departments and agencies and industry organisations.

A Guide to Bycatch Reduction in Australian Prawn Trawl Fisheries. Eayrs, S., Buxton, C. and McDonald, B. Australian Maritime College, Australia 1997

A key reference guide to temperate marine species

An comprehensive and authoritative overview of commercial fishing, fisheries and techniques in Australia

Australian Fisheries Resources. Edited by P.J. Kailola et al, BRS and FRDC, Canberra 1993

Australian Fisheries Statistics, ABARE and FRDC. Updated each years

Australian Marine Life: the plants and animals of temperate waters. Graham J. Edgar, Reed Books, 1997

Australian Seafood Handbook: an identification guide to domestic species. Edited by G.K. Yearsley, P.R. Last and R.D. Ward, CSIRO Marine Research Australia 1999.

Available free to commercial fishers.

Bycatch solutions: A handbook for fishers in non-trawl fisheries. Duncan Leadbitter, FRDC Report No.1998/201. Ocean Watch Australia Ltd., Australia. Fish Futures. FRDC

Investing for tomorrow's fish: the FRDC's research and development plan, 2000-2005. FRDC, Canberra, 2000.

Protected Species Handling Manual. Leadbitter, D. Ocean Watch Australia Ltd, Australia 1998

R & D News. FRDC regular newsletter

The key reference guide to Australian seafood species, including a standardisation of common and scientific names.

The reference for FRDC's policies, programs, and operations 2000-2005.

Check out ABARE/AFMA/BRS/FRDC/SSA websites for publications that are available. Often they have summaries of the publications.

Information sheet 3 Making better use of communication technologies

Technology is moving so fast that it is hard to keep up with the changes – which can be overwhelming. Control it before it controls you! Fax machines, telephones, the internet and e-mails have opened up new ways of communicating.

The decentralised nature of the seafood industry has traditionally made communication challenging – these new technologies can help enormously in keeping in touch with people and finding information that will help you go about your daily business.

Consider making better use of them.

Fax machines

These little machines have sped up the sending and receiving of information. It's great for sending news clippings and other information on paper (hard copy). All you need is a phone line and fax machine. It's very easy to operate. A Faxstream Duet is one line that gives you separate phone and fax numbers.

Telephones

Telstra and other telecommunication service providers now have a wide range of services that allow you to do all sorts of things.

These include 3-way chat- have a conversation with two people at once, and ConferLink- have a conversation with lots of people from just one telephone.



These are useful for conducting meetings when time and distance make face to face meetings difficult. Talking with two others is easy enough- you can recognise a couple of voices. It is much harder when there are 15 or 20 people on line. That requires good management and manners to ensure everyone has the opportunity to talk. Like any meeting, tele-links need someone to act as Chair, to keep control and work to an agenda. Everyone also needs to have the agenda, either faxed or e-mailed before the hook-up.

It is a good idea for the participants to identify themselves before they speak. If you are chairing the meeting, explain this as part of the procedure. Keep track of who has spoken and invite those who haven't to give comment.

Check out the costs and beware - a mobile on the line will significantly increase the cost. Otherwise it's generally economical and easy enough to set up. Phone Telstra or your telecommunication provider for details.

There's also a long list of other services such as call waiting, message banks, call control, remote access, etc. It's worth looking at ones that can help you stay in the communication loop.

The internet

Take a deep breath and relax, the internet is not as scary as you think.



Some people get hooked on it and spend days floating through cyberspace searching for information they don't need. But if you've got purpose and work methodically you can retrieve information and communicate most effectively and quickly using the internet.

If you've got access to the internet at home you are half way there- just ask a kid how to get onto the 'net'. It only takes a few clicks of the mouse. Most council libraries also have computers with internet access and usually a friendly librarian to help you through the basics.

Before you start, list what it is you are looking for. For example you want information about aquaculture. Have a list of things you want to find out about, such as regulations and permits, assistance and funding, organisations and markets.

Go to the web address of FRDC or your state fishery department. From here just follow the instructions/prompts. There's always the back icon in the top left if you get lost.

Most state/territory fisheries departments have easy to use sites that tell you about anything from catch data to cooking mullet. When you find a website you like that has lots of 'links' you like, add it to your 'favourites' file.

If there is an organisation you want to contact but are unsure of the address try [www.name of the organisation.com.au](http://www.name.of.the.organisation.com.au). or gov.au or org.au - then hit 'go', it should come up with some options to try. Most sites are listed in lower case and use acronyms.

There's also search engines where you type in key words - like 'fisheries' and it'll find hundreds of sites to choose from.

It is a whole new language to get used to but the words are pretty simple and usually appropriately describe what they do. Compared to the seafood industry jargon, it's a breeze!



There are plenty of opportunities for computer training. Contact WINSC in your state/territory for details. Also look for training through the rural women's groups and government in your state/territory. You can find this information on the websites.

E-mails

With just a little instruction and considerable practice, e-mail (electronic mail) opens up a new way of communicating. To get started you need computer access and an e-mail service provider. When you first hook up you will be supplied with an instruction guide that is invaluable and user-friendly. Patience and persistence are required.

Once you are connected you'll soon discover what a useful tool it is. It's fast, cheap and can be relatively informal. While there are some rules of etiquette about using e-mail (eg. using all capital letters for a word or words is considered to be 'shouting'), generally you can write as you would speak.

Most of the time grammar, punctuation and spelling are not as important, but most programs have a spell and grammar check you can use. E-mail saves time because you can communicate when it suits you rather than when you and the other person/people are both/all available.

A big advantage of e-mail is that you have a record of what is said and when it was said. You can attach documents and send the e-mail to more than one person - another time saver when communicating with a number of people about the same subject. There's no 'yellow pages' for e-mail addresses so it can be initially difficult to find people's e-mail addresses. However once you are online it doesn't take long to build up your e-mail address book.

Warning: Computer viruses are the scourge of computers. There are some computer vandals out there who devise these destructive programs that get into your computer via e-mail, internet or shared discs and destroy files and hard drives. Make sure you have a good quality virus checker and update regularly. Most importantly, do regular backups of your files. If you receive an e-mail from an unknown source and it looks suspicious do not open it. Delete it immediately. Also delete it from your recycle bin.

Good luck!

Free e-mail addresses are available from a number of providers like 'hotmail'

Information sheet 4

Contact details and websites

The Australian Seafood Industry Directory 2001-2002 is available from Seafood Services Australia, phone 1300-130-321. The directory provides comprehensive listing of agencies and companies that services the seafood industry.

The following details provide telephone contacts and web addresses where available. Most websites provide links to other websites. It's worth having a look at some of the links.

National

Australian Aquaculture Forum	(03) 6211-6666	
Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE)	(02) 6272-2000	www.abare.gov.au
Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)	(02) 6272-5029	www.afma.gov.au
Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS)	(07) 4753-4480	www.aims.gov.au
Australian Marine Conservation Society	1800-066-299	www.amcs.org.au
Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC)	(02) 6281-0383	www.asic.org.au
Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS)	(02) 6272-5177	www.brs.gov.au
Coastcare (Environment Australia community Information Unit)	1800-803-772	www.environment.gov.au/marine/coastcare
CSIRO Division of Marine Research	(03) 6232-5222	www.marine.csiro.au
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia (AFFA)	(02) 6272-3933	http://www.affa.gov.au/
Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC)	(02) 6285-0400	www.frdc.com.au
Marine & Coastal Community Network	1800-815-332	www.mccn.org.au
National SeaNet Program	(02) 9552-3181	www.oceanwatch.org.au
Ocean Watch Australia Ltd	(02) 9660-2262	www.oceanwatch.org.au
Recfish Australia	(02) 6257-1997	http://216.121.25.179/
Seafood Services Australia	1300-130-321	http://www.ssaust.com/
Seafood Training Australia	(02) 6281-0383	www.seafoodtraining.com.au

New South Wales

Master Fish Merchants Association	(02) 9552-1611	www.mfma.com.au
National Parks Association of NSW	(02) 9299-0000	www.NPANSW.cjb.net
NSW Fisheries	(02) 9527-8411	www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au
NSW Seafood Industry Council	(02) 9552-3300	
SeaNet Program	(02) 9552-3181	www.oceanwatch.org.au

Northern Territory

Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory	(08) 8932-3733	www.afant.com.au
Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries	(08) 8999-4321	www.nt.gov.au/dpif
Northern Territory Seafood Industry Council	(08) 8981-5194	

Queensland

East Coast Tuna Fishery SeaNet Extension Officer	(07) 5478-4611	
Queensland Department of Primary Industries	(07) 3224-2164	www.dpi.qld.gov.au
Queensland Seafood Industry Association	(07) 3262-6855	www.qsia.com.au
SeaNet Program	0500-894-011	www.oceanwatch.org.au
Sunfish (Queensland)	(07) 3216-5785	www.sunfishqueensland.org

South Australia

Primary Industries and Resources SA	(08) 8226-2311	www.pir.sa.gov.au
SA Recreational Fishing Advisory Council	(08) 8132-0430	
Seafood Council South Australia	(08) 8303-2796	www.fishindustry.sa.com.au
SeaNet Program	0429-110-026	www.oceanwatch.org.au
South Australian Fishing Industry Council	(08) 8363-6811	www.safic.asn.au

Tasmania

Tasmanian Amateur Sea Fishermen's Association	(03) 6228-6920	www.afant.com.au
Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment	(03) 6233-8011	www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au
Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council	(03) 6224-2332	

Victoria

Fisheries Victoria: commercial	(03) 9895-6999	
Fisheries Victoria: recreational	(03) 5226-4667	
Seafood Industry Victoria	(03) 9824-0744	www.siv.com.au
SeaNet Program	(03) 9824-0755	www.oceanwatch.org.au
VRFish (Victoria)	(03) 9412-5164	www.vrfish.com.au

Western Australia

Fisheries Western Australia	(08) 9482-7333	www.wa.gov.au/westfish
Recfishwest (WA)	(08) 9387-7864	www.recfishwest.org.au
WA Fishing Industry Council	(08) 9244-2933	www.wafic.com.au
Western Australian Dept of Conservation and Land Management(CALM)		www.calm.wa.gov.au

Other useful contacts

School education

Gould League	(08) 8389-1611	www.gould.com.au
Marine Educators Society of Australasia	(08) 9482-7333	www.ecwa.asn.au/resguide/mesa.html

Community education/networking

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia (AFFA) www.affa.gov.au/docs/industry_develop/women/index.html	(02) 6272-3933	
Australian Marine Conservation Society	(07) 3843-5235 1800-066-299	www.amcs.org.au
Coastal Habitat Resources Information System Coastcare	http://chrisweb.dpi.qld.gov.au/chris/ (02) 6274-1967	www.environment.gov.au/marine/coastcare
Marine and Coastal Community Network	(07) 3848-5360	www.mccn.org.au

Careers, training and personal development

AFFA Balance Database- computerised skills register of women and men interested in being considered for appointment to AFFA boards and authorities. Information for registration.	(02) 6272-3933	balance@affa.gov.au
AFFA Women in Rural Industries Section www.affa.gov.au/docs/industry_develop/women/index.html	(02) 6272-3933	
Australian Fisheries Academy	(08) 8303-2780	www.afa.edu.au
Australian Maritime College	1800-030-277	www.amc.edu.au
Australian Women in Agriculture		www.awia.org.au
Country Women's Association of Australia	(07) 3839-4066	www.cwaa.org.au/
National Fishing Industry Education Centre of TAFE	(02) 6644-7353	www.natfish.tafensw.edu.au
NSW Rural Women's Network	(02) 6391-3620	http://agric.nsw.gov.au/rwn/index.html
Queensland Rural Women's Network	1800-177-577	www.qldwoman.qld.gov.au/links/rural.html
Rural Remote and Regional Women's Network Western Australia	(08) 9327-5165	http://www.rrr.online.wa.gov.au
Rural Women's Network Victoria		http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/ruralwomen.html
Seafood Training Australia (STA)	(02) 6281-0383	www.asic.org.au
Tertiary institutions - Study link		www.studylink.com.au
The Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women	0500-553-229	www.faaw.org.au

SEARCH ENGINE SITES

Google	www.google.com
Yahoo	http://au.yahoo

Information sheet 5

Templates and checklists

Contact list	copy or use as a guide for making your own	2
Contact list of key people	copy or use as a guide for making your own	3
Task list	copy or use as a guide for making your own	4
Talk structure	copy or use as a guide for making your own	5
Local industry profile	follow the prompts for making your own	6
Fact sheet addressing an issue	follow the prompts for making your own	7
Seafood Cookbook Task list	copy or use as a guide for making your own	8
Staff briefing notes	copy or use as a guide for making your own	9

Talk Structure

Introduction:

Attract the audience's attention (use a quote, anecdote or welcoming statement) _____

Give the audience a reason to listen _____

Provide a clear outline of your talk _____



Linking phrase: Now I would like to turn to my first point:

First point of talk

Heading: _____

Subheading: _____

Subheading: _____



Subheading: _____

Linking phrase: I have described X now let me turn to my second point Y

Second point of talk

Heading: _____

Subheading: _____

Subheading: _____



Subheading: _____

Linking phrase: Now I would like to turn to my final point Z

Third point of talk

Heading: _____

Subheading: _____

Subheading: _____



Subheading: _____

Linking phrase: Before I conclude, let me first summarise

Conclusion:

Summary of talk _____

"Take home message" _____

Strong exit line _____

Local industry profile

The following headings and prompts are a guide only, you may have more appropriate headings for your area. Just remember to keep it simple and on a single page if possible. Clear headings act as sign posts for easy reading

Title:

NAME OF PORT OR AREA seafood industry

Types of fishing operations

List types of fishing operations/methods- trawl, net, line, trap aquaculture etc. provides descriptions of fishing methods.



Species taken and seasons

If they are year round fisheries say so otherwise you could do a table as shown below.

Species	Season
Mullet	April-June
Prawns, squid, bugs	December-March
Whiting, flathead, bream	Year round
Mud crabs	September-April

Markets

Mention where it's sold- locally, within Australia or export- highlight any great achievements in marketing- like a big export market or a value added niche market.

Value of the industry to the local community

State a dollar figure representing the landed value of the catch, the industry's investment- that's the value of the fleet and gear.

BRS Social Science Centre, Fisheries Dept or peak industry body may be able to provide some of this information.

Number of fishing families

Include the number of people directly working in the industry- number of jobs.



Other industries relying on the fishing fleet

For example: processing, marketers, boat building and maintenance, fuel, bait and net suppliers etc.

Restrictions placed on the fishing operations

List fisheries regulations- closures, quotas, size, gear restrictions etc

Also mention weather and seasonal restrictions if applicable.

Problems/issues facing the industry

Use bullet points to summarise these such as:

- water quality affecting fish nursery areas
- conflict over resource allocation with recreational fishers
- fisheries regulations making smaller operators unviable

Industry initiatives within the community

Use bullet points to list all the good things the industry is doing within the community such as:

- sponsors local netball and cricket teams
- hosts annual Seafood Festival Family Fun Day for the community
- participates in regional tourist council activities
- sponsors best restaurant contest
- organises an annual seafood awards competition

What the industry is doing for the environment

Use bullet points to highlight activities such as:

- voluntary clean and green code of practice which includes no rubbish overboard and eco friendly packaging
- using turtle and bycatch reduction devices
- undertaken courses in handling protected species

Who to contact for further information

Give at least two contact names of people who can provide further information and act as spokespersons for the industry.

Fact sheet addressing an issue

Try to be positive sounding - don't have problems-call them challenges and offer solutions.

Title including location and issue

The title should include the location of the industry and what the issue is. Make it short and descriptive.

Background

Describe what's happened that has lead to the issue.

The industry's position

Describe the industry's attitude towards the issue.

Who it affects

List those affected if the issue/problem is not resolved. Include as appropriate, the impacts on consumers, fishers, the local economy and other businesses, and the environment.

What's being done by the industry

List or describe the actions industry is taking to progress the issue. Make it as positive sounding as possible.

Planned outcomes

Describe what you are hoping to achieve. This can be done in bullet points if there is a long list of outcomes.

Who to contact for further information

Give at least two contact names of people who can provide further information and act as spokespersons for the industry.

Seafood Cookbook Task list

Task	By whom	By when	Outcomes
Decide on the style for the cookbook			
Decide on who you are going to sell it to and where			
Decide on the design, paper and printing and how many you want printed			
Get quotes for the printing and marketing of the book			
Compile, edit and proof read the book			
Oversee production and distribution			
Write a media release about the book			
Book launch			
Budget and financial management of the project			
Sales and promotion			

Staff briefing notes

Event:

Opening times/staff roster

Date	Times	Staff roster

Information about the event:

Who will attend:

About the display:

Likely questions and answers:

What to wear:

Contact details of display coordinator:

Information sheet 6 Avoiding Conflict

Conflict is the product of differences in perceptions, goals, attitudes and values. It can arise from competitive spirits. The key to avoiding conflict is to be aware of the causes and to be active in open communication. Maintain a high level of information exchange between all parties. Keep them talking and listening.

Tips for avoiding conflict

- Promote open communication where information is freely exchanged and everyone's opinions are respected.
- Accept different viewpoints. Agree to disagree if necessary.
- Encourage discussion and reach consensus on decisions made by the group.
- Keep disagreements or dissatisfaction in-house - airing grievances outside the group is unproductive and will only weaken you as a group.
- Use an open forum such as a meeting to air concerns if it's affecting the majority.
- Address misunderstandings before they turn into suspicion and a string of conspiracy theories which will lead to a tense and unproductive working environment.

If conflict between individuals does develop, follow these steps to work through the problem:

1. Define the problem. There may be many things worrying people. Discuss all the influences and narrow it down to the real source of the problem.
2. Summarise all the causes and prioritise the root causes. Don't try to solve the problem immediately as you may overlook deeper issues.
3. Identify all the solutions and prioritise them. Brainstorming is a great way of getting achievable solutions. You'll also get shared ownership for the solutions.
4. Assess the potential solution. Will it fix the problem/s already identified and can it be realistically achieved?
5. Select the best solution and act on it. Confirm that all parties are agreeable and if necessary and appropriate, put it in writing. Most importantly, let it go and move on.

Tips for resolving conflict

- try hard to understand other's points of view;
- let everyone have their say, during open and frank discussion;
- listen reflectively to what they are saying;
- look for common ground;
- acknowledge other's expertise;
- separate people from the problem;
- look for solutions that take into account the needs of all parties.

Still not happy campers?

In spite of your best efforts, one or two people in the group may still be consistently unreasonable or overly critical. Some people are simply not team players and will never function well in a group situation. Others can be managed if they are given more responsibility or a single project to focus on. Busy people usually do not have the time to cause trouble.

If all efforts have failed, let this person know that a lot of valuable energy is being channelled into dealing with this issue and this is preventing the group from achieving its full potential. Be firm and fair and let them know the situation cannot continue. If it is a personality clash and you have tried to include them in all aspects of decision-making, move on without them.

Remember, when group members are acting in a voluntary capacity they need to feel valued, they need to enjoy their time as part of the group and they need to know they are achieving results. Voluntary groups need to be flexible and accommodating, but not all relationships will work out. If you feel you, or your group, have tried to resolve the conflict to the best of your ability but you have been unsuccessful, it is time to re-focus on group goals and move on.

