

## Media Release No. 690

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### **Joint project ‘Growing Our Own’ is creating employment pathways**

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), in partnership with Tagai State College, MyPathway and TAFE North Queensland, have commenced the first in a series of projects to provide employment pathways for school leavers.

The partners all have an interest in developing the skills and abilities of school leavers, and have been working cooperatively with the students to develop an innovative training package.

Each of the partners in the programme are bringing to the table a range of skills and expertise to assist the school leavers to identify their individual goals and a meaningful pathway to employment.

The TSRA Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, said this is the first time year 12 students with an interest in maritime related employment have been offered the opportunity to commence a Coxswain Course that allows them to operate a commercial vessel up to 12 metres.

“Thirteen students have all been undertaking the marine studies stream at Tagai Campus and this training will round out their skills and remove a significant barrier to employment,” Mr Elu said.

“The students were given the opportunity to identify their areas of interest, these included fishing, customs and the Navy.

“The maritime industry offers a variety of employment opportunities in the Torres Strait region, including jobs in commercial fishing, tourism, ferry transport, pilotage and cargo transport.

“On completion of this round of training, the students will be moved into more specialised training in the next step of their maritime career progression. Those interested in fishing will be offered wild harvest dive training, and others interested in operating vessels will be trained in Marine Engineering qualifications.”

Mr Elu said next year there will be an expression of interest for others who have already been trained to join this group of students for a six month traineeship.

“The traineeships will allow the trainees to be paid a training wage, while being exposed to industry based placements across a broad range of industries,” Mr Elu said.

At a recent fishing industry meeting organised by the partners, many of the large fishing operators in the region pledged their support to the programme, this will provide the necessary industry exposure for the trainees to ensure they are given the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to be employed in the industry.

**ENDS**

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