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TSRA CONTINUES FUNDING MARINE PATHWAY INITIATIVES TO AID ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) has confirmed that it will continue to provide funding to the Torres Strait Marine Pathways Project (TSMPP) for 2014/15.

The TSRA Economic Development Program is injecting funding into the TSMPP for a dedicated training vessel, which is a key element of delivery of the courses, along with supporting a number of course participants through payment of course fees, travel and accommodation.

TSRA Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, said the TSMPP provides graduates with career pathways in maritime related industries such as fishing, tourism, coastal trading and the offshore maritime shipping industry.

“It’s important that these training and accreditation opportunities continue to be made available to Torres Strait Islanders, which is why the TSRA is continuing to support the initiative,” Mr Elu said.

“A number of past graduates have since obtained work in the maritime industry as a result of the valuable learning experiences gained through the program.

“During the program, participants gain a detailed insight on industry practices, processes and methodologies which can be applied throughout our local fishing industry and operations.”

The two latest components of TSMPP training has included studying Certificate III in Fishing Operations and the Wild Harvest Dive Program.

12 students travelled to Tasmania for the inaugural TSMPP Seafood Operations Course at the Australian Maritime College (AMC).

The Certificate III in Fishing Operations provided specialised seafood industry training required for operating primary fishing vessels or working in onshore support industries.

It also included nationally accredited instruction in handling, packaging, sale and distribution of seafood products, as well as level planning and business units focusing on the seafood industry.

The seafood processing coursework gave TSMPP students a great deal of insight and understanding of how seafood is kept fresh and in good condition after it has been caught in the wild.

Run as a standalone course but in conjunction with the Certificate III in Fishing Operations, the Wild Harvest Dive Program aimed to rapidly increase the acceptance of commercial dive industry standards within the Torres Strait.

Mr Elu said with a thriving commercial dive industry operating within the Torres Strait region focused on ‘Kaiar’ (Tropical Rock Lobster) and to a lesser extent ‘Bêche-de-mer’ (Sea Cucumber), improving the skills base and safety culture within the commercial diving industry is highly important.

Diver trainees successfully obtained their Wild Harvest Dive Certificate, providing industry standard diver qualifications with a strong focus on occupational health and safety.

Stephen Hurd from the AMC commended TSMPP students on their enthusiasm and dedication to their studies during the courses.

For more information visit www.tsra.gov.au

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