

**NOTES FROM THE  
INAUGURAL AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL HEMP ASSOCIATION MEETING  
HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2009 – 10.00 A.M. AT  
THE OLD DAIRY HALL, CURRUMBIN ECO VILLAGE, GOLD COAST, QUEENSLAND**

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**PRESENT**

- Graeme Barker - Matbeth Pty Ltd and Eco Board – Business Development, Architect
- Keith Bolton – Eco Team - research, manufacturing, regional development
- Tim Commins – Commins Engineering/Farming Partnership
- Greg Finlay – Farming, Agribusiness and Agri Politics
- Kathleen Green – Happy Planet – Seed manufacturing and processing, Domestic and Export Retail and Wholesale
- Jim Hall – AgriFibre –Plant Breeder, Farmer, Business Development
- Klara Marosszeky – Hemp Masonry – Research, manufacturing, Education, Regional Development
- Ian Murray – Rockcote - Building Supplies, business development
- Ray and Beatrice Rankin - Hemp Gallery – Wholesale and Retail
- Peter Simmul – University of Tasmania – TAS DPI - Research and Industry Development
- Matt Stapleton – IHAQ Inc – Retail and Industry Development
- Michelle Stapleton – IHAQ Inc. – Wholesale and Retail
- David Ward - Demand Farming Australia – Agronomy, Research, Business Development and Commercialisation

**OVERVIEW**

**Welcome**

The purpose of this meeting was to bring together a group of like-minded individual, independent people who are currently either directly and/or indirectly involved in the Australian Industrial Hemp Industry.

Over the past 10 years within Australia, there have been a number of individuals and companies who have attempted to put together such associations but, those in attendance believed there may have been a number of issues to why this was not achieved mainly self-interest issues may have slowed and halted progress some of these attempts in the past. It was also believed that the bringing together of the attendees this day would hopefully set a platform for bringing together all past and present participants in Industrial Hemp to form what will be a national Australian Industrial Hemp Association which can act as an overriding body or council that will address national issues as per each state's individual legislative licensing requirements.

The venue for the meeting at the Old Dairy Hall at Currumbin Eco Village was quite fitting, given the potential environmental possibilities that this crop has with the products that can be grown and manufactured and processed from the raw material, not to mention the economic and environmental benefits the crop has for farmers and regional productive areas in its growth capacities and potential regional value-adding.

Each of the attendees gave a brief description of their current business developments within Industrial Hemp and associated businesses and industries which gave the meeting a good overview of the people that had been rallied together. It also highlighted the fact that there was a good cross section of industry from breeding, growing, manufacturing, retail and wholesale production, sales, imports and exports. However in depth personal knowledge and experience of harvesting, logistics and decorticating was minimal as very few to no Australians have direct broad scale knowledge and experience of this sector of the industries potential. There have been a number of persons and companies dabble in this sector but the main stream work is being done in Europe and such technology is either capital restrictive to Australia or contains logistical impediments that were sustained in the early days of the cotton and cane industries.

The purpose of the meeting was to formulate a structure in the form of a flow chart example which would highlight and break down each sector of the industry so that those who were either indirectly and/or directly involved in that particular sector could concentrate on their area of expertise, knowing that there was an overriding body or council which was able to push for their individual requirements. This body or council could also attempt through collective lobbying to change legislation for ease of management and licensing through to working with Food Standards Australia & New Zealand (FSANZ) in changing the legislation to make Industrial Hemp products mainstream foods, instead of the current standing as a novel food only. This is very similar to that of the body Cotton Australia who lobby and assist in changes to environmental issues raised with the cotton industry and its use with pesticides such as Endosulfan and Helix. Through a collective as an industry there were working models and structure formulated so as to minimise the environmental impact along with the impact directly has by the farmers and associated businesses that would be impacted by broad stroke change. This Industrial Hemp body sees itself being potentially a self regulator for the betterment of the industry, its regions, its products, its future and its people.

### **CURRENT INDUSTRIAL HEMP BODIES & ASSOCIATIONS**

Currently throughout Australia, there are number of associations, or collectives that are persons or companies attempting to work together in regional-style models to gather like-minded people and companies together to formulate, state by state or region by region, an Industrial Hemp Industry. The known main ones are the Queensland Industrial Hemp Association, Australian Industrial Hemp Advisory Body Inc, Northern Rivers Hemp (NSW) and a number of others including small more community-based associations or gatherings in NSW, QLD, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia.

While a number of these associations are registered associations or incorporated bodies, they are not part of a national or state collective which could take Industrial Hemp through to a streamlined national or state Industry. It was highlighted quite clearly that this level of fractured or independent groups was not at all conducive to moving the Industrial Hemp plant or crop ahead as a collective, so that individuals, persons or companies could participate under known licences, standards, protocols in their own vested interests, knowing that we were all moving together as one Industry (instead of having lots of alternative groups of newly emerging farmers and/or business people).

It was brought up, in passing; a number of these associations would or could be resolved into state and/or national bodies but it was too pre-emptive to discuss this issue any further other than to raise the subject as members of these known or unknown associations were not present at the meeting. As will be highlighted in the layout in the flow chart for a proposed national Industry body or national Industry, all state, regional and local associations/bodies/collectives will be able to fall under the same state banner and have their personal issues raised and hopefully granted, given that they will be within the boundaries of the state by state legislation and licensing and also, under the protocols and agreed parameters as per the national body or council agreement.

#### **BRIEF INDUSTRY STRUCTURE REVIEW OF:**

Some examples of industry structures where presented, there links have been added as to explain their structure and standing in there associated Industries. There are a number of other known Agricultural Industry structures, however there four where highlighted due to their simplicity, successes and political and legislative consultation and actions:

1. Cotton  
<http://www.cottonaustralia.com.au/ca/industrystructure/>
2. Rice  
<http://www.aboutrice.com/handout10.htm>
3. Sugar Cane  
<http://www.canegrowers.com.au/what-we-do/aboutcanegrowers/whatwedo.aspx>
4. Poppy Industry in Tasmania  
<http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/poppy>

These four crops were highlighted as potential examples to be used for possible structuring of the Industrial Hemp Industry, there straight forward structure broken into for example production, manufacture, marketing sectors where key to looking into suitable structures for the Industrial Hemp industry given that there are also separate legislative issues per state.

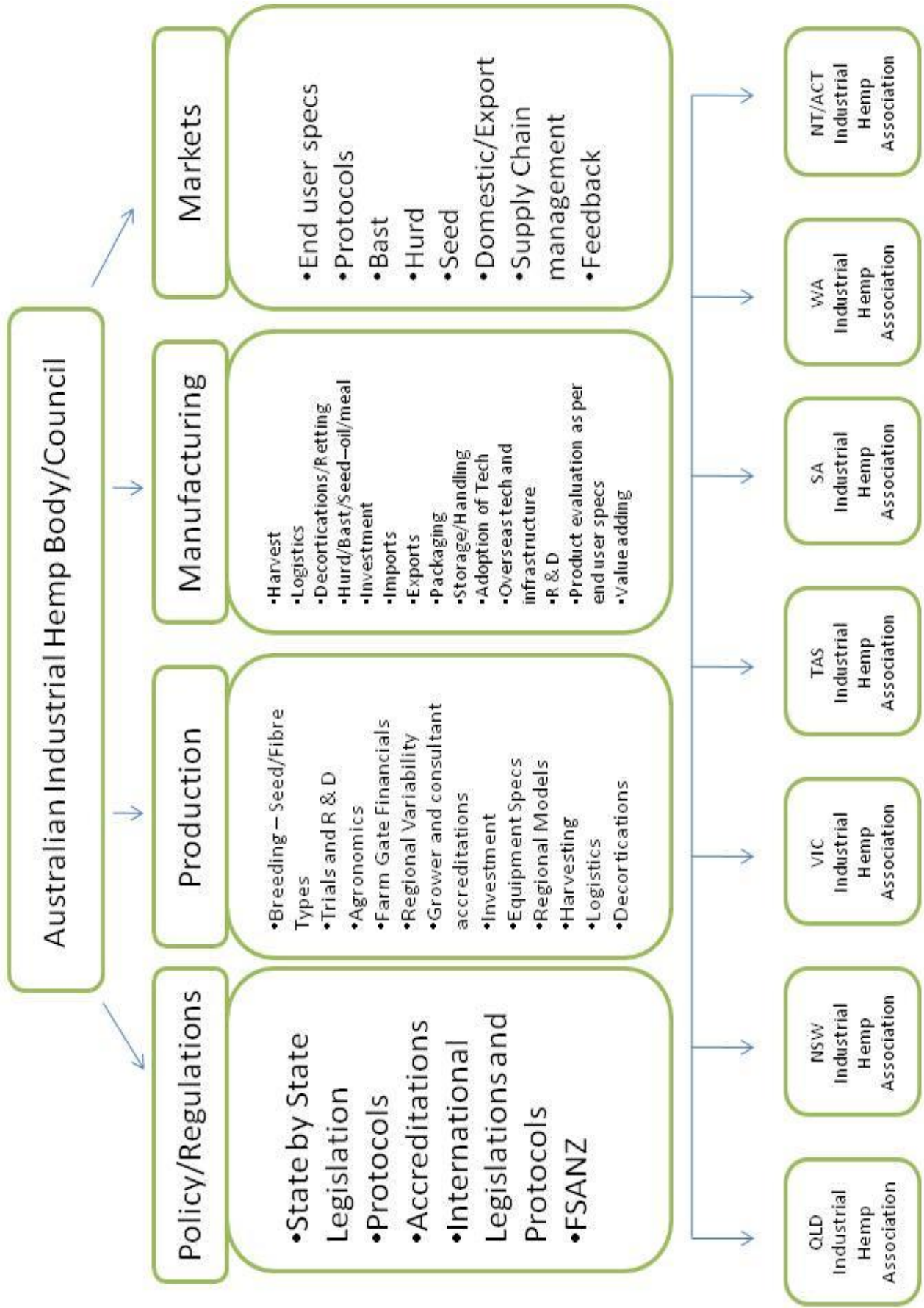
As the day progressed and it was highlighted that the persons attending the meeting were on a similar 'page' with regard to moving together as a collective, and a brainstorming session commenced to view visions goals and a potential statement to sum up potential momentum. Each sector of the Industry was broken down, as it stands today, with regard to production, breeding, manufacturing, etc. and the following flow chart was the result of such a brainstorming session.

#### **PROPOSED AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL HEMP INDUSTRY – TYPE & STRUCTURE FLOW CHART**

The following chart is the result of those thoughts and processes. In discussions it was highlighted to where such entities/bodies/associations per region would fit (like the Northern Rivers Group) as there are some very unique regions within Australia like the north eastern area of NSW around Lismore and the likes and regional models would fit under such an entity and that they would fit inside the NSW association as an Incorporated body significant to the goals and value of the group as a collective.

It was agreed that for agreement to occur that open discussion and debate be seen and had regarding this structure and that this example was to be presented publically for all to comment and submit changes and suggestions according to the general consensus of the states and individual needs of the involved.

The proposed is as follows:



## **RESOLUTION OF OTHER BODIES INTO NATIONAL**

As each State currently has legislation and/or licenses to grow Industrial Hemp and each one is of particular individual significance due to differences in state policing, health, DPI structures and the likes, it was agreed that, until this document is given public notification and authorisation, any attempt to resolve other bodies into a national body would be pre-emptive. Therefore, it was decided to wait until feedback was received from this initial meetings attendees and then public consultation so agreement could be reached regarding the best interest for the Industry, moving forward.

## **VISIONS, AIMS & GOALS**

From the charts and discussions created, these visions, aims and goals were again Brainstormed by the attendees as to how they thought the vision of Industrial Hemp in Australia, moving forward, should look. Notes words and views are listed below:

### **Vision**

These were the key words highlighted as to a vision for the Industrial Hemp Industry –

- Profitable
- Versatile
- Solution
- Green
- Ideal of Hemp
- Human needs
- Sustainable
- Positive education
- Human and environmental health
- Make Hemp a major industry within Australia
- Growing
- Manufacturing and selling quality products
- Providing quality and sustainable life for communities
- Health
- Quality
- Better well being
- Triple bottom line
- Valuable crop
- Regional value-adding
- Co-operation
- Community
- Reduction in carbon

Discussion took place with regard to finding a suitable statement which would highlight the purpose of the national body or council and a number of words were compiled to coordinate that vision seen.

One of the examples was:

***'To nurture the establishment of a sustainable and profitable Industrial Hemp Industry throughout Australia through food and fibre cooperation and innovation'***

As the Queensland Industrial Hemp Association has formatted and highlighted their goals, values, visions, etc. and have met on more than one occasion, their statements were also utilised to highlight what other words could also be considered. Some of these will actually be used as they have the same visions and goals moving from a state level to a national level.

Following is a list of goals that were highlighted:

### **Goals**

- To educate
- To change the legal regulations of food
- Gain political support – state, local and federal government
- To build a sustainable and profitable industry
- To allow regional infrastructure and job creation growth
- Gain export potential from a newly emerging crop
- Make the legalities of Industrial Hemp simple
- Open up self-regulation state by state and as a national collective
- Allow the ability for asset mapping for investment opportunity and potential
- Create an advanced healthy manufacturing domestic industry
- Create a healthy industry to minimise and manage waste
- Unity
- Cooperation with other industries and encourage cooperation within the sectors of Industrial Hemp personal, company, etc.

Following are some words taken from the Queensland Industrial Hemp Association's notes:

### **Objectives**

***'To network, research, develop, market and promote the Australian Industrial Hemp Industry  
To represent Industrial Hemp's best practice in research, production, farming, manufacturing,  
supplying, retailing, processing, wholesaling, product uses and industry support and education  
To liaise, support and promote best practice within Australia and the international Industrial Hemp  
entities, companies and individuals'***

Following on from the formulation of these goals, visions and outlook to the Industrial Hemp Industry as a collective in Australia, a number of other issues were raised with regard to board members, membership, participation, financials, accreditation, logos and standards. However, it was agreed that these were definitely points of priority in moving the Industrial Hemp Industry, as a national collective, forward but were a little early in the formation and structure of this Industry until agreement, as a collective, had been reached. As participants in Industrial Hemp production, manufacturing, selling, etc. in Australia, it was decided that initially, agreement was required for an industry platform and structure as a national body. Following on from that, state, local and regional associations, bodies, collectives or networks, could then work towards the single goal of the Australian Industrial Hemp Industry.

In closing, it was agreed that these notes would be initially distributed to all attendees for feedback, additional comment and editing, where necessary. Once all was agreed and put into a final draft, the final draft document would then be released into the public domain for comment, suggestion and editing. It was also agreed to then distribute the document to relevant government bodies such as NSW DPI, etc., the health industry and other various sectors which may have an indirect or direct influence or relationship with Industrial Hemp within Australia. This would therefore show that all relevant parties are working as a collective together with personal, private,

industry and companies right the way through to governmental, political and eventually International so that it can be seen that this body will be a professional and forward-thinking group which will set standards that the rest of the world would envy.

***Notes where compiled and edited by Maryanne Knight and David Ward of Demand Farming Australia Dubbo. A special thanks to Matt and Michelle Stapleton for arranging the venue and catering and to the Currumbin Eco Village for the super venue for such an event as this was.***