



The Hon Andrew Giles MP
Minister for Skills and Training
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

5 March 2026

Dear Minister,

Oysters Tasmania represents Tasmania's 40 oyster farmers, who sustainably produce a healthy delicacy and who are counteracting Australia's failure to produce food commensurate with our coastal waters. We directly employ around 350 Tasmanians across regional Tasmania to produce around \$40 million of oysters each year.

All our oyster growers are currently experiencing huge difficulties in filling all vacancies.

Our growers also rely on training and apprenticeship support so that entry-level workers can become productive workers. The removal of this support poses an existential threat to our industry.

The exclusion of the occupation "Aquaculture or Fisheries Technician" (OSCA 311133) from the Australian Apprenticeships Priority List from 1 January 2026 is disastrous. I note that the list is traditionally updated multiple times each year. Can you please return this occupation to the List at the next update?

The occupation "Aquaculture or Fisheries Technician" (OSCA 311133) is also absent from the Occupation Shortage List. This is an error and should be rectified. This occupation is in shortage, as reflected both in the difficulty in filling vacancies and in the wages for this occupation growing faster than economy-wide averages.

The shaping of lists through relatively small surveys of willing employers, relating just to vacancies advertised online, is flawed. List formation should instead depend on wage growth data.



The reliance on these lists to determine who gets government support is essentially a picking-winners approach. Support programs should be calibrated to allow for all occupations to be eligible.

I would be most grateful if you could please reply to the matters raised here.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Spender".

Duncan Spender
CEO
Oysters Tasmania