



Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N | Arlington, VA 22201

703.842.0780 | 703.842.0779 (fax) | www.accsp.org

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council Meeting

In-person Meeting

August 1, 2017 | 1:45 pm

Westin Alexandria, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria, VA

https://safis.accsp.org:8443/accsp_prod/f?p=550:15:1724908583617::NO:15:P15_CAL_ID_1:1899

1. Welcome and Introductions (Chair R. Boyles)
2. Review and Approve Agenda (R. Boyles) – Attachment I
3. Public Comment* (R. Boyles)
4. Review and Approve May Meeting Minutes (R. Boyles) – Attachment II
5. ACCSP Status Report (M. Cahall)
 - a. Program Updates
 - b. Committee Updates
6. Review and Consider Approval of the Marine Recreational Information Program Atlantic Regional Implementation Plan (G. White) – Attachment III
7. Recreational Data Collection: Changes on the Horizon (G. White)
8. Other Business
9. Adjourn (R. Boyles)

See Public Comment Guidelines:

http://www.accsp.org/sites/all/themes/aqua/File/ACCSP_PublicCommentPolicyOct2013.pdf



Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N | Arlington, VA 22201

703.842.0780 | 703.842.0779 (fax) | www.accsp.org

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council Meeting

May 10th, 2017

Alexandria, VA

https://safis.accsp.org:8443/accsp_prod/f?p=552:15:::NO:15:P15_CAL_ID_1:1852

MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Name	Partner	Phone	Email
Mark Alexander	CT DEEP	(860) 434-6043	mark.alexander@ct.gov
Thad Altman (Proxy)	FL FWCC	(321) 409-2022	Thad.Altman@myfloridahouse.gov
Tom Baum	NJ DFW	(609) 748-2020	tom.baum@dep.nj.gov
Bob Beal	ASMFC	(703) 842-0740	rbeal@asmfc.org
Robert Boyles (Chair)	SC DNR	(843) 953-9304	boylesr@dnr.sc.gov
John Carmichael	SAFMC	(843) 571-4366	john.carmichael@safmc.net
Joe Cimino	VMRC	(757) 247-2237	joe.cimino@mrc.virginia.gov
John Clark	DE DFW	(302) 739-9108	john.clark@state.de.us
Richard Cody (Proxy)	NOAA	(301) 427-8189	richard.cody@noaa.gov
Michelle Duval (Proxy)	NC DMF	(252) 808-8011	michelle.duval@ncdenr.gov
Lynn Fegley (Vice-chair)	MD DNR	(410) 260-8285	lynn.fegley@maryland.gov
Marty Gary	PRFC	(804) 224-7148	martingary.prfc@gmail.com
Patrick Geer	GA DNR	(912) 264-7218	pat.geer@dnr.state.ga.us
Steve Heins (Proxy)	NYS DEC	(631) 338-2295	steveheins.ifish@gmail.com
Wilson Laney (Proxy)	US FWS	(919) 515-5019	wilson_laney@fws.gov
Dan McKiernan (Proxy)	MA DMF	(617) 626-1536	dan.mckiernan@state.ma.us
Jason McNamee (Proxy)	RI DFW	(401) 423-1943	jason.mcnamee@dem.ri.gov
Stewart Michels	DE DFW	(302) 739-9914	stewart.michels@state.de.us
Brandon Muffley (Proxy)	MAFMC	(302) 526-5260	bmuffley@mafmc.org
Derek Orner (Proxy)	NOAA	(301) 427-8567	derek.ornor@noaa.gov
Cheri Patterson (Proxy)	NH FGD	(603) 868-1095	cheri.patterson@wildlife.nh.gov
Andy Shiels	PFBC	(814) 359-5181	ashiels@pa.gov

Committee Members Not in Attendance: B. Clifford (GARFO/NEFSC), P. Keliher (ME DMR), B. King (DC FWD), T. Nies (NEFMC), B. Ponwith (SEFSC), J. Stephen (SERO)

Staff Members in Attendance: M. Cahall (Program Director), H. Konell (Data Coordinator), J. Myers (Senior Data Coordinator), A. Schwaab (Outreach Coordinator), J. Simpson (Data Team Leader) G. White (Recreational Program Manager), E. Wyatt (Program Coordinator)

Welcome/Introductions – Chair R. Boyles

The ACCSP Coordinating Council of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Edison Ballroom of the Westin Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia, May 10, 2017, and was called to order at 11:05 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Robert H. Boyles, Jr.

CHAIRMAN ROBERET H. BOYLES, JR.: Good morning everybody, I would like to call to order the ACCSP Coordinating Council. My name is Robert Boyles; from South Carolina. It's my honor and privilege to serve as Chair of the Coordinating Council.

Public Comment

First item on the agenda is public comment, particularly for items that are not listed on the agenda.

I'm not aware that there has been any request for public comment; but I'll take an opportunity to scan the audience. I don't see anybody chomping at the bit to come speak, so we will move on and seek the Coordinating Council's consent and approval of the agenda, which was sent out in the briefing materials.

Committee Consent – R. Boyles

- **Approval of Agenda (Attachment I) – ACTION**

Are there any additions to the agenda? I see none; we will consider the agenda adopted by consent.

- **Approval of Minutes from October 2016 (Attachment II) – ACTION**

Also, looking for approval of our last meeting in October, 2016; also those minutes were sent out in the briefing materials. Any changes or edits to those minutes? Seeing none; those minutes will be adopted by consent.

ACCSP Status Report

- **Program Status – M. Cahall**

We will move right into our status reports. Mike, I'll turn it over to you.

MR. MIKE CAHALL: Good morning. We're going to go ahead and give you a little bit of a status update on what's going on with the program. From the programmatic side, we've been pretty busy. I think the single biggest areas where we've been putting a lot of our effort is in the expansions of the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) system.

We have been up and running again for the previous year with no significant issues that I'm aware of. We have a whole slew of pilots running. For reference, SAFIS is currently deployed in almost all of the federal dealers; probably in about half of the state dealers, and we're picking up right now about maybe 10 or 15 percent of vessel trips.

We have a number of pilots that are running that look to expand data collection; most notably in for-hire fisheries. We have one that's running in Massachusetts right now. It just started a few weeks ago; that looks at integrating biological sampling with the SAFIS electronic trip data that is collected.

We have another that's getting ready to roll for the South Atlantic Fisheries Council. That is a for-hire with validation project that also uses our eTrips Mobile tool. The South Carolina electronic trip report validation, which has some very interesting possibilities for automating some of the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) survey; we may have a little more on that in a few minutes. Then we're working also on the Georgia eDR. We're modifying the electronic dealer reporting system, to be used as a standard dealer reporting system. I'll speak to that in just a minute. Also, we've begun moving forward with the redesign.

I've been quite successful; my thanks to our friends at NOAA Fisheries, we've been well funded with Saltonstall-Kennedy (SK), and also with additional funding from Fisheries Information System (FIS). We now have, I think the funds that we're going to need to successfully redesign the SAFIS system. In addition, we have some help with our friends at GARFO, who have lent us part of the time of one of their contractors; who is helping us review our current design.

Then of course tomorrow we have an integrated reporting workshop. The goal of that is to come up with a programmatic standard on how business rules for integrated reporting might work. Obviously, we're going to move forward with that in much the same way the program always has. We recognize that initially it may not be adopted very much.

But we want to have a framework in place for the future; and we want to make sure that our technology is capable of performing those tasks. Right now, integrated reporting is one of those terms that is talked about a lot; but not generally very well understood, in the sense of exactly how would it work. That's the purpose of this workshop tomorrow.

We'll have hopefully a white paper from it, along with a program standard that we can push through our normal process; and in addition the concepts that are articulated by that workshop. My intention is to include those in the SAFIS redesign. In terms of the council initiatives, the councils have been very busy.

We have a Mid-Atlantic Council, which is working on a mandatory electronic for-hire reporting for all of their species. This will dramatically expand the number of trip reports that the SAFIS system collects. We have had a couple of workshops out in the field; A. Schwaab went to those. They were sponsored by the Council.

I don't know, they probably had what, 40 or 50 captains that attended total; something like that. Then although the council action doesn't require any specific tool to be used, the eTrips Mobile tool is the only one that is available to the captains at no cost; and has already been set up to send data into ACCSP, therefore/and by then extension to GARFO.

The data will come to us; we will format it and then push it into the GARFO Vessel Trip Report (VTR) system in near-real time. Those transactions occur almost instantaneously. Then in addition to that the Mid-Atlantic Council is looking at private angler reporting in the tilefish fishery. Because of the way tilefish are promulgated, we can adapt the trip reporting tool to work for that. Again, we're

talking to them about exactly how that might be implemented. Some of these lessons learned will probably also be applicable to the work we're going to do for the South Atlantic Council.

Again, they're working on electronic mandatory reporting in the for-hire fisheries. Again, from a technical standpoint our eTrips Mobile tool can handle this requirement. The pilot is looking at a number of additional data elements and some changes. Our intention is at the end of the process to have a single unified tool that adapts itself, depending on what kind of permit you've logged in under, and what trip it expects to be reporting. Rather than be managing a specific version that might be in use in the South Atlantic or the North Atlantic or just for for-hire, we'll have a single version that reads your permit as you log in; and makes a decision about what kind of reports are going to be submitted. In addition, we're not quite done yet. In addition, the South Atlantic Council just kicked off last week a private angler pilot; targeted at the pulse fisheries or poorly understood fisheries, specifically our friend snapper grouper complex and cobia.

The goal there will be to recruit a group of private anglers to use an adapted version of the iSnapper tool, which has been around for a long time; and teach iSnapper how to send data into SAFIS. SAFIS will be able to collect that private angler data. Again, it looks a lot like a trip, and so we should be able to fit the data that comes in from the private angler reporting into our current trip structure, and then feed that data back in whatever format. I think I have to emphasize that at this point we don't know exactly how these data are going to be used.

From ACCSP standpoint, our job is to provide the facilities to collect the data; and be able to redistribute it back to the folks that need it. How this private angler data might be used in fisheries management, I think is very much a TBD, and also of course outside our ordinary purview. In terms of our Data Warehouse, we just completed a query overhaul, again thank you for SK and FIS for paying for that.

We've deployed our new non-confidential data queries to the public; and we are currently working on the last kind of tweaks that we're going to need for our confidential queries. At the same time we're also trying to work up a coastal confidentiality management policy, and as you can imagine we've run into some hurdles with how exactly we're going to put that data up, as we continue to have some disagreements on the finer points of what we mean my Rule of 3, and how that needs to be implemented.

I think we have some expectations that we're going to be able to actually get all of that finished shortly. I think we have consensus finally around a solution. The data structures that provide confidential data will be modified to handle those specific queries. We've got the preliminary 2016 data loaded; well in time for northeast stock assessments. We notified the Northeast Fisheries Science Center; it was about 10 days ago I think that the data became, maybe two weeks that we notified them of the data.

As some of you may recall there were some issues with timeliness last year, and it turned out that the data deadline we were given was the actual data deadline that they actually wanted data in their hands. There is a big difference between us populating our database and the Northeast Science Center processing that data and preparing it, so that it can be used for stock assessment; and Joan Palmer's staff needs a couple of weeks to do that.

We had to advance our timeline up a little bit, to make sure that those data were made available on time. In addition, we just bought a new server; which is part of our regular budgeted process. This system cost less than the last one, and has roughly five times the capacity of the current server.

We also deliberately bought it a good bit larger; because we are anticipating a transfer of substantial amounts of data from GARFO and the Northeast Science Center, as we move forward with our project to warehouse data with them. In terms of APAIS, I continue to report to you happily, this is going pretty smoothly. We've completed Wave 1, the data and we've delivered the report and data to the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) program. We have completed the Wave 2 data, and we are working on processing. Those will be going out to the MRIP shortly; and Wave 3 is just started, and as far as we can tell is on track. Now we want to step back for just a minute and talk a little bit about some of the work we've been doing in APAIS.

Although the survey in and of itself hasn't changed, we've worked very hard with the staff out on the ground; most of you are probably aware of that. We've had multiple training sessions. We've been looking at the data and targeting the specific kinds of issues that we're seeing. This has been made possible by substantial automation.

The data now come into us and we read it directly into a database, where it can be reviewed and processed using a fairly powerful query system that we have; that we developed in house, and also with the help of a small amount of funding from MRIP. We're much better able to identify trends in data, and specific problems than we were previously.

We are also working on the (SEs), the social and economic data. I believe that is going also pretty well. We're getting a better response rate than we expected. Again, with a little additional funding from MRIP, we brought in a temporary person to help us process that data, so that we don't get bogged down.

Our goal is to stay ahead of the forms and keeping in mind that we're processing roughly 50,000 intercepts a year, and that the SEs adds a significant burden to that. Also the good news is as we are working, as you would expect, everybody is getting more familiar with what's going on. Folks better understand what is expected of them, we have a better understanding what the issues are out in the field; and are better able to work together.

I would say that we're watching things smooth out steadily, and the process gets better. It is very, very, very encouraging. We're also working directly with MRIP to work on the vessel registry. That continues to be a little bit of an issue, but we do have direct access to the site registry; and that kind of information, while we can provide now automated access to the assignments.

There are a lot of cool things that have been going on as a consequence of our ability to automate. In terms of for-hire, which of course has as you know caused some issues with some important species. We've been working again to make sure that everybody is clear on exactly what has to happen; and what the process and the procedures are, and how the differentiation between headboat and charterboat assignments is managed.

We've also been looking at an improved participation in the surveys. We have a roughly 25 percent improvement in response rate on those surveys; which is significant, and should improve the

statistics. We're also working with MRIP to develop an improved outreach campaign; to make sure the captains understand that their data are important.

Although right now there is no mechanism for them to be able to access it that they are used; and we can certainly site examples where when their data are folded in, it does things to the statistics. We're also working directly with them to improve the vessel directory itself. There continues to be outreach to the captains to get better information on the vessels, on the kind of work that they're doing to make sure that we're accurately capturing the universal vessels, as well as their activity. We're also of course working on the council logbook initiatives. I think it's important to consider that right now there is no mechanism to integrate in any logbook data into the MRIP official figures; following the standard wave format.

Right now at the end of the year, the data are pulled from GARFO; who has VTR requirements for their for-hire fisheries, and integrated in to change the catch and effort estimates. What our goal would be would be to work with MRIP to find some mechanism to integrate these logbooks into the monthly waves. We believe that there are a couple of different options, and we've already had some preliminary discussions with MRIP.

We will continue to move forward and work with them; to try to work through a mechanism. Ideally, we would like to see the logbooks integrated in as an intercept. Then that would potentially exempt the captains from being called, and of course those data would be sent to where everything needed to go; depending on who needed them. We may look at a similar method for doing the private angler data.

But right now it is all very preliminary, and all we've had is like very superficial discussions with them. But we have a serious concern about making sure that these data get used. Now obviously any data that comes into us will be immediately available to the captains who submitted it. The issue with, I don't ever see my data can I get it back? We can resolve that by simply providing the captain's access to their own information.

How the information gets used, again I think remains to be determined. We continue to work with GARFO, actually quite closely. We have two GARFO contractors on site right now. We've been working carefully with their visioning process. Their visioning process essentially came to the same conclusion that ACCSP has; that we really need a single unified system that we need to have universal trip identifiers. I don't know, some of you have been with the program for a long time.

You might remember the concept of a single trip ID, unifying all of the different reports together; and that's essentially the direction that GARFO has decided that they want to go into. The planning for that continues, and in fact my hope is that some of the work that we do at the integration workshop will feed into their visioning process.

There are going to be a couple of folks from GARFO that will be there. I am now on the committee that is managing their visioning process, and we have a biweekly conference call; which I can tell you can be quite enlightening. Working again with the universal trip identifier, if you want to step back for just a minute, and I'll try hard not to glaze you over.

The goal here is to create a tool that any reporting tool can access; to get the universal trip identifier that will stamp that trip and propagate through any of the other transactions that might

be associated with it. If I am a captain I'm haling out, I get a trip identifier. If I'm the observer I say I'm on that boat, I get that same trip identifier.

If I'm a dealer and I've bought from that boat, I get that trip identifier. If I am a bio-sampler, and I'm sampling catch from that boat, I get that trip identifier; so that the entire universe of data is pulled together. Now you can immediately trip over a whole slew of scenarios where that could get complicated. Again, that is part of what we're going to be talking about tomorrow. But the universal trip identifier is the core of the vision for GARFO, and is the core for our discussions around the SAFIS redesign. Our goal will be that no matter what tool is doing these reporting, it will access this universal trip identifier tool; that will automatically generate a number that can be referenced by other reporting activities.

We already have the contractor on our site that GARFO has hired. He's also been really helpful. He's done some analysis for us that we don't generally have time to do; and provided us with a lot of feedback about how our databases are laid out, and how they're designed. He's had some suggestions, and he'll be actively participating. He and the second contractor, who started just last week, will be actively participating in the workshop tomorrow as well, more as technical advisors.

But they've already been very helpful, because we don't just have the time to perform this kind of in-depth analysis; and it's been very helpful, as I keep saying. We have the Data Warehouse contractor. She is now tasked to us, until we get a little bit further down the road. What's she's doing is performing an up and down analysis of the Data Warehouse; much as we've already done for SAFIS, to look at our data structures, to understand the processes of how the data flows and moves in and out, so that it's all very thoroughly and clearly documented and understood.

Then the goal is to go over and look at what GARFO is doing, and what the requirements are in the Science Center, and look at the delta between these two things. What will we have to do, in order to be able to provide the services to GARFO and the Science Center? I suspect that we're going to be able to do that; it's relatively straightforward.

Even if it may sound like it's large, but the bottom line is that we're still looking at essentially the same kind of transactions. There are observer trips, there are biological samples, there are vessel trip reports, there are dealer reports, and then there are some ancillary datasets. They may be in different machines, they may be in different formats; but essentially the universe of data that we're talking about is stuff that I think we understand reasonably well already. Are there any questions for me? Mark.

MR. MARK ALEXANDER: Thank you for the presentation, Mike. It's always good to get a fresh look at what's going on. With regard to updating the vessel registry, I know that I've kind of looked over the shoulder of my staff; who was working on that. I was amazed to see that there were vessels for Connecticut in that registry that haven't had permits in years.

At the same time, we've been submitting for-hire vessel information, along with all our salt-water-angler registry data; every month for well over a year. I'm wondering, what's the impediment to getting that data to become the vessel registry; rather than have to suffer through this manual process?

MR. CAHALL: We've actually discussed this specific problem. I think I have a pretty good understanding, but I'm going to let Geoff give you the details.

MR. GEOFF WHITE: The vessel directory we're talking about here is primarily the for-hire survey vessel directory; that is also used by APAIS, and the parallel development of the angler registry and the charterboats, and the vessel information you've been sending was also part of the MRIP angler registry development. MRIP has been working on converging those two things in an online vessel directory; which will clean up a lot of the file passing, between the different components of the survey. We've been working with them on a lot of those details.

We certainly understand the extra effort that you and all the states have been putting into maintaining the more manual version of the vessel directory, as it stands today. We've been working and watching the progress of MRIP on their online vessel directory that should include all of the permit information and those types of things.

The short answer is that there were two parallel tracks that are now converging. We're getting really close. We've heard from MRIP that they've got some delays in contractor staff. They wanted to have the online directory posted, actually for the beginning of 2017, and it looks like it's going to be, we still hope later this year to get that out.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: John.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Thank you for the photo update, Mike. I have a question about the APAIS Survey, and I'm sure you know where I'm going with this. We had a situation in Delaware, and I think it happened in some other states, where a headboat had mechanical problems. The headboat operator got a substitute boat that was pretty much the same size, same captain, and same crew; probably the same customers going to the same place, and yet the data was not used, because that boat wasn't the registered boat for the survey.

Is there anything you can do for that? I mean obviously you know how difficult it is to get a lot of this survey data. In this case it seemed common sense would seem to dictate that well, given the situation that we can just use that data. I'm just curious as to whether this problem will be addressed.

MR. WHITE: We have mostly already addressed it from a statistical standpoint. It was looking at, when we worked with MRIP staff all the way up, and had them help us determine. If a vessel is not in the directory, and there is no sampling probability for that vessel, while it makes complete common sense that the catch data from that vessel would be representative.

If there is no mathematical way to expand that with known sampling probabilities that were determined before the draw of that assignment, then it can't be used in the vessel frame and the expansion. That's what I understood the answer to you back. That is why we've had to clarify the headboat assignment instructions; to sample vessels that were part of the draw.

MR. CLARK: If I could just follow up a second, Geoff. They can't just accept that substitute boat as the boat that they already have the assignment for? I mean in this case where you have something that is so similar. I'm just having a hard time reconciling how the boat itself actually is going to make much of a difference here.

MR. WHITE: We can certainly continue to look at case-by-case situations. There were other situations where a boat listed in the directory is a charterboat was written as a headboat; or a boat

listed in the directory as a charterboat, sorry the reverse as a headboat was sampled at the dock as a charterboat. When that happens you're switching protocols, you're switching methodologies, and those were some of the associated problems. There is some flexibility, and I'm working on giving all of the states some clear direction on it. If a vessel is of the same size and it's been drawn, and you can get it into the directory to get those things included. I realize in your particular case that was a little bit more unfortunate with that vessel change. But the instructions at that moment would be work off of the current months draw, actually wave, so two-month draw, and if there is a vessel that changes like that to provide those vessel changes to us; and make sure that they're in the next waves sampling frame, so we can make those changes within the year.

MR. CLARK: If I can just follow. Just to get you straight then, so in the case that happened this past summer. The instruction would still be not to go out on that boat. But if it happened in the following wave they could go out on that boat?

MR. WHITE: Correct. If it is not in the draw for this wave, don't ride it. But, adjust your vessel directory and your pressure files, which are the inputs to the draw; so that next wave that vessel can be included and then sampled.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Tom.

MR. TOM BAUM: Just to give another scenario, another headboat scenario; so it will probably be for you, Geoff. In the past, I guess the practice of getting to the dock, getting to your headboat assignment, and the captain decides well, I have five people here; I'm not going, and they have a captain's agreement at that dock. The headboat next to him is going out; his customers get on that boat for that day. As I understand this conversation that field interview can't do his assignment on that other boat, where they had that captain's agreement.

MR. WHITE: There is a procedure for riding an alternate vessel. It is the last option. The choices and the priorities are, if the vessel that you're planning to go on that day is not available, to reschedule. If you cannot reschedule and there is another vessel that was part of the draw for that month, you may ride that as an alternate vessel. Otherwise, unfortunately yes, go back home, reschedule it, and get back on a different vessel on a different day.

MR. BAUM: I'm just trying to imagine the field interviewer, if he's going to even know, they're going to even know that they'll be able to reschedule it? That's more of the coordinators job to know the entire schedule, as far as that boat goes and the rest of the month; not the field interviewer.

MR. WHITE: That would be up to the coordinator to make those phone calls and make those scheduling changes. As one of the things Mike pointed out, the application that we have that works on a cell phone, the field interviewers do know what vessels were in the draw that month. They do know which vessels they can do; and the protocols state, when that situation occurs, if something happens that is unusual. The field interviewer should call their state lead at that moment, before they board the vessel, and find out what they should do.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Further questions for Mike or Geoff? Next we'll move on into committee updates. Pat Campfield.

- **Committee Updates – P. Campfield**

MR. PATRICK A. CAMPFIELD: I'm going to summarize the activities of a number of the ACCSP committees over the past several weeks, and a lot of activity this spring that we should commend the staff and Mike on. They've been burning at a pretty high RPM rate. To start with, the Operations Committee met about a month ago for their, you could say their spring call; with the focus of the meeting being on reviewing some new Request for Proposals (RFP) Workgroup recommendations related to the annual funding process.

We'll cover that later this morning in a few additional slides. The other focus was the Operations Committee call was to review progress and the status of new proposals that were funded in the FY16 cycle. In summary, all those projects are underway. We also wanted to note there was a delay in the transfer of funds for a subset of those projects; and they will be applying for no cost extensions.

But that was related to money arriving to the program late, and therefore to the project partner recipients late. A week after the Operations Committee, the Advisory Committee met. I participated in that meeting, and the highlights of their call were to develop and improve materials for new advisors, so the welcome packets that A. Schwaab and others have developed to approve those materials, to get folks up to speed when they join the Advisory Committee.

I provided a summary to advisors of the RFP Workgroup recommendations. We also wanted to note that the advisors have added two new members from New Jersey, which is encouraging. But we also are looking to recruit additional members, notably from the four states listed on the board. If you have any ideas for potential advisors from North Carolina, New York, Mass or Maine, please communicate with A. Schwaab and M. Cahall.

Moving on to the Biological Review Panel, they have been very busy in the past six months; including their meeting in February to update the Biological Priority Matrix. That was completed, and will feed into this year's funding cycle and RFP project selection process. The biological group also elected a new Chair and Vice-Chair.

Since that time there have been some changes in those two people's professional tracks, and so the Vice-Chair will likely be moving into the Chair position. The Biological Review Panel also wanted to let you all know that the resilience factor project is proceeding. That's a new category or column within the Biological Matrix. They will also be working on a conversion factor project to build on what the Commercial Technical Committee will be completing in their report.

Conversion factors is something that it seems like the program is working on continually; but that's making great progress in getting all the conversion factors squared away among the states and different partners. The Biological Review Panel also provided a memo to the Operations Committee outlining guidelines for data collection proposals; to have them truly meet the biological module or category, and the related scoring criteria when we look at the proposals.

Finally, the Biological Sampling Program inventory application continues in its development, and we hope that will be available to the public on the website soon. The Bycatch Prioritization Committee met that same week in February. They also completed their prioritization matrix, and that feeds into the RFP process.

They also elected a new Chair and Vice-Chair, who are Mike Errigo from the South Atlantic Council, and Jacob Boyd from North Carolina; so good to have some new leadership there. Within the bycatch matrix itself, we've added a new metadata tab; which explains the current data sources that are contributing or feeding into the bycatch matrix. Bycatch also provided a memo to the Operations Committee, outlining some concerns with the matrix; and had some suggestions for additional fleets and how that relates to the ranking. Moving on to the Commercial Technical Committee, they had their meeting also about a month ago. One of the most notable new developments is the release of the Data Warehouse.

Mike touched on this, this went live about six months ago, which is a huge achievement for the program; and a really new and improved Warehouse. We've had a demo and a session within our office, and it's much better than the earlier version and easy to understand how to get in there and search for data.

The new version came out, but we are also looking for ways to enhance that and taking suggestions on refining the new version; including improving the display of non-confidential data for the public. Commercial Technical Committee has also been working on a swipe-card program. There were two pilot swipe-card programs in Massachusetts and Maine; which we've heard about in past council meetings.

We've now moved on to sort of a full implementation, where we're developing standards so that all partners can begin to adopt swipe-card technology; and use that to collect data and get everybody on the same page. I've also got a note there that Maine is expanding their program to the scallop fishery for the upcoming season.

Finally, for Commercial Technical Committee, Mike touched on this, but the SAFIS redesign and integrated reporting projects are continuing to progress very well; including former Operations Chair, Tom Hoopes, serving as a contractor to develop the requirements for the SAFIS redesign. There are a few other pieces listed there in terms of next steps for SAFIS redesign; including the integrated reporting workshop that will take place tomorrow across the hall.

Moving on to Recreational Technical Committee, they had a conference call last week. The primary project in front of them this spring is they drafted the Atlantic MRIP Implementation Plan. They'll be working on setting priorities within that plan; as well as getting input from MRIP leadership to the Recreational Technical Committee, as they make refinements to the Implementation Plan.

Then a few on the Council will see the draft before it is submitted and have an opportunity to comment on it before it's submitted to MRIP. The Recreational Technical Committee was also invited to provide comments on the newly forming MRIP Strategic Plan, and the other activities include setting the recreational priorities for the upcoming ACCSP funding process, which they do every year. G. White and company are also planning a meeting for this summer.

Lastly, the Standard Codes Committee has addressed a few detailed issues, including resolving some duplicate codes; ironing out some species or species group names within standard codes, as well as the addition of forage species or groups of forage species to the SAFIS species table, which I think was driven in part by the Mid-Atlantic Council's activities involving more forage species and their Forage Amendment.

A couple of pending items, the Standards Code group has established a Seized by Law Enforcement disposition category, which was a bit of a hang up in the past for any fish that were taken through law enforcement activity that didn't fall into the usual codes for disposition. They are also reviewing the gear attribute standards, which I believe are Appendix 1 in the ACCSP standards. That summarizes the committee updates, Mr. Chairman. I'll happily take any questions.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Questions for Pat. Lynn.

MS. LYNN FEGLEY: Thank you for that presentation. A question specifically for Maryland, we had a little bit of a furor in our state with the release of the preliminary estimates for black sea bass. The conversation that we started having was with MRIP. It seems as though estimates when they're released, the preliminary estimates tend to be significantly different from the final estimates.

The question that we were asking within our state was is there anything we can do to resolve, maybe not release the preliminary estimates, or something to sort of calm our constituents down? I know that our Recreational Technical Committee representative had sent a note, and asked to put that on to talk about it at the meeting. I just wondered if there was any discussion, and what the outcomes might have been.

MR. WHITE: Sure, no problem. It was raised near the end of the meeting, and a lot of the issue in including the for-hire information in the preliminary estimates has to do with the data timing. Whether it's the Maryland charter logbook information, or the federal VTRs, are those available within the timeline for MRIP to use those data within the preliminary wave base estimates?

It's different for how the headboats work and the charterboats work, and how those combine with the effort surveys to be able to include them and present them. They certainly discussed the idea of the timing of those reports coming in; and whether they were available to be included in the wave-based estimates. The issue was raised relative to not presenting some species versus not presenting all species; and that was certainly a concern that wasn't finalized, on choosing when to present some and not to present others. That would take some additional work.

MS. FEGLEY: As I understand it was the VTRs that I think were still in the pipe. Really I guess the overarching question here is what is the utility of presenting those preliminary estimates, when it's known that they're going to be very different from what's final? I don't need an answer to that now. But I think that's something just philosophically to consider as we go forward.

MR. WHITE: That's certainly up to MRIP to decide, and we can provide some advice on. But the VTRs are a mandatory program. This actually goes back to what the MRIP Communications Team and we have been working on in getting more APAIS intercepts on for-hire vessels.

The VTRs are mandatory, and have a different timeline associated with them. The APAIS Survey is voluntary and actually included in the for-hire telephone survey for the effort piece. The combination of which one does the captains answer to is another component in getting better compliance with the voluntary survey.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Further questions? Jay.

MR. JASON McNAMEE: A question for Pat. On your very last slide there, I saw there is a new disposition code for seized by enforcement or something like that. Is that code currently live? Is it something that can be used now, or is there still a process before it gets officially input?

MR. CAMPFIELD: I might turn to the staff to see if they can answer that in more detail than I can.

MS. JULIE SIMPSON: That is still being proposed to the Standard Codes Committee. The proposal is right now there is a single disposition for Seized by Law Enforcement, and so it loses the information of whether it is food or bait, or the other portion of the disposition that you would otherwise use the code for.

The idea is to take Seized by Law Enforcement and make it a disposition category, and then have, Seized by Law Enforcement, actual code bait. That is the proposal it's going to standard codes. Once they have proof of whatever they do with it, then it would be implemented.

MR. McNAMEE: Quick follow up. There is something there already, what is happening is it is being refined to better characterize what exactly was seized.

MS. SIMPSON: That's correct.

MR. BAUM: What happens with that seized law enforcement product, many times it's donated as food, just to keep that in mind.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Further questions, Tom? Wilson, excuse me.

DR. WILSON LANEY: A question for Pat or Geoff, I guess. Have you all noticed any uptick in use of the Data Warehouse since the redesign? I was just wondering.

MR. CAMPFIELD: I would say that's more for Julie and her crowd.

MS. SIMPSON: We're not directly monitoring it, but we are definitely seeing more use in that when folks come to us we're able to send them to the Data Warehouse and say, this is how you can get it. We get more, I got it, it was great as opposed to, I'm not getting it can you please do it for me. We're getting a lot more, and then we don't see that person come back to us again. Hopefully they're still continuing to use the Warehouse; but I don't have an actual metric for it.

DR. LANEY: That sounds great, Julie. That sounds like not only is the new interface more user friendly, but it's also making things more efficient; by not having folks come back to you for assistance as much.

MR. CAHALL: I would comment that we're also working on building utilities to be able track the statistics better. The way things are laid out right now, it's really hard to tell who is logging in and doing what. But it's certainly on our list of things to do.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Tom, did you have something?

MR. BAUM: Yes I did, thank you, Mr. Chair, not a question, just a moment to recognize. You mentioned that New Jersey had nominated two more members for the Advisory Committee, and I

would just like to recognize Mr. Fred Akers, one of our Advisory Committee members; who is in attendance today. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Welcome, and thank you for your volunteering. Further questions for Pat, all right seeing none; we will roll into Item 5, Mike, 2017 RFPs.

Review and Consider Approval of 2017 Request for Proposals – M. Cahall (Attachment III) – ACTION

MR. CAHALL: We requested per your direction, we requested that the Operations Committee consider making changes in the RFP processes with the eye towards providing better flexibility and reprioritizing the program priorities. The Operations Committee created a small workgroup that spent several weeks looking at various different scenarios, and made a series of recommendations; which were presented to the Operations Committee on a conference call a few weeks ago.

The Operations Committee does have a series of standard recommendations, and we'll go through those in just a second. Basically, we were looking at the module prioritization as the largest piece. We had a couple of different options on whether we might maintain status quo, which I think honestly is contrary to the directions that we had, all modules being equal; which is what the workgroup initially recommended and then whether or not we might want to rearrange the order of the modules.

We had, if you look at the decision on the model. The Operations Committee was unable in this conference call to come to consensus on the best way to reprioritize the modules; and they wanted to table that discussion until the upcoming year. That means that if that recommendation is adopted by the Council then we'll maintain status quo, in terms of how the scoring for each individual module occurs.

Just to refresh everybody's memory. Can you show the chart of how the scoring works? It's a little further down here. The way that we add weight in the proposal process, is by giving the highest priorities the best opportunity to get the most points. Catch effort projects have a maximum score of 10. Biological sampling projects have a maximum score of 6, and so on. It is those scores that drive the outcome of the process.

I think if you looked down even as a secondary module, I don't need to go into all the details, because it is actually a fairly complex scoring process. But essentially, if there is a secondary module in the proposal it too is scored, and again the commercial catch effort. If you have a biological project that has a large catch effort component; then it would receive additional scoring, because of the catch effort component.

Then finally there is one more spot. The point being that the easiest way to reprioritize the modules is to shuffle the scoring around. Can we just go back to this flow again? I'll try to be good. At that point, just to reiterate the Operations Committee were not able to come to consensus on the call, so that at this point their recommendation is essentially status quo.

They want to spend some more time to consider that. In terms of maintenance scoring, one of the big concerns that the Operations Committee raised was well, if we have a maintenance project it's essentially the same thing that was last years, it's going to get the same score. They wanted to simplify that process as much as possible. I think we want to keep in mind that the maintenance projects are going to start to fall off in 2020. The first cut, the 33 percent cut happens in March of 2020, whatever

fiscal year that works out. I always get confused which one it's supposed to be. Some of these may become moot as we move forward.

In any event the maintenance projects tend to be dropping off anyway. Folks are picking up maintenance of these projects on their own, or some of it is transitioning to other places. Again, so what was recommended was to go ahead and use a condensed scoring scheme for maintenance projects; which essentially is a scoring as proposed right there on bullet A, if it achieves the goals, was it properly prepared, et cetera, et cetera.

This also involves something that we haven't really taken into account too much before. We have had routine updates from the Principle Investigators (PIs) on these projects, but we've never actually scored their following year based on previous year's performances. This is new, and I think honestly a bit of an improvement over how we've been doing it before; and of course whether they're properly prepared, and you know spelling counts.

Whether they have a date of delivery plan, which of course is important to what we're doing. Then finally, they get higher scores if they ask for less money. They get a lower score if they ask for more. Then finally, we would only use that approach if funding was available that would exceed the maintenance total that was requested; which has been what's been happening in the recent years.

Typically we've had anywhere between 20 and 75K left over after the 75/25 split, and so it's been relatively easy to go ahead and take care of those maintenance projects. The Operations Committee came to consensus and is forwarding this recommendation to the Council. Then finally, they wanted to add a metadata into the scoring, so that improvement of data quality and timeliness becomes, essentially they're changing the name metadata to improve metadata quality and timeliness, which is kind of how it's been worked in the past.

The metadata is a very nebulous term. It's been difficult to quantify. But they wanted something that was a little more concrete that demonstrated; hey this is going to make a difference. They wanted to go ahead and include this. The metadata itself will be replaced by the Data Delivery Plan. Are we going to get the data from this project?

Because there are some projects that have not been routinely delivering data to us, which has been an ongoing issue. Then again, the Operations Committee considered that and forwarded this recommendation to this Council. Finally, one of the big issues is merit. This has come through where we have projects that are a little bit outside the normal, where folks felt that it was really a good idea, and in fact in the last round we asked you all to approve a project that fell outside of our normal funding criteria; which you did.

This will allow us to assign up to five points, based on the merit of the proposal; regardless of which of the modules it falls under. Five points will be enough to push a biological project up to have competitive scoring with catch effort; probably not a bycatch project as we currently stand right now. But it could make a significant difference, in terms of a well-prepared-biological project that was innovative. We've been getting a lot of kind of really cool ideas that often involve genetics, which is fun for me. Then again, the Operations Committee reviewed that recommendation and is forwarding it up to this Council. This is how the scoring would work. The blue section highlights the changes, so the Data Delivery Plan could be up to a plus two. The improvement in data quality and the timeliness could

be a zero to four score, so that could make a significant difference. Then finally merit could push up a score by as much as five points.

This merit will give the Committee flexibility enough to push projects that otherwise might not make it into the top group are likely to be funded, if we felt they were really interesting, really innovative and would advance the science of data collection. Cheri.

MS. CHERI PATTERSON: Right now does that pretty much just pertain to new projects, or does that include maintenance projects with the merit?

MR. CAHALL: This is for new projects. No it's for both? I'm sorry, yes both. But again, I think just to step back. In the whole history that I've worked on the program, I think once we've been unable to provide funding for an ongoing maintenance project. Typically they get funded. Here's the ranking guide for the maintenance, the simplified guide.

Again, did the project achieve its goals? Did it have a data delivery plan? Are they asking for more or less money? I guess you know ten cents more is more, or exactly the amount of funding. Was it properly prepared? Again, we are beyond the era now where they come in where we really can't figure out what people are asking us for.

But occasionally they do come in and they're a little confusing, and it takes us some time to sort through them, and the Operations Committee also. We have a few members of the Operations Committee that are sticklers for making sure the formats right, and we can understand; because if you're looking at 10 or 15 of these things, it can get to be quite confusing. Then finally on the merit again, this is a zero to three as opposed to a zero to five score. This would be for the maintenance project. The merit does apply to both, but on a little bit of a different basis.

MR. CAMPFIELD: I just wanted to add. There was quite a bit of work that went into these recommendations from the Subcommittee of Operations and Advisors. I think we had four Operations members and two Advisors, so it was good to see participation from both groups. I want to recognize Nicole Lengyel from Rhode Island, who's here today, who did a lot of the rescoring analysis that was the meat and potatoes of laying out these options; as well as Elizabeth, who kept the project moving.

Although the Operations and Advisors were unable to reach a clear consensus, there was a fair amount of support for making a change to how the different modules are weighted. Ultimately we decided we didn't have consensus, and we might want to take more time into later this year and consider it for next year's cycle. But there was mixed support, so I just wanted to pass that on to the Council.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Pat, were there kind of two camps, with the reason that the folks that didn't want to make the change, I guess. Was there a reason that they were resistant? Did they just run out of time or are there specific reasons where they were uneasy with flip flopping a couple of these priorities?

MR. CAMPFIELD: I think one example concern was that bycatch they see as important, but they didn't want to make it equal to catch and effort, which is core that we need that every year, it feeds into stock assessment and other management decisions. They were concerned about giving them a level playing field, and very concerned about making bycatch and bio higher than catch and effort.

Given that you can go in and get bycatch data less frequently, and still get an understanding of those dynamics. But they wanted to keep catch and effort as the high priority. That was one example. But they also mentioned they would like more time to think it through. Although we lay out, I think two or three options during the call. Operations came up with different variance, and so they asked for scoring of those additional options; and that would take more time.

MR. ALEXANDER: I just have a question about the properly prepared score there. That is interesting, and I can totally understand why that's there. Was the intent to ding a proposal on the initial review or only on the final review if they couldn't get it right?

MR. CAHALL: Always on the final review.

MS. FEGLEY: To follow up on Bob's question. It sounds like the Committee needs some more time to think about reshuffling these priorities. My question is can you tell us are there ramifications for staying status quo until the next funding cycle?

MR. CAHALL: Probably not. Even if let's just say we reshuffled the program priorities to make the biological equal with catch effort, which would potentially resolve some of the issues that folks have. The perception of the program right now is that we are focused primarily on catch effort. It will take us some time to get the word out to folks who might potentially be preparing biological proposals.

We sent out the RFP, and to be honest I'm not certain folks read it, beyond making sure that they're preparing things in the right format. I think without a significant outreach effort that says, hey we're looking for biological projects, or we want to start talking about bycatch. I don't think that the likely list of things that we're going to receive is going to change.

Even if we adjusted the priorities right now, and sent out the RFP with the adjusted priorities. I think that it would take a year or two for it to sink into folks that we're looking at adjusting; and we want to look at biological sampling projects, or maybe kick off another socio-econ research or something like that.

MS. PATTERSON: I would like to make a motion to approve the Operations Committee recommendations for this RFP process.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Okay motion by Cheri, is there a second; second by Tom, discussion. All those in favor of the motion signify by raising your hand, please. Any opposed to the motion; any abstentions, null votes. That motion carries unanimously.

Other Business

Is there any other business to come before the Coordinating Council? Michelle, is that a wrist raised or a hand raised? Yes that's a hand raised. Okay, Dr. Duval.

DR. MICHELLE DUVAL: Let me stand between you all and lunch. I guess just in reading the briefing materials, which included a long list of the RFP as modified. Also, we had some slides on the Biological Review Panel recommendations based on the matrix, and the bio-sampling priority matrix.

I just had a couple concerns about the scoring for some of those species. You know with regards to the greater than, I think 25 percent or significant changes in landings within 24 months. It seems like a

couple of those scores were sort of mixed up a bit. Like cobia scored really low. I mean 24 months ago we had no problem with cobia.

Now there is like two and a half times the catch of cobia, so I was a little concerned to see just a one, in terms of significant change in landings; and then also looking at that sampling priority matrix, where you see in the bottom left hand quadrant, you know adequate sampling and low priority columns for red snapper and Atlantic menhaden. It notes that they're being sampled adequately and have low priority, so additional sampling is not needed.

Now if this is red snapper in the South Atlantic, I think we've got a lot of constituents who would probably argue otherwise. I feel like I would be remiss if I did not bring these things forward. I had a similar concern about snowy grouper, in terms of the bio-sampling matrix. Absolutely we need more sampling of snowy grouper, but again it was with that significant change in landings within 24 months.

I mean that scored a three and cobia scored a one and there hasn't been that significant a change in landings. Now we've had an increase in the ACL. I just want to lay those out there, because I understand that the Bio Sampling Committee met and reviewed this matrix. But I just wanted to get that out there.

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Thanks, Dr. Duval. Cheri.

MS. PATTERSON: Considering that we will not be dealing with the priorities, rearranging the program priorities for this funding cycle. I would like to know in anticipation of this process being presented back to us next year, where the socioeconomic module lies in its progression, and how we can try and get that up on the scoring board for the somewhat near future. I guess I just want to know about the Committee and the module for the socioeconomic data.

MR. CAHALL: Certainly. First Dr. Duval, I think it would make a lot of sense for you to touch base with Julie, who can I'm certain explain exactly how those numbers were derived. If we find issues and errors in those numbers, we'll certainly be glad to correct them. Secondly, Cheri, in answer to your question, as you know we're dependent on the Commission's Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS), which I understand is getting cranked back up again.

At this point, there has not been any forward motion on that nor have any funds been expended towards implementing that program. Honestly it was one of the kinds of drivers in thinking about; we need to consider readjusting our program priorities. Having said that, we have a lot of data that are being used by social economists that were unavailable in previous years simply because of the breadth of our registration tracking, we know how old the fishermen are. We know where they live. We know how busy they are, those kinds of things.

We are not asking specific social and economic questions. But we do have pretty good demographics, and we do have a fairly complete universe of commercial fishing folk, and are able to run different kinds of analyses on those. But we do need to get it going, I agree. It's just a matter now of getting it through the CESS.

MS. PATTERSON: Pat, did you want to mention something before I forward a recommendation?

MR. CAMPFIELD: Maybe it's one and the same, but I think offline discussions have led to we should identify a core group from the Socioeconomics Committee to work with the program and get the socio-econ standards moving; so that we can both ask for and better support those types of data's coming in if we fund a couple projects.

MS. PATTERSON: Follow up. **I would like to speak for the Council as a whole that we would recommend that that move forward in anticipation of program priorities reshuffling next year.** Then if there is a problem with interaction or engagement of the CESS Committee that there be a workgroup put together.

Where you're bringing in additional socioeconomic individuals that can help out and anybody who's on the CESS Committee that would like to participate in that work group would be helpful. But maybe not just rely on the CESS Committee, if they're having struggles getting this done. Maybe just put together a workgroup.

Adjourn

CHAIRMAN BOYLES: Without objection; so ordered. Any other business, seeing none; we will stand adjourned. Thank you all.

Action Items

1. The Coordinating Council recommends the CESS Committee to assess ACCSP's current Socio-economic standards in anticipation of the primary priorities reshuffling next year.