

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

DATA COLLECTION COMMITTEE

Omni Hotel Corpus Christi, Texas

August 22, 2018

VOTING MEMBERS

- 10 Greg Stunz.....Texas
- 11 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
- 12 Patrick Banks.....Louisiana
- 13 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- 14 Paul Mickle (designee for Joe Spraggins).....Mississippi
- 15 John Sanchez.....Florida
- 16 Andy Strelcheck (designee for Roy Crabtree).....NMFS

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- 19 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
- 20 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- 21 Doug Boyd.....Texas
- 22 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- 23 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
- 24 Phil Dyskow.....Florida
- 25 Tom Frazer.....Florida
- 26 Martha Guyas (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
- 27 Robin Riechers.....Texas
- 28 Bob Shipp (via webinar).....Alabama
- 29 Lt Mark Zanowicz.....USCG

STAFF

- 32 Steven Atran.....Acting Deputy Director
- 33 Zeenatul Basher.....Coral and Habitat Biologist
- 34 Assane Diagne.....Economist
- 35 Matt Freeman.....Economist
- 36 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist-Statistician
- 37 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
- 38 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
- 39 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
- 40 Jessica Matos.....Administrative Assistant
- 41 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
- 42 Ryan Rindone.....Fishery Biologist & SEDAR Liaison
- 43 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
- 44 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

- 47 Carlos Alegria.....TX
- 48 Pam Anderson.....Panama City Beach, FL

1 Billy Archer.....Panama City, FL
 2 Greg Ball.....Galveston, TX
 3 Anna Beckwith.....SAFMC
 4 William Bradley.....
 5 Ken Brennan.....NMFS, Beaufort, NC
 6 Karyl Brewster-Geisz.....HMS, Silver Spring, MD
 7 Rick Burris.....Biloxi, MS
 8 Les Casterline.....TX
 9 Bubba Cochrane.....Galveston, TX
 10 Mike Colby.....Clearwater, FL
 11 Traci Floyd.....MDMR, MS
 12 Troy Frady.....AL
 13 Benny Gallaway.....TX
 14 Susan Gerhart.....NMFS
 15 Bobby Grumbles.....Port Aransas, TX
 16 Jake Herring.....TX
 17 Clifford Hutt.....NMFS, Silver Spring, MD
 18 Bud Kittle.....TX
 19 Clay Porch.....SEFSC
 20 Andrew Ropicki.....Texas Sea Grant, TX
 21 Ed Schroeder.....Galveston, TX
 22 Clarence Seymour.....Ocean Springs, MS
 23 Nick Spilrotis.....
 24 Lauren Sponsler.....TX
 25 Jen Thomasson.....TX
 26 Steve Tomeny.....Port Fourchon, LA
 27 Daniel Willard.....EDF, Austin, TX

- - -

28
 29
 30

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1
2
3 Table of Contents.....3
4
5 Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes.....4
6
7 Action Guide and Next Steps.....4
8
9 Gulf of Mexico 2017 Headboat Summary Report.....5
10
11 Update on SEFHIER Implementation Plan Presentation.....10
12
13 Other Business.....21
14
15 Adjournment.....25
16
17 - - -
18

1 The Data Collection Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
2 Management Council convened at the Omni Hotel, Corpus Christi,
3 Texas, Wednesday morning, August 22, 2018, and was called to
4 order by Chairman Greg Stunz.

5
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
9

10 **CHAIRMAN GREG STUNZ:** We will call the Data Collection Committee
11 to order. As far as our members, I'm the Chair, and Kevin Anson
12 is the Vice Chair, and he's present. Patrick Banks, Sue Gerhart
13 I think is representing NOAA, Dave Donaldson, John Sanchez, and
14 Paul Mickle. I'm not sure if Ed Swindell is joining us by phone
15 or not. He would be the one council member absent.

16
17 Our first item of business is Adoption of the Agenda. Is there
18 any additions or any comments to the agenda? Yes, Madam Chair.

19
20 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Dr. Stunz, I'm not on your committee, but,
21 if you would permit me, at the end of your committee, if you
22 have time, I would like to have a discussion about the unique
23 trip identifier and what that might mean.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. If there's no objections from the
26 committee for that, we would entertain -- Are there any other
27 additions to Other Business or anything else on the agenda?
28 Seeing none, would someone like to make a motion to approve the
29 agenda with the addition? Mr. Sanchez. It's seconded by Mr.
30 Banks. Any opposition? Seeing none, the agenda is approved.

31
32 Our next item of business is Approval of the Minutes from last
33 time, and is there any comments, edits, or suggestions to the
34 minutes? Seeing none, would anyone like to approve the minutes?
35 John Sanchez, and Mr. Donaldson seconds. Any opposition to the
36 minutes? Any opposition to the motion, I should say? Seeing
37 none, our minutes are approved. Our next item of business is if
38 Dr. Froeschke wants to go through the Action Guide and Next
39 Steps for this meeting.

40
41 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** Sure. It's just two items here. The first
42 is Ken Brennan from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center is
43 going to give us a presentation summarizing their annual
44 headboat report, and this is the first report we've seen for the
45 Gulf, and it summarizes the activity in the most recent year,
46 and they plan to do these on an annual basis going forward, and
47 so it's both to give you some information about the headboats
48 and also to get your feedback on the report and what you like

1 and if there are other things that you want to see more of or
2 less of, and I think they would be interested in that as well.

3
4 The second item is Ms. Gerhart of SERO is going to give us an
5 update on the implementation of the SEFHIER plan, which is the
6 team that is assembled to implement the for-hire reporting that
7 you guys took action on last year, and so I think there will be
8 some useful information for you guys as well, and that's it.
9 There is no action required for either item.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Okay. Thanks, Dr. Froeschke, and I guess, Sue,
12 is that -- I was wondering if that's what we're calling it now,
13 is the SEFHIER --

14
15 **MS. SUSAN GERHART:** That's what we're calling the implementation
16 team, and that's just a cute little name we came up with. It's
17 short for Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting,
18 and so that's what SEFHIER is.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Okay. Good. I was wondering about that, and
21 so then, with that, we'll move on to Item Number IV, and, by the
22 way, specifically, this one is Tab F, Number 4(a), and Mr.
23 Brennan is going to give us a presentation regarding the
24 headboat summary report, and so, Ken, if you're back there.
25 Good.

26
27 **GULF OF MEXICO 2017 HEADBOAT SUMMARY REPORT**

28
29 **MR. KEN BRENNAN:** Thank you. Good morning. I'm Ken Brennan,
30 Coordinator of the Southeast Region Headboat Survey, which is
31 administered by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and I
32 would like to thank you for the opportunity to present the Gulf
33 of Mexico Headboat Survey Annual Report this morning.

34
35 I would also like to thank Ms. Pam Anderson for this great photo
36 from her family's rich history in the headboat industry. The
37 Anderson fleet has been part of the headboat survey since it
38 started in the Gulf in 1986, just like many of the headboats
39 here in Port Aransas, South Padre Island, Galveston, and
40 throughout the Gulf for the past thirty-two years.

41
42 That's where I would like to start my introduction to the
43 report, by acknowledging the main contributors, which these are
44 the headboat owners and captains and staff and crew. They
45 cooperated in filling out the logbooks and working with our port
46 samplers on the docks over the years. Without them, this report
47 wouldn't have been possible, and so I think it's important to
48 point that out from the start, because I hope this report

1 demonstrates the benefits of that partnership.

2
3 The primary purpose of the report is to share information with
4 the participants in the survey and the councils and other data
5 users. Following the rollout at this meeting, we will be
6 distributing the report to all the survey participants, and our
7 goal is to make it an informative reference document for a quick
8 look at trends in catch, effort, and economics in the Gulf of
9 Mexico headboat fishery, and this report includes data up to
10 2017.

11
12 The content of the report includes a section with a brief
13 history of the survey along with any events that occurred during
14 the previous fishing year that may have impacted the headboat
15 fishery, such as Hurricane Harvey in 2017. There is also a
16 description of the survey design and other metadata describing
17 the changes in this survey, such as our transition to electronic
18 reporting in 2013.

19
20 There are summary tables of total landings, discards, and
21 dockside intercepts for 2017 that show changes in the five and
22 ten-year average for most of the prominent species in the
23 headboat fishery.

24
25 There is a table on estimated annual effort for the Gulf from
26 1986 to 2017, and the majority of the report consists of a
27 single-page summary of the fifty different species, and these
28 include federally-managed species and species of interest.
29 There is also a page at the end of the report that summarizes
30 the economic data that is collected on the headboat logbooks.

31
32 This is a list of the species covered in the report, and we can
33 make changes to this list, but we want to try and keep it
34 manageable and somewhere around the same number of species, and
35 so, if there is a species that you feel strongly about that
36 should be on that list, we could possibly replace one of these
37 less-important species, say sand tilefish or something like
38 that, but we would like to try and keep the list around the same
39 number of species.

40
41 Here is an example of what is contained on the species summary
42 page. This is vermilion snapper, for example, and these are
43 annual landings and discards for the past ten years, and I
44 should point out that, in the Gulf, we had to partition
45 southwest Florida and northwest Florida, which includes Alabama,
46 and we had to combine Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, due to
47 confidentiality reasons and to maintain a continuity in the time
48 series.

1
2 Also included on this page is information on dockside sampling,
3 number of lengths, weights, average size of fish being sampled,
4 with a five and ten-year comparison. There is also a table with
5 a summary of the positive trips for the past ten years and a
6 graph that shows trends in CPUE from 1986 to 2017.

7
8 This is a complete look at the species page and the information
9 that I just described, and so it's basically a snapshot of the
10 time series and any trends that occurred during that period.

11
12 To close, we will release this report in the second quarter of
13 each year, with the previous fishing year's estimates, and we
14 also will welcome any feedback, and we're willing to make
15 changes, but we want the report to remain about the same size,
16 in order for it to be automated and repeatable each year.

17
18 Then other acknowledgements that I would like to make, along
19 with the survey participants, I would like to thank the many
20 headboat port agents and staff over the years that have
21 collected and summarized the data for stock assessments and
22 management, and, finally, I would like to give a special thanks
23 to Eric and Kelly Fitzpatrick for writing the code and for
24 preparing the report in a way that is informative and repeatable
25 from year to year. That's just a brief introduction to the
26 report. Thank you.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Thank you, Mr. Brennan. I appreciate it. That
29 was a very nice report, and I know a lot of work went into that
30 with the participants and port agents and all of that, and I
31 think I speak for this committee and the council that we really
32 appreciate it, having data at this refined level and that sort
33 of thing. With that, I will open it up to anyone that might
34 have questions for Mr. Brennan.

35
36 **MR. ROBIN RIECHERS:** I am reading in your report here, and you
37 talk about your different validation methods, both your port
38 agents as well as calling the trip office and using the web to
39 do those sorts of things.

40
41 I am not really worried about the latter two options as much,
42 though I would kind of wonder how often you are using self-
43 reported validation on self-reported data, which is kind of that
44 -- We call it the trip office, but what kind of port agent
45 coverage do you guys now have for this survey, and what is the
46 validation rate that you're seeing as compared to trips, kind of
47 the percentage of the trips that you actually are encountering?

48

1 **MR. BRENNAN:** Well, there is normally about 9,000 trips run in
2 the Gulf, and we get between 7 and 10 percent coverage of those
3 trips.

4
5 **MR. RIECHERS:** Is there pretty good geographic, because I know
6 you run up the Southeast coast as well, but is there pretty good
7 geographic coverage of that?

8
9 **MR. BRENNAN:** Yes, we have our port agents that are
10 strategically located around the main ports where headboats are
11 located, and some of the driving distance can be up to 200
12 miles, but we factor that into our sampling strategy.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. I have Mr. Anson next.

15
16 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Robin hit on my question, and I was wondering,
17 Ken, if you would consider maybe, in the beginning of the
18 report, to provide a summary of maybe the last ten years, or the
19 same time period as covered for each of the species, the number
20 of headboat trips that were sampled by region, and that would
21 provide some information as to the coverage, and aspects of that
22 could help the program, as far as funding and importance and all
23 that stuff too, and so maybe add that table, and that might
24 provide some more clarity. Thank you.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. Go ahead, Andy.

27
28 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** First, Ken, I wanted to thank you for the
29 great work that your team does and you do. You have been
30 certainly a huge help in a lot of management activities that we
31 have worked on in recent years with the Headboat Collaborative,
32 and more recently electronic reporting, and so thank you for
33 that.

34
35 My question is related to information that you would be
36 providing to SEDAR, and so it sounds like you have standardized
37 the programs to be able to output this data, and so do you see
38 this as a significant efficiency for streamlining data that can
39 then be provided to SEDAR going forward?

40
41 **MR. BRENNAN:** Yes, and, I mean, this is data that we routinely
42 generate, but we have fashioned the report to just summarize it
43 in short time series, but, for SEDARs, yes, we use some of the
44 same code to generate data for all of those SEDARs that we're
45 involved in, yes.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Clay.

48

1 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** Thank you again, Dr. Brennan. One question
2 about the discards. Can you explain to us how they are derived
3 and what your confidence is in the actual number discarded and
4 if there's any ways those estimates can be improved?
5

6 **MR. BRENNAN:** The discards, of course, are self-reported on the
7 logbook, or the trip report. We refer to as a trip report, and
8 we have at-sea coverage in west Florida, in the Gulf, and it's
9 continuous in the South Atlantic, at-sea observer coverage, and
10 so we're able to compare the discard rates with the at-sea
11 observer coverage to the self-reported discard rates and then
12 determine if we need to adjust those rates, and there is ways
13 that we have done it in different SEDARs, but I have to say that
14 the self-reported discards stand on their own most of the time.
15

16 Once we have compared them to the at-sea observer data, they are
17 in line with what is being recorded at-sea. The Gulf is lacking
18 in at-sea observer coverage, in the other states. Florida has a
19 continuous time series, west Florida, but we have run -- As
20 Kevin knows, we've been involved with at-sea sampling in
21 Alabama, and some in Texas, but I think that would be important,
22 to implement a Gulf-wide program, in order to validate discards.
23

24 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Any other questions? Go ahead, Ms. Boggs.
25

26 **MS. SUSAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to thank
27 you, Ken, for all the work that you do and all the work over the
28 years making this a more streamlined process, from the eight-
29 and-a-half-by-fourteen, double-sided piece of paper to
30 electronic reporting. We appreciate that. Thank you.
31

32 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Mr. Donaldson.
33

34 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** Thanks, Ken, for the report. What kind of
35 compliance, reporting compliance, rate do you guys get for the
36 vessels?
37

38 **MR. BRENNAN:** Well, in the Gulf, it's been extremely high, over
39 95 percent for the past ten years, and I want to say, in the
40 past five, over 98 percent. There is a good attitude about
41 reporting in the Gulf, and we've done well to work with the
42 captains, and we've kept compliance up. It's a constant
43 struggle, but we try and track every trip report down and try
44 and get it reconciled as soon as possible, so it doesn't create
45 a cumulative effect of boats getting too far behind, but we've
46 kept compliance high.
47

48 **MR. DONALDSON:** Do you think that going to electronic reporting

1 has helped, in that it makes it a little easier than having to
2 fill out the forms and all that?

3
4 **MR. BRENNAN:** Absolutely. We're able to monitor more
5 efficiently on a daily basis with electronic reporting. I mean,
6 either the report is submitted or it's not, and we're tracking
7 it down, and we do weekly late trip reports within our program,
8 and we circulate those to each of the port agents. They know
9 which trip reports are missing, based on recording vessel
10 activity, and then they're tracking those trip reports down and
11 reconciling them with the office or a captain, whoever is
12 responsible for filling them out.

13
14 **MR. DONALDSON:** That might be a useful table to include in the
15 summary, just a compliance rate by region or something, just a
16 short table, just to show that there is high compliance, and
17 that might be useful information.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Ken, that's good to hear. That was going to be
20 my question as well, is how the electronic reporting component
21 was going, because that's, obviously, our next presentation and
22 where we're going with the for-hire electronic reporting in the
23 Gulf. That's good news, and so I'm glad to hear that. Any
24 other questions? All right. Seeing none, thank you, Ken.

25
26 **MR. BRENNAN:** Okay.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Moving on in our agenda, the next item of
29 business, Ms. Gerhart is going to give us a presentation, and
30 I'm going to have to look it up again, but the Southeast For-
31 Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting, I think, SEFHIER, and, if
32 you're following, that is Tab F-5, and so whenever you're ready,
33 Sue.

34
35 **UPDATE ON SEFHIER IMPLEMENTATION PLAN PRESENTATION**

36
37 **MS. GERHART:** Thank you. Here you see the title that we get the
38 term "SEFHIER" from on this slide, and it's really the process.
39 We don't intend to call the whole program that, but that is the
40 process, and, of course, we are the federal government, and so
41 we like our acronyms.

42
43 I have presented some of this already at the last meeting, but
44 the structure of the team, the original implementation team, was
45 a very large number of people from a huge swath of organizations
46 and not just the councils and the regions and NOAA, but also
47 state representatives, people from MRIP, and those sort of
48 things.

1
2 The first phase we referred to as our information gathering
3 phase. We had all these people available so we could see what
4 other areas and other organizations are doing and kind of try to
5 base some of our decisions about how to implement this procedure
6 by looking at what's already out there, and so we've spent time
7 in that first phase, and we are now getting into the Phase 2,
8 which is the decision-making.

9
10 One of the big decisions that we did make was to use ACCSP as
11 the platform for data housing, and so we have pared down the
12 number of individuals involved in this process, and we're
13 focusing with ACCSP to get this together. The six sub-groups
14 you see listed here were the groups that were part of that first
15 phase to gather the information on these different topics and
16 come to this decision-making phase.

17
18 As far as the timelines, we've been delayed a little bit. We
19 did publish the Notice of Availability on the amendment in June,
20 and the comment period ended this past Monday. I have not
21 looked to see how many comments we've had so far, but the
22 decision date by the Secretary of Commerce on the approval of
23 the amendment is September 19.

24
25 Our hope is to have the proposed rule published a little bit
26 before then, in mid-September, and we're working on a lot of
27 details, which is why we have not published a proposed rule yet,
28 and there is a certain amount that we need to obviously have in
29 the rule in order for people to comment on it, and so that's
30 what we're trying to straighten out right now, and then we hope
31 that the final rule will publish in mid-December sometime.

32
33 The implementation date that we were aiming at was April 1 of
34 next year, with the potential delay of the GPS portion to later,
35 because that's a little bit more complicated than just the
36 straight reporting. We have gotten a little bit of feedback
37 from some people, from the industry itself, that this might not
38 be the best time to start a new program, because it's sort of
39 the peak of fishing activity, and they might prefer that we
40 actually implement a little bit later, so that people aren't
41 quite as busy and they can spend more time learning the system,
42 but I will let others speak to that in a little bit.

43
44 The South Atlantic is also doing some rulemaking on their own
45 amendment for for-hire reporting, electronic reporting, at the
46 same time. They're a little bit ahead, because their system is
47 a little less complex. They don't have the GPS portion involved
48 in it, and they have less-timely reporting, and so they've

1 already published a proposed rule and approved their amendment,
2 and they are working to publish their final rule about the same
3 time that we will publish our proposed rule.

4
5 They are aiming, again, for January 1 as an implementation date,
6 and so that's a little sooner, and, again, I have a lot of
7 question-marks up there, because we do have a lot of things
8 still to work out before these things can happen.

9
10 Some updates on some of the decisions that have been made and
11 some of the things we've done, as I said, ACCSP is selected as
12 the data warehouse. We still have a lot of work to do with
13 them. We have to get our data-sharing agreement, and we have to
14 work on security measures, to make sure that any private
15 information that goes through them is protected, and they do
16 have to make some modifications to their systems to accommodate
17 what we want them to do, particularly in bringing in that GPS
18 data that's going to be coming in and matching that up with the
19 trip reporting data.

20
21 We are trying to -- We are very, very close on finalizing the
22 data elements, in other words the questions that will be asked
23 from the fishermen as they are reporting. We are trying to
24 coordinate with other regions, particularly the South Atlantic,
25 but also the Mid-Atlantic and other programs, for example the
26 state programs that are going on, so that we have as close as
27 possible to the same sort of questions being asked on reporting,
28 so there is less duplication for the fishermen.

29
30 I want to acknowledge that there will be a slight difference
31 between the charter boats and the headboats, in terms of the
32 questions that will be asked. There are several reasons for
33 that. As you heard from Ken, they have had a very successful
34 program going on with the headboats, and it's been going on for
35 quite a while, and we don't want to jeopardize the consistency
36 of their data by changing up some of the things that they ask.

37
38 There is also differences in how headboats and charter boats
39 run, and one of the things is they do have observers onboard,
40 where we don't have that for the charter boats, and so, some of
41 the information that they get through observers, we may have to
42 add additional questions for the charter boats to answer,
43 because we don't get that.

44
45 Also, we are adding a few economic questions to this list,
46 things that our economists have said are going to be really
47 important, in terms of analysis. As you know, a lot of what we
48 do now, in terms of amendments, have a very strong economic

1 influence or impact, and so we can get better analyses by asking
2 these questions and gathering this data.

3
4 Another thing we're doing, and this is actually Ken Brennan
5 doing this, and so, if you have questions, you can ask him, but
6 his group is investigating the actual devices for collecting the
7 location information. We have VMS units, obviously, that we've
8 type approved for the commercial fleet, but there are also these
9 archivable GPS units, and they are testing -- I guess he told me
10 last night that there is only five different units they are
11 testing, but they did get some funding to do this testing, and
12 so they are actually out on the water testing these units now to
13 see how they will work for this circumstance.

14
15 We do have to develop an approval process. We said this has to
16 be a NMFS-approved device, but we have to figure out how we're
17 going to approve them, and so that approval process is in the
18 works, and we also are working right now with the VMS
19 Reimbursement Program. If you recall, when we put VMS on the
20 commercial fleet, there was a reimbursement of a certain amount
21 of money to each person from this fund, and we're working to see
22 if we can get some of that going on as well to help defray the
23 cost of any units that people buy.

24
25 Finally, one of the big things that we're really working on is
26 how we're going to calibrate this data with ongoing programs
27 now. We need to be able to validate the data, and part of that
28 is through the GPS units, but we also need more port agents, and
29 we need more personnel altogether to do the validation.

30
31 We also, just like all the state programs do, this program will
32 need to go through an MRIP certification, and so there will be a
33 side-by-side time period until MRIP certifies it as usable data,
34 and, of course, we have all the different states having their
35 programs being certified, and not all of them include all the
36 species that we will have in this program, but we do want to
37 make sure that we can calibrate between them and also, again,
38 reduce the amount of duplication that we're going to be asking
39 of people.

40
41 I mentioned at the last meeting that this meeting was going to
42 occur at our office, as a Quality Management Professional
43 Specialty Group, and it works out FIS, and they conduct a
44 workshop every year, and they held it in St. Petersburg, and it
45 wasn't a meeting where we requested them to come. They were
46 holding it in our area and say, hey, how about if we use your
47 program as our example to work through for our meeting, and we
48 were very excited to have that opportunity that they asked to

1 use our program.

2
3 What they did in there was reviewed some data flow, the
4 processes, and connections, and they made sure that everything
5 made sense, and it really helped us out a lot to go through this
6 process. There were representatives from both the Gulf and
7 South Atlantic Councils. Your representative was John Sanchez,
8 and there were also representatives from both the charter boat
9 and headboat industry there.

10
11 The headboat representative was Susan Boggs, who was not a
12 council member at the time, and she was there representing the
13 headboat group, and then the charter boat representative was
14 Dylan Hubbard that's out in the audience here now too, and so,
15 if you have questions on those, and I'm going to let maybe them
16 talk in a little bit, but just to let you know that we're going
17 to have a full report on this at the October meeting.

18
19 The final report from this meeting has not been completed yet,
20 but general outcomes there are you can see that the process is
21 really complex. There is a lot of things to think about, and
22 that's why it's taking so much time, is that there is a lot of
23 moving parts to this.

24
25 If we want the data to be useful, we've got to be able to
26 validate it, and so we're really working hard on that part of
27 it, and then we also are looking at outreach and the fact that,
28 yes, outreach is going to involve telling people what they need
29 to do and how to do it, but we also really want to be clear on
30 what the purpose of collecting this data is and how and when it
31 will be used, and so these are some outcomes that came from
32 there, but I'm sure that John, Susan, or Dylan can tell you
33 more. I wasn't actually at the meeting, and so they can tell
34 you more about that. If you have any questions or if someone
35 else would like to speak up, I would appreciate that.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. Thank you, Sue, and I appreciate
38 the report and that you guys are making progress. Are there
39 questions? Ms. Beckwith.

40
41 **MS. ANNA BECKWITH:** The additional questions that you guys are
42 thinking about adding, the economic questions, is that going to
43 be for everyone, or are you guys going to sub-sample?

44
45 **MS. GERHART:** We have a few questions that I think will be for
46 everyone, but then there will also be a sub-sample for more
47 involved economic -- Just as we do like, for example, for the
48 shrimp fleet, where we select some to do a more involved survey

1 for that, but there will be -- I think there's maybe three
2 questions that are economic that we're putting on that list, and
3 I think a lot of it had to do with what the South Atlantic had
4 listed as their core elements that they wanted. There were some
5 economic questions there.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Mr. Donaldson.

8
9 **MR. DONALDSON:** Thanks for the presentation, Sue. I recall, in
10 previous presentations, that this is a fairly expensive
11 activity. Has money been identified for implementation and
12 operation?

13
14 **MR. STRELCHECK:** We've spent a lot of time refining the budget
15 based on what we think is kind of the ideal program validation
16 needs, and we've also compartmentalized it, in terms of, if we
17 are going to stand this up and implement it, can we do it in a
18 step-wise fashion and what would that cost us. At this point,
19 NMFS has had some internal conversations regarding budgeting for
20 this, but a specific source has not been identified.

21
22 **MR. DONALDSON:** One other quick question, Sue. You mentioned
23 MRIP certification for it. Has that process started, or what's
24 the timeline on that?

25
26 **MS. GERHART:** Well, we've been in discussions with the MRIP
27 folks, but, until we actually start running something, it can't
28 be certified, but we have gone -- It's sort of a chicken-and-egg
29 thing. We want to start out looking at, again, the process
30 that's going to be most likely to work for them, and so we are
31 talking with them and working with them, but the actual
32 certification process won't happen until we start actually doing
33 it.

34
35 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Just real quickly, to add to that, that large
36 implementation team that Sue talked about in one of her first
37 slides included some of the MRIP staff, and we pulled them in
38 early to this conversation.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. I have Ms. Guyas and then Mr.
41 Sanchez after that.

42
43 **MS. MARTHA GUYAS:** Thanks for recognizing me, because I don't
44 think I'm on this committee, but I have two questions, Sue. I
45 think you mentioned that the states have been somewhat
46 integrated into this process. Can you expand a little bit more
47 on that? Then, also, are you all envisioning the states being
48 involved in conducting the dockside validation for this, once we

1 get to that stage? How is that going to work?

2
3 **MS. GERHART:** A lot of what we've done with the states up until
4 now has been part of this information gathering phase, and so
5 we've talked to states where there were programs that we could
6 look at. I know, in particular, South Carolina was one that has
7 a large program that we were talking to, but all of the states,
8 I believe, have had representatives during that phase.

9
10 As far as the validation, I think a lot of that would be the
11 same port agent system that we're currently using. It would
12 just involve more people, and I believe there are states
13 involved.

14
15 One of our key things that we've determined is that we want to
16 sit down with the individual states and talk to them about how
17 this is going to work, and so we have an outreach plan that
18 includes very specifically talking with each of the state
19 agencies and getting them onboard with what we're doing and
20 understanding and seeing how we can integrate states, but I
21 can't give you any more specifics than that, and I'm sorry.

22
23 **MS. GUYAS:** When you say port agents, are you meaning like the
24 headboat port agents or the folks that are conducting the for-
25 hire MRIP survey, because those are state, at least in Florida's
26 case.

27
28 **MR. STRELCHECK:** I think the bottom line is we haven't made a
29 determination of whether this will be state, federal, contract,
30 or how it would work at this point, but we do have, obviously,
31 opportunities ahead of us, in terms of discussing this with the
32 states, in terms of implementation.

33
34 What we do know is that, to validate this program, we're going
35 to need more than the existing staff that are on the ground
36 doing headboat and for-hire sampling, and how that's
37 geographically spread -- We have looked at it a little bit, and
38 that's where the state conversations come into play.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. Mr. Sanchez.

41
42 **MR. JOHN SANCHEZ:** Thank you. I'm glad that I attended the
43 meeting, because I got a real education. I had no idea how
44 complex this is and absolutely all the moving parts and the
45 differences in trying to get this going and having it mesh with
46 all the existing different state data-gathering techniques that
47 are in place and have it all make sense.

48

1 Reporting timeliness, there are some differences between the
2 South Atlantic's approach to this and ours, and VMS and how that
3 relates to HMS reporting, reporting weekly or daily, and there
4 is a lot, a lot, of moving parts here, and so I was completely -
5 - I am glad I went, and I'm befuddled by it. By the time I
6 left, I was just beside myself.

7
8 I would like to add that John Froeschke did an excellent job of
9 going there and speaking. He knew everybody there, and he asked
10 the right questions, and he really had a good grasp on this
11 process as it's evolving, and so I'm absolutely glad that I
12 went.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Mr. Donaldson.

15
16 **MR. DONALDSON:** Sue, just in terms of engaging the states, I
17 would recommend that you utilize the GulfFIN committee and our
18 data committees, because we've got the players that sit around
19 the table, and they're involved in the data collection,
20 commercial and recreational data collection, for a number of
21 years, and so, in terms of facilitating those discussions, I
22 think that would be a good opportunity.

23
24 **MS. GERHART:** Yes. Thank you.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Mr. Anson.

27
28 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you. I have two questions. Sue, in regard to
29 the outreach plan, I know you've had extensive work behind the
30 scenes, at the workshop and such, and this is just a very brief
31 summary that you provided, I'm sure, but is part of the outreach
32 also going to include like 24/7 support and kind of port-by-port
33 training, or are you going to have one-on-one sessions, because,
34 from the outside, at least relative to the CLS America pilot
35 program, that was a point of contention with a lot of the folks
36 that were in my neck of the woods that were trying to utilize
37 that system, is that there was not a very good rollout, as far
38 as the training, and then the support just wasn't really there
39 to help them in-season, while they're trying to do their trips
40 and everything and submit the data. They just couldn't call
41 anyone and get any quick answers to their questions.

42
43 **MS. GERHART:** We're still working on how we're going to do that
44 kind of support. For example, in the IFQ program now, we do
45 have a twenty-four-hour line, but it's not manned by our staff
46 twenty-four hours. It's there for reporting, and so I don't
47 know that we would have support 24/7. That's another cost
48 issue, and I think that's probably a little prohibitive, but we

1 do have the intention of going out and doing workshops on the
2 ground in all the different regions, and there will be a series
3 -- Again, I would compare it to when we put the IFQ programs in
4 place.

5
6 We did a series of workshops where we went through what's going
7 to be required and helped people, and, even now, we have people
8 that go out to different dealers in different regions and sit
9 down one-on-one with people to help them learn stuff, and so
10 we're anticipating that kind of outreach as well, and we have
11 got some funding for initial outreach, at least, already.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Did you have a follow-up to that?

14
15 **MR. ANSON:** My second question is, in regard to CLS America and
16 the duplicative recording or the extra burden to those that were
17 in that program relative to Alabama and supplying the red
18 snapper trip information, do you anticipate it to be a kind of
19 information sharing that we could do that as well, that the
20 charter boats could provide the electronic report to you all and
21 then that data gets immediately transferred to the states,
22 Alabama particularly, to comply with the reporting requirements
23 that we have?

24
25 **MS. GERHART:** Right, and so I think that's something we're still
26 working out with ACCSP and how that kind of process would work.
27 We are well aware that there is multiple things that people have
28 to report to, and we want to reduce that as much as possible,
29 and so that's one of the things that the team is working on, is
30 how that might come about.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Okay. I've got you, John, and I think Ms.
33 Boggs has had her hand up. Go ahead.

34
35 **MS. BOGGS:** Thank you. Yes, I was glad to be able to
36 participate in the seminar, or conference. It was really good,
37 and it was enlightening in a lot of ways. I do have a couple of
38 questions, and then I want to comment.

39
40 Back to the CLS pilot program that was used, there were many VMS
41 that were distributed during that program, and is there any
42 possible way to repurpose those in this program as a way of
43 helping with savings?

44
45 **MS. GERHART:** Yes, absolutely. I mean, when the council put in
46 the requirement for this GPS, it was an archival at a minimum,
47 and that was specifically intended to allow people who already
48 had VMS units to use those for both their reporting and the

1 location information. We have approved VMS units, and I can't
2 remember if CLS has been through that approval process or not,
3 but the intention was the people who already have VMS can
4 continue to use those.

5
6 **MS. BOGGS:** Then I wanted to comment. I know that the council
7 received a letter from a charter boat operator about some of the
8 concerns with how the program might operate, and one of the
9 concerns was about having to have a port of landing.

10
11 In Orange Beach, I can tell you it's a little bit different,
12 because we do have vessels that will leave our marina and go to
13 another marina and pick up and drop off and come back, and so
14 they don't necessarily always operate from that location, and so
15 I do see that there needs to be consistency of where the vessel
16 is going to land.

17
18 The other thing, and we had this in the headboat EFP, was we
19 always had the availability to hail-in or hail-out, if it was by
20 phone or by email, and I know that he expressed concern in his
21 letter that they might not be able to fish because the VMS
22 system might be down, and I just wanted to let the council know
23 that we didn't experience that during the headboat EFP.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Mr. Sanchez.

26
27 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thank you. I forgot to mention that -- I mean,
28 obviously, I'm pleased, after years of hearing the industry ask
29 for this, to see it finally taking shape and gain some momentum,
30 but, after having spent a couple of days at the meeting, I would
31 say, as far as an outreach component goes, I would love to see,
32 for perception reasons with the industry, for us to be very
33 transparent with how laborious this is going to be and how long
34 it's going to take to actually roll out and implement, and, from
35 the day they fire up the units and start collecting data, just
36 kind of let them know that it might be a year or two, or
37 possibly more, before that data actually becomes meaningful, in
38 terms of what it's used for, and so I would love to be very
39 realistic and transparent with all of that, so that expectations
40 are met, rather than we're criticized later for some of these
41 things.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Any other questions for Ms. Gerhart? Sue, if
44 there are no other comments, I just had one thing, and, Andy,
45 this was kind of to you. I think it was you, or maybe you and
46 Dr. Farmer, that gave early presentations about that steep price
47 tag, obviously, that was associated with that, and so I'm glad
48 that you guys are on it.

1
2 I guess this whole process of validation, which is probably
3 where a lot of that price tag comes into play, and I wasn't real
4 clear. That's going to be so important for this, and I just
5 want to make sure you're feeling good or you think that the
6 money is there for that extensive validation that this is going
7 to take.

8
9 **MR. STRELCHECK:** I was told the Great Red Snapper Count was
10 going to donate \$5 million to the project.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** We'll work on that.

13
14 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Am I feeling good? Yes and no, and, obviously,
15 we can't lobby Congress for budget purposes. We can certainly
16 work within our agency to determine priorities and, where we
17 can, obviously, shift priorities.

18
19 With the price tag of this, it's a substantial shift in funding
20 to take something, a program, away within NMFS, and so my
21 concern, obviously, at this point is needing that additional
22 funding, primarily for the validation component. I think we can
23 stand up the program with the existing budgets and funding and
24 get it going, but that validation component comes with a hefty
25 price tag.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Yes, and so that's my concern as well. I mean,
28 obviously, we want to get that right, as long and as hard as
29 we've been working on this, since even before I was on the
30 council.

31
32 My last comment was to follow-up on John's point. Having done
33 this data collection thing for some years, and it's the
34 importance of communication and outreach and making sure that
35 the individuals using this have a resource to call when things
36 aren't working, and that's where I would say we spend the vast
37 majority of our time and effort, is that type of outreach or
38 hotline or whatever you want to call it, and so I just wanted to
39 throw that out there, Sue, for you and your team of things to be
40 aware, because you can get disenfranchised very easily when
41 you're trying to go fishing and things aren't working, and
42 things come up that you never even anticipate at this point, and
43 so I think that it's very important to at least be prepared for
44 that, so that the for-hire guys have a place to immediately go
45 when they need it kind of thing to get the answers. Go ahead,
46 Sue.

47
48 **MS. GERHART:** Just a couple of things. Thank you for that.

1 That's something we have been really thinking about, and I would
2 like to say that we -- Our in-house is not necessarily going to
3 be at the Regional Office that will be housing all of this
4 support, but we have our IFQ team that really gets a lot of
5 compliments on their customer service, and so I feel pretty
6 confident that we can put something together for that.

7
8 The other thing is that I would like to address an
9 implementation time and the questions that have come forward
10 about maybe delaying the implementation, so that it's not during
11 the peak of fishing season, and could I get some input on that?

12
13 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Ms. Boggs.

14
15 **MS. BOGGS:** Thank you. I was the one that kind of brought that
16 up with Jessica at the meeting. The implementation being in
17 April, for our port, and I think even northwestern Florida,
18 spring break, and you've got triggerfish season and going into
19 amberjack season, and you're coming into red snapper season, and
20 I just mentioned, and I haven't talked to a lot of the captains,
21 but, when I found out that the validation wasn't going to be
22 there if we started it immediately, maybe it wouldn't hurt to
23 come out of the peak season, August or September, and then try
24 to implement it, when the captains aren't so busy with the
25 fishing season. That was just a suggestion that I made, and
26 those were the reasons that I made it.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Thank you. Any other questions for Ms.
29 Gerhart? Seeing none, we will move into the next item in our
30 agenda, which was Other Business, and I think, Leann, you had a
31 point that you wanted to bring up?

32
33 **OTHER BUSINESS**

34
35 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thanks, and I will just be quick. I've kind of
36 been waiting for a Data Collection Committee to come around so I
37 could bring this up. Back in April, there was actually a motion
38 that was passed at one of our AP meetings, and it was the IFQ AP
39 meeting, but it was really more related to data, and their
40 request, and their motion, was that a unique trip identifier be
41 developed for their IFQ trips.

42
43 My understanding of the way it works now is they hail-out, and
44 there is a confirmation number associated with that, and they
45 hail-in, and there is a separate number. They get a trip ticket
46 for their unloading, and that's got some sort of ID associated
47 with it, and there is a dealer report, but there is not one
48 unique identifier that follows that trip from start to finish,

1 okay, and I don't -- I am not going to sit here and act like I
2 know all the innerworkings of that data process. I don't, but
3 it was something they requested, and so there must be some value
4 in it to them, in their minds, where it could be helpful from a
5 data collection standpoint.

6
7 I bring it up because, when we went to the CCC meeting in
8 Alaska, where all eight councils come together, we were being
9 given a presentation on data collection and this and that, and
10 two of the other councils at the table actually came up with
11 this same request, and they said, you know, we have been asking
12 for a unique trip identifier for quite some time for several of
13 our fisheries, and I think the New England Council brought it up
14 and the Mid-Atlantic, or maybe one of the western councils, and
15 I don't remember.

16
17 There must be some value. Multiple councils are requesting it,
18 and our fishermen are requesting it, and what I wanted to do was
19 throw it out there to look further into. Not to start
20 developing any kind of amendment or things like that, because,
21 before you ever get to that, I think we should really know what
22 would be involved, from the NMFS side of the house, whether it
23 be Clay's shop or Roy and Andy's, what would be involved in
24 making that happen. How complex of a process is that, and what
25 do we really think we might could gain from it? What would be
26 some of the benefits?

27
28 Maybe reach out to some of those other councils, and maybe staff
29 could, that brought it up at the CCC meeting and see what value
30 they thought that they were going to be able to reap from it,
31 from a data perspective, and so I just wanted to throw that out
32 there and see if NMFS would be willing to maybe look at it a
33 little bit on their side, and maybe staff could ask the other
34 councils where they were headed with it, and maybe we could get
35 an update and see if it's something that is worthwhile for
36 pursuing.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Well, Leann, I agree completely, and, just in
39 the broad data collection realm, this unique identifier is the
40 way it's going, for a variety of reasons, and so I guess the
41 question is how do we move that forward? I don't know that -- I
42 personally think it's a great idea, but I don't know. Maybe,
43 Sue, you or Andy have a comment to that?

44
45 **MS. GERHART:** Well, my comment to that was going to be going
46 back to the SEFHIER process. That's one of the things we're
47 really looking at, because we have these multiple data streams.
48 We're going to have the trip reports, and we're going to have

1 the GPS data, and then if there is state information, and so
2 that is something that we're really focusing on as a way to keep
3 all of that tracked through a unique identifier. I don't know
4 if Andy had something to add.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Go ahead, Andy.

7

8 **MR. STRELCHECK:** We have talked about this, actually, for years
9 at NMFS, and we haven't come up with a lot of good solutions.
10 We have multiple programs that have been brought online at
11 different time periods, and that's one of the challenges that we
12 have faced, is how do we then merge all of those programs
13 together.

14

15 It is a good practice, especially when you're tracking a trip
16 that has to hail-out and then hail-in and ultimately report
17 landings, to have that unique identifier. One of the challenges
18 with the IFQ program is we give a lot of different options for
19 steps in the process, in terms of how they can report.

20

21 For example, on the hail-out, they could submit it via VMS, or
22 they could make a phone call and report it that way, and so you
23 have to have all those systems talking together, but, yes, we're
24 happy to look into it, and maybe we could come back with a
25 presentation or some further discussion at a subsequent meeting.

26

27 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Okay. A follow-up?

28

29 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you, sir. That would be wonderful. I
30 appreciate it.

31

32 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** I think Ms. Beckwith had a question.

33

34 **MS. BECKWITH:** Not a question, but just a comment. Similar to
35 this discussion, the South Atlantic Council has been kind of
36 interested in the idea of an operator card that would work in a
37 similar fashion.

38

39 The South Atlantic has an operator card for our captains in
40 certain fisheries. The Northeast Council has got operator cards
41 that operate in some of their fisheries, and we don't find them
42 to be useful in their current format, because, of course, the
43 Northeast Office doesn't talk to the SERO Office, and they're
44 not connected in any way, but I think our council had sent a
45 letter out to you guys, along with all the other councils on the
46 Atlantic side, sort of indicating the idea that, if the councils
47 were interested in pursuing one united operator card for all
48 captains, that that would also probably go a long way to

1 improving our data programs throughout the entire council
2 jurisdiction. It would work similarly, but you would just be
3 able to identify what captain was on that unique trip, and so,
4 if you guys are interested in talking more about it, we would
5 sure love to.

6

7 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Right. Thank you. Ms. Bosarge.

8

9 **MS. BOSARGE:** I won't say that I am not interested in talking
10 about it, but I will talk you that they're a pain in the rear,
11 because we fish over there, and we have to get them, and I guess
12 the part for me is seeing the value in it. I have yet to see --
13 It's a little -- It essentially looks like a driver's license or
14 something, right? The captain has to go and get a passport
15 photo made and mail it off with a fee to the South Atlantic.

16

17 You wait, and it has to come back in the mail, and you've got to
18 carry this around with you at all times, and I guess, with all
19 the reporting systems that we have, and we're gathering the
20 data, and it's almost an ID, I could not figure out, for the
21 life of me, what is the value? If you want to persecute him --
22 Because you were talking about from an enforcement standpoint, I
23 think, over there.

24

25 Well, we have lots of IDs, and they're all required by the
26 government, and we carry them with us, and we have our own
27 Social Security numbers, and we can be tracked, and I don't
28 know. It just seems like an extra layer.

29

30 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** Ms. Beckwith.

31

32 **MS. BECKWITH:** Yes, I couldn't agree with you more. In its
33 current format, it has exactly zero value. All of the operator
34 cards, I think, for the Southeast in particular, and I think the
35 Northeast has an individual identifier number for all of their
36 captains.

37

38 One of the things that we have run across is, certainly for our
39 charter fleet, is it doesn't add any value, because we are
40 individually identified by our captain's licenses, but the
41 feedback we've gotten from some of our commercial fleets is that
42 their operators are not licensed captains, and they might not
43 even have a driver's license, and so sometimes they have folks
44 running their snapper grouper boats that have zero
45 identification, and it's a problem, and so it's an interesting
46 discussion.

47

48 I don't want to take up your time, but I think if all the

1 councils had one united operator number for all operators
2 throughout the entire area, especially for those that sort of
3 crosspollinate, there could be some value to that, in the long
4 run.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. Well, Ms. Bosarge -- I guess I
7 certainly think that there is value in what you're talking
8 about, the trip identifier and the operator card, and so there's
9 kind of two different things, but somehow building those
10 together, and I don't know if we had the discussion that you
11 wanted to have.

12
13 What I am sort of thinking, Sue, is that, maybe since the
14 SEFHIER is sort of in its infancy, this might be a good
15 opportunity to test something like a unique identifier trip that
16 could be translated into other fleets, but I don't know if that
17 meets the timeline that you're talking about, and so, if you
18 want something sooner, I don't know if we need to formalize that
19 or if -- Andy was talking about bringing something back to the
20 council, or how do you want to leave that discussion?

21
22 **MS. BOSARGE:** I am not in any heated rush. I mean, this is
23 something that's been asked for for a long time, as Andy said,
24 and so, whenever Andy and his staff have the time to look into
25 it and get back with us, and whenever our staff has the time to
26 maybe reach out to those other councils, and we have time on our
27 agenda, that's perfectly reasonable.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN STUNZ:** All right. Well, we're at Other Business. Is
30 there any other business that needs to come before this
31 committee? Seeing none, that would adjourn the Data Collection
32 Committee.

33
34 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on August 22, 2018.)

35
36

- - -