

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

DATA COLLECTION COMMITTEE

Webinar

April 12, 2021

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- 11 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
- 12 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- 13 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
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- 15 Robin Riechers.....Texas
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- 18 Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi
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- 21 Ed Swindell.....Louisiana
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- 47 Shannon Calay.....SEFSC
- 48 Martin Fisher.....FL
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1 Rich Malinowski.....NMFS  
2 Clay Porch.....SEFSC  
3 John Walter.....SEFSC  
4 Spud Woodward.....SAFMC

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1 The Data Collection Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery  
2 Management Council convened via webinar on Monday afternoon,  
3 April 12, 2021, and was called to order by Chairman Kevin Anson.

4  
5 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
6 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
7 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**  
8

9 **CHAIRMAN KEVIN ANSON:** This is the Data Collection Committee,  
10 and we have the agenda in Tab F, Number 1. We have the  
11 committee members here. It's myself, Dr. Stunz, Mr. Schieble,  
12 Ms. Boggs, Ms. Bosarge, Mr. Donaldson, Ms. Guyas, Mr. Riechers,  
13 Mr. Sanchez, General Spraggins, and then Andy Strelcheck and Mr.  
14 Swindell and Mr. Williamson. Is there any additions or changes  
15 needed to the agenda? I will wait just a moment. Seeing none,  
16 unless there is any opposition, we'll go ahead and approve the  
17 agenda as-is.

18  
19 Next on the agenda is Approval of the October 2020 Minutes. Are  
20 there any changes or updates or additions to the minutes? I  
21 don't see anybody raising their hand, and the same thing.  
22 Unless somebody has any opposition, we'll go ahead and approve  
23 the minutes as written. That takes us to Item Number III, Tab  
24 F, Number 3, the Action Guide and Next Steps. Dr. Hollensead, I  
25 guess it would be efficient and we'll go ahead and review the  
26 action guide with each item, as the item comes up in the agenda,  
27 if you don't mind.

28  
29 **DR. LISA HOLLENSEAD:** Yes, Mr. Chair. That won't be a problem  
30 at all.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Great. Do you want to go ahead and proceed  
33 with the first item on the agenda and the action guide, Dr.  
34 Hollensead?

35  
36 **DR. HOLLENSEAD:** Sure, Mr. Chair. I will go through the entire  
37 action guide. After approval of the agenda and minutes, we have  
38 three sort of actionable items on the docket for today. The  
39 first will be reviewing some excerpts from the Reef Fish AP  
40 summary and the CMP AP summary, specifically regarding the  
41 commercial electronic logbooks, and so I'll just quickly go  
42 through those and sort of give an overview of what the panels  
43 discussed, as well as their motions associated with that.

44  
45 Sort of actionable items for the committee then is to review  
46 those summaries and questions and discuss those recommendations  
47 and provide any direction to staff that the committee would deem  
48 suitable for any next steps.

1  
2 Agenda Item V is going to be an update on the Southeast For-Hire  
3 Electronic Reporting Program, or SEFHIER. I believe Mr. Rich  
4 Malinowski will give that, or perhaps Mr. Peter Hood will also  
5 chime in on that as well, and so they're going to give sort of  
6 an update of what's gone on with Phase 1 and that implementation  
7 for that program that began in January of this year. They will  
8 also provide a little bit of a progress report on what's going  
9 on recently with that program.

10  
11 Then the last item that we will go over will be a presentation  
12 from staff at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center discussing  
13 discards, methodology for discards, in the commercial and  
14 recreational sector and how those discards are related in the  
15 annual catch level monitoring. If you all will recall, this was  
16 originally on the docket under the Sustainable Fisheries  
17 Committee, back in our sort of interim November/December council  
18 meeting, but had to get pushed back, because of time.

19  
20 The Sustainable Fisheries Committee is not meeting this go-  
21 round, and so it's now in the Data Collection, and so the  
22 Science Center has provided that, and they've also given a  
23 couple of case studies in that presentation for red snapper, red  
24 grouper, and king mackerel, and so they'll be touching on that  
25 and then giving some case studies with which to hopefully inform  
26 the committee of those procedures, and so that would conclude my  
27 action guide, and so I would be happy to take any questions on  
28 that before I jump into our first agenda item.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Anyone have any questions? I guess go ahead  
31 and proceed with that next agenda item, Tab F, Number 4, DR.  
32 Hollensead.

33  
34 **AP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROPOSED COMMERCIAL E-LOGBOOK**  
35 **REQUIREMENTS**  
36

37 **DR. HOLLENSHAD:** Thank you. As we pull up that item, just to  
38 sort of circle everybody back, if you recall, the committee  
39 received -- Excuse me. The council as a whole received some  
40 presentations from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, back  
41 in June and October of 2020, outlining some proposed changes to  
42 the commercial ELB program, and the council thought it best to  
43 bring this information in front of the various APs, to get their  
44 feedback.

45  
46 What I ended up doing is we had a meeting with the Reef Fish AP  
47 at the end of February, and so all I did was take like a  
48 synthesis presentation, where I took some slides from those few

1 presentations and sort of put them together, but we also kept  
2 the full, intact presentations as background material for the  
3 panel to consider, and I just sort of went through those, sort  
4 of highlighting what we had been given from the Science Center  
5 in those presentations.

6  
7 We also had the Science Center staff on the call, and so Dr.  
8 Julie Brown was made available, and so she was able to field  
9 some questions from panel members at that time, which helped  
10 with the discussions, but, overall, the summaries from this  
11 meeting, regarding this item, is the Reef Fish panel -- They  
12 liked the idea of moving away from paper logbooks. They were in  
13 support of a more electronic way of doing that.

14  
15 Then some of the AP members did like the idea of more real-time  
16 data and getting data more quickly, but there were some things  
17 that were cause for concern for the panel. Some of the  
18 preliminary considerations for the program seemed more tailored  
19 to longlines, in terms of what might constitute a set, and, as  
20 you know, there's a variety of different commercial gears used  
21 in this fishery, and so they had noted that, that what would  
22 necessarily constitute a set to monitor effort, for example.

23  
24 They were concerned about things like reporting overlap. Given  
25 the amount of programs monitoring, that there would be some  
26 duplicative reporting, and they would want to try to minimize  
27 that, as much as possible, between, for example, trip tickets  
28 and IFQ programs and things like that.

29  
30 They were concerned about reporting at-sea would be burdensome.  
31 With these commercial trips, obviously, they want to be as  
32 efficient as possible while they're out on the water, and they  
33 would make those trips as timely as possible, and so having to  
34 stop and input a data input, sort of at every set, would be  
35 burdensome.

36  
37 They also encouraged the Science Center to reach out to more  
38 fishermen, the idea being that those that had participated in  
39 the pilot program are probably folks that might be interested or  
40 have sort of a positive thought on that program and that it  
41 might be good to talk to a diversity of fishermen, to get some  
42 input on what could perhaps be modified about the program,  
43 versus what was found in the pilot program.

44  
45 That led to this motion from the Reef Fish AP, and so this  
46 motion was to inform the mackerel, reef fish, and shrimp  
47 commercial fishermen of the Gulf about these ELB proposals and  
48 hear back from them before implementation, and so that sort of

1 covers a little bit of what the Reef Fish AP went through. I'm  
2 not sure if Captain Ed Walker is on the line or not, but, if  
3 he's not, I can move forward with the CMP AP, as we do have that  
4 chair available to comment.

5  
6 I will just go through the summary for the CMP AP, and so they  
7 had some similar recommendations, or discussion, that the Reef  
8 Fish AP had. Again, they were in favor of moving away from the  
9 paper logbooks, and they liked the idea of something electronic.  
10 However, they weren't very supportive of the idea of having to  
11 do it on the water. Again, they mentioned, specifically, the  
12 burden and potential at-sea safety, should a storm or something  
13 come up and that they don't necessarily do some sort of hail-in  
14 before they get in, and, obviously, they would want some  
15 consideration from that.

16  
17 Again, they mentioned concern with duplicate reporting, with the  
18 observer program and things like that, already having worked  
19 through those venues, and they mentioned the sort of methodology  
20 of spot fishing, staying in one spot not very long and then  
21 maybe moving a short distance to another spot and what would be  
22 considered a set in that case.

23  
24 Some of the Science Center staff had mentioned that that could  
25 be sort of subjective, based on what they thought would  
26 constitute their effort in those cases, and so it's not the  
27 intention that they necessarily would have to fill out a hundred  
28 reports if they stop at a hundred places, for example, but that  
29 was going to have to be a concern and something that would have  
30 to be teased out.

31  
32 Again, there was also concern about -- It was brought up at this  
33 AP about the proprietary fishing location information, and so,  
34 if they were interested in reporting that, that this information  
35 is sort of sensitive for where these good spots are, and the  
36 fishermen would like to keep that -- They would like to keep  
37 that and not necessarily broadcast across to a lot of people.

38  
39 Then any sort of costs that might be associated with this  
40 program. The app, right now, is free, in order to put in  
41 through your phone or tablet, but just any potential, perhaps,  
42 costs that the program may incur, should it expand or anything  
43 like that, and so they, again, thought that -- This AP thought  
44 that these were proposed changes, and so they would like a  
45 little bit more time to look into this and have a little bit  
46 more say in what this program would entail.

47  
48 They passed a motion to recommend the council reject the

1 commercial ELB proposal as currently written, and Mr. Fisher,  
2 the Chair of the CMP AP, is here with us, if he would like to  
3 illuminate on anything I may have missed or sort of capture the  
4 larger discussion, and I know he touched on it a little bit at  
5 the last meeting, but, if he wanted to be called upon to speak a  
6 little bit more to it, he's available to do so, but that  
7 concludes my sort of overview of those parts of the summary.  
8

9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dr. Hollensead. Mr. Fisher, do you  
10 have anything else that you would like to add?  
11

12 **MR. MARTIN FISHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The only thing I  
13 would like to add is we already have the VMS program for the  
14 reef fish fleet, which doesn't, obviously, include the mackerel  
15 guys that aren't involved in reef fish, but, as a fleet, we  
16 spend upwards of \$800,000 a year to be able to participate,  
17 through our VMS costs, and one of the reasons that we were so  
18 passionate about our response to the proposal is that,  
19 especially in reef fish, your spots are very specific, and they  
20 are basically like the phonebook of your financial life.  
21

22 The way that the proposal read, to us, you are -- NOAA already  
23 has a record of where we go, and they can actually tell,  
24 sometimes, where we stop, and it's on the hour, and so it's not  
25 a minute-by-minute, and it's certainly not species specific or  
26 where we've actually caught the fish, but the whole idea, for  
27 us, is that the electronic logbook would mirror the paper one  
28 and that we would come home from a trip, and we would sit down  
29 in our nice armchair, and we would type out what we would  
30 normally write out, and, instead of mailing it, push "send".  
31

32 We understand that we need really good research and have the  
33 ability to give the Science Center real-time information about  
34 where we're catching the fish, and none of us can see a real  
35 scientific reason to be so specific as to, okay, I caught a  
36 hundred pounds on this spot, and I moved a half-mile and caught  
37 a hundred pounds over there. That's about all I've got, I  
38 think. Thank you.  
39

40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, sir. Any questions or comments from  
41 committee members? In our action guide, it's basically up to us  
42 to kind of take in this additional information that we've just  
43 received from a couple of our APs and their recommendations and  
44 kind of use that to go forward. Is anybody interested in  
45 addressing the issue? I see, Dr. Walter, and is that you  
46 raising your hand?  
47

48 **DR. JOHN WALTER:** Good afternoon, everyone and Chair. We saw

1 this here, and we're glad that I think people are seeing some  
2 benefit to the electronic logbooks, and particularly in the  
3 efficiency of reporting, that that might ease some of the  
4 reporting burden.

5  
6 We also think we probably need to take a look at the best path  
7 and work a little more collaboratively, to try to find solutions  
8 to things that would work. I guess what I would really want to  
9 ask of Martin, as Chair of the CMP AP, how do you think you see  
10 it best for us to work together to find a solution?

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mr. Fisher.

13  
14 **MR. FISHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, sir, from our  
15 perspective -- It depends on what you want to do. From our  
16 perspective, the best kind of ELB that we could participate with  
17 would be the one that we can do when we finish our trip.

18  
19 The whole idea of having to hail-in before you unload, for the  
20 purposes of the ELB, seem punitive, and almost as if you're  
21 expecting somebody to cheat, where, again, at least in reef  
22 fish, we have hail-in already, and we have lots of enforcement  
23 issues with getting to the dock at a certain time. That seems  
24 redundant, and kind of offensive.

25  
26 When the kingfish fleet -- The kingfish fleet and the mackerel  
27 fleet are, oftentimes, much smaller boats than what you would  
28 find in the shrimp or the reef fish fisheries, and it seems like  
29 the program that you have is more dialed-in for pelagic  
30 longlining, or possibly even grouper longlining, bottom fishing,  
31 but, for a twenty-foot boat, or a twenty-five-foot boat, or a  
32 thirty-foot boat, that doesn't necessarily have an enclosed  
33 cabin, to have to jump through the hoops that the proposal puts  
34 forth -- It just seems out of character for what you're actually  
35 trying to achieve, especially since you already have, at least  
36 in reef fish, again, the VMS tracks of where we've been fishing.

37  
38 I understand that you would like to get real-time data for  
39 kingfish and mackerel, and I don't think there's a fisherman out  
40 there, commercial or recreational, that doesn't want better  
41 data. We all want better data. I've advocating for -- Me,  
42 personally, I've been advocating for electronic logbooks since  
43 2004, but my idea was always, again, you get home and sit down  
44 at the computer and fill it out and push "send", and, boom,  
45 you've got it done. Does that help?

46  
47 **DR. WALTER:** Yes, I think so, and, also, I think one of the  
48 things I wanted to ask is would we be able to set up a workshop,

1 through the APs, where we could have a little more informal  
2 discussions about what could work and what wouldn't work? I  
3 think that's kind of the step we need to take here, because of  
4 the diversity of fisheries that we might have, and the diversity  
5 of vessels that you raised, but I think that's really what's  
6 missing.

7  
8 We've only had the ability to give fairly short presentations to  
9 the APs, and then it's kind of been a yes or no on the proposal,  
10 but I don't think we got to have enough back-and-forth that I  
11 think is really the key to achieving a workable solution.

12  
13 **MR. FISHER:** Mr. Chair, to that point?

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** To that point, Mr. Fisher.

16  
17 **MR. FISHER:** Okay. Thank you. Dr. Walter, I think that's a  
18 great idea. That's certainly up to the council's discretion, as  
19 to when they could convene another AP meeting for both Reef Fish  
20 and Shrimp and CMP, but, yes, that would be ideal, if you would  
21 come to us and we could give you how we really see ourselves  
22 participating willingly and with enthusiasm. Thank you.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Dr. Walter, any more questions or  
25 comments?

26  
27 **DR. WALTER:** No, and thank you, but just we would welcome the  
28 opportunity, and I hope that we can find a path forward. Thank  
29 you, Chair.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Next up, I have Leann.

32  
33 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I just wanted  
34 to thank Dr. Walter. I don't know that I've ever met you face-  
35 to-face, but I always enjoy interacting with you in these  
36 meetings. You're real level-headed, and you have a lot of  
37 commonsense, and I just think you get along very well with the  
38 fishermen, and so thanks for your participation.

39  
40 I just kind of wanted to highlight a few of the things that  
41 Martin spoke to, because, although Martin is with the CMP AP, I  
42 think several different APs have looked at these different data  
43 collection programs that are being proposed right now, and I  
44 think there's some common themes that go across all of them.

45  
46 One of the things that Martin brought up was that there was the  
47 hail-in and hail-out requirement and things like that, and he  
48 said it was kind of a little offensive, and it's almost like you

1 expect us to cheat, or you're insinuating that we're cheating,  
2 and I think the same thing can be said with the shrimp fleet  
3 sometimes, with this idea of putting a VMS on us that has real-  
4 time tracking and having our data go straight to law  
5 enforcement.

6  
7 It's almost like it's a little offensive, as if you think we're  
8 doing something wrong automatically, and so I think maybe that's  
9 rubbed a few of us the wrong way, and so I think, maybe if we  
10 can get past some of those issues, that that would be helpful.

11  
12 Then it seems like all the different groups -- What I have heard  
13 is what they're really wanting -- You have a logbook for them  
14 right now, and you have a logbook for shrimp right now. In the  
15 finfish fisheries, it's a piece of paper that they have to turn  
16 in at a certain time after a trip, and I think it's seven days  
17 after the end of a trip, but don't quote me on that, and what  
18 they were wanting was to get some efficiencies, by taking that  
19 piece of paper, the same information, and putting forth an  
20 online platform that they could submit that.

21  
22 They could go check those boxes on the computer, at the house,  
23 instead of checking the boxes on the piece of paper and not to  
24 totally revamp the form and the information that's in there, and  
25 that's not to say that you couldn't look at some minor tweaks,  
26 but I think what's been presented were pretty major changes in  
27 the way that we collect data, and the same again goes for  
28 shrimp.

29  
30 We have a logbook program. In our case, would just be the  
31 platform that we're using, and the 3G has expired, and we would  
32 like to look at a new cellular platform and not going to a  
33 totally different type of platform, which is satellite or  
34 otherwise, and so continuing what we have, but with a little  
35 more efficiency, in all of these different APs, I think, was a  
36 recurring theme.

37  
38 I think we just need to maybe take a step back, and, with that  
39 in mind, go back and look at these things again and have a more  
40 back-and-forth dialogue, rather than the top-down approach that  
41 was sort of taken this way, this time, and maybe let's have more  
42 of a grassroots approach and an open dialogue on this, and then  
43 I think we might could get somewhere. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Leann. Next up, we have Martha.

46  
47 **MS. MARTHA GUYAS:** Thanks, Kevin. I appreciate both Leann's and  
48 John Walter's comments. I think having some more workshops with

1 industry, whether it's through the APs or not, I think would be  
2 really helpful here. The people I've spoken to about this have  
3 a lot of really in-the-weeds questions about what this looks  
4 like, and I also feel like, where some big changes have been  
5 discussed, I think it's really important to make it -- Kind of  
6 explain, in detail, what each of the potential changes -- What's  
7 the benefit, because there's a tradeoff to all of these things,  
8 and, from the fishermen's perspective, it may not be worth it  
9 for that tradeoff.

10  
11 I think I like what Leann said, trying to have more of a  
12 conversation, rather than this is what this is, and what it's  
13 going to be, and I think helping fishermen to see what it will  
14 mean for them and hearing about how -- Hearing more, and I  
15 understand there's been some pilot work done here, but there's a  
16 lot of people that are still pretty confused about this, how  
17 this going to potentially affect people, and what are we really  
18 accomplishing here I think is going to be helpful.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Next, I have Dale.

21  
22 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Mr. Chairman, thank you. I'm not on your  
23 committee, but I did want to weigh-in, real quick. I do like  
24 the idea of getting more active with the APs and setting some  
25 time aside to work with the APs on this. There was a good bit  
26 of discussion at the CMP AP, and I know they would -- From the  
27 discussion, they would welcome getting a chance to weigh-in on  
28 it sooner rather than later.

29  
30 I did take some notes from the AP, on different things that they  
31 were saying, and I think Mr. Fisher covered some of them, but  
32 the burden was too much was one comment I have. Fishermen  
33 really don't like giving out the exact locations of where they  
34 fish, and putting electronics on small, open boats, and it's not  
35 good if they get wet.

36  
37 These smaller boats have small crews, and the way they were  
38 interpreting it was that, as they move from stop to stop, they  
39 should be logging-in, and the burden of logging-in is too much  
40 for them while they're trying to fish, either fishing by  
41 themselves or with a small crew. I believe that's it. The only  
42 other comment I had is one that Mr. Fisher had already made, and  
43 so thank you, Mr. Chair.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. I agree that it's great that there  
46 is some dialogue going on, and it's good to hear, from at the  
47 least the Science Center folks, Dr. Walter, that he's interested  
48 in continuing on the conversations, and he had learned some

1 things from some of the interactions that have been held  
2 already, and he's willing to talk some more, and so it sounds  
3 like from Mr. Fisher the same thing, that they're eager to find  
4 out more details, because there some benefits, potentially, to  
5 having electronic logbooks. Carrie, your name popped up, and I  
6 was going to ask you a couple of questions, but do you have some  
7 comments?

8  
9 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
10 think the workshop idea is a great idea. I just feel like we're  
11 not quite there yet. I think we need to take the comments that  
12 we got from the two APs and work with the Science Center staff  
13 and the Regional Office staff and our staff to figure out what  
14 fisheries are going to be impacted, what are the current  
15 requirements, how can they mesh with the current programs, and  
16 then go from there and bring it back for perhaps a workshop, but  
17 I think we need to take this information and feedback first and  
18 figure out what we can do with it with the other staffs and then  
19 bring it back to the AP and council, would be my suggestion.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Next, I had Susan up first, and  
22 then I'll go back to allow Mr. Fisher a comment. Susan.

23  
24 **MS. SUSAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think this is a great  
25 conversation. I know, when the SEFHIER program was underway,  
26 there were a lot of questions, at the beginning, about how it  
27 was going to look, what's it going to look like, how are we  
28 going to have to report.

29  
30 I know there was some kickback from the smaller vessels, is what  
31 I'm hearing today, with the commercial fishermen, and it's a  
32 learning process for everyone, and I think it's a good  
33 conversation to be had, and I'm glad to hear that the APs and  
34 NMFS and the Science Center are wanting to get together and have  
35 these conversations and work together to build a program that's  
36 going to work for everyone and that everyone is going to buy  
37 into and make it successful. Thank you.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Mr. Fisher.

40  
41 **MR. FISHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think there's two  
42 different things that we could focus on here. One is electronic  
43 logbooks to replace the paper ones, and that could happen  
44 yesterday. Then, on top of that, you've got this idea of  
45 getting real-time data on fish effort. I think they're really  
46 two separate ideas, and I don't think you should combine them.  
47 I think, going to an electronic logbook that you can do at home,  
48 that could happen literally tomorrow. Thank you.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher. I appreciate your  
3 engagement. Does anyone else want to speak to the issue?  
4 Carrie, you said earlier that you need some time. I mean,  
5 unless somebody on the committee says otherwise, I am getting  
6 the feeling that the committee at least is interested in making  
7 sure -- Facilitating, to the extent that we can as a council, to  
8 further the conversations, and I will just kind of leave it up  
9 to you, I guess, as to make those arrangements and settle them  
10 with NOAA, as far as timing and getting the information. I see,  
11 Dr. Walter, you would like to make a comment?

12  
13 **DR. WALTER:** Thanks for the floor, Chair. To Leann, I hope that  
14 we are able to meet in-person at the next council meeting that  
15 we can have in-person, and I definitely enjoy the interactions  
16 in-person a lot more.

17  
18 My last thing that I will just follow-up on is that I hope we  
19 can try to schedule some probably workshop-type scenarios, where  
20 we can discuss the details of the programs and what would work  
21 and what wouldn't work, and so I look forward to that. Thanks.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, and I guess my only comment is  
24 certainly staff is very creative about these types of things,  
25 but just, if there's a possibility, if it was going to be held  
26 in person, the workshop, that they are recorded and then  
27 available on the website, so that people can access them who  
28 won't be able to attend, and so just, again, as far as the  
29 information exchange and maybe helping those folks who don't  
30 have a chance to meet at that location, and so is there any  
31 other discussion?

32  
33 I think that takes care of this agenda item, and is there any  
34 other comments from committee members about this? Seeing none,  
35 we will move on to the next item, and that would be Tab F,  
36 Number 5, Update on the Southeast For-Hire Electronic Reporting  
37 Program. Mr. Malinowski, is that going to be you, or both? Is  
38 he with you, Mr. Hood?

39  
40 **MR. RICH MALINOWSKI:** I believe it's going to be me, Kevin.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** You have the floor, sir.

43  
44 **UPDATE ON SOUTHEAST FOR-HIRE ELECTRONIC REPORTING (SEFHIER)**  
45 **PROGRAM**

46  
47  
48 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Gulf

1 Council, for giving me the opportunity to present to you on  
2 updates to our Southeast For-Hire Electronic Reporting Program.  
3 I realize that we're a little behind, and so I will try to go  
4 through them pretty fast.

5  
6 The first couple of slides are just an overview of the  
7 requirements, and then I'll provide you with some numbers and  
8 some updates like that, and then we'll get into some questions  
9 that we would like some discussion on.

10  
11 Phase 1 of the Gulf reporting requirements started on January 5.  
12 The vessels need to declare each time the vessel leaves the dock  
13 and submit their fishing report before offloading the fish at  
14 the dock, and they need to respond to any dockside intercept  
15 surveys, and headboats have been submitting their reports  
16 through the VESL or BlueFIN app for the headboat survey, and  
17 that will continue on.

18  
19 Phase 2, which we'll talk about a little bit later, is not  
20 effective yet, and that's requiring a permanently-affixed  
21 positioning unit, either satellite or cellular, on the vessel,  
22 and it's always got to be on and transmitting, unless there's a  
23 power-down exemption in place. It applies to vessels when the  
24 requirement becomes effective, which it is not effective yet.

25  
26 Reporting must be done using an approved software and hardware  
27 app that we have. Currently, for the software, we have  
28 eTRIPS/mobile, which is the ACCSP product, and VESL, which is  
29 the BlueFIN product, and approved software and hardware are  
30 listed on our website, and you can take a look at those, and  
31 there is the connections to their links and such on our website.

32  
33 Currently, some satellite VMS units, and one cellular unit, have  
34 been approved with forms. There is a table on our website that  
35 you can go to and see these different reporting vendors and  
36 units themselves and click on them for some more information,  
37 and I will get to that in a second.

38  
39 This is what you guys haven't seen yet, and this is a summary of  
40 these webinars, and so we held over twenty outreach educational  
41 webinars, with folks throughout the Gulf and the South Atlantic,  
42 and you can see a list of them there, and we reached out to  
43 almost 500 or 600 captains or fishermen or permit holders and  
44 state partners and law enforcement and such, and so it's a big  
45 outreach push.

46  
47 You can see the last one we had was on March 30, which closed  
48 out our Tuesday evening webinars. We had webinars set up, and,

1 in the beginning, it was at 6:00 in the evening, and then we  
2 switched to 7:00, for some of the west coast or central  
3 fishermen. We're at the end of that string right now, and some  
4 of the guidance we're looking for, from the industry and such,  
5 is on how to continue these.

6  
7 The next question is, with the public Q&A webinars -- Just  
8 briefly, probably there were probably between five and ten  
9 fishermen at the Tuesday evening meetings, and we had staff from  
10 eTRIPS, BlueFIN, and one VMS unit -- SkyMate was always there,  
11 and, a lot of the times, we had the same handful of fishermen  
12 there that were sort of representing their neighbors and their  
13 organizations and asking consolidated questions that they have  
14 in the group, which is great for us, but we're looking for some  
15 direction from the council, and/or the fishermen, on how often  
16 we want to have these webinars in the future, as things roll out  
17 and questions arise.

18  
19 The next upcoming webinar we have is for training OLE and the  
20 partners, in May or June, and so SRFH, which is our Southeast  
21 Reporting For-Hire -- I am going to call it a vessel management  
22 system, and it basically is a system that is setup to enter all  
23 the communications we have, whether it be from a law enforcement  
24 agent, help staff, from someone on the phone working in  
25 Sustainable Fisheries, and we can log into there and put in  
26 communications, and we can see the trip declarations in there,  
27 and we can see the logbooks, and so it's a very comprehensive --  
28 I call it like a vessel management or project management system.  
29 We're going to be waiting to roll out some of the intercept  
30 stuff, and then we're going to have webinars with those folks.

31  
32 FWC recently reached out to law enforcement, our group there,  
33 and we're looking to schedule a training with them sometime in  
34 April, and then we're looking for additional recommendations, if  
35 anyone has them, on if you know a certain group of vessels --  
36 Say the Orange Beach, Alabama vessels want to have one for their  
37 captains, or something like that, and just come talk to us, and  
38 we'll get that stuff set up.

39  
40 Here are the numbers we're seeing for sign-up of accounts here,  
41 as of March 2 of this year. VESL, the BlueFIN app, is on the  
42 left, and eTRIPS is in the middle, and then VMS is on the right  
43 side there. Of the VESL accounts that have been set up, you can  
44 see 253 are South Atlantic permit holders, and the Gulf is 285,  
45 and dual permit holders are seventy-three. eTRIPS, you see the  
46 numbers there, and then VMS units -- Fishermen that are using  
47 VMS units to report their forms, there is sixty-six of them.

48

1 The total accounts, not including South Carolina, because I  
2 think seventy boats are in SRHS, and so there is about 1,500  
3 total accounts that have been set up. In the Gulf alone, we  
4 have between 1,200 and 1,300, and then, in the South Atlantic,  
5 they have almost -- I think it's 2,900 or 3,000, and so we've  
6 still got a long way to go to get vessels signed up, and so, in  
7 the end, we've got about five-hundred-and-some Gulf vessels  
8 signed up, and so we're almost halfway to getting all of our  
9 vessels signed up with a reporting account of some sort.

10  
11 From January 4 to March 31, the number of logbooks submitted is  
12 about 6,000 of them, and 19 percent of them are coming from VMS  
13 units. Up to March 31, the total number of trip declarations  
14 submitted has been about 4,000, and so that includes South  
15 Atlantic trips, and so you're seeing the difference there in  
16 numbers, and about 23 of those have come from VMS. In addition,  
17 some of the trip declarations, and reports, were fishermen that  
18 were practicing in the beginning and submitting them, and we've  
19 had to include them, up until now.

20  
21 Since the last time I presented some rollout issues, here's a  
22 couple that have come up recently. In the VESL application,  
23 account setup requests, it needs to be handled manually by us,  
24 because they can't get into our permits system yet, and so we're  
25 caught up. In the beginning, it was taking some time to get  
26 accounts and verify the accounts, but we're caught up with that  
27 now.

28  
29 A trip declaration and trip activity they were asking too many  
30 questions there, and so we got that resolved. Then new landing  
31 locations and end ports have been getting added. It was taking  
32 some time to get them up to speed, and there wasn't a  
33 comprehensive list, but that's been resolved, and we'll be  
34 working to communicate all of these to the fishermen here in the  
35 near future.

36  
37 The eTRIPS application, the end port and landing location  
38 updates weren't occurring too often, or often enough, I should  
39 say, and so we've asked them to step that up a little bit, and  
40 the work on the end port and start port and landing locations is  
41 very cumbersome, and there's thousands of ports in the list, and  
42 probably I think a thousand landing locations, and so it's a lot  
43 of ports and landing locations.

44  
45 Fishermen were confused about an area fished map that was  
46 appearing up on eTRIPS, and we have since then corrected the  
47 map, and we're asking eTRIPS to make those corrections and put  
48 up a little explanation on what the fishermen need to do there.

1 Then validations are not built into the application, and I know  
2 we have one issue with the price of gasoline and/or diesel, with  
3 a decimal point, and it's not validating the dollar sign, and so  
4 there's issues like that, small ones, where glitches come up,  
5 and we've got to figure them out, and we're figuring them out  
6 and keeping the ball rolling with it.

7  
8 This is the VMS update, and I'm trying to give it to you in  
9 little bits of pieces of each one, and so Visma is our  
10 contractor who supports the Vessel Monitoring System Office up  
11 at OLE Headquarters, and Visma has a signed agreement with NOAA  
12 Fisheries and ACCSP to start transmitting the VMS data to ACCSP  
13 for data storage, and so those took quite a few months to get  
14 finished, and they're finished now, and, right now, we're in the  
15 process of testing that VMS data going to ACCSP and those  
16 communication pathways, making sure that they're going to work  
17 and everything is fitting right and such.

18  
19 We're still a little bit away from that, but they just started  
20 seeing the data, and so it will probably be another month or so,  
21 and we'll be able to come back with answer of, yes, it's  
22 working, hopefully.

23  
24 Then another thing with the VMS forms is we've heard there is  
25 some formatting usability issues, and some of the fishermen have  
26 explained to us that it doesn't have favorites set up, or it  
27 doesn't record the last one that you put in there, for fast  
28 moving, to be able to just keep moving on with the application,  
29 and so we have to step back and, before we can just say, okay,  
30 you need to change your format, Mr. SkyMate, or Mr. Woods Hole  
31 Group, and we've got to do it comprehensively, because they can  
32 each make their own type of design and their own formatting.  
33 They're the vendor, and we're just giving them the technical  
34 specs, and however they present it is up to them, and so we've  
35 got to think about how we approach this one, and it's going to  
36 take a little bit of time, but we'll get there.

37  
38 VMS approvals, you will be happy to know that the Faria ETERM-C  
39 unit is the first cellular-based VMS unit to be approved for use  
40 in the federally-permitted Gulf for-hire sector, and I believe  
41 it's the first one of its kind in the nation to be approved, and  
42 so you did a great job here, council, in recommending that we  
43 get these things done.

44  
45 We are testing the CLS NEMO hybrid unit, and we're also testing  
46 a Nautic Alert cellular unit. When I mean hybrid, I mean it's  
47 either satellite or cellular, depending on what you want, and,  
48 if so, which range you're in, and so those are the three units

1 that we received. One is approved, and two are currently being  
2 approved, and we've probably got another month or two with each  
3 one of those, to get them tested and approved, and so we're  
4 making headway with that.

5  
6 If you could just click on that link down at the bottom, I just  
7 wanted to show the council, quickly, where they can see these  
8 VMS tables at. If you scroll down a little bit, you will see  
9 this is our page for the SEFHIER page, and so here is your list  
10 of units with forms, and it tells you the contact name, is it  
11 compatible with the commercial sector, and the cellular one  
12 isn't yet, because it hasn't been submitted to the reef fish  
13 fishery for approval yet, and so that's something you've got to  
14 think about here. Flipping the switch, it's still got to meet  
15 the commercial requirements, and so it will probably take less  
16 time, but it's still got to be reviewed.

17  
18 Here is the units without forms, and so there's two of them that  
19 are just simply pingers, and they don't have any forms. I just  
20 wanted to show you guys where that is at, and you can go in  
21 there and look at it when you want.

22  
23 Federal update, here's some questions we've been getting from  
24 captains on some topics that we need to discuss and some issues.  
25 One of the questions we had was a fishermen said, well, I don't  
26 target one species, and I just go after whatever is going to  
27 bite my hook, which most of us do anyway, and so we explained to  
28 him that there are categories, or species lists, a species  
29 number, that says "groupers", and so, if you're going bottom  
30 fishing on a reef, well, you're going grouper fishing or snapper  
31 fishing or jack fishing, and so there's groups. If you're not  
32 sure, if you don't want to put one species, you can select the  
33 species groupings.

34  
35 Next was a question that a fisherman wanted all the species  
36 numbers to be put in there as zeroes at first, and we were like,  
37 well, no, the active zeroes get analyzed, and no values don't  
38 get analyzed, and so that's why we couldn't do that. There was  
39 a lot of questions about the ports list and the landing  
40 locations, as I discussed earlier.

41  
42 On a positive, trip declarations are being sent to local law  
43 enforcement and port agents, and so, for each zone, the trip  
44 declarations being made are visible and being emailed to those  
45 law enforcement agents and/or port agents, and we've had some  
46 concerns from port agents that don't want to see all these --  
47 Not port agents, but law enforcement agents that aren't part of  
48 that area, and they don't want to see all these trip

1 declarations.

2  
3 At one time, and I think it was on a Monday, I came in and there  
4 was 300 trip declarations in my email box, and so you can get  
5 the gist of how many of these things are occurring.

6  
7 A letter is to be sent, and there's an editing error there, but  
8 a letter is going to be sent to permit holders that have not set  
9 up a reporting account as of April, whenever we send the letter  
10 out, and I was hoping that it would go out last week, but it  
11 didn't.

12  
13 Basically, we're going to select all those permit holders that  
14 don't have an account set up, and we're going to send them a  
15 direct mailer saying, hey, we're four months into this, and you  
16 still haven't set up an account, and here's what you need to do,  
17 and hopefully that will stir the pot a little bit there and get  
18 them moving.

19  
20 Some other things we're working on, staff is working on  
21 developing a for-hire electronic reporting specific Fishery  
22 Bulletin list to receive program-specific information, and so,  
23 when you get these bulletins, probably a third of them are of  
24 concern to folks, or not even that sometimes, if they're  
25 strictly a charter fisherman, but we want to make sure that  
26 people have the opportunity to receive the updates and get the  
27 information, and so we're going to ask them to sign up to be on  
28 the specific list, and so keep an eye out for that. We'll  
29 probably send a bulletin to the general public, asking them to  
30 sign up if they're interested.

31  
32 We're also working on, our website, a what's new announcement.  
33 That way, it will be up there -- If we update it once a week, or  
34 once every two weeks, and it will say, okay, there's a new  
35 version of eTRIPS or VESL coming out, and you need to update it  
36 before you go out on your trip. That way, you won't get out  
37 there to your boat and you're having trouble, because it won't  
38 upload, because it's a different version. There are some things  
39 we're working on.

40  
41 Kevin, I know you're going to ask this one, and so data sharing  
42 with the partners is not quite ready yet, due to some of the  
43 data streams not being incorporated fully. We're working on  
44 getting the VMS logbooks and the VMS data to ACCSP, which will  
45 go, in turn, into the database, and some of the other ones we're  
46 having some issues with, some of the data elements and such, and  
47 so we're not quite ready to release the information yet, but, as  
48 soon as we are, we'll get those non-disclosure agreements out to

1 you guys, and we'll get that moving.  
2  
3 Discussion topics, and I think we're closing out here, and so,  
4 as we all have heard throughout this whole project, what options  
5 do I have when I get to my vessel and my unit is not working, or  
6 the application is not working, and I have customers on the boat  
7 ready to leave? As an agency, and the regulations say the  
8 vessel can't leave the dock until the issue is resolved.  
9  
10 We then explain it to them that, well, you can submit your  
11 declaration through another app or means. If eTRIPS isn't  
12 working, use VESL. If your VMS isn't working, use eTRIPS, and  
13 so there are other means that they can submit the declaration,  
14 but fishermen have asked us, and I'm taking it to you folks, to  
15 say, okay, what are our options here? Have we got a way in GC,  
16 or have we got a way in commercial regulations?  
17  
18 To provide the ability for a vessel to complete the trip. We  
19 don't want fishermen to not go on a trip because their VMS or  
20 their system is not working, and they're going to go anyway, and  
21 so we want to do the best we can to get that trip recorded and  
22 make sure they feel confident that they're doing something  
23 legal.  
24  
25 One thing we came up with was just an idea, just a thought, and  
26 it's an option that fishermen can submit a fisheries form  
27 electronically to SEFHIER. You would say, if their unit is not  
28 working, how are they going to do it electronically? Well, call  
29 your office and tell your desk person to send in an issues form  
30 that my VMS isn't working, and I'm going to be declaring and  
31 leaving on my trip at 8:00 a.m.  
32  
33 Then the other thing they have to do is the fisherman submits  
34 the issues form and must complete the declaration and logbook  
35 for their trip upon return, or whenever it can be fixed,  
36 possibly. We've got to think about procedures and validation  
37 here, and we've got to think about regulatory modifications  
38 needed, and then we'll need rulemaking.  
39  
40 I know Mara weighs-in on this quite a bit with me, and she says,  
41 Rich, we've really got to think about this, if we're giving  
42 people the ability to not do what we're requiring, and so it's  
43 something we need to think about, and I would like you guys to  
44 take that home with you, and what are some of the options that  
45 you can think of, or look at this option.  
46  
47 Then the other thing that we've got to think about considering  
48 is when are we going to start the VMS requirement? We're

1 looking, tentatively, at December 1, having it effective, and  
2 so, prior to the Christmas season, or holiday season, getting it  
3 on the boat. That way, you're not distracted by the holidays,  
4 but, also, it's a slower time of year. October and November,  
5 for most, they're starting to put up their vessels, and so it's  
6 something to think about.

7  
8 The other thing is, is three cellular units going to be enough,  
9 or is one enough? That's another consideration that we need to  
10 think about when we're doing this. I think that might be it.

11  
12 A special thanks to these captains. They really helped us out  
13 with questions and being liaisons, and those are other  
14 associates, and, if I missed somebody, please forgive me. Just  
15 send me an email, and I will get you in their next time, but,  
16 also, the port ambassador program I think is really helping out  
17 some fishermen that aren't so involved in the process and the  
18 program, but special thanks to these guys. Dylan Hubbard got  
19 the -- He's getting a wall plaque, because he made every  
20 meeting, which is great, and so thanks, Dylan, and I think  
21 that's it. I am open to take questions.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Rich, for the presentation, and,  
24 before I move on to folks, since I'm waiting for hands, and I  
25 see one, I appreciate the information, and you did answer a  
26 question that I was going to ask about the access to the data,  
27 and so hopefully that timeline is much closer to being completed  
28 now, and I look forward to filling out the data-sharing  
29 agreement. I have Susan, followed by Martha. Susan.

30  
31 **MS. BOGGS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Rich, for a very  
32 informative and detailed presentation. I had a couple of  
33 comments and questions, and I will try to go as quickly as can  
34 be. On your slide about upcoming outreach webinars, I was  
35 trying to help a captain the other day, and, of course, I use  
36 VESL, which is more geared for the headboats, and so it's a  
37 little different than what the charter boats are using.

38  
39 As I was looking at the website for SEFHIER and back through  
40 some materials that I've gotten through this process, I thought  
41 it might be kind of nice to have some how-to videos for both  
42 VESL and eTRIPS, so that a captain, at his leisure, can log-on  
43 at home, and it says, okay, Step 1, you log into VESL. Then  
44 Step 2, because, when you do it every day, like I do for the  
45 headboat, it's hard to explain to someone when you can't see  
46 what they're seeing. I just thought it might be kind of nice if  
47 there was a way to do that, and I don't know if that's something  
48 that can be done or not.

1  
2 I am kind of scrolling back through the slides, and another  
3 thing is this December 1, 2021 date, that's kind of good  
4 information to have, because I get that question asked of me  
5 daily, when is this going to happen, and then, specifically to  
6 the hail-out issues, I've had one particular captain that has  
7 called me three times since last Friday, because he was having  
8 issues with his hail-out, and the local port agent, and I  
9 believe it was ADCNR officer, had approached him, and,  
10 basically, they came to the conclusion of, okay, screenshot what  
11 you're trying to do, so I can see that you have attempted to do  
12 it, and we'll work through it as we can.

13  
14 I am actually going to try to talk to Andrew Peterson about this  
15 later, to see -- Because there had been some issues with the  
16 VESL program, even on the headboat side, with the hail-out  
17 procedure, but I do think it is important, because this captain  
18 was very concerned as to what he should do, and he didn't want  
19 to lose a trip.

20  
21 He contacted me a couple of times, and I sent emails for him,  
22 and so I think it is very important that we do come up with a  
23 procedure for these captains to be able to be assured that  
24 they're not going to be fined, penalized, et cetera, for trying  
25 to do what they're supposed to, but just the equipment or the  
26 software would not allow it. With that, I thank you, and I  
27 appreciate the title of "Captain". My husband will really  
28 appreciate that, and I have enjoyed working on this project with  
29 you. Thank you.

30  
31 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Thanks, Susan. Good points. Yes, we have  
32 videos on the way for eTRIPS and the VESL app, and we're going  
33 to be putting them up on our website as soon as we get approval  
34 through our process. Probably in the next week or two, you're  
35 going to see those videos up there, and so we're on top of that  
36 one.

37  
38 The thing about trip declarations is, recently, we had some  
39 issues with trip declarations with VESL, and that is because, a  
40 while back, they pushed out a new version, and that version  
41 isn't compatible with what they're trying to do currently, and  
42 so most of -- This is where those updates and the here's what's  
43 new type of thing is going to help, because we've had quite a  
44 few calls on that, and it was because of a new version that was  
45 pushed out, and so hopefully that resolved it. I think Andrew  
46 pushed out a new version over the weekend, or he's doing it  
47 today, and so that's one thing.

48

1 Remind your fishermen to check with VESL, or check with eTRIPS,  
2 that an updated version hasn't been pushed out, and that's  
3 probably one of the first things. It's, well, when was the last  
4 time you updated the version, and it should say, when you log-in  
5 there -- I think they're both getting set up to send an  
6 automated message of you need to update your version, and I will  
7 check on that, but I'm pretty sure they're going to be sending  
8 those out to all the permit holders when they go to sign on, if  
9 they need updates to their version of it. Hopefully that  
10 answers your questions.

11  
12 **MS. BOGGS:** Yes. Thank you.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Next, we have Martha, followed by  
15 Chris Schieble.

16  
17 **MS. GUYAS:** Thanks, Kevin. Thanks, Rich, for the presentation.  
18 I am glad to hear about some of these updates. It sounds like  
19 we're making progress, slowly but surely, and so that's good. I  
20 am glad to hear that you guys are going to be posting some  
21 training videos, because I've heard there's been some struggles  
22 with that, which it looks like you all know, and thank you for  
23 the FWC law enforcement training. It sounds like that is very  
24 needed.

25  
26 I have a couple of questions. I have been hearing that, at  
27 least in Florida, our folks have been -- Our dockside samplers  
28 have been working with the headboats, and they have, I think,  
29 encountered some of the same issues that Susan has talked about,  
30 but, as far as charter goes, there's still a lot of people that  
31 are in the dark about this program.

32  
33 A lot of these people are not tech savvy, and I guess they're  
34 not maybe the webinar audience, and so I was wondering if, at  
35 some point, after maybe travel restrictions are lifted for you  
36 all, if you would be planning to do in-person trainings for  
37 people that are still figuring this out.

38  
39 From what I'm hearing, I think that might be needed, and maybe  
40 it could be targeted to where people have not yet signed up yet,  
41 or they haven't submitted any trips, but it sounds like there's  
42 still some issues to work out there.

43  
44 I am also glad to hear that you guys are thinking about what to  
45 do when captains have issues and they're not able to submit  
46 reports, or log-on, and so I guess I would just encourage you to  
47 keep working through that, to try to find ways to work with them  
48 and to allow them to run when the equipment fails and figure out

1 some kind of timeline for getting them back online. I think  
2 that it's for me now, but thanks. I really appreciate this  
3 update.

4  
5 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Sure. Thanks, Martha. I appreciate your  
6 comments. Of course, we want to get out in the field and have  
7 some onsite training for folks. It's up to the powers-that-be  
8 of whenever that's going to happen, but, if folks haven't -- We  
9 have been giving presentations on these weekly webinars, like  
10 with eTRIPS and VESL, and they're on there, and they're walking  
11 through a description of how they sign up and how they do the  
12 reports.

13  
14 If they haven't heard about the webinars, how are they going to  
15 hear about the onsite trainings, and what would you propose that  
16 we -- How do we reach out to them, if they're not signing up for  
17 the webinars, which are doing the same thing? How should we  
18 reach out to them? I don't mean to put you back on the spot,  
19 but just some thoughts would be great there.

20  
21 **MS. GUYAS:** No, I appreciate that, and so I think we can help,  
22 to some degree, with our people that are on the ground. I think  
23 part of the problem is some of these people are not tech savvy,  
24 and so they are just not either able or willing to get on a  
25 webinar.

26  
27 Some of them still don't know about this program, and I know you  
28 guys have been sending stuff to them, and I think it's going to  
29 take a bit more handholding, it sounds like, whether those are  
30 phone calls, more mailings, knocking on people's doors, and I'm  
31 not sure, but it sounds like there's still people that are in  
32 the dark here, and there are certainly people that are not going  
33 to get on the webinar, it sounds like. That's just not --  
34 Either they're not capable of doing that, for whatever reason,  
35 but they're going to need some extra help and time and  
36 attention.

37  
38 I know we'll -- I did have one more question, too. We'll be  
39 helping to validate this, when that's ready, and, if there's  
40 things that our folks can do, let us know, but I also was going  
41 to ask you if you had a timeline for validation, when that  
42 starts, and maybe I missed it in your presentation.

43  
44 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Sure. The validation, you mean the for-hire  
45 intercept survey that we're going to be doing?

46  
47 **MS. GUYAS:** Yes.

48

1 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Okay. It's been delayed a little bit, and it's  
2 taking a little bit longer, on everybody's end, the states to  
3 get set up, and we're giving out funding to the partners for  
4 that, and so it's taking a little bit of time on both ends to  
5 get that rolling, and our end is making sure that that SRFH, our  
6 vessel communication, or vessel management, system -- Those  
7 agents are going to be able to see that, and so we want to make  
8 sure that that's up and running, and running properly, before we  
9 start doing the validation on the dock.

10  
11 I think, once we get those folks up and running with the  
12 program, and get the port agents, your folks out in the field, a  
13 little better training, we can send them out with, okay, there's  
14 going to be a monthly meeting here, and any fisherman with  
15 questions, or folks in the dock office, we can do that, but,  
16 until then, we've got to wait to schedule those types of things,  
17 but the validation -- I heard the other day, and Jessica Stephen  
18 might be able to confirm it, or Jack, but, in September, we're  
19 looking at potentially rolling that out, and so we're a couple  
20 of months away yet. That's what I heard, and so, if it's  
21 different, other than, Jessica or Jack, if you're listening, if  
22 you could speak up to that. I think that's everything for you,  
23 Martha.

24  
25 **MS. GUYAS:** Yes. Thank you.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Next up we have Chris.

28  
29 **MR. CHRIS SCHIEBLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Rich,  
30 for the presentation. It was informative, and, also, I want to  
31 thank you guys for doing the regional workshops, especially the  
32 two that were put together in Louisiana, down in Grand Isle and  
33 Venice, in particular.

34  
35 Our Venice captains, I think we had twenty-five attendees, which  
36 I thought was a pretty good headcount, and a lot of them were  
37 working at the time, and so it was difficult, but they had some  
38 good questions, and one of the points they brought up was would  
39 there be the potential, in the future, in this program, for more  
40 of a regional type of -- I guess a regional reporting survey  
41 that would be more attuned to what the fishery is like in  
42 Louisiana, for example.

43  
44 They were considering, or asking, if we could potentially, in  
45 the future, have a proposal for more of a regional-based survey  
46 design that would be put forth by the council, and we all kind  
47 of know that the fishery in Louisiana is a lot different than  
48 the fishery in other parts of the Gulf.

1  
2 We don't really have headboats, and so it's not conducive for  
3 them to be able to hail-in and report in, running twenty miles  
4 of river in a six-pack vessel, until they're back to the dock,  
5 actually, and so there are some hang-ups with things like and  
6 logistics here, and it would be good if we could consider maybe  
7 some small regional management changes in the future. You  
8 answered my other question, just a minute ago, about the  
9 dockside intercept reporting, and so that's all I had, and I  
10 wanted to thank you.

11  
12 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Chris, thanks. We can consider that in the  
13 future. Right now, we're just trying to get the program rolled  
14 out right now, and, if we can find the means to make things more  
15 efficient and more regionalized and better for the fishermen in  
16 the long run, we'll do it, but it's just something we -- Tell  
17 your guys to write their ideas down and bring them back to us,  
18 and we'll always -- Open doors, and we'll listen and see what we  
19 do, but sometimes it's not the answer they want to hear, that's  
20 all, but thanks.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Next, we have Leann, followed by John Sanchez.  
23

24 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thanks, Rich. Excellent presentation. I have a  
25 couple of quick questions. I think they will be quick. The  
26 recent VMS approval for that Faria ETERM-C, you said it's the  
27 first cellular-based VMS unit, and so you did refer to it as a  
28 VMS. In my mind, VMS is real-time. The pings go through in  
29 real-time, to show where the vessel is right then. Is this  
30 real-time, again, and just transmitted via a cellular signal,  
31 rather than a satellite signal, or is this archived GPS and it's  
32 transmitted via a cellular signal?

33  
34 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Thanks, Leann. A VMS can be either satellite  
35 or cellular, and that's defined by our definitions that we saw  
36 earlier, and this is a cellular-based unit that is -- When you  
37 get outside of cell range, the tracks are stored. Those once-  
38 an-hour pings are stored, and they are transmitted to us once  
39 they get back into range, cell range.

40  
41 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay, but we don't know, really, how often you're  
42 out of cell range, or, I mean, for example, in the shrimp fleet,  
43 it says that you have to be within range of a cell tower that is  
44 not on roaming or petri.com or something like that, and then it  
45 transmits, and so do you have any idea how often they're out of  
46 range?

47  
48 I ask that, because, when we went through this document for the

1 for-hire, in my mind, the compromise that we made was to allow  
2 archived GPS reporting, rather than real-time, and you can see  
3 where their boat is right then and there, and so it wasn't this  
4 difference between satellite or cellular. It was really the  
5 difference between can the scientists and law enforcement and  
6 everybody else see where I am right that second, or is it  
7 archived GPS, and so that's what I am trying to figure out.  
8 Does this actually end up really being pretty real-time?

9  
10 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** It does. We have requirements that that ping  
11 has to come within -- I forget the wording that the VMS group  
12 uses, but it's -- I can't recall the exact wording, but it's got  
13 to be within -- I think it's like five minutes of that hourly  
14 pinging occurring that we have to receive it, and so it's pretty  
15 real time, and I think that's what you're getting at, is like  
16 how long can it --

17  
18 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Rich, let me jump in. Rather than sending us  
19 coordinates on an hourly basis via satellite, we would receive  
20 the coordinates when they come back into cellular range, Leann,  
21 and so it's collecting them and storing them, but then  
22 submitting them once the trip returns to cellular range, and so  
23 it's called a VMS, and it's a cellular-based VMS, and this is a  
24 confusion that's been existing under the shrimp electronic  
25 logbook discussion, but it's really an archivable GPS unit  
26 that's submitting coordinates when it's back in cellular range.

27  
28 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay, and, Andy, I'm asking some specific  
29 questions, because I want to make sure that we all understand  
30 what the actual specs are, and I think Rich was starting to get  
31 into that, and I think that's important, both for the fishermen  
32 and for the scientists involved, and so, if there is a  
33 requirement that it has to be sent off and received by whoever,  
34 law enforcement or scientists or whoever, ACCSP, within five  
35 minutes of the ping, that's important for us know, moving  
36 forward. We don't want to be hit with that kind of information  
37 at the end.

38  
39 Then the next question is did that company give you any  
40 indication of how long it would take them to ramp up production  
41 of that model device, this new model that they've created, and  
42 have it on the shelf for fishermen to purchase in large  
43 quantities? I'm thinking they will need at least several  
44 hundred of these, minimum.

45  
46 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Back to your first question, we have our  
47 technical specs on our website, and I will forward you those,  
48 where the link can be found for them, and those descriptions of

1 the delay in ping rates and the requirements are in those  
2 technical specifications, which it's like a thirty or forty-page  
3 document, and so I will forward you them. That way, you can get  
4 an idea, a little better idea, of what the requirements are.

5  
6 Faria hasn't informed us when they will be able to roll this  
7 out, but I think they would be ready to sell them as of now.  
8 They have these units in other places already in the world, but  
9 just not with us, and so I will check with them and get back to  
10 you. I probably can get back to you before the end of the week  
11 here on that one.

12  
13 **MS. BOSARGE:** All right. That sounds good. Then you mentioned  
14 that they haven't been approved yet for the commercial fishery,  
15 because they hadn't met those commercial specs yet, the  
16 commercial requirements, and so, essentially, these people have  
17 to meet two sets of specs. They have to meet the, I guess, VMS  
18 law enforcement-type specs, and then they have to meet the more  
19 scientific-type specs, or what is this other set of specs you  
20 say they have to meet?

21  
22 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Basically, there is one set of technical specs,  
23 where they have to meet NMFS security and PII and all those  
24 things, but then there's specific fisheries specifications, like  
25 the two-way communication thing, and that's one spec that wasn't  
26 there previously, but, in the future and going forward now,  
27 they're going to want two-way communication.

28  
29 Another one is what's the ping rate, and can they ping it once  
30 every five minutes, and does it have that capability, and so  
31 there are specific fishery, or sector, type, whichever you want  
32 to call it, and I usually call it fishery, but the fishery-type  
33 requirements, versus the overall security and financial  
34 stability-type stuff.

35  
36 **MS. BOSARGE:** Gotcha. Okay. The last question is you said that  
37 you had been working on the agreements between the VMS people  
38 and ACCSP and testing the technical communications pathways for  
39 the data, and so, according to that, I'm guessing those pings go  
40 to ACCSP, and then they go to NOAA Law Enforcement, or do they  
41 go to both NOAA Law Enforcement and the Science Center, or one  
42 or the other, and how does that pathway work?

43  
44 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** The VMS unit itself will send the data to NOAA  
45 Law Enforcement, and we'll gather that data up and send it over  
46 to ACCSP, where it's going to be stored, and so it goes through  
47 the unit to us out in Seattle, out to our VMS group out in  
48 Seattle, and it goes out there, and then it comes back to ACCSP.

1  
2 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you, sir.  
3  
4 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** Yes, and I will get back to you about the Faria  
5 and how many models they have ready for us.  
6  
7 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay. Thanks.  
8  
9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Next, we have John, followed by  
10 Dave Donaldson.  
11  
12 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I have a question. If  
13 there's an equipment failure at-sea, is there a contingency  
14 procedure for validation?  
15  
16 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** So you're saying if you're -- The VMS isn't  
17 effective yet, but you're saying you're coming back and you  
18 can't see your logbook before you offload the fish? Is that  
19 your question, John?  
20  
21 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Well, if something happens to fail, equipment-  
22 wise, and you're having a hard time, is there an alternate  
23 procedure so that the guys aren't in trouble trying to be  
24 compliant? Has this been thought through, like a mechanism,  
25 some contingency, to still accomplish the same requirement, but  
26 maybe overcoming an equipment challenge?  
27  
28 **MR. MALINOWSKI:** So if your equipment, your cellphone, fell in  
29 the water, and that's what you're using to report, I don't think  
30 you're going to be able to do your report, right? You could  
31 probably borrow someone else's phone or tablet and call the  
32 office and say, can you complete my report for me, and here's  
33 how many fish I caught, and here's where I was fishing and such,  
34 and that's one contingency.  
35  
36 If your machine -- Say if you're using a VMS, and it fails,  
37 because it broke or something, just communicate that to us, as  
38 soon as you get within range of cellphone. Call us, and let us  
39 know that this happened while we were coming back in, and it's  
40 not working, and we'll make that record in that SRFS system and  
41 say, okay, they called us, and they're going to get us the  
42 report as soon as they can, and the machine is down, but, if the  
43 law enforcement agent was at the dock when they got back, and  
44 saw that they didn't report, they could at least go into the  
45 SRFS system and say, oh, they called, and they're working on it,  
46 and they let us know, and so everything is okay, but make sure  
47 you get the logbook in, but that's one thing that I would say we  
48 need to consider for the future.

1  
2 If we do want to go down that road, how can we get around these  
3 issues of things breaking and not working, but, as we said  
4 before, when we started all this, the commercial VMS unit has  
5 less than a 1 percent failure rate, and so we would expect that  
6 with these units as well, but, yes, I hope that answers your  
7 question.

8  
9 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thank you very much.

10  
11 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Next, we have Dave.

12  
13 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks, Rich. I  
14 appreciate the presentation. I don't have a question, but I've  
15 just got a comment about the validation, just to add a little  
16 more information, and you're correct that we're targeting  
17 September to do the start, and we had a call last week, the end  
18 of last week, to talk about it, and the commission will be  
19 reaching out, and this is for Martha and Chris, and we'll be  
20 reaching out to the states here in the near future, to set up a  
21 call and talk about the feasibility of that start date and all  
22 that stuff, but I just wanted to let you all know that we are  
23 working on it, and we appreciate it.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dave. We need to start wrapping  
26 this up. It's getting late in the day, and we have one more  
27 person on the board. Susan.

28  
29 **MS. BOGGS:** Just real quickly, and I hear a lot of concern about  
30 the failure of the equipment and not being able to hail-out,  
31 and, just from experience that we have had, again from the  
32 headboat experience over the last -- I've been doing it for  
33 probably sixteen or eighteen years now, and we've never missed a  
34 trip because of any kind of a failure or inability to report.  
35 There's always been a way to communicate that information to  
36 either a port agent or to the agency, and I will concur with  
37 Rich that, unless it's a software glitch -- The hardware itself,  
38 if you're using a VMS unit, we really didn't have hardly issues  
39 with that, and so I just want to try to calm some fears about  
40 that.

41  
42 We're going to have some bumps in the road as we go through  
43 this, but I don't think there's going to be anything that's  
44 going to prohibit anybody from fishing, and I think we can get  
45 through this, and it's new, and everybody is a little nervous  
46 about it. Thanks.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. All right. We are going to wrap

1 that up, and, Mr. Chair, we are just past the official end of  
2 the agenda, and we did start a little late in committee. Is it  
3 okay to proceed with the last item on the agenda?  
4

5 **DR. TOM FRAZER:** Power through, Mr. Anson.  
6

7 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, sir. That brings us to Tab F,  
8 Number 6, Methodology Used for Red Snapper Recreational and  
9 Commercial Discards Used in the Stock Assessments and Annual  
10 Catch Level Monitoring, Southeast Fisheries Science Center  
11 staff. Dr. Porch.  
12

13 **DR. SHANNON CALAY:** Can you all hear me?  
14

15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I can hear you. Who is this?  
16

17 **DR. CALAY:** This is Shannon Calay. I will be making that  
18 presentation for the Science Center.  
19

20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Very good. Proceed.  
21

22 **METHODOLOGY USED FOR RED SNAPPER RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL**  
23 **DISCARDS USED IN THE STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND ANNUAL CATCH LEVEL**  
24 **MONITORING**  
25

26 **DR. CALAY:** Thank you. Because it is very late, I will try to  
27 make sure that I punctuate the important parts, because this is  
28 a fairly detailed presentation, and it probably contains more  
29 detail than is really needed.  
30

31 Let me just discuss the objective, and the council would like to  
32 better understand the methods by which the dead discards are  
33 accounted for in the stock assessment and in the annual catch  
34 monitoring and the uncertainty inherent in these estimates.  
35

36 During this presentation, I will discuss how discards are  
37 accounted for in stock assessment models, how the uncertainty is  
38 used in the model, whether the dead discards are also included  
39 in the OFL, ABC, and ACL catch advice, and whether they are  
40 monitored in ACL monitoring, and, also, some differences in the  
41 treatment of recreational versus commercial discards and the  
42 implications for management, which I will tell you right now are  
43 relatively minimal.  
44

45 We'll start by discussing the recreational landings and  
46 discards, and, for the charter and private boat fleet, these  
47 come from the MRIP program, and they do have some definitions,  
48 which I will be using throughout this presentation. Type A, in

1 the MRIP program, are fish that are landed whole, retained, and  
2 are observed by the interviewers. Type B1 are fish that are  
3 reported as killed by the fishers, but are not observed by the  
4 port interviewers. They are assumed to be all dead. They can  
5 be retained, but not observed, and they can also be, in some  
6 cases, used for bait, partially eaten by a predator, or thrown  
7 back into the water already dead. Then we have Type B2, which  
8 is the fish that are reported as released alive by anglers, and  
9 also not observed by interviewers.

10  
11 For the assessment purposes, and this is true for all Gulf stock  
12 assessments, recreational landings are assumed to be equal to  
13 the A component plus the B1, and so these are all animals that  
14 are dead and are assumed to be harvested, whether or not they  
15 are observed by the interviewers. The recreational discards, in  
16 the stock assessment models, are the B2 component, and they  
17 include all animals that are released by fishermen back into the  
18 water.

19  
20 Now, when we talk about discards in a stock assessment context,  
21 we often say dead discards, and we are usually referring to  
22 those B2 animals released alive by fishermen, and then we kill  
23 some fraction of those released alive, using a discard mortality  
24 rate, and so, when we are talking in stock assessment jargon,  
25 that's what we're most often referring to.

26  
27 Commercial discards are from a different program, and they are  
28 typically estimated -- Well, today, they are routinely estimated  
29 from the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Commercial Observer Program,  
30 and so these are not from your ACS system or your logbook, but  
31 these are from the observer program.

32  
33 Now, the observers record information about disposition and  
34 condition of the animals, and so the disposition is whether they  
35 are kept, used as bait, or released off the boat. The condition  
36 of the animals that we typically use for stock assessment  
37 purposes is the condition of the fish as they arrive to the  
38 vessel, and those are recorded as either alive and in good  
39 condition, alive with barotrauma, already dead, or not recorded,  
40 or no information recorded.

41  
42 For the commercial discards, for assessment purposes, and, in  
43 this case, landings, I want to mention, are not at all the Reef  
44 Fish Observer Program at this time. They are from the ACS  
45 system. The discards are from the logbook. Discards, in the  
46 case of stock assessment, are fish that are not kept, and I will  
47 show you tables of this information, to kind of reinforce this  
48 point, in a moment, but these might be fish that are released

1 alive, but also contain some fish that are discarded known dead  
2 and some fish that are used for other purposes, including bait.

3  
4 Again, in a stock assessment context, when we discuss dead  
5 discards, we're typically, in the commercial sense, applying a  
6 discard mortality rate to the known discards, and so it's  
7 discards multiplied by the discard mortality rate, but what you  
8 will notice, in the case of this commercial discards, is that  
9 this method actually underestimates the commercial discards, to  
10 some extent, and the reason for that is because we are actually  
11 including some fish that are discarded dead or were used for  
12 bait in the estimate of total discards, and then we are applying  
13 a discard mortality rate, and so we're essentially saying that  
14 some small number of dead fish are released back into the ocean  
15 alive, which is, of course, not the case, and so it is a slight  
16 underestimate of the true commercial dead discards.

17  
18 I will show you, however, that this is a small difference,  
19 because there are very few fish in the commercial observer  
20 program that are reported dead before release or reported used  
21 for bait.

22  
23 I do want to point out that there is a regulation that the use  
24 of Gulf reef fish for bait is prohibited, and has been since  
25 2006, but you will see that, in both the recreational and  
26 observer discards, there is some small fraction of fish that are  
27 reported as used for bait. In the recreational sector, it's  
28 thought to be less than 1 percent, and, in the commercial  
29 sector, as I will show you in the tables, it is generally much  
30 less than 1 percent of animals that are reported used for bait,  
31 and so, while it does occur, it's very unusual.

32  
33 We'll start with red snapper. Red snapper, we have -- I will  
34 just go through a few of the data inputs for red snapper, about  
35 the data fits and the uncertainty used in the stock assessment.  
36 Again, for red snapper, and all other Gulf assessments that  
37 we've done recently, landings are both the A plus the B1  
38 component, and so these are animals that are either landed and  
39 retained and observed by the port samplers or those harvested  
40 but not observed.

41  
42 Now, in the case of red snapper, the landings were fit nearly  
43 exactly. We assume there is very little error in the landings,  
44 and that's that first plot with the red and black on it, and the  
45 red is just the western Gulf recreational fishery, and the black  
46 is the eastern Gulf. What you see there is that there are some  
47 data points, and then there are lines connecting those points,  
48 and there is very little difference between the points and the

1 lines that connect them. That is because we're assuming the  
2 landings are known nearly exactly.

3  
4 Now, for the discards, which in the case of red snapper are B2  
5 animals released alive, we do actually model that as total  
6 discards, and we do allow a larger uncertainty estimate, and so,  
7 in this case, the CV we assumed was about a 30 percent error,  
8 and so you will see, in the bottom panel, that the red points  
9 are the observations of discards in thousands of fish, and the  
10 blue line shows the model predictions, and so there is more of a  
11 deviation between the observations and the predictions, and  
12 that's because we're allowing the model to estimate discards  
13 with error.

14  
15 If you're interested in what release mortality rates we apply in  
16 the stock assessment model, that is what is tabulated here.  
17 It's the discard mortality rate by fishery and by time period.

18  
19 This is just pointing out here that there are numerous  
20 recreational fleets, and there are six in the Gulf red snapper  
21 assessment, and there are four open-season fleets, and there are  
22 two closed-season fleets, where the fishing season is closed.  
23 For the open-season fleets, we are estimating all three  
24 components, A, B1, and B2.

25  
26 The B1, for both the open and closed season, are actually  
27 included in the open-season fleet, but, in the closed-season  
28 fleet, the fishing season is closed, and animals can be caught  
29 and released, and so there are some B2 discards released alive.  
30 We subsequently apply a release mortality rate, and some of them  
31 subsequently die, and those are included in the model as animals  
32 that are dead but not retained by the fishery in those closed-  
33 season fleets.

34  
35 Here is the commercial discard estimates, and I will walk you  
36 through. There are a few tables that look like this. This  
37 happens to be from the red snapper vertical line fishery for the  
38 years 2007 through 2019. What you see here, in the first two  
39 columns, are disposition codes, and so the animals are either  
40 kept and used as bait or released, and those three columns sum  
41 to 100 percent, and so that is the disposition of all the  
42 animals observed.

43  
44 Now, of the fraction that are marked released, there is a  
45 condition code about the condition of that animal when it  
46 arrived to the vessel, and so they can be either alive and in  
47 good condition, alive and experiencing barotrauma, dead, or, in  
48 some cases, the condition is not recorded. Now, those four

1 columns sum actually to the percent of animals that are  
2 released. That is the condition of animals that are released  
3 when they arrive at the vessel.

4  
5 What I would to point out to you here are the two columns that  
6 are in red, and so I mentioned earlier that, in our discard  
7 estimates, there are in fact some fish that are already dead  
8 that are included in our discards, and then, through the magic  
9 of applying a release mortality rate to those animals, some are  
10 assumed to be thrown back in the water alive, which is clearly  
11 not correct, right, but this is a very small component.

12  
13 You will see here that less than 1 percent of red snapper in the  
14 vertical line fishery are marked down as used for bait. In  
15 fact, far less than 1 percent, because remember that these are  
16 in fact percentages, and so you're reading this as 0.01 percent  
17 on the first line, and there are, again, less than 1 percent of  
18 the animals that are released that were known dead when they  
19 arrived at the boat, and so that's that small fraction that I  
20 was talking about that represent a slight underestimation of the  
21 discards from the commercial sector.

22  
23 In the red snapper longline, it's basically the same small  
24 number of animals that are used for bait, less than 1 percent,  
25 and there are a somewhat larger fraction of animals that are  
26 reported dead on arrival to the boat, up to 7 percent in 2007.

27  
28 When we got this council request, it did ask for information  
29 also about red grouper and king mackerel, and I will just point  
30 out any treatments that differ between these species, but, in  
31 general, they are treated very much the same way.

32  
33 Just like red snapper and other Gulf assessments, recreational  
34 landings, again, are the A and B1 component. In this case, we  
35 see, in the top panel here for red grouper, we did not assume an  
36 exact match for the landings, and we allowed the model to  
37 estimate the landings with some uncertainty, and it's a CV of  
38 0.3 in this case, and we'll discuss more about this when we talk  
39 about the weight estimation for red grouper at some point, but  
40 that is a difference between the red grouper model and most  
41 other Gulf assessments, is that, in the red grouper model, we  
42 did say that the landings were not known exactly, but they were  
43 known with some uncertainty.

44  
45 The recreational discards are very much the -- Well, in fact the  
46 same as other species, and these are B2, released alive, in the  
47 recreational sector, and then we apply a discard mortality,  
48 which happens to be 11.6 percent in the case of red grouper.

1  
2 The CV for red grouper is 0.29 for the discards, and you will  
3 see here, on the bottom panel, how the model fits our  
4 observations of discards, and so here, in the blue, are the  
5 discard -- Sorry. Here in the open circles are the discard  
6 observations, with the uncertainty, and the bars show the  
7 uncertainty, and in the blue are the model predictions.

8  
9 This just shows you the fleet structure of the red grouper  
10 model, and there is one recreational fleet. The discards are  
11 from B2, and the uncertainty applied was about a 30 percent CV,  
12 with a discard mortality, or release mortality, of 11.6 percent,  
13 and then there were three commercial fisheries. The discards  
14 were estimated, in this case, from the commercial observer  
15 program, and they are in total numbers of fish discarded, with  
16 an uncertainty of 0.29, or 29 percent.

17  
18 In the case of both red snapper and -- Basically any Gulf  
19 assessment, we also do have headboat discards, and, just as an  
20 aside, I will describe how headboat discards are estimated. In  
21 Gulf red grouper, there is a single recreational fleet, and  
22 headboat is a component of that fleet, and so those headboat  
23 discards were added to the charter and private boat discards.  
24 In this case, we actually use a proxy, which is from the MRIP  
25 program, to estimate the Southeast Region Headboat Survey  
26 discards, and so those bullet that starts with "1986" gives you  
27 a little detail about how we estimate the early discards from  
28 the early headboat program using a proxy generated from the MRIP  
29 program.

30  
31 Beginning in 2007 and subsequently, we actually do have discard  
32 estimates directly from the headboat survey program. There is  
33 no CV provided directly for the headboat discards, but the  
34 recreational discards were given a CV of 0.29.

35  
36 This is just an example that shows you how important the A and  
37 B1 components are. Now, remember, these are fish that are  
38 dead, and the A component, which is shown in the blue color, or  
39 teal, is the component that is observed by the port sampler.  
40 The B1 component, which is quite large in the early years, but  
41 generally smaller after 1986 -- That B1 component are dead fish  
42 that are not observed by the port sampler, but they are reported  
43 dead by the fisher. This is the charter boat mode, and so, in  
44 general, the B1 component is less than 5 percent of the total  
45 harvest, in later years at least.

46  
47 In the private boat component, it can still be a larger fraction  
48 of the catch, and so, in the private boat component, there are

1 more Bls as a fraction of the total harvest, and it can be -- It  
2 averages about 20 to 30 percent a year of the harvest is  
3 actually the B1 component.

4  
5 These are the commercial discards for red grouper from the  
6 vertical line, and it's very much like the red snapper example  
7 that you saw. A very small fraction of the animals observed by  
8 the commercial observer program were used as bait or dead on  
9 arrival to the boat, and so what you see here is that roughly  
10 about 40 percent of the animals are released, are reported  
11 released, and some fraction of those we apply as release  
12 mortality, and they are assumed to be dead. The longline  
13 component is a similar story. A small fraction of fish that are  
14 already dead upon arrival to the vessel or used as bait.

15  
16 King mackerel, SEDAR 38 update, these are -- I am just going to  
17 give you a few very brief details about king mackerel. In every  
18 way, it's very similar to red grouper. There are four directed  
19 fleets here of commercial vertical line, gillnet, a  
20 recreational/private/charter boat fleet, and headboat. Again,  
21 we have assumed now landings to be very known with great  
22 certainly, with a CV very close to zero.

23  
24 The headboat discards are very much like red grouper, and  
25 they're estimated using an MRIP proxy for those early years, and  
26 then the headboat survey directly reported discards after, in  
27 this case, 2004. The discards, in this case, used a CV of 0.2  
28 for the commercial and 0.4 for the recreational, and the discard  
29 mortality assumptions are listed here. For commercial vertical  
30 line, it's a 25 percent discard mortality, 22 percent for the  
31 recreational headboat, and 20 percent for the recreational  
32 private and charter.

33  
34 Here are the commercial observer program data. I would not pay  
35 much attention to the most recent years, and those are very  
36 small sample sizes. This is a draw that we just did a couple of  
37 weeks ago, and it's possible that this may represent incomplete  
38 reporting, and so I wouldn't worry about those most recent years  
39 yet, until we have more information about them, but, very much  
40 like the story I was telling you before, most king mackerel from  
41 the vertical line fishery are actually kept.

42  
43 A very small fraction, less than 1 percent, are used as bait,  
44 and, actually, quite a small fraction are released, less than 12  
45 percent, in every year except 2011. Of those fish released,  
46 most are released alive in good condition, with a small amount,  
47 less than 1 percent, that were dead upon arrival to the vessel.

48

1 These are the conclusions, the last slide of this presentation,  
2 and so, for the recreational dead discards, the OFL, the ABC,  
3 and the ACL do not include recreational dead discards. Once  
4 again, it's defined as live release, or B2 animals, times  
5 discard mortality.

6  
7 However, I do want to point out that the OFL, ABC, and ACL do  
8 include recreational A component that is retained, as well the  
9 B1 component, which is retained but not observed or used for  
10 bait, et cetera, and so the ACL monitoring does also include,  
11 for Gulf assessments, the A and the B1 component, and our stock  
12 assessment models produce OFL, ABC, and ACL advice with A and B1  
13 component as well, and so that is consistent.

14  
15 For the commercial discards, the OFL, ABC, and ACL from our  
16 stock assessment -- They do not include a small amount of  
17 commercial discards that are dead on arrival or used for bait,  
18 and so there is a small inconsistency between the treatment of  
19 the recreational and commercial discards.

20  
21 On the next bullet point, just kind of summarizing, the  
22 recreational B1s are added to the recreational landings. They  
23 are included in catch recommendations from stock assessments,  
24 and they are used to monitor the ACLs. The commercial discards  
25 that are used for bait or dead on arrival to the vessel are not.

26  
27 I think you can see, from the tables that I presented, and in  
28 particular the values I have highlighted in red on those tables,  
29 that we expect the implications for management are quite small  
30 for the three species examined, because very few fish are either  
31 dead on arrival to the vessel or used for bait.

32  
33 That said, we could make revisions to our commercial discard  
34 treatment in stock assessments to reduce that inconsistency  
35 between the treatment of recreational and commercial discards.  
36 Once again, we don't expect it to have large implications for  
37 management. I think that's the last slide.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Shannon, for the presentation.

40  
41 **DR. CALAY:** You are very welcome.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mr. Chair, it is thirty-five minutes past the  
44 scheduled time to end the committee today, the council, and it  
45 is late for folks, particularly in the Eastern Standard Time  
46 Zone. I have some comments to this, and I put it into a  
47 presentation, and I would like to share those, because I think  
48 it has some implications to our discussions tomorrow, and so

1 would you like for me to continue with that? It will take about  
2 ten minutes or so for me to do that, or can I have the privilege  
3 of introducing that at Reef Fish, before we get into the  
4 calibration discussions tomorrow?  
5

6 **DR. FRAZER:** I think, Kevin, that I would go ahead and share the  
7 presentation with the council, so everybody can have a look at  
8 it, and I will afford you a few moments prior to insert some  
9 time for discussion tomorrow, if that suits you, and I think it  
10 is late.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** So would you like me to send them now?  
13

14 **DR. FRAZER:** Please, and we'll distribute them.  
15

16 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. I will open the floor up, I guess,  
17 for others, if they have any other questions, but it is late,  
18 and so it's up to you.  
19

20 **DR. FRAZER:** I mean, we can always ask questions in Full Council  
21 as well. I am not seeing hands right now, Kevin, and so my  
22 suggestion is, unless there's any other business, that we  
23 adjourn for the evening, and, if we have questions about this  
24 particular presentation, we can revisit it in Full Council.  
25

26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. That concludes Data Collection  
27 then.  
28

29 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on April 12, 2021.)  
30

31 - - -  
32