

Data Collection Committee Report
October 24, 2018
Greg Stunz – Chair

The modified agenda and minutes were approved.

Revisions to MRIP Recreational Data Collection

Dr. Richard Cody summarized the recent changes to the MRIP survey design including the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) to measure catch and the Fishing Effort Survey (FES) to measure effort. The FES replaces the previous landline telephone survey with a mail survey. The mail survey generates higher estimates of effort than the legacy telephone survey. Improvements to the APAIS are more subtle than those for FES, but include better survey coverage over 24 hours and more statistically sound catch estimation.

A transition plan has been developed to move from the old MRIP methodologies to the new combination of FES and APAIS survey design. The transition plan included a benchmarking period from 2015-2018 that allowed for comparison of differences in the estimates of catch effort for both methods. This allowed for the development of calibration methodologies to move between the old and new MRIP survey designs. These increased historical estimates of harvest based on the new survey methodologies may impact stock status for some species, prompt reconsideration of allocation strategies between fishing sectors, and other necessary resource management changes. Catch from 2018 will be back-calibrated to the old MRIP methodology to ensure that data are in the same currency as the data presently in use for setting catch advice. Between 2019 and 2020, it is likely that many management changes based on the new catch and effort data will be developed.

For-Hire Electronic Reporting Implementation Update

Dr. Stephen reviewed the Quality Management Workshop, which explored the For-hire Electronic Reporting program. The Quality Management Workshop selected small groups of individuals actively engaged in either inputting or using the data generated to determine where deficiencies in quality management may exist. Generally, the workshop sought to understand the flow of data, the inputs and outputs expected, and the data requirements to make the program successful.

Stakeholder concerns with the program were identified and some specific needs were to: 1) close feedback loops, 2) provide 24/7 customer support, 3) data validation prior to use in management, and 4) compliance. Outreach materials will need to be developed to detail how to report using the program, program expectations, and funding and program costs.

The Committee asked about the use of a unique trip identifier, and whether it would be possible to include that in the new program. Dr. Stephen replied that the Atlantic Coast Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is working to develop the unique trip identifier tool, and will house all the data collected by the SEFHIER program.

The implementation schedule for the SEFHIER program was reviewed by Mr. Malinowski (SERO). The final rule is expected to publish on January 31, 2019, with training sessions held in

2019 from February to March and August to September. Phase 1 for the Electronic Logbook will be implemented on or about April 15, 2019 as a web-based platform, with Phase 2 and the GPS/VMS Reporting implemented on or about October 1, 2019. Data from the program will likely not be used for management until after 2020, to ensure that the data are being properly collected and can be validated appropriately.

The ACCSP will be responsible for housing the data generated by SEFHIER. A federal audit is underway to verify data security, and system modifications are underway to accommodate the program's needs. The necessary data elements were detailed and have been finalized, acknowledging some differences between headboats and charter boats. Hail-out and hail-in questions will be included in the program. Pilot testing is underway for five GPS units, which will be conducted between November 2018 and June 2019. SERO is working on a system approval process and a VMS reimbursement program. The SEFHIER program does not currently have a long-term funding source and annual operating expenses are estimated at \$6-7 million.

A Committee member asked whether the states will have access to data reported through SEFHIER at the state level. Mr. Malinowski replied that data from SEFHIER will be shared as necessary with the states.

A Committee member asked whether a brief report on how the SEFHIER program is evolving at each meeting, with updates on how system is working, difficulties encountered by the captains, and any other information. The Committee Chair requested to receive updates on this program as they become available.

A Committee member asked about the use of port agents, state law enforcement officers, and other enforcement agents to validate compliance and accuracy of trip reports? Mr. Malinowski replied that training opportunities will be offered to prepare those agents involved in compliance and validation prior to and during the roll-out of the program. The Committee suggested NOAA reach out to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission to investigate the possibility of using state staff to assist with dockside validation activities.

Mr. Chair, this concludes by report.