

MEETING NOTES
MRIP EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
SEPTEMBER 28, 2009
2:00 – 5:00 PM

1. Operations Team Workshop Recap. Team Lead Preston Pate provided a summary report on the Operations Team Workshop, held on September 23-24 in Woods Hole, MA. The report highlighted the following issues:

- The OT discussed support needs for implementing projects. Greater administrative support for travel, meeting logistics, and project planning and management would facilitate the work of the Work Groups and Project Teams. Also, the time required to secure approval of contracts and for OMB clearance of new data collections were identified as limiting factors in project completion. It is expected that the new Blanket Purchase Agreement developed by the Office of Science and Technology will enable us to add administrative and project management support soon, and to expedite contracts for technical services for the Project Teams.
- The OT discussed the question of determining when MRIP is actually being implemented. The Team will consider comparing current accomplishments to the original NRC recommendations as a means of benchmarking the status of MRIP's implementation.
- An overview of progress on funded projects was presented.
- A list of recommended priorities and project needs for the next round of funding was presented.

The complete OT report is appended to these minutes and is incorporated herein.

2. Discussion of necessary decision-making process for implementing survey changes and adopting revised historic estimates based on use of new methodologies. The ESC members agreed that:

- The Executive Steering Committee is the appropriate body to decide on the implementation of changes to survey methods and designs, and on the adoption of survey standards and best practices.
- Proposed changes to survey methods and designs, and resultant revisions to published estimates of fishing catch and effort, should be peer-reviewed before submission to the ESC for adoption.
- MRIP should develop a process to establish standards, procedures, and/or general terms of reference for peer reviews. These should assure compliance with the requirements of the Information Quality Act. A new Work Group or contract with a body such as the CIE should be considered to meet this need.

- The OT will work with the staff of ST to develop a response to this decision.

3. Registry Team Update. Team Lead Gordon Colvin provided an update on Registry Team activities. The Registry program is currently focusing on developing MOAs with states to be designated as exempted states, and on making the federal registration process and supporting systems ready for January 1, 2010. A FY '10 appropriation of \$2.5 M for support of states' efforts to improve their license data bases is expected, and the Team is developing recommendations for use of that appropriation. A copy of the Registry Update is appended to these minutes and is incorporated herein.

4. Communication and Education Team Update. Team Lead Forbes Darby presented a report on outreach activities. A copy of that presentation is appended to these minutes and is incorporated herein. The ESC discussed outreach issues and noted the following:

- While much of our outreach focus has been on stakeholders, it is important to also develop outreach for users of MRIP data for stock assessments, management analyses, etc. Dr. Boreman will explore placing MRIP on the agenda for the National Stock Assessment Workshops. The Interstate Commissions were asked to suggest venues for similar briefings for state stock assessors.
- Several ESC members noted the importance of managing the expectations of stakeholders. We need to assure that our messages do not indicate that improved data quality will necessarily result in increased quotas or ACLs.
- Mr. O'Shea suggested that the MRIP Activation Phase include a "customer response team" or equivalent that will ensure that stakeholders' questions about the data are addressed in a timely and understandable way, and that "urban myths" regarding the surveys are affirmatively and effectively addressed.

5. Review of overall budget strategy. A budget strategy paper, appended hereto, was provided to the ESC. Members were asked to review the paper and advise the ST staff if this strategy addressed their needs. **ESC ACTION DUE DATE: 9 October 2009.**

6. Discussion of draft update to Implementation Plan. Mr. Colvin provided a brief overview of the draft Implementation Plan Update. ESC members were asked to submit comments to the Team Leads and Dr. Boreman within two weeks. The final Update will be completed, incorporating the ESC comments and the OT workshop recommendations for projects needs and priorities, around the end of October. **ESC ACTION DUE DATE: 9 October 2009.**

7. Feedback from ESC members on overall progress of MRIP and discussion of concerns of stakeholders. The ESC members noted a gap between what we can communicate regarding project progress and achieving end points. Dr. Boreman will draft a document that will provide feedback to the teams on the ESC's sense of progress-to-date and what would help the ESC better evaluate progress in the future. He will share the draft with ESC members for their comments before sending it to the Teams.

Mr. Fisher suggested that the ESC feedback to the teams also include a request for specific accounting for how the MRIP funds have been utilized to date and how the \$9.0 M FY 10 funds will be used.