

Enforcement Committee Agenda

October 2, 2012

1pm – 5pm

Birch Room, Hilton Hotel

Anchorage, Alaska

The following agenda item is scheduled for review at this meeting:

I. D-1(b) Discussion paper on VMS

In October 2011, the Council initiated a discussion paper to review the use of and requirements of vessel monitoring system (VMS) in the North Pacific fisheries and other regions of the U.S. The Council stated that while there is uncertainty regarding whether a major change to or expansion of VMS requirements is necessary in the North Pacific, there is interest in reviewing the current state of the North Pacific VMS requirements in addition to other regions' application of VMS.

At the April meeting, the Enforcement Committee reviewed the discussion paper. The Committee agreed that the document presents a good overview of the current state of VMS use in the North Pacific and around the country, basic cost information for approved units in the North Pacific Region, and some of the potential additional benefits that may be gained if the program were expanded. The Committee suggested that the process would be greatly assisted through the development of a problem statement to guide and focus staff efforts. Any expanded discussion paper should detail additional capabilities of VMS systems available in the Region but not currently in use, to include:

- Target species, gear, and area declarations
- Geo-fencing and the implications and cost ramifications to the fishing fleet and agency for use of this capability
- Increased poll rates and the implications of this change to both the fishing fleet and enforcement agencies
- Potential data transfer applications or electronic log books

The Committee also noted that an expanded discussion paper would also benefit from further examining other potential technologies that may assist enforcement and compliance efforts with regards to catch accounting and area fished (for example, cameras, or other electronic monitoring tools that may accomplish the same goals). The Committee further noted that, should the Council choose to expand the VMS program to IFQ vessels, this would establish equity with other catch share systems in the North Pacific Region. The Committee did note that this process is slightly complicated by the fact that IFQ halibut and sablefish quota is issued to individuals and not vessels.

After reviewing the Enforcement Committee's recommendations and listening to the public, the Council requested that the discussion paper be expanded to identify the needs for management, enforcement, compliance, and safety in the fisheries and what is the appropriate technology for meeting those needs. The Council also requested that the expanded discussion paper include: 1) a description of advanced features of VMS like geo-fencing, increasing poll rates, and declarations of species, gear and area; 2) expanded discussion of VMS alternatives to include electronic monitoring; and 3) expanded discussion on VMS requirements in other regions to include the purpose and need in those regions and whether VMS has been successful in meeting those needs.

The revised discussion paper is posted on the Council web site for your review.