Comments on Electronic Technology Implementation Plan-related Attachments (Mel Bell):

EM Workshop Summary (Attachment 7)

George's summary was accurate and thorough, and I agree with Michelle's assessment. It was obvious that we in the SA are not in the same place as the other regions at the moment related to their ability and willingness to move quickly into brining on operational EM programs/systems. Since the workshop was entitled the National EM Workshop and included electronic reporting I at first considered EM to be the sort of generic term that really encompassed both EM and ER, but due to the predominance of participants from regions that are already using and more comfortable with actual EM there was a much heavier focus on monitoring over reporting. Clear use of terminology is important, especially when communicating with stakeholders, so I think it would be good to make sure what we are working towards is an Electronic Technology Implementation Plan, rather than an electronic monitoring implementation plan. As Michelle has indicated, we need to be sensitive to the folks in our region and work towards buy-in from where we are right now rather than where the other regions might be (a little farther down the road). George pointed out the importance of considering cost. That is certainly a major factor and goes beyond the technology itself. The total costs of on-going data services are definitely something that must be kept in mind, and certainly significant in the long run.

ET Ideas by Council Region (Attachment 8)

Under "General Ideas", I agree that the EM needs to move at the proper pace (for us that would be slower than the other regions). NOAA/NMFS may wish to move forward on EM now, but I think in the SA region progress towards incorporating ER is possible, and even desired by stakeholders.   That's where we have the most logical and best chance to succeed, and where we need to start.

I concur with Michelle's comments related to inclusion of SG fishery in the SA under ER on page 3.

I also agree that the SA could benefit from the ER related items listed for the NE Council Area (page 4). In general this document is a good indication of the differences between the SA and other regions in terms of where we are and they are in the status of EM use and desirability. We are definitely in a position to move on ER, but not so much EM right now.

Regional Electronic Implementation Plan contents (Attachment 9)

I concur with Michelle's comment. We need to use the term "electronic technology" to describe the big picture of what we are looking at and be careful how and when we discuss employment of EM specifically. George and NMFS need to be sensitive to this as we move forward at the proper pace within our region. Again, correct and consistent uses of terminology are important in getting public understanding and buy-in.

Cross Regional Issues (Attachment 10)

To this list I might add:
- A clear understanding of goals/objectives of implementing electronic technologies MUST be in place
- Appropriate regulatory actions, authority and policy must be in place and keep up
- The right people (stakeholders) must participate, collaborate, communicate, and buy-in
- The use of ET (EM/ER) must provide enhanced efficiency and be scalable, flexible, and non-redundant
- Use appropriate off-the-shelf technologies when possible
- Once started there has to be a commitment and plan to keep the system going as long as needed