

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

JT. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND INFORMATION & EDUCATION ADVISORY PANELS

**Crowne Plaza Hotel
North Charleston, SC**

February 6, 2013

SUMMARY MINUTES

Law Enforcement Advisory Panel

Capt. Jim Kelley, Vice-Chair
Capt. Doug Lewis
Capt. Rob Beaton
Mike Kennedy
Charlie Renda

Karen Raine
John Clark
Lt. Brandon Fisher
Rich Chesler

Information & Education Advisory Panel

Cathy Sakas, Chair
Dr. John Dean
Pamela Fletcher

Jennifer Koches
Elizabeth vonKolnitz
Suzi Durant

Council Members

Mel Bell

John Jolley

Council Staff:

Bob Mahood
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Kim Iverson
Myra Brouwer

Gregg Waugh
Julie O'Dell
Amber Von Harten

Observers/Participants:

Pat O'Shaughnessy
Diana Martino
Julie Davis

Capt. Rama Shuster
Mark Brown
Don DeMaria

Other Participants Attached

The Information and Education Advisory Panel and the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in Charleston, South Carolina, February 6, 2013, and were called to order at 1:30 o'clock p.m. by Vice Chair, Cathy Sakas.

MS. SAKAS: Welcome to the joint meeting of the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel and the Education and Information Advisory Panel. We are delighted that you all could join us today to participate in this very important meeting. I'm Cathy Sakas. I'm going to be co-chairing this session along with Jim Kelly, who is representing the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel.

I am from NOAA, Grays Reef National Marine Sanctuary, and I am pleased to see all of my panel members and to meet new panel members from the Law Enforcement. I'd like to go around the room and everybody introduce themselves. We don't have name badges today so this will be a true test of our memories to see if we can remember everybody's name.

MS. KOCHES: I'm Jennifer Koches with the Fish and Wildlife Service in Charleston. I'm a public affairs specialist.

DR. DEAN: I'm John Mark Dean and I failed the first test because I had to look up my name; former member of the South Atlantic Council.

MS. vonKOLNITZ: Elizabeth vonKolnitz, I'm with DHEC Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, and I'm in policy and planning.

MS. FLETCHER: Pamela Fletcher, University of Florida, Florida Sea Grant Program Liaison at NOAA's Marine Laboratory down in Miami.

MS. DURANT: Suzi Durant. I'm the Executive Director for the South Carolina Marine Association, which is a trade association representing the recreational boating businesses in our state.

MS. VON HARTEN: I'm Amber Von Harten. I'm the new Fisheries Outreach Specialist for the Council. Some of you may remember me from South Carolina Sea Grant.

MS. IVERSON: I'm Kim Iverson, council Staff.

MR. KELLEY: Jim Kelley; I'm with North Carolina Marine Patrol out of the Wilmington area.

MS. BROUWER: I'm Myra Brouwer, council Staff.

MR. RENDA: Charles Renda, Jr. from the LE AP Program. I'm from North Carolina representing the commercial fishermen.

MR. KENNEDY: I'm Michael Kennedy; I'm a member of the LE AP, and I am a civilian from West Palm Beach, Florida.

MR. BEATON: Captain Rob Beaton, Florida Fish and Wildlife. You don't need to remember my name; this is my last meeting.

MR. SHUSTER: Rama Shuster with Florida Fish and Wildlife, JEA Administrator and Offshore Vessel Coordinator. I'm replacing Rob. This is my first time here.

MR. CHESLER: Rich Chesler, NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, Port Orange, Florida.

MS. RAINE: Karen Raine, NOAA Office of General Council for Enforcement Section, AP.

LT. FISHER: Brandon Fisher, U.S. Coast Guard, C.O. of the Southeast Regional Fisheries Training Center.

MR. LEWIS: Doug Lewis with Georgia, DNR Law Enforcement.

MS. SAKAS: I'd like to hear the names of the people around the room, too, if that is all right. If you could come up to one of the microphones, that would be lovely.

MR. O'SHAUGNESSY: Pat O'Shaughnessy from the Southeast Office of Law Enforcement. I'm the Southeast VMS Program Manager.

MS. MARTINO: Diana Martino, Caribbean Fishery Management Council.

MR. BROWN: I'm Mark Brown. I'm from here in Charleston and I own a charter headboat, and I'm on the Snapper Grouper AP.

MS. DAVIS: Julie Davis. I am Amber's brand new replacement at South Carolina Sea Grant.

MR. JOLLEY: John Jolley, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Florida.

MR. DeMARIA: Don DeMaria, Key West, Florida. I was just here with the MPA groups so I wanted to sit in on this while I'm waiting for my plane.

MS. DUNMIRE: I'm Leda Dunmire with the PEW Charitable Trust. I manage the U.S. South Atlantic and Caribbean Fish Conservation Campaign.

MR. WAUGH: Gregg Waugh, South Atlantic Council Staff.

MR. MAHOOD: Bob Mahood, council staff.

MR. BELL: Mel Bell; I'm with South Carolina DNR, Office of Fisheries Management and I'm a current council Member.

MS. SAKAS: Wonderful, thank you all very much. This is Cathy Sakas. It is great to see this excellent attendance especially from the community, from the stakeholders, and also from other panels that are represented here. I'd like to turn the program over to Gregg Waugh, who will give our presentation, this first presentation.

Please look over the agenda real quickly. If there are addendums, any changes, any additions, please say so. I'll give you a moment to look it over. If anybody needs any hard copies, they are

back at the desk here. Okay, would anybody like to offer any changes or addendums to the agenda? All right, then we will move on. Gregg.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you and good afternoon. VMS; this issue was previously in CE-BA 3, and the council has been looking at this for final approval at September. At the December meeting, when they were considering it again, they decided to split our CE-BA 3 Amendment into separate amendments.

VMS is now Snapper Grouper Amendment 30 and it just deals with VMS. What I am going to do is go over – you were sent the document. The preferred alternative is shown there to require VMS only if funding for VMS equipment reimbursement is available from the VMS Reimbursement Account.

It would require all commercial snapper grouper vessels with a federal unlimited or trip-limited permit to be equipped with VMS. Purchase, installation and maintenance must conform to the protocol as established by NMFS in the Federal Register. Purchase will be reimbursed, but installation, maintenance and communications costs will be paid for or arranged by the permit holder.

Now these three alternatives are what the council looked at. We have a Plan Development Team that is composed of NMFS and Council Staff. What we did is we met and we looked at these alternatives. The timing that the council is looking at right now is to approve this for public hearing at the March meeting, which is the first week in March; hold public hearings in April and May time period; and then final approval in June.

What we have had happen before is the council looks at a document and then adds some alternatives. We want to get them to consider any other alternatives at this March meeting, such that they could be added when they go out to public hearings in that April/May timeframe so it doesn't slow down the process.

The idea here is to lay out the additional recommendations that you haven't seen in the document, but they are listed in this hard copy that you have, and we can send out an additional document if you want to see the additions as well. We wanted to get your input, certainly the I&E on ways to better explain this, how best to present it; and then from the Law Enforcement any particular recommendations that you have.

The idea here is to go over this today and then you will discuss it in a little more detail tomorrow. Pat is giving a presentation to the council in March. I'm not going to go through a lot of the background on VMS. We know your agenda is full, so we wanted to focus in on these new alternatives and to give you a chance to have any input to go to the council in March so the Council has all the input before they approve it for public hearings.

As I'm going through if you have any questions, please just stop me as I'm going through so I can explain it, and then at the end I'll be glad to handle any additional questions as well. The IPT is recommending including the phrase in maintenance, making it absolutely clear that maintenance includes replacement of the unit.

They are running into this in the Gulf now where some of the units are needing replacement. Some of the fishermen were under the thought process that they would be reimbursed for that, but that is not the case. They also recommended clarifications in Alternatives 2 and 3; that for VMS units purchased on or after February 1, 2008, the maximum amount for all fisheries is \$3,100.

They are recommending that we add this following phrase after the last sentence in Alternatives 2 and 3, that all approved units must be installed by a qualified marine technician and activated with NMFS no later than X amount of days following publication of the final rule. That period of time will be specified by the council at the March meeting once we get input from NMFS.

We show here the revised wording for Alternatives 2 and 3 with those changes. Then we had some additional suggestions for the council to discuss. This gets into looking at these additional alternatives. The IPT is suggesting that they discuss whether they want to add subalternatives to Alternative 2A and 3A and then 2B and 3B; so that they have the option of only requiring them for federal trip limit permit holders or unlimited permit holders.

The trip limit permit holders are capped at 225 pounds. Particularly when the Law Enforcement AP gets into this, some of the pros and cons – and we've got a little bit of them outlined here, but any recommendations you have for whether this is a good idea, bad idea or what are the issues related to that.

One of the pros that is outlined so far is a lot of the 225 pound trip limit permit holders don't fish as much for snapper grouper species, and so the cost of having VMS will hit them harder. Those permits, 225, will go away over time and so that VMS requirement would go away. There is an equity issue if only one permit type has a permit and the other doesn't. Not requiring the majority of permit holders would pretty much forfeit any benefits from improved enforcement.

There are some issues that the people that make fewer trips, or only have the 225 trip limit permit, don't have as much at risk for enforcement actions as someone that has the unlimited permit, so they might be more inclined to push the limits. If VMS is not required for all participants in the fishery, the validity of the data for anything is greatly reduced.

It would be suspect for stock assessments. If you are not getting the catch-by-area information from the entire fleet, it is not as useful. Law enforcement would find their jobs more difficult without it. They would probably want it in all or none of the vessels. That has to do with some of the pros and cons that we've identified thus far for setting alternatives where you require it for trip limit or just unlimited.

There is also a suggestion for adding the following subalternatives to 2 and 3 where the VMS requirement would only apply to those federal snapper grouper permits when they are commercially fishing for and/or possessing snapper grouper species. Again, this would introduce a number of complexities. The IPT is not recommending these alternatives but just wants the council to talk about it. Pros; possibly this would reduce the negative impacts from cost and address concerns from fishermen about 24/7 monitoring. VMS would be targeted only to the snapper grouper fishery, if that can be considered a pro.

In terms of cons, this would be difficult to manage in many ways. For permit renewal they would need to check if the VMS is VMS compliant. If this were made conditional, that would impose complications in the permit process. Enforcement would be difficult if not all trips were required. It may be difficult to enforce.

What if fishermen don't intend to catch any snapper grouper species but come across them as bycatch? Do you then switch on the unit? Fisheries managers would lose valuable data that could perhaps help the management of all species. An additional set of subalternatives would have the VMS requirement only for those federal snapper grouper permit holders who have landed a certain quantity of poundage.

If they've landed above a certain cutoff, then they would be required to have the VMS unit. This would probably reduce negative impacts on smaller businesses; however, enforcement and permit compliance would be reduced. There are equity concerns. It is complicated, probably a substantial administrative burden, and the time that the council would spend on other things.

In terms of data by subsetting your fleet for VMS selection, the representatives would be skewed, and pointing out it is a bad idea with a lot of bureaucracy associated with it. Then a couple of other alternatives; one would be to add an alternative that would require all for-hire fishing vessels with a federal permit to be equipped with VMS.

Right now the council is just looking at commercial, and this is just to get them to think about requiring this for for-hire. Of course, they could discuss that and perhaps only discuss it for the headboat sector and not the charterboats. There is some concern that there is not enough money in the fund to cover all the charterboats.

But, again, thus far the council has expressed no interest in applying this beyond the commercial. Some of the pros; it would create a potential barrier to entry, because it is an open access permit; enhanced client safety; great for data collection. Some of the cons; the scope of the amendment and the ability to reimburse from the fund, which I already mentioned, it creates a potential barrier. It is a lousy idea for fishermen who do not participate full time in federal fisheries.

Alternative 5 that we want them to consider is requiring just all headboat vessels to be equipped with VMS. We talked about that. Then the final one is Alternative 6 that would require the owner of vessels with a federal permit to pay all costs. Obviously, this would save the money in the VMS account.

Cons; it would say something that the fishermen could work out for themselves, but may be difficult to enforce; pointing out this would be a real problem with acceptance, because the fishermen aren't for this in large part now. If you shifted the cost to the fishermen, there would be a lot less support.

That's just a brief overview of the items that we are asking the council to address. Again, the council's preferred alternative is Alternative 3, which would only require it on commercial vessels in the snapper grouper fishery as long as funding was available. In terms of the overall benefits here, there are a lot of benefits to enforcement, a lot of benefits to data collection and some byproduct in terms of vessel safety. I'll be glad to answer any questions that you might

have. Again, we're really looking for the Law Enforcement AP to get into this in more detail tomorrow.

MS. SAKIS: You mentioned that this was already in effect in the Gulf. Are they following Alternative 3; what are they following?

MR. WAUGH: In the Gulf all the reef fish vessels have VMS. In terms of the specific requirements that we are suggesting that the council consider here is exactly the requirements in terms of hailing and all of that that is applicable in the Gulf, that that applied to the South Atlantic. But it is just commercial Gulf reef fish vessels that have to have the VMS.

MR. BROWN: My name is Mark Brown. I'm from here in Charleston and I have a charter headboat. Also, I am a member of the National Association of Charter Boat Operators. I called Bob Zales over in Panama City in regards to the effects that the VMS has on the dual-permitted vessels. They are required to have VMS on the boats over there.

He said that it has turned out to be a big problem with boats that have to hail when they leave the dock and go offshore. If they have issues with the VMS, and let's say it goes out or doesn't work properly, then they have to turn around and come back in. They lose their trip. Then you have to wait to get this fixed before you can go back out.

Sometimes it can take a long period of time, because you have to have somebody that is NMFS or NOAA specified to work on this equipment. Then you have to wait for it to be ordered back in. They say they can take a couple of weeks sometimes, so you lose a whole lot of income waiting on getting this VMS fixed, plus the salt air has effects on it.

There are a number of things. They said that there is funding that is supposed to be available for the installation, but the burden of the cost of the operating and the service and upkeep and all that is placed on the fisherman. There is a negative view of it from the charter, dually permitted fishing vessels in the Gulf Coast.

MS. SAKAS: Thank you. Is there anybody else that wants to ask a question?

MR. BELL: This may be a question Pat could answer, but in the IPT's recommendation about the installers be certified, or whatever the terminology was used, does that mean something in terms of a credentialing or something or is there a body? Is that easily identifiable already, Pat?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: There is no licensing or list that NOAA provides. The design behind it is to keep the person who thinks he is a marine electrician to install it, to try to install it. What we usually do is when the certifications come in we ensure that it is a marine electronics business dealer that actually does that installation, but there is not list that is maintained anywhere in the country for NOAA certified.

MR. RENDA: Has the council considered how the VMS, when it collects its data, would actually know what the catch is other than just the location that the fisherman is fishing? Did they consider the observer program where the observer can write down the exact location and we can know what the catch is so we can get better scientific analysis?

MR. WAUGH: The VMS will tell where that vessel has traveled; and according to the speed – we've experienced this in our rock shrimp fishery where you can determine by the speed of the vessel when they are trawling, and so you know what areas they have fished, when they've fished. Then you can match that up to the trip ticket information to get the catch from that vessel on the trip; not specific to each location, but you can get their trip so we can match up that information.

MR. RENDA: Wouldn't an observer on board be less costly to the fisherman and would be much more accurate to the actual catch and the specific area?

MR. WAUGH: In the observer, yes, but the observers are very expensive. It is on the order of 800, 900 up to \$1,500 a day. The action that is left in CE-BA 3 is implementing an observer program in our fisheries, so that is being looked at as well. We're looking at coverage rates of 2 to 5 percent of the trips.

That gets to be a significant expense. We're dealing with issues of how the agency would be able to fund that versus carry on additional programs. It is a lot more expensive to implement an observer program than it is the VMS program, but the observers would definitely give you a lot more data.

MR. DeMARIA: This is your meeting so I don't want to take up a lot of your time, but I figured I was here for the MPA one. I live in the Keys; I have a 43 foot boat with a Gulf Reef Fish permit, and I have a VMS on it. I thought I would just maybe let you know some of my experiences with the VMS, which has not been positive.

I kept it going for about two years, I guess, with all the maintenance on it. I paid to have it installed; it was three hundred and something dollars and then \$40 or \$50 a month service. It ran the batteries down. They don't have electricity at the dock in the Keys, so I constantly had to pull the batteries out and charge them.

It just became so much of a problem that I finally just gave up. I got together with NMFS and got a power-down exemption. I've given up any work in the Gulf now. I don't fish there because of this. I get a chance to do some different research charters with scientists. I've had to tell them all no. It has been a real problem to me.

I'm certainly a huge proponent of marine reserves and you have got to be able to patrol them, but I think there are other ways of doing it. To me it seems like by the time you get VMS on all the boats in the South Atlantic, that the technology might even be outdated, and there may be something better like the drones or whatever that NOAA is using right now for monitoring some place in Tortugas.

But I tried, and like I said, I finally had to just give up. I couldn't keep it up and pay it, and keep the batteries charged, and all the other problems. There are people with much smaller boats than me. One guy has got a 16-foot boat that he has to have a VMS on. How you can keep it dry; it is not going to work. It has got some problems. Thank you.

MR. BEATON: Pat can probably speak better, but in the beginning there were a lot of equipment failure issues and installation issues in the Gulf, but the last I spoke to Pat, and he

conducted the training for our agency. A lot of those kinks have been worked out and the failure rate is quite low now that I understand. As far as the monthly cost, ping rates and bells and whistles that are attached to the VMS program can be dialed down more or less to not be such an impact to the fisherman.

MR. WAUGH: Don mentioned that he was here for an MPA meeting. We've got a network of MPAs and various Coral HAPCs area-based management. A big thrust of this is improved enforcement there. We are also looking at expanding our list of MPAs. It raises the issue of how do we better enforce these areas? Thus far this is one avenue that the council has been exploring.

MS. SAKAS: It seems to me that as time goes along, technology does get improved. I know that batteries now are about the size of a refrigerator magnet that can last for days and days and days. I would assume that as time goes along this technology will improve and won't be nearly as much of a burden. But, we want to move on with the agenda, and I want to turn it over to Amber who is going to talk about the frequently asked questions.

MS. VON HARTEN: We created this Q&A fact sheet, because we are obviously starting to get a lot of questions about how this works and what are the implications for the region. I believe the intent of the council is after the March meeting to possibly schedule some public hearings about VMS in April or May.

We recognize the need to actually pull some information together that is easily understandable for stakeholders that are coming to these hearings, so that we can answer their questions. The Gulf actually put together a very similar FAQ, or fact sheet. We kind of modeled it after that, and, of course, modified it for our region.

The Q&A fact sheet just kind of goes over some of the basic questions, what it is, how it works, who gets the data, what is being considered for the region, and then some actual benefits and challenges. As Gregg just explained, there are some of both for using VMS. From a law enforcement perspective, we would like to get your feedback, especially those that have experience with VMS in other regions and other fisheries, your feedback on this fact sheet to make sure it is accurate and that this is how it actually works.

From an Information and Education AP perspective, make sure that this is understandable and is it in plain language and can be useful to fishermen? It can be longer than this. This was kind of a draft that Kim and I put together that hopefully will go in the next newsletter as we start our outreach efforts.

This could look different. It could be a series of fact sheets if we want to focus on one particular aspect, but we just want to have some type of outreach materials together for these proposed public hearings coming up. We openly accept any comments and feedback from that.

MS. IVERSON: To that point; I think we had a good opening for this discussion as far as the questions and answers that were given here and the different perspectives from people that have experience with VMS. That may be considered in using VMS in the future, some of the challenges that are being faced with using this equipment.

The council has already been receiving comments from outside of the council office from constituents in regards to VMS. We haven't solicited comments at this point. I think there will be a great deal of interest. This action was already in an amendment earlier, as Gregg mentioned, The Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 3 has been on the table and discussed by the council for quite some time; several council meetings.

The council has discussed this issue. This is not the first time that it is going out. If you have ever followed the council process and been to a council meeting, you can see how things can go in as one form and come out the end of the meeting week in a different amendment and taking a different form.

I don't want you to get the impression that we're just starting to talk about VMS or address this from an outreach perspective either, because we have written about VMS. As a matter of fact, when Amber was with Sea Grant, we went through and did some work on talking about how we would approach VMS.

The council considered it several years ago prior to the Gulf implementing it. For those of you that aren't that familiar with it or haven't been following with the council process, this isn't something new. But it is going to present a challenge, which I think we've already identified in the opening discussion.

From an outreach standpoint, the fact sheets have been a really good start. Amber did the majority of this work based on what the Gulf has done. We do have that experience based on the Gulf Council, but the fact sheet is not the only tool. As we start to talk about it and think about the discussion that we've already had this afternoon here at our meeting, if you have other ideas, as Amber said, please let us know.

MS. VON HARTEN: I guess I just want to make sure is there anything missing? Have we missed any key points or based on your experiences, the law enforcement folks, to make sure that we have everything covered. I'm glad Pat is here so he can kind of have a look at this as well. If anybody has any comments, that would be great.

MR. BEATON: Are we going to discuss this more tomorrow? When do you want comments?

MS. IVERSON: That doesn't mean that you can't go back and give comments later either, but we would prefer to have the comments or suggestions or any edits and recommendations at this point.

MR. SHUSTER: I was just looking through the Q&A here. And VMS, I want to compare it to computers, if you will go there with me for just a minute. We all know somebody that gets near a computer and it stops working correctly. I believe we have that same learning curve with VMS. My experience out on the water is some people deal with it wonderfully. It always works and everything else works on their boat.

You can go to the next boat and it is alien to them. It is so foreign that they are asking us how to operate it. I think training should be some mandatory component somewhere in this program, because you can't hand somebody a computer and expect them – if it is going to be mandated, and tell them to learn on their own.

That is something we would like to see because we receive those questions all the time; show me how to use it; is it working; is it not working? I get on the satellite phone and call Pat and say, Pat, is it working, and he says yes. That is the current method right now. Training would be a huge piece to make this work properly.

MS. SAKAS: Thank you, and how do you propose would be the best way to train people? Would this be in-person workshops or web-based, or a combination of things?

MR. SHUSTER: I would really refer to Pat on that; however that is rolled out, that it be mandatory training of some sort.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: One thing we're doing in the OLE VMS office, as well as most of NOAA is updating their websites, we are trying to take like this two-page frequently asked questions and expand it into a 20-page frequently asked questions. Part of that is take a Faria unit, for example, how do I do a declaration on a Faria unit? They could click on Faria.

We're having the screen shots up there and the arrows, press this button, scroll here, and press this. You should see this when you're done. We're moving to that point where we can direct people to the OLE Website and tell them to click on their unit, and then there will be those pictures and photos, snapshots on the website that will help them.

Rama has hit it on the head. Over half have no problem; they are used to using computers and iPads and iPhones, and we have another percentage that don't own a computer and don't use a debit card or even a cash machine, and those it's a lift. I know some say, well, great, you are going to put all this on the website.

That is not going to help them either, but it is going to be something we can print it out and we can send those to the folks, the minority of folks that need more than just going to the website or we could walk them through it as we do now. We're trying to do a lot what Rama has with a cost-effective way of making it accessible on the website.

I hate to say dumbing it down, but it is a computer; and for those who don't use it on a regular basis, dumbing it down to where they don't have to look at all the units; I just want to know about my unit and how I do my declaration and what should I see to tell me that it is working or not. That is a work in progress we have right now.

MR. BROWN: My question is I have a dual-permitted boat. I go through a lot of coast guard inspections and everything. We have a lot of requirements in order to not only carry people for hire but also to be able to commercial fish. If we have a VMS on the boat, one of the things that was brought to my attention from the gentleman in the Gulf is that if you are out on a day charter and you are fishing around the areas where there are MPAs in place, and you go into those areas and troll, which is legal the way that the MPAs are built, that it causes an issue if you troll in that area and then you come out of that area and you go to some other area and you bottom fish, and you come back to shore with snapper grouper species on the boat. How does law enforcement intend on dealing with that as far as dually permitted vessels that have the commercial and for-hire and being able to distinguish whether or not they were actually fishing within that area illegally?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: From the VMS perspective, we deal with this on a regular basis. Throughout the Gulf we have a variety of MPAs. The regulations, which I don't necessarily love all the time, they create these type of things where transiting is allowed or bottom fishing is allowed, or bandit rig, no bottom longline, or you can troll or you can't troll, or you can possess fish on board and be inside or not be inside.

The VMS just provides the VMS data, and the technicians are very good at looking at the regulations that particular MPA possesses. The fact that you ping inside of a closed area in no way means that it is a strict violation type event. That gives us information to go by, and a lot of the time for those particular instances, if somebody is consistently in and we have a question, we'll call either our state partner agencies or the Coast Guard to see if there is something in the area that can take a look.

But VMS alone, when those types of regulations limit us, is not going to be a violation type event. Now there are strict closed areas where you cannot enter at all. That is different. For some of these MPAs that have a variety of different regulations, VMS is just one piece to help law enforcement ensure the MPA is not violated, but it does not mean a ping inside a closed area is a violation.

MR. KENNEDY: Kind of a wordsmithing point – and I for one have been thumped on for years for not speaking regular English. But, for example, the question who monitors the data collected by VMS and who has access, that ought to say are you going to know where I'm fishing and are you going to take my data; is it going to be on a webpage somewhere?

We're dealing with people, that is their "pot of gold", if you will. They don't want everybody knowing where they're fishing. I would make some of these things a little bit more directed to the concerns that people may have that don't trust, perhaps, the process.

MS. SAKAS: Thank you; that is a good point. If you want to do any more editing, that would be great and send it via e-mail; that would be lovely. Truly, really that is what we want. We need that kind of input. Thank you very much.

MR. BEATON: Again, back to Rama's point about not being techno savvy, we've seen many vessels where the fact is the boat operators don't want the VMS to work, because it is a Big Brother concept. We've seen where the brains of the unit are put where they're exposed to the weather in some of these early installations, but yet their \$5,000 piece of navigation equipment is in as weatherproofed a place where it can be. They want the failure; not all, but there is some group that believes the Big Brother concept, and they want the VMS not to work so they can say I had to go fishing anyways and point at a corroded unit.

MS. SAKAS: That is our job in the E&I is to help people understand the uses of that, so any help in that area would be great, too.

MS. IVERSON: To that point – and this may be a question for Pat and what is done in the Gulf, but there are other advantages or other uses for VMS. You have your basic unit is my understanding, and then you can add bells and whistles to have increased e-mail correspondence or Fax capabilities, I'm not sure. I'm not that familiar with it.

But one of the things that we try to do with the fact sheet here is just to talk about the challenges and how the council would use the VMS data for its management purposes. And this is for everybody at the table; do you think it would be advantageous to point out that you can take this basic subscription?

I don't know it is like your basic cable is my understanding, television cable, and if you want to add HBO and ShowTime and all the other things, once you get that basic subscription, there are advantages to using that VMS system to enhance your fishing operations. That has been my understanding. I have a very basic understanding, because I have not had personally an opportunity to witness the VMS on a vessel.

I did years ago go down to the Southeast Regional Office and visit the VMS monitoring setup there, which has expanded greatly since then. That was years ago when the council first started talking about using VMS. For the group, I don't know if that would be something that would be advantageous or should we just stick with the uses and how it would be relevant to fisheries management?

MR. RENDA: Did the council ever consider maybe going by a state-by-state requirement rather than one size fits all for the whole fishery, the whole complex? Sea bass may be a different situation than a boat that snapper group fishes and catches B-liner and all of that stuff. When we have the black sea bass fisherman fishes in 80 feet of water and no deeper, if he has a catch history with confirmed logbooks that he doesn't fish in any water deeper than 80 feet and he doesn't bring in any other snapper grouper; is there any way of possibly saying, let's look at the VMS on a more state-by-state basis, and that one size fits all doesn't usually work all the time. ?

MR. WAUGH: The council could consider that. They haven't thus far, because again what we are looking at is for enforcement and improved data collection. Those aspects, while you might have some differences in a fishery by fishery and by state, but still we would want to know the assessments could be improved by knowing where fishermen are fishing off of each state. Our law enforcement capabilities, in terms of protecting the MPAs that are off of each state would be enhanced by having it apply across the board.

MR. BEATON: One thing that is often overlooked by vessel owners is the safety benefit of the VMS to them in the event of an at-sea catastrophe. Brandon might be able to speak to it, but we just recently had a SAR in my area where four adults and two children went down, were hanging on to coolers.

The Coast Guard air assets went to the EPIRB things and we went to the last known location on VMS by water. The VMS location was by almost 1.2 miles more accurate than the pings from the two separate and personal EPIRBs. There is an added benefit to the vessel owner and operator for crew safety.

MR. BELL: I mentioned this at the last council meeting, but to the degree that you can talk about success stories like that or things that would be kind of an incentive – and I know we can't sort of incentivize this program other than we potentially pay for them initially, but if it has been used in the Gulf for a while and other places, are there success stories out there, are there things that you can explain additional benefits beyond the how we intend to use it, but how can this be useful, and it has been in use for a while. Is there a way you can kind of bring some of that out?

That kind of I think deals with what you were getting at, Kim, maybe in terms of just explaining why it could be useful.

MS. IVERSON: To that point; keeping in mind with the council, our job is to get the information out. We don't have an opinion on the use one way or another from an outreach perspective. As you look at this fact sheet, it is a fact sheet as a Q&A to get the information out, to let the public come and make comments to the council.

As it was noted earlier, I believe that the intent of the council following the March meeting – well, I know that following the March meeting the council has asked that we as staff hold a series of public hearings in late April, early May, some time along there. This is an issue that is going to be coming to the public forefront very quickly. It is targeted to a specific commercial fishery within the South Atlantic Region, but the implications have a much broader reach for people that are concerned that they are next as far as constituents, as far as fishermen. I'll stop with that.

DR. DEAN: I want to go to the rhetoric question, which I think is our primary contribution, and back up Mel. If you go to the potential benefits of implementing VMS, what I can read is this is what we are going to do to you rather than what this will do for you. I think with some creative thought you could really enhance that.

Then if you had a place on in this where you could click and it would take you to the success stories, and have little blurbs on success stories that would back up what you are saying in here, but not in this text, just I can go there and look for more information.

LT. FISHER: To follow up on that; when I did my first read through on the first page, it looks like the section was a little thin on the why is the VMS being considered, but the two points that they bring up are then expanded in what are some of the potential benefits of implementing it, so maybe to address that I would suggest taking that expanded section on the benefits and just using that to expand the section of the why is it being implemented, because that is what you are really explaining there. Then more along the lines of what Mr. Bell was talking about is talk more about what are the benefits to the end user for that section. I would definitely echo the comments on safety.

MR. RENDA: Would the council ever consider possibly trying a pilot program?

MR. WAUGH: Again, they could, but we have this in our rock shrimp fishery so we have that experience. It is in the Gulf reef fish fishery, which is very similar to our snapper grouper fishery. I think what could be learned from a pilot project we already have that information.

MS. vonKOLNITZ: Not being as familiar with this as I wish I was, I know the data is going to be secure and confidential from obviously a specific vessel perspective. I work on several regional teams where we're trying to compile data of offshore uses for future potential impacts like offshore wind, oil and gas. We're trying to compile known uses to avoid conflicts and try to avoid positioning of these things in areas where commercial fisheries are happening, where military uses are happening.

Getting some of that data, especially military uses, is challenging, but they do give it in a bigger, broader large polygon so it is not specific. Some of the endangered species are larger polygons, it is not specific. Is any of this information going to be available for use in that scenario, to help protect the commercial fishermen and their areas? Could that be seen as a possible benefit or would that scare commercial fishermen away? Would that be a negative for them?

MR. WAUGH: That is an excellent point. We can demonstrate with the information collected from our rock shrimp fishery how that has been able to help in developing these Coral HAPC expansions that are now in Coral Amendment 8. The VMS data is even treated in a more confidential manner than the catch information.

For instance, in our office a number of our technical staff has access to confidential data, but Roger Pugliese on our staff is the only one that has that added clearance to deal with VMS data. It is treated more confidentially, but then, yes, we get that data and it is projected in a way that it is still showing you the area but not the specific location, and certainly not the specific individual.

We have alternative in Coral Amendment 8 where you can see where the fleet has fished and the council has moved the boundary of those Coral HAPCs to eliminate the impacts on fishermen, either entirely or greatly minimize it. We can only do that because we have that information.

MS. vonKOLNITZ: I think that is very important to get that message out, because I am not sure that actually is being broadcast to the fishermen. I don't know that they understand that it is actually providing them that benefit. If we can somehow work that in, I think that would be helpful.

MS. SAKAS: Really good point. Anybody else?

MR. CHESLER: One of the things I also wanted to point out as a potential benefit is we talk about leveling the playing field, that one of the goals of enforcement is to level the playing field for the fishers. One of the positive aspects of VMS is that this would prevent somebody who is willing to violate the regulations from deriving economic benefit by going in to an MPA where fish are known to exist, and essentially cleaning out that MPA, which would be basically stealing the fish from everyone else if you follow the purpose of the MPA in the first place.

The other thing – and we've made cases on this – is that with your seasonal openings or closures you have people that fish early and you have people that fish late. They are deriving an economic benefit from violating the regulations that with VMS we would be able to much more easily detect those violations. Right now we rely on aircraft, vessel patrols. It is very manpower-intensive to make those cases where VMS obviously would really shorten the curve on being able to detect those violations.

MS. SAKAS: I have a question. If we are requiring the VMS and we've got EPIRB and other safety equipment in place; would there be the possibility later on down the road, I know not right away but later on down the road where VMS would supplant everything else where you wouldn't have to have redundancy?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I want to emphasize the VMS units that are on board are advertised as a secondary. The EPIRB is the primary safety requirement as regulated by the Coast Guard and monitored by the Coast Guard. What VMS has – the program, particularly staffing – on the government side we are there at seven in the morning until six at night.

Nobody is there monitoring in the evenings and nobody is there on the weekends, so it serves a secondary role. Certainly, that data is made available to the Coast Guard and is routinely used for search and rescue cases, but it is not the same as an EPIRB. When an EPIRB goes off, the Coast Guard reacts and responds. When a VMD unit goes off, there is some investigative work. We try to figure out why and how, but it is not the same as an EPIRB. That is why we always advertise it as a secondary role with the EPIRB being the primary one as required by the Coast Guard.

MS. SAKAS: Does anybody else have any comments on this particular part of the agenda? Okay, we will move on to the second part of the agenda, and I will turn it over to Kim and Amber.

MS. IVERSON: As most of you know, I think we've given some briefings in the past on the development of a regulations application. I think some of you that have been around long enough remember our printed regulations brochure, our four-color printed regulations brochure with our lovely snapper grouper centerfold that was popular.

We reprinted it I think three different times where we would distribute somewhere between 30 to 40,000 copies. They were very popular. I really liked having them as an outreach tool, being able to send them out to all the law enforcement agencies along the coast, as well as all the state agencies. They were well received.

Since the implementation of annual catch limits and the council has been working and meeting the mandates of the Reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act, as many of you know some of these fisheries are opening and closing more often than they have in the past. That has created a new challenge for printed material.

Those of you at the state level know when you print your state regulations that you end up inevitably having to update those either through supplemental handouts or via news releases, et cetera. That having been said, we have not reprinted our glossy publication in quite some time and have been just printing updates to our snapper grouper regulations.

If you go to the council's website, you can download the PDF copies. I do have some copies here. Jim Kelley is going to take the rest of these back to North Carolina for his officers to use for outreach purposes, but we can order more. If you want to take a look at these, I have absconded some color copies. We can always print black and white copies, and there are some additional copies back here, but even these get outdated very quickly. As fisheries open and close and annual catch limits are met, regulations change on a regular basis.

Joining the social media world, the council staff has been working to put together a regulations application. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council currently has one. We have used the Gulf Council's contractor to begin that process. By using the same contractor, we negated

some of the cost in the initial setup. The formatting and information will be similar to what is on the Gulf Council's application.

There is a presentation that was included in your briefing book materials on the application, and we can give a brief overview. We do have our iPads here. If you want to see it in work, we have a beta file that you can look at later. We just kind of wanted to give you an overview and an update on where we are with the development of the application and the information that is included.

I am going to defer to Amber and let her go through that presentation. Amber, since she took her new role at the council as an outreach specialist back in September, has been diligently working on completing the updates for all of the information that is included in the application. That is a lot of information. The beauty of it is that we will be allowed to change that information as it occurs.

We will never, I don't think ever get away from printing materials. As it was discussed earlier, there are always fishermen out there that some are more techno savvy than others. That's okay; that is fine. We will continue to have these updated sheets on our website for all of you to print out. I mean you can go in there and print them out in color copies.

You can upload the file; and if you want the high-resolution file, just call us. You can print multiple copies or we will be glad to supply you at least with black and white copies. We print color copies periodically for people like Jim Kelley. Amber, if you are ready to go through that and kind of update the group on where we are with the application.

MS. VON HARTEN: Please jump in, Kim, because this started before I came on board. As Kim already described, obviously we are dealing with rapidly changing regulations making some of our printed materials outdated. Soon to be our MPA brochure it sounds like is going to be updated. We'll have to redo that as well.

We are just trying to catch up with all the different mobile applications and technology that are available and out there and decided to pursue our own application. Like Kim said, we do have our iPads here if on break you all want to look at the beta version of the application, we would be more than happy to show it to you.

We think we are pretty much ready to go. We are just waiting for the QR code so we can put that on our postcard so people could know how to download the application using their droid or iPhone. The content of the application is separated out is it has different tabs. There is one for fish ID and regulations, and that is a list of all the species managed by the council.

But we also decided to include some of the other commonly encountered species that the states manage things like red drum, black drum and things like that and also all the HMS species and sharks. Those are going to be actually released in the second release of the application, the update that we do probably in another month or two. We really wanted to get the HMS folks to do a good, thorough review of all those regulations.

We kind of pulled together what we could find off the web and other resources for those species, but we want to make sure they are accurate. The HMS and sharks will not be released in the first

initial release of the application, but look for that coming soon. We also have a fish description of each species that is on there and, of course, the recreational and commercial regulations.

There is also a tab for measurement guidelines and how to actually accurately measure a fish; important numbers, including National Marine Fisheries Service, the council, all the state management agencies and some other important numbers that folks can have access to on the water.

We also included a tab for all of our managed areas, including the Deepwater MPAs, the Oculina Bank, deepwater corals, special management zones and the National Marine Sanctuaries. Then we have a little blurb actually about the application and about the council and then a link to any state regulations or states that have mobile applications.

This is how we actually were able to enter all of the data for each species. I know that is kind of small, but our application designer, Ovi Verona of Verona Solutions, developed this kind of web editor for us that allowed us to go in species by species and actually type in the information. A lot of this was actually transferred over from the Gulf application when it came to the fish description, because they were very similar in nature.

Then this was a great feature of the editors. We were able to actually have an editing portion that allowed you to put in hyperlinks and bold things and italicize things and do some copying and pasting and bullets that made some of the very lengthy regulations we have on some of these species a little bit more readable.

This is what the recreational web editor looks like. You can see the fish description is on the left in the blue, and then on the right you have – well, that one didn't translate – for the commercial side there is size limit, trip limit, quotas and closed seasons and then similar information on the recreational side as well and then an image of the fish.

We're hoping that maybe down the road we can also add some actual real images of fish as well, because as we all know fish don't always look like the drawings that they have. Like I said, we are hoping to launch within the next week or two at the latest. We are just waiting for those QR codes.

It will be available on both iPhone and droid. This web editor that I showed you will allow us to make updates to the regulations as they happen very quickly. Hopefully, we can get those HMS species added pretty quickly as well. That is kind of what the page of the application looks like there with the different tabs. That's it; we're really excited to get launched.

MS. IVERSON: Thanks, Amber, and just to keep in mind, too, that this is the first version and we will keep adding. Ovi Verona, the contractor, is going to be in the background holding our hand as we continue to provide updates and edits. If you see that and it comes out and you are like, wow, I would have really liked to have seen X, Y, Z, added to this, we can still do that.

As Amber said, we want to have different versions. Amber has put together a really nice postcard that will go out to constituents to let them know we are going to advertise that it is available. For those of you – I have to admit I just got my first Smartphone within the last year.

I'm loving it. It is like having a Ferrari and I am riding it like a tricycle, but I am going to learn. I'm going to have it network with my iPad and everything.

For those of you that haven't grown into that world and use applications on a regular basis, the beauty of this is that you don't have to have connectivity. You can be 40 miles offshore and have no signal. You don't need to have access to a satellite phone. I did find out that an iPhone actually does have an internal GPS that even when you are out of range it still contracts, so that is pretty cool. I learned that at Miami Boat Show. That was a whole other thing on the side.

But you can download, update your application, go offshore and you have the latest greatest. Now it is up to the user to update your application. It is just like updating these sheets. It is up to the users to keep up with them once they are distributed. That is the beauty of using the application and that is the exciting part of it; having the ease of updates with having the web browser.

We can be sitting in this meeting right now and it could be 4:15 on a Friday afternoon and NMFS puts out the Fishery Bulletin. A fishery could change or close or whatever and we have that capability of updating that application right away via the website and then that update will pop up and the little update signal will be on the person's phone or iPad or wherever they are using it from. There are a lot of advantages and we really want to use this as a key outreach tool. We look forward to getting your input on that.

MR. KENNEDY: I do have several questions. First of all, the one that's in entitled – I think it is the fourth slide down – the regulations application web editor has the AJs on it; that page is just way too busy in my view. I know that I talked a little bit. If we're using that, it is way too busy. We don't need to know how it face, what family it is in.

If I'm a recreational angler, I don't need to see the commercial regulation. We ought to be a tab for those guys and a tab for us. The commercial guys don't need to know what the recreational deal is unless he is doing some kind of for-hire deal – just kind of my thoughts – and maybe a big red circle with a line through it if they are out of season or the take has been stopped. Obviously, this is for demonstration purposes so I'll be quiet.

MS. IVERSON: This is actually the web editor. This is what we use. Amber and I will use this to update the application. The application itself, again, we have a beta file here. It hasn't come up so you can't download it. We have to go actually through the Apple store so you can download it through iTunes for both the droid and the iPhone version.

But if you have ever looked at the Gulf application, it is very similar to that. We have streamlined the information quite a bit; and from an enforcement capacity, we have a disclaimer at the very beginning. These are not the end all, be all for all the regulations. If we tried to do that, you would have to scroll this far down on your iPhone or your iPad.

This is not what it looks like at all. It will be a picture very similar to what is on the website now. You have an individual species, the name of the species, and then a very concise listing of the regulations. Then there are links. Especially for HMS information, we envision having links to their website so that you can go.

We recognize that having links to a website when you are offshore and out of range is not an ideal situation, nor can we just have all of the information that is there. For example, commercial king mackerel, we were caught on that. King mackerel is very confusing because you have mixing zones and you have opening and closing seasons.

For the Gulf and the South Atlantic we share those regulations. We tried the best we could to consolidate that information; but if you are a commercial, mackerel fisherman, it is your responsibility to know those regulations and go to the Code of Federal Regulations to get that detail.

Now to the point of having both commercial and recreational regulations together, first of all, it is ease of use, because the application is consolidated and I think when you see it you will see that information is there. It is concise. But also in dealing from an outreach standpoint, we consistently hear, well, the recreational guys get all the regulations and the commercial guys have none or vice versa.

By seeing that, hey, this is a greater amberjack and these are commercial regulations, these are commercial seasons and these are the recreational size limits and bag limits; that they can see across the board that there are regulations that impact all fishermen. That's the reason even in our printed brochure – when I first came to work for the council many years ago, I put them all together so you would have a recreational section and you would have a commercial section, but there are regulations across the board for most of those species that are managed by the council and by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

DR. DEAN: Kim, as one who has only a telephone, that's the telephone. Is this going to be just like this; we can access it on the web?

MS. IVERSON: No, are you referencing the application? Yes, the application is for Smartphone and tablet use. You can take it with you and go. We have the fish ID and regulations on the website. We have the summaries that you could print out and take with you. But if you are 40 miles offshore, my experience – and I may be wrong, but most people that are 40 to 50 miles offshore have some sort of electronic capabilities for accessing this type of information. We are just making it easier for Smartphone users. Most of the guys, John, that are offshore now at this point have one of these. That has been my experience, and a lot more.

DR. DEAN: I understand, but I like on the web and I like the format of this and being able to move around like you can. Maybe I just misunderstand that. I will look at the website from that perspective when I get home.

MS. IVERSON: If you like the web, you will like the application, because it is a very similar format when you actually go to the individual species.

MS. VON HARTEN: One more thing; I was just showing it to Jim and he said he wanted to see the red drum species profile. Because red drum is closed to harvest in federal waters; that is what it says. We don't have the state regulations for red drum and things like that, but we do point you in the right direction of where you can find those regulations. Just keep that in mind.

MS. vonKOLNITZ: I'm just curious; have you established staffs in each state to get updates for state regulations or do you have someone that is perusing – you aren't doing the state regulations. The state species that you had on the – it is the next to the last one I think. There was a button on the bottom of the application page, the home page that says state regulations.

MS. IVERSON: Yes, and to that point, Elizabeth, Verona Solutions also happens to design applications for the states, not all of them; I'm not speaking for all of them, but we will link to state applications. I know FWC has an application at this point and I think some of the other states are working towards those. If they are relevant, it will point you to those, but, no, we are sticking with the species managed by the council and the National Marine Fisheries Service at this point, and that is quite a task.

MR. BEATON: Will the application know where you are? For instance, I have Fish Rules 2012 and – well, if you are going to be competitive in the market – I just opened up red drum and it knows that I am in South Carolina and it gives me South Carolina state regulations. If I go out into federal waters, it will know that I am out in federal waters and give me federal regulations if they are different from state.

Thinking about being competitive in an application market, this is very convenient. I'm going to have three icons. Because we are the state that is bi-coastal, I'm going to have three applications, Gulf, South Atlantic, and one that tells me everything wherever I am no matter what. That is just where I am going to go.

MS. IVERSON: Well, we consider ourselves competitive because ours is free. I am familiar with Fish Rules, and actually the person that developed that has been in contact with me on several occasions, and I understand with folks in the Gulf as well. But to that point, if we were to move forward maybe down the line to work together with the Gulf Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service where we would want to go in that direction to develop an application for each of the regions, that may be something that we would want to look at.

In talking with Ovi Verona and Verona Solutions, there are advantages and disadvantages to having that capability for having your location known and tying that in directly with the regulations. We are not exploring that capability right now. There, again, this is our first attempt at using the application.

I know that we may not be competitive in a for-profit world, but this is going to be free. It is going to be easy to use for fishermen that focus on federal fishing, offshore fishing in the South Atlantic Region. There are other products. I mean, there are millions of applications out there. We just thought that to help supplement as an outreach tool and not reproduce the cover copies to the extent, and not have to update those on a periodic basis, that this is the next step. But I'm certainly well aware of that capability, and it is a nice feature, but we are not looking at that right now.

LT. FISHER: Rob, are you running that on an iPhone?

MR. BEATON: Yes.

LT. FISHER: Okay, because Fish Rules, I just double checked on the play storage. As far as I know, it is not out for Android, and yours will be available on Android and IOS, right, simultaneously?

MS. IVERSON: Absolutely, and it will be free of charge on both platforms.

LT. FISHER: Okay, that is definitely one advantage going for yours then, Kim, because I think there are at least as many Android phones out now as iPhones, if not more.

MS. SAKAS: I am an Android user and I love it. All right, is there any other discussion? This is an excellent discussion. I appreciate everybody's input both on this section and the first topic that we discussed. Keep it going, this is good input; anything else?

LT. FISHER: Amber, did you end up getting our input from Surf Tech? I've been gone the last two weeks on a ship. I mean, three of our guys got through. They did some really detailed stuff. I don't know why they haven't sent it off to you, but I'll get right on that if there is still time.

MS. SAKAS: Okay, anything else on this? I would like for us to take a five-minute break.

MS. SAKAS: Okay, let's pick the meeting back up where we left off. Again, I thank you all for your input. This is really invaluable to the staff, and, of course, it is really nice that we have the input from the LE AP and also from the other APs that are represented as well as from the stakeholders. It is really good input all the way around. Let's pick up with Section 3; and, Kim, take it away with the website overview.

MS. IVERSON: Again to reiterate what Cathy said, we sincerely appreciate the input from the two advisory panels and we were excited when Myra and I first started talking about having this joint meeting, to have everybody at the table to discuss these outreach issues and relevance to law enforcement.

As we continue, what I wanted to do this afternoon briefly is to go over and kind of give you an update on where we are with our continuing saga of our council website upgrade. Again, the I&E AP members are aware that we've been working towards upgrading our website similar to all of our use of social media and the application and all of our technological advances.

We recognize that our website, while it is a useful tool, can be greatly improved. We started that process a couple of years ago by hiring a contractor, getting a design, working with updating our site map, cleaning out some things on the site, streamlining it, focusing on relevant issues, and then went to the design part of the team that we had contracted with and came up with a new and improved design.

I'll bring that up here in a few minutes. Meanwhile we're dealing with our current website, which again gives good information, but I think we want to make it more interactive, a lot more interactive and a lot more visually appealing and easier to use. That being said, it seems like when we start talking about redesign and everything else, I get e-mails and compliments from constituents and organizations and agencies that say your website is great and thank you so much; and I'm thinking, well, we need to look at making some changes but we don't want to completely overhaul it.

With that in mind, what I wanted to do was just give you an update on where we are now. That team that we hired, the contracting team has since disbanded. While we have a new design, and working at doing some new design upgrades for the interior pages, we are well along in the process, but now we need to look at the programming,.

Again, capitalizing on Amber's experience and having an outreach specialist in the house now, we've been working together to put bids back out to get the programming completed, so we can move forward in this process. It has been going on a long time. I'm excited to have Amber to work with, who has worked with some of the content management system.

Drupal is the CMS that we are thinking of working with to finish the programming on the site. I will pull up the design. This is the new look for the home page of the site. We've had this reviewed by the I&E Advisory Panel. We've had staff involved at various and sundry versions of this process and come up with what I think is a new and kind of a cleaner look.

We will have an active calendar; we will continue to have the common contents that you are familiar with such as our fish ID and regulations' pages, our library where the fishery management plans are listed. We are also going to add some pages on our site, a section on how to get involved, how to provide public comment, how to get involved in the fishery management process.

We've added a section of plans under development so that fishermen and other constituents will know what the council is working on right now, what is coming down the pike, upcoming meetings and materials, adding a calendar I think and linking it to the meetings and materials section will be helpful. We are going to add an announcement section at the bottom.

We decided to also include news releases in conjunction with that. This item is in your briefing book. This is Attachment 3 for the joint meeting if you want to look. It is kind of difficult to read it as it is projected on the screen right now, but I wanted to point out some of these improvements that are going in to the design.

We are also going to be linking to our social media, to our Facebook page. I hope if you haven't had an opportunity to look at our Facebook page that you will look at it, and not only look at it but you will friend us, so you get updates from the council on a regular basis. As the Gulf Council puts it, you don't have to like us to like us on Facebook.

We'll kind of copy that tagline and I'll put it out to you guys. Please like us, friend us, and get input or get updates from our Facebook page. Kari MacLauchlin on our council staff is the person that is directly responsible for updating that page. She does a great job of posting information about our meetings; webinar available for video streaming, pictures, photographs, and regulation updates et cetera, and sharing information with other state agencies as well.

We're looking at entering the world of Twitter. We have a Twitter account and we will be tweeting messages I think within the next few months, few weeks maybe. Amber is anxious to start doing that on a regular basis and setting up our website so we can blog, so we will have blogs; hopefully, our tech staff and other council members, anyone that wants to submit items for the blog and to start a blog site. We are entering into the world of social media and we are integrating that on the site so that it is going to be a lot more interactive.

That having been said, since the focus this afternoon is kind of on the outreach and law enforcement, we are walking that fine line between providing law enforcement information now to constituents without conveying that the council is responsible for law enforcement. People have various ideas of what the council is and what the council does.

They are aware that the council is involved in some way with law enforcement, but sometimes get that misconstrued, just kind of like protected resources or highly migratory species; they kind of lump us all together as government. What we want to do is provide a service. Certainly, we want to help enhance the law enforcement outreach and efforts. I do so through the news letter.

I try to highlight cases occasionally and put picked photographs and that type of thing within the council's newsletter, but we want to highlight it on the website as well. I can show you the current page and what we have here. We have a quick link right now for law enforcement over on the left-hand side of the page; and if you click it, it simply has an explanation of how the council recognizes the importance of law enforcement, the fact that the council has a Law Enforcement Advisory Panel, and it has a link to all the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel members, and the partnerships that the council has as far as working with NOAA Fisheries Office for Law Enforcement, the Coast Guard and that those agencies actually have a seat on the council.

Then we go on to how to report violations; the enforcement hotline, the NOAA enforcement hotline and then the state agencies contact information. The law enforcement reports, we get quarterly reports from Otha Easley from Office of Law Enforcement down at the regional office in St. Petersburg, and we post those and we get the quarterly reports.

If you can take a few minutes just to look at what is currently on the website and see if you could provide input for us as we go through updating our website, if there is other information that you think would be relevant there, we would appreciate your input at this point.

MS. RAINE: I would suggest that you might want to consider putting the links to our office's website. On our headquarters website there is a listing of all of the charging documents and settlements that have been issued nationwide on a quarterly basis. We've begun publishing decisions on that website, too. Not only would you have information on what is going on in the South Atlantic, but nationwide as well.

MS. IVERSON: That is a simple thing that we can take care of this afternoon. I mean, adding a link is very simple and probably should have been done quite some time ago. It is just an oversight, so we can do that this afternoon.

MR. CHESLER: Something else to add is possibly adding a link to the states' weekly reports. They are not obviously going to all contain information regarding marine fisheries enforcement, but I know in Florida they are widely read. People copy and post them on different forums, so maybe provide a link next to the contact information for that state. I am aware of Florida and Georgia DNR both have them posted. I know I have them bookmarked. I think that would probably be valuable. If it is so easy just to throw a link up, I think that would be useful.

LT. FISHER: Yes, real quick, can you scroll up a little bit, and can you hover over the Coast Guard hyperlink there. Okay, that's what I thought. Since it is just going to USCG.mil, we do

have an unclassified front end for our fisheries as well. I can give you that. I don't have it handy; I can e-mail it to you later if you want to send them to a site that is a little more directly relevant to the fisheries side.

DR. DEAN: I want to go to Karen's comment. I think one of the places, going back to VMS, is tell the story. I agree with – I like to see those reports, but they are very terse cables, et cetera. Having participated in the workshop on social media, what we need to have I think is that successful outcome to a prosecution then turned into a story, a very brief story but a story.

Because for those of us that are compulsive in our personal culture of following the law, we're judgmental and we really like to see those people that violate the law get caught and punished. I want to see that. Then that supports all the other things that we are about. Linkage of regulation with successful enforcement is a very key part for public education.

MS. RAINE: I appreciate that comment. The headquarters information, what is developed at headquarters obviously – and it was put together as a result of a meeting a couple of years ago now. Decisions were made at headquarters as to what information to put in for each case. If you want me to, I can suggest that maybe a little bit more information go in.

I don't know whether that will happen, but as I say we are starting to publish decisions on the website as well. I think the decisions probably go back to about 2010 or so, which obviously they will have more details. Not that many cases go to a hearing; but for those that do, the decisions will be there.

Also I should say that website also contains information on our penalty policy, and what penalties people might expect if we are going to charge them – if they are found to be in violation in our eyes and we propose a penalty. Of course, they always have a right to a hearing. There is more information than just the decisions or the charge of your settling documents.

MS. SAKAS: I would like to follow up on the discussion about stories. Stories are extremely powerful. Everybody loves a good story and that is one of the best vehicles for disseminating information is through a good story. Does anybody else have any further discussion?

MS. IVERSON: Another thing that one of the other outreach tools that we had talked about using in the past also is a Q&A, similar to what we have developed on the VMS, is developing more an FAQ, frequently asked questions, not a Q&A. We get questions at the state level, obviously, and in federal fisheries quite often.

We talked about this at the AP level before. There has been some hesitancy in developing an FAQ. I think since that time, especially with our Facebook page and some of the forums that are online, I know FWC has a forum in which they ask a law enforcement officer or ask enforcement platform where people can e-mail questions and they are answered.

With the regulation changes that are in place right now, we do our best as far as informing the public on those changes, but we continue to get calls on a regular basis on enforcement; what is required, what permits are required, what the crew and captain can keep and can't keep on a for-hire vessel that is dually permitted? I would like to entertain that again.

I don't have an example for you, but I can put something together. I believe the last time we met you had ask me to put something together, and I apologize for not having a specific example to use, but I will be glad to continue to work on that. I would like to get input on any concerns that the advisory panel has any support that you would see as an outreach tool for having an enforcement FAQ that could be updated or perhaps address these questions in another social media platform. I'm not sure what the answer is here.

As we move forward in developing and upgrading our website, I want to have it more interactive. Our blogs are going to allow for that; the Facebook page; certainly the Twitter accounts and things like that, but still there is something to be said for having an FAQ available. I know NOAA Fisheries uses it quite effectively on their website. I was thinking of moving forward to develop that and add that as part of a component for our upgrade to law enforcement information.

MR. BEATON: I have to somewhat caution against too much of a forum board. I don't know if you've gone to the Ask the Law on the Florida Sportsmen Forum Page. It ends up a lot of mudslinging and then people just attacking each other. It all starts from one person just innocently asking a legitimate question.

We also have a "Ask my FWC" link. The last count I had 620 questions that we provide answers to; anything from can I hunt coyote with an electric collar to what is the bag limit of fish here or there. Those questions have gotten to the point now where all the questions have been asked. It has gotten to the point where people ask a question, you respond and then it becomes, well, I understand that, but what about this and what about this.

Since you have been assigned to respond to that question, it becomes very time consuming. My recommendation to the division or to the agency has been we need to cut off – if the answer is not there, their question is too specific or too what about this, what about that, and it ends up being a back and forth, so sometimes phone calls are the easiest way to deal with those.

But it is a good quick reference, because a lot of our administrative staff are able instead of forwarding calls to somebody else, the answer is there. Then if somebody does a "what if" to an administrative person, well, then 80 percent of them might be satisfied with the answer that is given, and then you have eliminated transferring a call and you have satisfied a customer.

MS. IVERSON: Okay, we are way ahead of schedule at this point. I was anticipating a little bit more discussion, but that is okay because we'll all be together again tomorrow separately, but we can certainly follow up. I think Karen had mentioned that I had received a phone call a few weeks ago in regards to an upgrade to the NOAA OLE Website and how it was being used.

I was unable to get any additional information on that process or who is handling that. I did e-mail the webmaster at NOAA OLE and I didn't receive a response. If there is someone here or Karen can provide some input, I would appreciate it. I was interested, number one, because first of all I was very glad that they contacted the council. I understand that they are contacting the council outreach folks to get input on how we currently use that website, and what we would like to see changed and what works and what doesn't.

I'm always appreciative when I'm contacted, but I wanted to follow up and see if I could get some input and I really didn't. I don't have a whole lot to provide on the update for NOAA OLE Website improvements, but I do understand that there is something boiling or in the works to update that website and increase the user friendliness of it and the information that is available.

One of the things that I had noted when I was contacted was the ability to tell the story. There are good news stories out there. There are a lot of hard-working enforcement officers and field agents that are doing good things. I think the ability to get that story out in a way that is easy to read, and John pointed out, to tell that story in a way that enhances the profile of the agency, whether it be at the state level or the federal level is always helpful.

I use the newsletter as a tool, but certainly we can link to additional stories. That was one of the things that I had asked for. It is difficult for me as an outreach person to get the information in a timely manner and then disseminate it out without working with it through the hoops that you have to jump through to make sure that you have cleared all the steps.

I depend on NOAA OLE, and I depend on the states to provide the information. Sometimes I read about it in the Miami Herald or the Savannah Morning News. They have that latitude to get that information out. I work through the proper channels and wait for the agencies to report back, so sometimes there is a time lapse in there.

But even when there is a time lapse, there is still a good story. Even if it is six months later and that story hasn't been told or picked up by a newspaper, there is a lot of good information out there. I would hope that as that process continues – and believe me I know the painful process in doing a complete website upgrade, that they would take those comments into consideration. I really don't have a lot to report. I don't know if anybody else at the table has some information.

MR. CHESLER: Essentially the new webpage just rolled out like today. Essentially they are making the formatting more consistent with the rest of the fisheries formatting, but it is much better. I've looked at it; it has kind of a rotator of new stories. Also it is a really good place to go to find an up-to-date list of case results.

Generally speaking, if it is a criminal case, DOJ releases a press release. That gets sent to our headquarters and they post it up pretty quickly. Also there have been improvements internally within NOAA, I think, for our ability to get OLE stories also released or press releases. We recently had a case on somebody that was on a Discovery News Channel, or Discovery Channel show.

He got a nova, and they were able to get that news report or that press release out fairly quickly for that case. It also has a lot of different things; it talks about our priorities, compliance assistance. This is phase one and apparently there is a phase two, but I don't know what all is involved with that. But if you go to it, you will notice immediately it is a lot different than it was, and I would say the interface is a lot better.

MS. RAINE: Just to note we have two different websites, which is evident to anybody who looks at them.

MS. IVERSON: I'm sorry, Karen, I didn't catch that; you have two different websites?

MS. RAINE: Right; OLE has a website and the Office of General Counsel has a different website. They are different.

MS. SAKAS: With different stories, right? Did you have any other items on the agenda?

MS. IVERSON: Thank you, Rich, for the update, because I had not seen the new site, I'm glad to see that it is up and going. Perhaps there are some lessons that we can learn. Certainly, we will link to that and try to enhance the stories will be posted there. Glad to see Tracy on the cover.

We do have one more. Hopefully, this will solicit some discussion or I want to solicit some discussion and elicit some discussion and we will have some good open conversation. One of the things that we get calls about obviously from a regulatory standpoint is having field officers, whether it be at the state or the federal level, that are aware of regulations changes.

They happen a lot. I work with Lt. Fisher at the Fisheries Training Center in a Fisheries Managers Course. I have the privilege of going there once in a while and giving an overview about the fishery management process to these managers that are coming through the Fisheries Training Center.

I am always; I want to say overwhelmed, because I think that is true, but amazed at the amount of information that these Coast Guard officers are asked to understand and be able to convey as they go out on the water in force. Remember that fisheries are only one of their many, many duties.

They are given Ops Handbooks that are this big, literally several inches thick, and asked to learn all of this, and a lot of times those folks are coming in from the Pacific Northwest and have never seen a yellowtail snapper. They are asked to do a lot of things in a very limited amount of time and with limited resources, and the same for law enforcement across the board.

Myra and I were talking in having a two-way piece here together how to facilitate better communication at the state and at the federal level from the fisheries management offices to the law enforcement officers, the regulations, the resources that are currently available, what needs to be done to help improve those communications; so that if an officer, a law enforcement officer at the state or federal level is on the dock, that he has the resources and the capacity to know what changes have come in place, what modifications may have been made, what is opened, what is closed, where the Deepwater MPAs may be; if those configurations change, how they've changed.

We've talked about some of those tools this afternoon, but I would like to maybe have some open discussion in the time that is remaining, and we do have time to do that, for us from an outreach standpoint to better facilitate that communication.

MR. JOLLEY: Kim, is there any such thing as a hotline into the councils or the states where an officer can pick up a phone, make a phone call on a critical issue where you are dealing with something like this? Is that even a possibility to consider?

MS. IVERSON: Well, generally that would be me. I appreciate the suggestion, but we just don't have the manpower to handle it. I guess that falls to me or Amber as an outreach specialist when they contact the council office. Sometimes they've gone through other agencies or whatever trying to get the answer.

It doesn't mean that I don't have a good working relationship with our law enforcement folks out there, we do and we try to maintain that, but there just seems to be sometimes some disconnect between what maybe is disseminated to an office and getting it out to the field, getting the field officers informed. This exercise is not to point fingers.

I'm just dealing with the realities of what we are dealing with, the calls that Amber and I get, and the questions that Myra fields from a law enforcement standpoint. You guys know. I think it is evidence sometimes that there are a lot of changes and it is difficult to keep up with what actually is occurring out there.

As a Law Enforcement AP member and people that deal with this on a regular basis, we are soliciting your input and from our I&E AP members how do we take these suggestions – and we will talk more about this tomorrow – and implement some things that need to happen.

MR. BEATON: Don't feel bad, Kim, I can't even get my memos to the field.

LT. FISHER: Just to give a little peek under the hood there, those resources are available to our folks and they understand how to use them. We only get five days to make somebody into a fisheries boarding officer. Although we do our best, we can't expose them to every single regulation that is out there.

What we do is provide a new boarding officer with a thorough consistently laid out, as easy to understand as possible job aid that I'll have to bring in tomorrow now that Kim built it up so much. It is 697 pages; it is a beast. That is South Atlantic only; we have a separate one for the Caribbean. It's a large job aid.

On right inside the front cover on that is a list of all their NOAA special agents; there are resources for our partner agencies at the state level, as well as a 24-hour surf tech duty cell phone that we man; that myself and my instructors here are the resident subject matter experts on fisheries for the Coast Guard in the South Atlantic and the Caribbean.

We are always available to our guys 24/7; and then as you guys know, as Rich knows the NOAA special agents, we promote them to our students as the subject matter experts for their regions and encourage our guys to contact them if they have any question about what they are looking at. From what I know, they have had no hesitancy in doing so, because I hear from you guys all the time, too.

As far as contacting the council, I get questions all the time and my instructors do. It sort of flows uphill to me; and then if there is something, then I call Kim or Myra or someone about something that I've heard from several people that I'm finally reaching up to you guys to get an answer for, but it doesn't happen that often that it needs to go up that high. Thanks.

MR. LEWIS: One of the things that I see may be happening are a lot of these come out on Friday night late after the officers have gone and people have gone. If you don't have a way to forward it to your folks in the field, it gets missed a lot of times that way. Also the NOAA officers that we have, our folks have got them on speed dial and they have been great for us, to help us.

Now maybe if they come out earlier in the week or during regular business hours or something like that – and I know you get caught up trying to get a lot of things done. They get miffed a lot of times by that. I was forwarded one at eleven o'clock at night. I turned around and called him, "What in the world are you doing, doing this at this time of night?" He said, "Well I just got it; and if I don't do it, I will forget it."

MR. CHESLER: I think one of the things that is most valuable for us is having updated websites. That is probably the most critical thing, because I can tell you generally how it plays out. I forward out these Fishery Bulletins to pretty much all the officers and Coast Guard units that are in my area.

Then we actually go on to our Google Calendar and we mark when closures are and things like that so that we have some kind of ready access to the information. Typically what happens is I'll have my Smartphone in one hand as I'm looking up the ECFR or your site or the Southeast Regional Office website, and I'm talking to the officer with my other phone in the other hand.

Having easy access to correct information is probably the most critical. As far as improving it system-wide, obviously simpler regulations would be easier for everybody involved if we could manage that. It is hard to say, because the information does get disseminated, but it is hard to necessarily, when there is so much information as we've pointed out, kind of separating what the officer needs to know immediately versus the other stuff that is in the Fishery Bulletin.

I know unfortunately with some HMS, an example, probably the things that we need to know tend to get buried within the Fishery Bulletin so that we miss it completely. We never even see it, and then a fisherman asks us and we're like, oh, really. We have to go back and look in the regulations and find it there, which is probably not the time we should be finding that.

We should know that ahead of time. These are just some of the things that I've experienced in the field that could probably help us out. Absent of those informal distribution systems, having one location, perhaps, for a lot of the information might be helpful so that really it is a one-stop shop, so to speak, instead of having to go to the council website, go to the Southeast Regional Office Website, go to ECFR, and go to HMS. That is just one of the difficulties that we have in getting that information current and correct information out.

MS. SAKAS: Which website are you advocating as to be the go-to website?

MR. CHESLER: It is hard to advocate that, because there is really – well, obviously HMS is a NMFS function. That is the difficulty really is having that one-stop shop and also having the information be current. I know the Southeast Regional Office recently changed their website, and the information they used to have on there as far as closures and openings isn't necessarily the same format they had before.

Then your website doesn't necessarily have all – or the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council Website doesn't necessarily have all the opening and closures listed in one place either. That is one of the difficulties we have is that especially with the frequent quota closures and then seasonal closures, that it gets difficult to keep track of those specifically.

MS. SAKAS: Perhaps having links, having cross links between the websites.

MR. CHESLER: That might be a good place to start. I know at least in Florida the officers have the computers either in their vehicles or on their vessels. A lot of times that does solve the problem. They know where to go get the information, and then they are just calling me to advise me about the case. Maybe that would be the best solution is just have the one place with all the links to those specific things like the regulations themselves as far as size limits and then really the closures and information like that.

LT. FISHER: To speak to that, we've had that same sort of problem that Rich described. Our solution to it that we came up with when we rolled out the new job aid was – well, the basic problem was the same as he described in that we have units that are not signing up for fisheries bulletins.

Then when they do get them the, fisheries bulletins are sort of constructed in a way that they don't get to the point of the information. When you are on a pitching boat in the middle of a boarding, you need to be able to access it quickly. We just sort of process, us meaning me, I collect all those and roll them out into a new format that is called a Living Marine Resource Bulletin that has a status board of every regulated species.

If something is open or closed or changed, that is highlighted, and then we blast it out through our message traffic system that goes out to all the units we service. Then that has a place in the job aid up front that we tell them go into that first and take a look at it. The problem that we have is you've got almost 700 pages of relatively static regulations that don't change much, and then these ACL closures, this fast-moving stuff is hard to keep up with. That is when we try to cover it with the message traffic.

MR. RENDA: It is good that law enforcement has the most up-to-date information that is going on with closures and stuff, but we've got to get it out to the fishermen. Every fisherman I know has a VHF radio and they always listen to NOAA weather radio stations. Maybe two or three times a day, if they can get a little bit of air time, especially of a regulation that is coming due within a day or so, where guys who are fishing on a three- or four-day trip and don't have a computer or means of an iPad or something like that, at least they can get updates right from that and it is a NOAA weather station, and we're all under NOAA. There is no reason they can't give you a little air time, especially with events that are taking place within a three- or four-day span. Thank you.

MS. RAINE: I know that there are fishery announcements that go out on NOAA weather now.

MR. KELLEY: When we receive a notice, the first thing we do is get it to the officers to try to get it in the field. The problem is in the past officers have gone to try to get the word out about a closure and then the closure didn't come. You had information that was sent out; we had people

that stopped fishing for gags and stayed in and the season never closed. When you get the information out, we have to make sure that what we are getting is accurate.

MR. BEATON: Another thing to put on your VMS benefits checklist is if they have VMS, they can be messaged these closures if they are at sea.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: If I could jump in here, we need to watch that, because there is a cost associated with that. I know that is becoming a bigger and bigger problem as more and more people use that. Although that is something that can be used, OLE is footing the bill right now in some of the regions.

But as budgets shrink, they are going to be going back to the person or offices that are changing the regulations to get funding assistance, because every character that goes over the satellite has a cost. Although that is an ideal way to do it, we just have to think about the monetary side of it as well.

MS. SAKAS: That is a good part of the equation.

MR. BELL: Just from our state perspective, when an ACL hits we always get a phone call or something from St. Pete saying this is about to happen. Usually there is a little bit of time, but I always make sure I push that out to our coastal region captain as well as our JEA guy. From our perspective, how we operate, I mean we try to push information out to law enforcement.

We also encourage them to ask us even from the field if they have questions. It is another resource potentially available to you, depending on how your state operates. We certainly work that way. We are trying to keep up with this stuff in fisheries management the same way law enforcement is trying to keep up with it. We hope we have a handle on it at all times. Your individual state agencies may serve as another resource if you've got questions or something. I know that works pretty well for us.

MS. IVERSON: I just wanted to address a couple of things that came up. Doug, you had talked about the Fishery Bulletins and the timing on them. I have experienced that frustration myself at 4:15 on a Friday afternoon quite often. I don't have any control over that; I've expressed that. I realize that, but I have expressed that to the regional office that the Fishery Bulletins are wonderful tools, they really are, and I appreciate the time and effort that goes into formulating them.

They are picked up on a regular basis by a lot of people, but the timing sometimes is difficult to deal with. We try to get those out and forward those as quickly as possible. I know that the regional office tries to get the Fishery Bulletin posted on their website as quickly as possible. Sometimes there is a lag time from the time that the Fishery Bulletin is distributed, e-mailed out and then you go to the website and it is not posted.

But there is that lag time between what the regional office is putting out and then that web editor can bring those up. We've tried to deal with that and put them on the council's website as quickly as possible, too, but the timing on that I think is something – and I appreciate your comments and the discussion on that – maybe we can try to address that working closely with the

regional office to look at the timing on the Fishery Bulletins, because 4:15 on a Friday afternoon for a closure is a difficult thing. I can send you some fan mail that I get in response.

MR. LEWIS: I already get it. I know things happen like that, but it is just our officers are kind of like Florida. They do have the convenience of going to the website or the computers with them to get that information. A majority of the fishermen in this day and time, before they leave the dock, they check to see what they can and can't do for that day. They know if they go back tomorrow, they are going to have to check it again.

MS. SAKAS: I agree, timing is everything as is location. It seems to me that even puts more of a distrust in government when regulations are put out, not inaccessible, but at times when people aren't checking, so it just puts another element of distrust like we're trying to slip something in. I think putting that feedback back to the issuers that we do it at a more reasonable time would be good feedback.

MR. LEWIS: I don't think any of our – well, I know our officers are taking that into account when they run across somebody out there fishing. They may have something that closed the last day or two. They are not trying to make an example out of them, they are educating them, letting them know that it has closed.

It is not the fact that there are a lot of people being charged for these violations. They may be in other states, but not in Georgia. It is just that when they call the office, the first thing you have to do is go look to see what it says at that moment. The officer in the field at that time needs someplace to go to look it up so it will be there, and I think you all do a great job at it with what you have to work with, I really do.

MS. IVERSON: Thank you, Doug, I appreciate that. I do have a question. One of the things that as we were taking our iPads and our tablets and proudly showing off our developing application, I've been told that some of the field officers maybe have tablets, but they are limited in what they can access or they can't download applications, or they don't have access to that information. Is that the case; the boots on the ground people; do they have access to an application? Will they be able to use that?

MR. BEATON: In Florida we don't give officers phones. They do get a laptop, but that is not an application; that is just a webpage. It is a non-issue in Florida.

MS. IVERSON: The other states.

LT. FISHER: I can say the Coast Guard does not have any approved Smartphone or tablet technology and probably will not for at least another five to seven years. We tend to have a very, very slow process for catching up with new technology. We're actually still using HP PDAs, if you remember those things from like the land of 1997. We're still using those.

We actually are the only people I think that are keeping that division of HP in business in PDAs. Anyway, we're behind the times on that. With that said, I know that there are a number of units that have actually said that they are looking forward to that application coming out, if only for a reference that they would use on their personal Smartphones. But, unfortunately, it does limit our abilities. In my office I would love to put that big 600-page job aid into an application just

as a PDF and have them take it on a tablet just to cut down on the weight in the boarding bag, but we're not allowed to do that at this point.

MS. SAKAS: Do you still have bag phones?

LT. FISHER: We do actually with satellites; our sat phones are bag phones.

MR. KELLEY: It almost sounded like you were describing North Carolina with the bag phones, we are so far behind. Sergeants and above do have cell phones or Smartphones and they have capabilities to get the applications. The field personnel pretty well have their own phones, and most of those have their own applications that they carry. They pay for those themselves. They are currently looking at some tablets, but I don't know exactly what the procedures will be, if they will be able to get any applications on those or not yet.

MS. SAKAS: Okay, this is a really good discussion. I know you all have some more things you want to say. We've got plenty of time so please speak up.

MR. BEATON: I'm going back to the webpage, we do the hot sheet and you can sign up to receive it. It is very simple. It is just a monthly here is what is going on with saltwater fisheries in Florida this month, and it talks about changes and even some proposed changes. I haven't swam around the council site enough, but is there an opportunity to sign up and receive electronically the bulletins? There is?

MS. IVERSON: Yes, you can. We don't have a hot sheet like you are referring to, but you can go on and sign up for e-news and we forward all of the Southeast Regional Office Fishery Bulletins as well as any of our news releases, any meeting announcements. Any items of interest, we distribute through constant contact.

Everyone in the room should be on the e-mail list. You probably are and just didn't realize it, but you can go in through the homepage and sign up for e-news. I like that idea of kind of the hot sheet thing where we can discuss possible pending closures. I think Mel noted that the council members go back to their individual states; and if a quota looks like it is going to be met, not oftentimes do you have time to go to the NMFS Website and look at the quota monitoring table and see what percentage are there.

Sometimes that information has a lag time from the time that the information is posted and the closures occur. I will say that with the Fishery Bulletins and the very few times have you gotten an announcement that the fishery is closing at midnight on the same day; they work hard to give you a few days or give us a few days to get that information out to the fishermen in the field to give a heads up.

That having been said, still getting them on Friday afternoon and having to distribute them, and having you guys in turn to redistribute them and get fan mail, it is a difficult thing. I'm hoping that maybe we can come to some better solution for maybe putting those out. I know in working with the media – and this goes back to our AP members over on the other side of the table – there are times of the week when you want to push stories, you want to push information out there so that the newspapers – well, I say the newspapers; the news feeds will pick them up and put them out rather quickly. Friday afternoon at 4:15 is probably not one of those times. Suzi is

shaking her head, no. Again, if you have suggestions, please let us know. I appreciate the conversation.

MS. SAKAS: Okay, are you all talked out already? Well, this has been great input and we really appreciate everybody's perspectives.

DR. DEAN: When you do that, Kim, do those go to the websites of the fishing clubs, et cetera? Do they pick up on those routinely?

MS. IVERSON: We currently have about 1,600 contacts on our e-mail distribution list. They range from everyone at the table to news media feeds, fishing clubs, fishing forums, magazines, media. I think we have about 350 to 60 media contacts. Now what gets picked up and what makes the news is another thing from the Fishery Bulletin end of things.

DR. DEAN: Yes, I'm just thinking about how the social networks work and that those people that follow those forums often will accept whatever shows up on the forum as fact rather than go back to the website. It would seem important that we put that directly to them on Friday afternoon, because they will look at that before they go someplace.

MS. IVERSON: Some of the forums will pick it up. A lot of the sportfishing magazines have online forums, and they will pick that up. The first one that comes to mind since we are in Charleston is Charleston Fishing.com. Andy Pickett there is on our mailing list and so they will pick it up.

If it is something relevant to recreational fishing, they will put it up on their website fairly quickly. I don't mean to point them out and that there aren't others, there are. A lot of times we're dealing with closures that are specific to commercial fisheries. Those are more apt to open and close with the ACLs in place.

It is difficult to get the Miami Herald to pick up on a commercial fishing closure, but we try. We try to get that information out. Again, I think we've addressed several avenues in which that information becomes available, whether it is through NOAA weather radio and announcements and bulletins.

I wanted to end this afternoon on discussion on one of the things that we had an informal discussion over lunch and Amber suggested is maybe it may be helpful to compile a list of the tools that are currently available; what do we have right now; what is effective; what could be improved, and then what new technology, what new avenues that we could go and move forward in?

I just really felt extremely excited to have Amber on board and have an outreach specialist that can dedicate her time in working on this and having the expertise that sits here at the table, and you guys are awesome, because we contact you. You know I do. I mean, I get back in contact and we have an open dialogue on questions that maybe have. It is not always a one-way situation. I appreciate having the advantage of having the advisory panel members here and having you accessible after we leave this room.

I appreciate that, and Amber the same way. We'll be in contact. We'll be hounding you as we move through that process. But I'd like maybe some feedback on that approach as we move forward. Maybe it would be helpful if we could just – Amber and I can work together to outline those from what we've heard here; the open discussion, to outline those tools that we are aware of, because you guys live in a different world.

Everybody goes back to their jobs; everybody goes back to their agency position; from the outreach specialist to law enforcement. If we can outline those tools and then say this is what we have, and you say, oh, well, but wait. Pat may say I've got other things down here at the regional office you need to be aware of or we have this internal communication.

There is a lot of internal communication that we are not privy to. I think having the discussions this afternoon has been helpful, but that may be a good way to start. We can certainly do that and then send that out for your input.

LT. FISHER: Kim, I had a question about you guys do a lot of little print pamphlets, things like the Oculina Bank Pamphlets and things like that that we like to try and give out to our guys to further distribute. Right now the way that generally happens is they come to us and we know what geographic area they come from. Based on the stuff you give us, we try and hook them up with something that is appropriate for them. What is the future of those types of pamphlets? Are you moving away from print distributables and trying to leave everything online; just a question?

MS. IVERSON: We've had that discussion and it is a good question. We've had that discussion in the past. I'll use a newsletter as an example. We three-hole the newsletter. When you get it, it has three holes, and that is because fishermen a lot of times will put them in three-ring binders and they will put them on their boat.

They like to read them when they're going out, when they're moving offshore or whatever, and they like to bring them to public hearings and remind us of what has been said. That having been said, the Oculina Bank Brochure, it's a relatively inexpensive print job and I think we will continue to try to minimize the print cost and look at things that don't change every three to five months, but that are consistent, and be able to put those out in a print form.

We are, as we talked about earlier, moving away from the printed regulation brochures that are expensive and change and are outdated. Amber, when she worked with South Carolina Sea Grant, we worked together jointly to put out the MPA Brochure, which has nice color maps and coordinates and background information.

I think we will probably continue to update that brochure. We have it available at our application. But if there is a demand for it and it doesn't get outdated within such a quick period of time, I think we can continue to print those. I don't see us ever really going completely away from printed material.

We have constituents out there that are not tech savvy. I think of my parents. My dad fishes, he's 80 years old. He does not own a computer. There is a targeted audience and it is not age-specific either, but not everyone has that. There is an advantage to having this in your hand when you are offshore. I've had charter captains laminate these. I keep saying make sure they are updated, but they will print theirs on out.

I've had headboat operators tell me that they print them out and hand them to their customers as they get on board. Here, these are the regulations; you are responsible for making sure that you comply with them. There are certainly advantages to having hard copies, and I'm old enough that I like them still. Thank you for asking that question.

MS. vonKOLNITZ: I am curious on how the Twitter is going to work. I was one that swore I would never be on Twitter ever. I don't tweet anything; I just get my information that way. I find the older I get the less patience I have in reading through things. Definitely, the Fisheries Bulletins, I'm with you all; I get two sentences in and you've lost me.

I think that can be very valuable for a certain demographic. I know as a fisherman that is how I would – it would be really nice. As I'm lying in bed at night setting my alarm, I always check Twitter for any updates for the day. Having that available to me for that day, knowing if we're going out in the morning what I might need to be aware of, I think it will be an interesting experiment. I applaud you if you are going to be able to keep us straight.

MS. VON HARTEN: Yes, it is definitely going to be an undertaking to keep up with it. The I&E is going to hear more about this tomorrow at our separate meeting, but Kim and I went to a social media workshop that the Atlantic Coast Marine Fisheries Communications Group put on earlier in January.

That was kind of one of the things we walked away with was how great of a tool it could be. I think the fishery closures is one example. It would be just so easy. If it comes out at 4:15 on Friday and we don't have time to send it out via constant contact, we can send it out via tweet and then get back to the constant contact when we have time.

But also there are lots of different really neat applications that are being used with Twitter, like I know Florida Fish and Wildlife, they are doing like live tweeting events where they are taking questions from people as events happen, which has seemed to be a really innovative use of it. We're thinking, obviously during council meetings we can be tweeting updates of what is going on. We are already using our Facebook page to do that.

I think that is kind of what we are envisioning. Another thing we came up with was trying to do some kind of – I had said that it was going to be called Science Friday, but then we learned that Friday is not a good time to reach your constituents – having like an “ask the scientists” kind of event where people could tweet in questions and we could respond and things like that, so just trying to get, like Kim has said, just get more interactive and get our stakeholders more involved. We'll see how it goes. We'll let you know your Twitter handle.

MS. IVERSON: Yes; and to the point of the closures – and that keeps coming up as far as our need for communication – when we were on a conference call – Amber and I were on a conference call yesterday with a potential contractor to complete this upgrade and do the programming, there are so many calendars out there.

There are so many ways of communicating this, and I'm learning, but with Google and using Google Calendar and that type of thing as far as upcoming meetings and events, but as far as opening and closures, one thing that is very simple, and we talked about it and you will see it on the upgraded website, it's a table with the standard opening and closures.

These are vermilion snapper closes recreationally November 1 through April 1; those types of things so that you can see it month by month, a simple visual that is easy to print out and then have it so that there is a more interactive component to that same table where the openings and closures can be on there as they occur.

NOAA Fisheries does that on their website if you go to quota monitoring, ACLs and quota monitoring. It is in a table and they just added another column in that table that shows what is opened and closed. I think visually we can expand on that and improve on that and have something that is available.

There, again, we have to have it interactive because we can put the standard openings and closures on an annual basis, but as they occur we will do our best to have that, but that would be another resource. We've gotten input from our AP members in the past on having that as a resource in a simple table.

If you are going through and you are using your computers looking for things that you come across and say, hey, I went to this website and there is this awesome table here. It doesn't have to be fisheries related. It could be anything. If you see an example of something that you would like us to use or format or something that can be integrated with other social media platforms, we are in the learning stages and we are open to suggestions.

Just shoot us an e-mail with a link and say, hey, check this out, we like it, or I think this would work good for your fisheries openings and closures or any other components that you see that you like, because now is the time to do it. Of course, we will be updating the website and adding components, but I am learning a lot about restructuring sites and what you can and cannot do, and what has to be done on the platform when you move into a new CMS or content management system. We are limited in some way; but if you see things that you like, bells and whistles, we can add those later as funding allows and time allows.

MS. SAKAS: Okay, you all have provided a lot of good input and we expect more via e-mail to Kim and Amber, and Myra, too. Anyway, we thank you very much for your participation, and I know that the committees or the advisory panels are meeting separately tomorrow. I thought this was really an excellent way of communicating amongst the APs. I look forward to getting into our separate APs tomorrow, but look forward to more communications, cross-pollinating. That is what makes the system work. Thank you all very much and I hope you have a very pleasant evening.

(Whereupon, the Joint I&E and Law Enforcement AP meeting adjourned on February 6, 2013)

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