



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Charlie Phillips, Chair | Captain Mark Brown, Vice Chair
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA

Law Enforcement Committee

Bahia Mar Doubletree by Hilton

801 Seabreeze Boulevard

Fort Lauderdale, FL

Monday, June 11, 2018 – 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda – Mel Bell

Approval of June 2017 Committee minutes – Mel Bell

1. 2017 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year (CLOSED)
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b. **Committee action:** Develop recommendations for 2017 LEOY – Mel Bell

2. Law Enforcement Advisory Panel Summary Report (*Attachments 1a and 1b*) – Captain Bob Lynn, LE AP Chair
 - a. **Committee action:** Consider the LE AP’s recommendations and take action as necessary – Mel Bell

3. U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Priorities
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b. **Committee action:** Discuss and develop recommendations as appropriate – Mel Bell

Other Business – Mel Bell

Adjourn – Mel Bell

Committee Members

Mel Bell, Chair

Anna Beckwith, Vice-Chair

Zack Bowen

Mark Brown

Ben Hartig

LCDR Jeremy Montes

Attachments:**Attachment 1a:** LE AP Summary Report, April 2018**Attachment 1b:** LE AP Minutes April 2018**Staff:** Myra Brouwer

OVERVIEW

Law Enforcement Committee

The Committee will approve minutes from the June 2017 meeting and the agenda for the June 2018 Committee meeting.

1. 2017 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year (CLOSED)

Description: The Committee will review nominations for the 2017 Law Enforcement of the Year award. Nominees are submitted by agency representatives on the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel. The Committee will deliberate in closed session and recommend one nominee to receive the award during the September 2018 Council meeting to be held in Charleston, SC

Required Committee Action: Discuss nominations and recommend one deserving officer to receive the award.

2. Law Enforcement Advisory Panel (LE AP) Summary Report (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)

Description: The LE AP met in Charleston on April 18-19, 2018 and discussed several topics pertinent to enforcement of fisheries regulations in the South Atlantic region. Captain Bob Lynn (GA DNR), LE AP Chair, will deliver a summary of the discussions that took place and any recommendations offered by the LE AP.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and take actions as necessary.

3. U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Priorities

Description: Lieutenant JG Jerry Brown, USCG Sector Charleston, addressed the Snapper Grouper, Mackerel Cobia, and Law Enforcement Advisory Panels to request input on how the USCG can be more efficient regarding fisheries enforcement, particularly off South Carolina and Georgia.

The Snapper Grouper AP provided the following input:

- Penalties for violations are not severe enough.
- Concern over penalties directed at vessel owners vs. operators. Operators who commit violations are not being held accountable.
- Suggestion to improve USCG officers' knowledge of species identification, perhaps through development of a mobile application.
- There is perception that enforcement effort is focused primarily on the commercial sector
- Suggestion for the USCG to provide regular updates to APs, similar to how it is done for HMS meetings.
- There are issues in Florida with gear tampering (commercial gear being removed or tampered with by recreational anglers).

The Mackerel Cobia AP offered the following:

- Enforcement during tournaments can be frustrating. Anglers don't want to pull up lines for a 30-minute safety inspection after paying for a tournament.
- When targeting king mackerel, vessels often fish in a fleet of boats. An AP member suggested the USCG vessels sit inshore of the fleet and catch them as they are coming in as an alternative to sending small boats out for safety inspections.
- It would be helpful if the USCG was familiar with for-hire safety requirements, which are rarely monitored. Drug test cards are also rarely enforced, even when renewing your captain's license.
- Multiple AP members expressed concern about individuals that solicit people to fish with them through online forums and social media. These individuals often do not have the necessary for-hire permits and as a result don't have to abide by for-hire safety and harvest regulations. There needs to be a way to differentiate between a person who takes money to offset the cost of a trip (i.e. friends who chip in for gas) and a for-hire trip. It was suggested that this might be dockside enforceable and that social media could be a useful law enforcement tool.

Members of the LE AP had the following feedback:

- Increase that communication factor, possibly have organized task-force type meetings to share information and be better able to focus efforts and direct assets. NOAA OLE and state partners are willing to help coordinate.
- In North Carolina, law enforcement officers have been holding meetings with local USCG stations, and those meetings have been extremely helpful. The biggest challenge is keeping up with USCG personnel changes to keep the communication channels open.
- Suggest a joint detail in North Carolina just prior to grouper season opening. NOAA OLE has recently been sending enforcement officers along USCG cutters in the Florida Keys. The agency is adding a thirty-six-foot offshore boat (will be stationed in Charleston) that could go out to the MPAs. NOAA and the USCG could benefit from partnering on operations.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and take action as appropriate

Other Business