



**STATISTICS SPECIALIST WORKING GROUP
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
FOURTH REGULAR SESSION
11-22 August 2008
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea**

**SCIENTIFIC ISSUES
RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE AHTG [DATA]**

**WCPFC/SC4/ST-SWG/2008/IP06
30th July 2008**

Introduction

1. The Fourth Regular Session of the Commission (WCPFC4) held at Guam, USA in early December 2007 endorsed the recommendation of the Third Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC3) for continuation of the work of the Ad Hoc Task Group-Data (AHTG [Data]), particularly in relation to MCS data¹. The terms of reference for the AHTG [Data] are attached as attachment 1 and a timeline for its work is attached as attachment 2.

2. The immediate task of the AHTG [Data] is to develop separate rules and procedures for the protection of, access to and dissemination of non-public domain data for the purpose of compliance and enforcement activities on the high seas, as well as the dissemination of VMS data for scientific purposes².

Request for input from the ST-SWG

3. The AHTG [Data] held informal discussions on July 11, 2008 following the IWG-ROP2 meeting in Nadi, Fiji. At that meeting CCMs requested the Chair of the AHTG [Data], Ms. Holly Koehler (USA), to consult with the Chair of the Statistics Specialist Working Group (ST-SWG), Mr. Kim Duckworth (New Zealand), regarding receiving advice on the issue of releasing VMS data for scientific purposes. Accordingly, given the full agenda of the ST-SWG, the Chair intends to seek the advice of the ST-SWG participants on this issue under “Other business” during its meeting on August 15th at SC4.

¹ Paragraph 23 of the “Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission” states, “For the purpose of compliance and enforcement activities on the high seas, Non-Public Domain data will be made available subject to separate rules and procedures for the access and dissemination of such data, that the Commission will adopt for these purposes”.

² Paragraph 24 of the “Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission” states, “VMS data will be made available for scientific purposes, subject to the separate rules and procedures referred to in paragraph 23 above.”

Recommendation

4. Participants in the ST-SWG are invited to provide technical advice and input to the AHTG [Data], through the SC4, on the issue of releasing VMS data for scientific purposes.

The follow questions are offered to guide the discussions:

- (1) What specific kinds of VMS data are needed?
- (2) For what particular scientific purposes are these data needed?
- (3) At what time scale are data needed?

The following generalized categories may assist consideration of the use of VMS data for “scientific purposes”:

- Stock assessment research;
- Planning and executing tagging studies; and
- Modeling effort dynamics.



**Ad Hoc Task Group [Data]
[DRAFT] Terms of Reference**

1. The Ad Hoc Task Group [Data] (AHTG [Data]) will principally work electronically.
2. The AHTG [Data] may meet physically, from time to time, at a time and place to be agreed by the Commission. Such decisions may be made inter-sessionally in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Commission.
3. Physical meetings of the AHTG [Data] will normally be associated with sessions of the Commission, its subsidiary bodies or meetings of other bodies established by the Commission.
4. The tasks of the AHTG [Data] include, *inter alia*:
 - a. To provide the Commission with advice and recommendations in relation to, *inter alia*, the implementation of the Commission's *Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission*;
 - b. To liaise on data-related matters with other data-related initiatives of the Commission such as the Scientific Committee's Statistics Specialist Working Group, the VMS Technical Working Group (VMS TWG) and the Inter-sessional Working Group for the Regional Observer Programme (IWG-ROP);
 - c. As priority tasks for 2008:
 - i. draft rules and procedures for access to and dissemination of non-public domain data associated with compliance and enforcement activities on the high seas, for consideration and adoption by the Commission (as proposed at paragraph 23 of the *Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission*); and
 - ii. in consultation with the VMS TWG, ensure the rules and procedures developed in respect of paragraph 23 of the *Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission* include rules for making VMS data available for scientific purposes.
5. The Commission may revise the tasks listed above at paragraph 4 from time to time.
6. The AHTG [Data] will report on its work to the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

2008 Timeline for the Work of the AHTG [Data]

Date	Mode of operation	Activity
11 July	Physical meeting at Nadi, Fiji	Informal discussion of Draft Program of Work, proposed timeline, and key issues.
14 July – 1 August	Electronic discussion	Chair will consult with the Chair of the SC Statistics Specialist Working Group and the WCPFC Scientific Provider on the issue of releasing VMS data for scientific purposes.
11 August	Statistics Specialist Working Group meets at SC4 in Port Moresby	SWG experts will provide advice to the AHTG [Data] on the issue of VMS data for scientific purposes.
August	Electronic communication	Chair will circulate a first draft of the separate rules and procedures.
August –26 September	Electronic discussion	Consideration by CCMs of the first draft of the separate rules and procedures.
[30 Sept-1 Oct] ³	Physical meeting at Pohnpei, FSM in advance of or in association with TCC4.	Discuss draft rules and procedures as refined by electronic discussion group.
2-7 October	TCC4	Discussion, as needed.
13 October-7 December	Electronic discussion	Further refinement of draft separate rules and procedures.
8-12 December	WCPFC5	Presentation of draft separate rules and procedures to the Commission. ROPs adopted at WCPFC5.

³ The Executive Director will consult with the FFA and other CCMs, as well as the chairs of the IWG-ROP and the VMS-TWG, regarding scheduling a physical meeting of the AHTG [Data] in advance of the TCC4 Meeting.