



Scott Perkins, Chair
William Hanson, Vice Chair

May 19, 2015

Kathryn Sullivan, Ph.D.

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 6217
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Dr. Sullivan:

The Hydrographic Services Review Panel (HSRP) developed two recommendations resulting from our meeting in Long Beach, CA April 8-10, 2015:

1. Full utilization of hydrographic survey fleet
2. Precision Navigation

Each of these recommendations is discussed further below.

Additionally, we can report on outreach to and engagement of stakeholders, including that US Congressman Lowenthal, CA-47th District addressed the HSRP and discussed his recently introduced [H.R.1308, *Economy in Motion: The National Multimodal and Sustainable Freight Infrastructure Act*](#). During our Q&A with Rep. Lowenthal, the HSRP informed Rep. Lowenthal of the recent formation of the Coastal Community Caucus. We received communication on April 10 (day 3 for the HSRP meeting) that Rep. Lowenthal has now joined the Coastal Community Caucus.

We understand that progress has been made on formal agreements with USACE, although the MOA is not currently in place. The HSRP urges the timely completion of the MOA. We also heard about the progress on the pre-scripted mission assignments with FEMA and urge that NOAA continues to pursue agreements with other agencies.

A review of the existing HSRP Working Group was completed resulting in the DFO approving four (4) Working Groups going forward:

- Legislative & Policy
- Arctic Emerging Priorities
- Planning & Engagement
- Coastal Intelligence & Resilience

Purpose statements and the membership of each working group are provided separately in the Meeting Report.

Recommendation #1

Full utilization of NOAA hydrographic survey fleet

The HSRP is concerned that NOAA hydrographic ship time is not being effectively used. NOAA must make more effective use of current and future ship, launch, and personnel resources in order for Navigation Services to provide the foundation data for coastal intelligence and to fulfill its critical charting mission, particularly in the Arctic.

The actual time for hydrographic surveying on NOAA vessels has decreased steadily over the past decade because of fewer ships and sea days, lack of qualified crew, and/or ship problems. As a result in 2014, OCS was only able to deploy 58.6% of its allocated ship days and no surveying was done in the Arctic. The lack of ship time also means that new survey personnel are not getting adequate training and experience. The underutilization of NOAA hydrographic ship time places critical navigation missions at risk, jeopardizes future ship acquisition, and erodes long-term NOAA core hydrographic capabilities and expertise. The HSRP urges the Administrator's attention to continue to address the systemic issues preventing full utilization of allocated NOAA hydrographic ship days and welcomes any suggestion on how the panel may assist in this matter.

Recommendation #2

Precision Navigation

The HSRP was provided a presentation on the "Precision Navigation" prototype system for LA/LB harbors. Underpinned with shore-to-shore, high-resolution bathymetry, the development of this system demonstrates close collaboration across NOS offices, the NWS, Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System Regional Association (SCCOOS RA) and a public-private consortium of maritime interests and system developers. This system relies on real-time coastal intelligence supplied by CO-OPS and geospatial data provided by NGS that will greatly enhance the safe operation and economic resilience of the port, expanding the navigation window for larger, environmentally friendly vessels.

The high-resolution bathymetry and dynamic model development associated with this demonstration provides foundational data to support numerous coastal resilience concerns. Additionally, the architecture of the data model conforms with IHO S-100 standards to increase system portability and ease life cycle maintenance.

The HSRP fully supports the future enhancements of this system, as presented, and nationwide build-out. The panel has provided initial criteria on how NOS may prioritize future efforts.

On behalf of the HSRP members, we submit these two (2) new recommendations for your consideration and look forward to your response. Furthermore, I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these recommendations.

The HSRP has benefited from your participation in our meetings and look forward to meeting with you during our September 16-18, 2015 meeting in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Scott R. Perkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Scott R. Perkins, Chair
Hydrographic Services Review Panel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Hanson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

William Hanson, Vice-Chair
Hydrographic Services Review Panel