

**Summary Record
Hydrographic Services Review Panel
June 22, 2009
Public Meeting via Teleconference Call**

Introduction

A public teleconference of the Hydrographic Services Review Panel (Panel) was held on June 22, 2009. The meeting was scheduled to begin at 2:30 p.m. EDT, but due to efforts to identify and reduce echoes on the line, the meeting was called to order at approximately 2:53 p.m. EDT.

As stated in the Federal Register notice announcing the meeting (Vol. 74, No. 105, page 26654, published June 3, 2009), the primary purpose of the teleconference was to allow Panel members to deliberate and provide recommendations to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on the proposed revisions to the NOAA contracting policy for mapping and charting services. As stated in the Federal Register notice, public access to the meeting was via the meeting room in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Primary topics discussed in the meeting were:

1. Proposed revisions to draft NOAA contracting policy for mapping and charting
2. Report revisions

Meeting

Before the meeting started, the teleconference operator announced that the meeting was being recorded, and advised any participant with objections that they could withdraw from the conference at that time. At approximately 2:53 EDT, the meeting was opened by the Designated Federal Official, Captain Steve Barnum, who stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the mapping policy as well as other business. A roll call was done of the voting members, and then all other individuals introduced themselves. During the introductions and start of the meeting, another effort by the operator eliminated the continuing echo on the line.

Tom Skinner stated the approach he would like for the meeting, which was to first address the main topic for the meeting, and then later discuss the concerns with the format for the conference call as had been mentioned in the e-mail traffic. Tom Skinner indicated he would like Steve Barnum and Roger Parsons to explain the main issue of the meeting and what NOAA is looking for from the Panel, before seeing how the Panel members would like to proceed.

Contracting Policy Revisions

Roger Parsons started with some background information to explain why NOAA is putting forward proposed contract revisions.

NOAA is responding to a provision in the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act of 2009 (signed into law at the end of March), which states: "...continue developing a strategy for expanding contracting to minimize duplication and take advantage of non-governmental capabilities and fulfilling the administration's mapping and charting responsibility."

In 2005 there was similar language in a 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act; at that time Congress indicated that the directive applied strictly to Hydrographic Services. In response to the directive, NOAA reviewed the existing 1996 policy. The Panel provided input to that policy, and out of that input along with NOAA input came the existing Hydrographic Services contracting policy that was promulgated in August of 2006.

With the new 2009 directive, which is nearly identical to the language in 2005, NOAA has expanded the definition of mapping and charting to include ocean and coastal mapping.

Over the last three weeks, NOAA provided to the panel a copy of the 2006 contracting policy, a proposed revision (vetted through the mapping programs), and a one-page summary of the proposed changes that included about ten individual changes or revisions to the 2006 contracting policy. The intent of the revisions is to broaden the policy beyond Hydrographic Services to include other ocean and coastal mapping activities. There is little substantive change – primarily rewording to clarify the 2006 provisions, and reworking the language to make it more inclusive of ocean and coastal mapping. Roger Parsons also mentioned that he had provided some clarification to questions and concerns raised last week via e-mail.

Roger Parsons summed up his presentation by stating that NOAA is looking for discussion and input from the HSRP, deliberations on the proposed changes, and any additional changes the panel might recommend.

In response to the question if there was a timeframe driving the setting of the conference, Roger Parsons replied yes, the new legislation required a transmittal of the new contracting policy to Congress within 120 days. Therefore, NOAA was using the August 1 date as the target due date to Congress, which prompted the timing of the HSRP meeting.

RADM West suggested that if the August 1 due date was not established for a particular immediate follow-up need of Congress, that the contracting policy be discussed at the next HSRP meeting, and that NOAA should request an extension for the due date to allow the Panel more time on the issue. This motion was seconded by Larry Whiting.

In the following discussion, Ed Welch indicated that NOAA would need to communicate to Congress the need for an extended period. Jonathan Dasler proposed modifying the motion to also include having the discussion as an agenda item, and also having a venue for the Panel to interact with the mapping community. In addition, he asked Roger Parsons for clarification between the 2005 Federal Register notices and Panel input on the contracting policy and the current coastal and ocean mapping effort – how do they link and are they two separate things? Roger explained that the current efforts are separate from the series of contracting policy events that started in 2005 in response to language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act. At that time, NOAA generated a report to Congress giving some background information on Hydrographic

Services and also indicated that a revised contracting policy would be provided at a later date. In response to guidance from Congress, the efforts were focused on “Hydrographic Services”. NOAA engaged the HSRP in the revision of the 1996 policy, and the subsequent revised policy was published in the 2006 Federal Register. The current 2009 revision is a separate effort focused on the mapping and charting responsibility, which NOAA interprets to be broader than “Hydrographic Services”. Jon Dasler asked if the contracting at the Coastal Services Center would fall under the policy. Roger Parsons indicated that the CSC had reviewed the existing policy and that their contracting efforts would fall under the policy to the extent that they involve ocean and coastal mapping. Sherri Hickman wanted to know the likelihood of Congress granting an extension. Roger Parsons felt it was likely to be granted.

Tom Skinner called a vote on the motion, which passed; no members were opposed and no members abstained. The item will be on the agenda for the next meeting

Revised Report, Membership Applications, and Meeting Scheduling

Tom Skinner than brought up the issue of revising the report (the HSRP Most Wanted Report). Based on the e-mail discussions about revising the report charter and subsequent discussions with Ashley and Rebecca, it looked like the report was in generally good shape, with some needed revisions and updates. Tom Skinner asked the Panel for feedback on sticking with groups working on each chapter, but rather than trying to revise the whole report, having NOAA first go through the report to update statistics and figures, and have the Panel figure out which stakeholder presentations to highlight. Ed Welch was supportive of the approach, and no Panel members expressed concerns. Therefore, NOAA will send out an updated draft as a starting point for the Panel to revise.

Tom Skinner also announced that the time period for applications to the HSRP has been extended to July 24. Ed Welch asked for an update on level of response to date as well as the number of current members that are not eligible for renewal. NOAA indicated that about 10 applications had been received and confirmed with the relevant current members that five members are not eligible to renew, as they are in their second terms. There was some discussion of the question if members had not served two full four years terms (due to the staggered initial membership periods of 2, 3, and 4 years) if this had any impact on the eligibility. Rebecca Arenson will check and clarify this question.

Tom Skinner checked if NOAA would be discussing the funding for the next HSRP meeting; Steve Barnum indicated that the office directors would be finalizing the meeting budget and details immediately after the teleconference.

The last issue Tom Skinner brought up was the issue of the meeting approach – i.e. having a teleconference meeting with one point for physical access. Some of the issues with teleconferences were logistics, getting an accurate record, etc. Tom Skinner also indicated that one factor is to be more aware of which issues are and are not appropriate for teleconferences. Steve Barnum agreed with Tom Skinner, and mentioned that the changes NOAA made were in response to issues in the past, but that even with more structure in the approach, the panel still experienced challenges with the teleconference approach. NOAA will look at technology and

future approaches for meetings. Andrew McGovern suggested one approach is to state in the Federal Register notice the number of lines available, which are on a first come first served basis. Jon Dasler asked about the possibility of having a video teleconference through NOAA facilities such as at the Pacific Hydrographic branch. NOAA will also look into this approach. Andrew McGovern also suggested having the next meeting in Cleveland since most of the Great Lakes industry is based there.

Ed Welch asked about the status of the mapping and charting stimulus money – some publicity had mentioned that stimulus funding was slow in being spent, and one item mentioned was the mapping and charting money. Steve Barnum indicated that about four million dollars went out in procurement last week, and more will follow soon. Steve Barnum agreed to Ed Welch's request to provide an e-mail status report on the funding status before the next Panel meeting.

Sherri Hickman asked for clarification on the next meeting scheduling. Tom Skinner and NOAA staff indicated that the meeting would be taking place in September before the fiscal year ended, and that within the next couple of days there would be a decision on location and meeting time.

Rebecca Arenson asked Panel members to send in any comments on the June 8 teleconference summary.

Public Comments

Next, Tom Skinner provided an opportunity for public comments. C.J. Zane, representing Stabbert Maritime, thanked the Panel for the opportunity to participate in the meeting, and asked if there would be an extension of the time period for public comments on the contracting policy; if so, any comments he had would then be submitted later, rather than during the current meeting. Steve Barnum indicated that yes, this will be on the next meeting agenda, and there would again be an opportunity for public comments.

Final Business

Tom Skinner asked for any other business, and as there was none, Andrew McGovern made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Jon Dasler. Tom Skinner called a vote on the motion, which passed; no members were opposed and no members abstained.

Meeting Outcomes

1. The Panel postponed discussion of the revised contracting policy till the next [in person] Panel meeting.
2. Panel will revise Most Wanted Approach after NOAA updates basic data.

Actions:

1. NOAA to request an extension from Congress on a revised contracting policy.
2. NOAA to update the statistics and basic information in the Most Wanted report.
3. Panel to revise stakeholder and other information in the report.
4. Finalize fall meeting location and dates and place contracting policy on agenda.

5. NOAA to update Panel via e-mail on status of mapping and charting stimulus funding.
6. NOAA to examine options and possible approaches for holding teleconferences/remote meeting.
7. NOAA to check on length of eligibility of Panel membership for individuals who had initial appointments shorter than 4 years (during the initial staggered membership appointments).

Appendix A

Attendees

Voting HSRP Members

Tom Skinner, Chair	Senior Project manager, Durand & Anastas Environmental Strategies, Inc.
Edmund B. Welch, Deputy Chair	Independent Consultant for Maritime & Ocean Policy
Jonathan L. Dasler	Vice President, Director of Marine Services, David Evans and Associates., Inc.
Sherri L. Hickman	Pilot
Capt. Thomas Jacobsen	President. Jacobson Pilot Services, Inc.
R. Adam McBride	Port Director, Lake Charles and Terminal District
Ramón Torres Morales	Associate Professor, Interamerican University
Capt. Andrew McGovern	Pilot, Sandy Hook Pilots Association
Rear Admiral Richard D. West, U.S. Navy (Retired)	Past President, Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education
Larry Whiting	Hydrographer, TerraSond LLC (retired)

Non-voting HSRP Members

Andrew Armstrong	Co-director, NOAA/ University of New Hampshire Joint Hydrographic Center
Juliana Blackwell	Director, NOAA's National Geodetic Survey
Rich Edwing for Mike Szabados	Deputy Director, NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services

NOAA: Designated Federal Official (DFO) and Staff

Capt. Steven Barnum	Designated Federal Official
Rebecca Arenson	NOAA's Office of Coast Survey
Virginia Dentler	NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services
Jeff Ferguson	NOAA's Office of Coast Survey
Terence Lynch	NOAA's Office of Coast Survey

Roger Parsons	NOAA's Office of Coast Survey
Danielle Stuby	NOAA's National Geodetic Survey
Kathy Watson	NOAA's CO-OPS & Office of Coast Survey

Others/Public

Ken Fleming	Tenix LADS
David Maune	Dewberry
John Oswald	JOA Surveys
C.J. Zane	Blank Rome LLC, representing Stabbert Maritime