




Australian Government
Australian Fisheries Management Authority



Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery



**Joint SESSF Resource Assessment Group
(JOINT SESSF RAG)**

DRAFT MINUTES

CHAIR: DR TONY SMITH

27 JUNE 2008

AQUARIUM ROOM (AFMA)

LEVEL 6

73 NORTHBOURNE AVENUE

CIVIC ACT 2600

Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery Joint Resource Assessment Group (JOINT SESSF RAG)

Draft Minutes

27 June 2008

The meeting commenced at 8.30am

Chair Dr Tony Smith

Agenda Item 1 – Preliminaries

1.1 Welcome and Introductions/Apologies

The Chair welcomed members and observers to the meeting and informed members that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss common issues across ShelfRAG, SlopeRAG, SharkRAG and Deepwater RAG (which had all met over the previous two days), and consider the work required for the upcoming assessment period.

Apologies were received as per the noted apologies at the individual RAG meetings.

1.2 Declarations of Interest

The declarations of interest were received as per the noted declarations of interest at the individual RAG meetings.

Refer to individual RAG meeting minutes for declarations of interest.

1.3 Adoption of Agenda

The draft agenda was adopted. Most input for the agenda would come from the individual RAG meetings held on the 25th and 26th June 2008. The Chair invited members to propose any new agenda items. No items were raised.

Item 2 – Implications of the Commonwealth Harvest Strategy Policy

2.1 Tier 3 & Tier 4 Rules – Review and Target CPUE Levels

The Chair gave members a brief reminder of the reasons Tier 3 and Tier 4 were being reviewed. Discussions had taken place in each individual RAG about the new Tier 3 and Tier 4 Rules. The Chair hoped to gain in principle support for the proposed new Tier rules with the view to implementation for the upcoming TAC process, subject to further testing. The Chair requested that each individual RAG Chair provide the view of their RAG on the proposed new Tier Rules.

Tier 3:

Slope RAG: Dr Morison stated that Slope RAG members suggested a progressive transition to new rules. More than one Tier 3 rule option might be needed to meet the RAG needs. The current Tier 3 rule was never tested prior to implementation, which had led to problems, and



the RAG supported the current approach to formal testing using MSE methods. The RAG noted that testing so far had only been on 'flathead-like' species, and this should be extended. It was also suggested that the new control rules could be tested empirically on Tier 1 species where the results are already known, such as flathead. The testing should also consider minimum and maximum changes in TAC. Overall, Slope RAG generally supported the new Tier 3 Rules.

Shark RAG: Dr Prince stated that members were impressed with the new Tier 3 Rules and in the interim would like to move towards a new Tier 3.

Deepwater RAG: Dr Prince noted that while Tier 3 might not be useful for very long lived species, it may be useful for some deepwater species such as alfoncino.

Shelf RAG: Dr Knuckey stated that there was general support for the proposed changes to Tier 3. While there was support for the proposed form of the Tier rule itself, members were more cautious about the use of the non-equilibrium assessment to determine F as they felt the data requirements would be quite high. Dr Smith agreed that further testing of performance was required, but noted that the non-equilibrium assessment was a good alternative for assessments that don't rely on CPUE. Members noted that the number of years of data to be used in the assessment was important. Similar to comments from Slope RAG, Shelf RAG members felt that there may be a need to transition from RBCs under the old rule to those under the new. They also supported empirical tests against Tier 1 species.

In more general discussion, Dr Prince suggested that there may be a need to look into the age/depth relationship and any changes/shifts in the depths fished (or sampled!) in the fishery.

Tier 4:

Slope RAG: Slope RAG members supported the proposed standard approach to determining longer term targets. However they noted that some flexibility was needed to get to the standard.

With regard to rule 2, assessments for species like jackass morwong should consider the whole of the spatial area, instead of by the fishery area. Spatial structure needed to be considered when assessing stock catch and target limits. Shifts in targeting and catch levels between sectors also needed to be considered for species taken by more than one method.

With regard to rule 3, members supported replacement of C with C_{target} . Concerns were raised as to how catch rates could be determined where species are not being targeted or actively avoided (quota too expensive or unavailable to purchase). It was noted that this was a problem with any use of CPUE data in assessments. It was still thought better to use C_{target} instead of the average catch in these cases.

Members noted that there were a number of differences in the target information supplied in species summaries in the power point presentation compared to the paper circulated and requested that an updated paper be circulated to the RAG with the targets shown in the power point.

Dr Morison noted that Slope RAG members showed less support for the new Tier 4 Rules than for Tier 3. Targets and limits were supported, but only general support with concerns for process. The methods for determining targets needed to be looked at species by species. Dr Smith suggested that they be tested against known Tier 1 assessments. Members had concerns regarding shifts in the fishery, spatial changes and stock differences. Should species be assessed by stock for all of the fishery or by spatial area (Eg: East/West).



Shark RAG: Dr Prince stated that Tier 4 should work quite well for the assessments of sawshark and elephant fish once a data issue apparently associated with changing logbooks in the late 1990s was addressed. He also thought that considering the structural issues that needed to be addressed with the Tier 1 Gummy Shark assessment and the time that may take there may even be some utility in developing a Tier 4 decision rule for gummy shark.

Deepwater RAG: Dr Prince stated that the new Tier 4 appeared to give more favourable results and would assist with the relationship between Management and Industry. Members showed an intuitive level of support. Mr Moore asked how the discard factor would be applied across Tier levels and how would the method cope with a non-target TAC in CPUE. Dr Smith explained the proposed use of the discount factor to account for relative levels of uncertainty between Tiers, with the aim of achieving acceptable levels of risk for all Tiers. This idea will be investigated further using MSE testing. Dr Morison stated that there is a need to explore whether there are certain species where the assessment is not conservative. Members identified that a non-targeted CPUE was a real issue. Dr Smith agreed that CPUE may not be comparable over the entire time series and suggested to split targeted and non-targeted series, in order to use the data more effectively and give a better representation of the fleet. Dr Prince stated that there was a need to test performance for poorly known as well as well known species.

Shelf RAG: Dr Knuckey stated there needed to be a capacity to compare catch rates from previous years, prior to the species being a quota species and after becoming a quota species. Dr Knuckey asked if the first 10 years were the best data available, and he believed there was a need to assess species by species. He suggested that other indicators could be used for species where there was no targeting, such as royal red prawn, where industry was avoiding/choosing not to catch them. Any data filtering needs to ensure that there are no hidden problems in the data. Dr Smith agreed that the data needed to be looked at carefully. A form of precaution needed to be applied between Tiers as previously discussed.

Dr Morison asked how to recover a species if it is at its limit. Dr Prince stated that there is a need to think about putting some rules in place to avoid sudden changes while transitioning to the new process and to give some ability to see what happens with assessments and have rules to provide for a smooth transition. Dr Morison suggested that the new rules could be implemented over two years in a stepped approach.

The meeting discussed whether Tier 2 should be retained in the Harvest strategy framework (HSF). Dr Smith noted that a better way would be to apply agreed discount factors to Tier 1 assessments depending on uncertainty levels. This would be an improvement on altering reference points within the rules themselves.

Ms Gibson asked industry for their thoughts on the proposed new Tier Rules. Mr Drenkhahn stated that until the assessments are run, they couldn't really comment. Mr Moore stated that there is scepticism about the use of catch rates and standardisation. There needed to be clear messages/information on discount factors and why they were used. A plain English explanatory sentence was needed to explain discount factors for people new to assessments. Industry also believed that a plain English explanatory statement was needed in the introduction to assessments to explain what was done to the data.

Action Item 1 – RAG chairs – On-going

Provide plain English explanatory statement in the introduction to assessments and provide plain English sentence to explain use of discount factors between Tiers.

Ms Gibson clarified with members that they gave general consensus support that Tier 3 could be implemented, with Tier 4 requiring more testing to gain general support. Members



expressed greater support for Tier 3, but if Tier 4 is implemented, more consultation was needed on the effects to TACs, including consultation with the Commission.

Mr Moore stated the new Tier 4 gives industry more confidence than the previous Tier 4 as it avoids the ratchet effect. Dr Morison stated progress towards implementing Tier 4 was important, as delaying may cause more severe effects in the future. Each species needed to be considered on its individual merit. Dr Knuckey stated that he wanted to avoid disruption during the transition and believed that TACs were pretty good now, so it should be a smooth process if rules are put in place for the transition. The new process was just substituting information with other information that will be more useful for assessments.

Action Item 2 – SESSFRAG – August 08 meeting
SESSFRAG to consider results of the MSE and advise on the process forward. Provide a plain English explanation of the process to be followed.

2.2 Bmsy And Blim Estimates

The Chair explained the background to this item. The question was whether Tier 1 should be implemented using model estimates of targets and limits (e.g. B_{MSY}) instead of default values. The agenda paper provided by Dr Punt advised on using the default values unless the model estimates were known to be accurate.

Slope RAG: Dr Morison stated that members hadn't really looked at defaults but were happy to retain the current defaults.

Shark RAG: Dr Prince stated that this item should probably be looked at more closely at the SESSFRAG Chair level, as well as look at what is available elsewhere in other fisheries in the world. Several papers on this issue have been released.

Shelf RAG: Dr Knuckey stated that members don't have the capacity to judge; biologically 40% is a good place to be. Why do we accept some aspects of the model and not others? Dr Punt's paper explains this.

2.3 Interim B_{MSY} Targets

Dr Knuckey stated that he was unsure about implications with Dr Rayn's letter regarding transition from B_{MSY} to B_{MEY} . Dr Smith stated that his interpretation of the letter is a 20:40:40 recovery strategy, curtailed at F_{48} , not F_{40} .

Action Item 3 – SESSFRAG Chair– August 2008
Provide paper on SESSFRAG's interpretation of transition from B_{MSY} to B_{MEY} and send to AFMA, via the RAG Chairs.

Dr Knuckey stated that there was no capacity in the RAGs to talk about B_{MEY} . RAGs understand where a stock should be from a biological stance, but need better economic input. Dr Haddon agreed that, given their current expertise, the RAGs are not the best place to discuss B_{MEY} , but understands that it is in AFMA's legislation and policies.

Dr Prince stated that progress on the economic efficiency issue could still be made without complicated analysis of MEY. In the gummy shark fishery there is a relatively simple relationship between catch rates and effort and historical data indicate that current catches could be take a double current catch rates and the TAC was set in 2002 at a level that can be caught quite easily, specifically with the aim of increasing catch rates over time and this is now happening. The data show daily catch rates are rising and the number of vessel days



and vessel numbers are declining. Operators are buying up the quota and the quota is being caught in fewer days for lower total costs. The declining effort levels are thought to also be reducing the level of incidentally caught species like school shark. Dr Prince said it was his observation that the dynamic observed in gummy shark where catches remain stable over a wide range of fishing effort levels also applies to a number of species taken in the market fishery of the trawl sector, and that this helped explain some of the short term response in catch rates being experienced in that fishery following the recent buy-out. He said assessment and management should work to constrain effort at the low levels left by the buy-out with the simple aim of driving catch rates and profitability up to higher levels. He asked whether David Galeano would be able to annually update the summary he was presenting to this meeting as he thought that broad analysis would provide a useful input in continuing to discuss these broader multi-species issues of fleet efficiency and tracking the performance of the various sectors over time.

Action Item 4 – AFMA Beth Gibson – August 2008
Look at capacity for David Galeano to assist RAGs on economic issues.

Action Item 5 – AFMA David Galeano – On-going
Continue to provide RAGs with updates to the paper on the effects of the buy-out to the SESSF, to show if indicators change or the fishery changes.

Dr Knuckey stated that it was important to ensure that BRS is in line with decisions made including agreed harvest control rules. Dr Morison stated that as long as fishing was between F_{40} and F_{48} , it is not overfishing.

Item 3 – General Issues

3.1 Data Review Issues

The Chair requested that each individual RAG Chair provide their RAG's views on this item.

Slope RAG: Dr Morison stated that data were still required for grenadier, ling, blue warehou and silver warehou. He noted that there was an inconsistency between the 1 page report provided by the Observer Section and the full catch standardisation reports provided by Dr Haddon. The values in the standardisation papers needed to be updated.

Shark RAG: Dr Prince stated that with Terry Walker unavailable, SharkRAG was finding the transition into a future less reliant on Terry Walker rather difficult. The ideal is a one-stop shop where all information is available. Previously SharkRAG had a system that had worked reasonably well over many years, but that no longer seems to be the case.

Dr Smith stated that data inputs are from many and varied sources including MAFRI, CAF and the States, and we need a centralised system to store all the data. Dr Klaer stated that there is a project to centralise data, with a plan in place, but the plan does not include shark data at this stage. Shark data are different in several respects and do not easily fit into the current system. This issue is currently being addressed, although the longer term solutions are still unclear. Once a staff member (like Terry Walker) leaves, it is difficult to recover due to the loss of specific corporate knowledge.



3.2 Timetable for Assessments

Members agreed with the 2008/09 stock assessment timetable proposed in the AFMA paper. Shelf RAG advised that they require an additional meeting once the data are available to discuss CPUE targets. They would also look at the preliminary Tier 3 results with MSE.

3.3 Stock Rebuilding Strategies

Dr Knuckey asked about the process for a recovered stock to come out of a stock rebuilding strategy. An agreed process is needed. Ms Gibson advised members that AFMA has approached DEWHA regarding 'delisting' a species from conservation dependent, and DEWHA stated that there was no process available. Stock rebuilding strategies are required under the Commonwealth harvest strategy policy, but at what point/when do we consider that we don't need the stock building strategy any longer?

Action Item 6 – SESSFRAG – Meeting August 2008
Provide input into the process that could be followed for species to come out of listing (Eg: conservation dependent) that were subject to a stock rebuilding strategy (Stocks now rebuilt).

Dr Smith noted that the harvest strategy policy refers to the potential listing of species that are below the biomass limit. This policy however only applies to retained target species, not bycatch species. He also noted that just because a species falls below the limit in one year should not automatically trigger a listing or stock recovery process. Dr Prince said that a new policy was needed for weak-link species (bycatch species) to state what level is acceptable for these species, especially where B_{20} isn't possible/viable as a limit. Ms Gibson stated that Harrison's dogfish was a real issue. There is a need to formulate a process and policy on how to deal with this issue.

3.4 Incorporating Industry Information

Members expressed support for incorporating up-to-date industry information into TAC setting. RAGs need to formulate rules on how this can be achieved. Dr Knuckey suggested that rules applied to catch rates in determining RBCs, could also be used to modify RBCs on latest information. Dr Morison said that this needs further investigation, especially due to the transition already taking place and agreed that testing needs to be completed using a rule based approach. Examples are needed of how the updated information could be added and testing carried out on the implication to assessments. Decisions are needed on what process would be used. This could be investigated further in the MSE project.

3.5 Impact of the Buyout

David Galeano presented a discussion paper to members on: 'Impact of the *Securing our Fishing Future* Buyout'.

Overall the buyout appears to have had a positive effect for the Commonwealth Trawl Sector (CTS) with very little change for the Gillnet, Hook and Trap (GHAT) fisheries. Results were not considered to be conclusive as there are many factors that need to be taken into account. Given the relatively short time frame since the buyout and that a range of factors such as environmental and market conditions can have a significant impact on indicators, care must be taken in attributing the results discussed in the paper entirely to the buyback.

The Chair noted that the average catch per boat day had increased, but the average catch per trawl hour had not increased. Mr Galeano said that landings by port for the CTS were not included in the paper due to concerns about privacy of information and confidentiality issues.



Only broker data were used for quota prices, but prices for quota had generally improved. There was a notable increase since the buy-out.

Discussion centred on whether this kind of aggregate information could be used for bio-economic analyses in the fishery. Mr Galeano noted that it is not possible to have a bio-economic model for all species, and that possibly we can only move in the direction of B_{MEY} , as the cost to fully assess B_{MEY} may not be cost effective. It was noted that Dr Kompas's bio-economic model of the CTS was heading towards a multi-species model.

Dr Prince asked Mr Galeano if he had the capacity to continue the discussion paper that he had prepared for members, perhaps as an annual report to RAGs. Mr Galeano said that he already had to provide a less detailed 3 monthly report for the Board/Commission, so he could add the extra details to these reports for the RAGs. He stated that a current project was looking at what data could be needed for economic analyses, including collecting sample data that will assist with CPUE, but also provide economic data.

3.6 FIS and Incorporating Biomass Estimates in SESSF Assessment Models

Dr Knuckey discussed how to bring FIS information into assessments. Based on experience in the GAB, two issues are the timing to bring in the new time series and what weight should be given to the FIS information relative to other indices of abundance.

Action Item 7 – SESSF RAG – Meeting August 2008
Consider experience of GABRAG in incorporating FIS data into assessments.

Item 4 – Stock Assessments

4.1 Nominate Priority Species

The Chair asked the RAG chairs to provide the RAG views on this item.

Slope RAG:

- Pink ling and blue grenadier: updated Tier 1 assessments
- Silver warehou: use most recent Tier 1 assessment to make projections on RBC.
- Blue warehou: The possibility of an updated Tier 1 assessment is being looked at by Dr Punt. This species has proved difficult to assess in the past. It was noted that a stock rebuilding strategy is due 31 December 2008.
- Western gemfish: a Tier 1 assessment is in progress by Dr Barnes at BRS.

Shark RAG:

- School shark for Tier 1 assessment.

Deepwater RAG:

- Cascade orange roughy was a possibility for an updated Tier 1 assessment, but only if the time series of surveys was to be considered rather than the year with the highest value.

Shelf RAG:

- Morwong, school whiting and eastern gemfish for a Tier 1 assessment.
- Flathead requires an update (projection).



GABRAG:

- No assessments for Tier 1 this year.

4.2 Nominate Species Suitable for 3 Year TACs

The Chair asked the RAG chairs to provide the RAG views on this item.

Shelf RAG: John dory is currently subject to a 3 year management strategy. Members wanted to wait until the new Tier 3 and Tier 4 Rules were implemented before implementing multi-year TACs. John dory is the only species definitely considered suitable at this stage. Morwong and whiting are thought to be unsuitable.

Shark RAG: Members considered gummy shark was suitable for a multi-year TAC and believe in the long-term all species would be suitable as all species are long-lived. Currently there are discussions underway with DEHWA on possible school shark listing. Members believe that this year is not the right time to look into implementing multi-year TACs. No suggestions for this year.

DeepRAG: Members considered that in time all or most of the DeepRAG species could become multi-year TACs, however in the short term there were issues that needed addressing for each one before the RAG would be comfortable recommending a three year TAC.

Slope RAG: Silver warehou was considered as a possibility for multi-year TACs. Grenadier may be suitable in the future, depending on ongoing recruitment variability. Members want to wait until the new Tier 3 and Tier 4 Rules are applied and see the results of the assessment first, prior to nominating other species.

4.3 Process to Be Followed for Unchanged TACs

The Chair invited members' comments on the agenda paper provided for this item.

Shark RAG: Members thought that this was a commonsense approach to the issue, even though this is not really an issue for Shark RAG.

Shelf RAG and Slope RAG endorsed the paper and agreed that there needed to be preset agreed decision rules for multi-year TACs.

4.4 Process on Approaches for Use of Zeroes in CPUE Analyses

The Chair invited members' comments on this item.

Shark RAG: Dr Prince stated that this can be an issue in Tier 4 assessments and the use of zeros was already a standard in Shark RAG.

Dr Haddon is already looking at inclusion of zeros as a sensitivity analysis in CPUE standardizations for a range of Shelf and Slope species. Several projects are underway to identify suitable methods, including in BRS and CSIRO

Item 5 – Companion Species

5.1 Companion Species

Dr Klaer gave a power point presentation on this item, and provided a discussion paper.

When managing a primary species, the paper looked at what other species needed to be considered. This involved looking at how many species needed to be added together to get 50% of the catch. The paper discussed the species that were targeted and what species were



caught with it (bycatch), noting that the results were not necessarily reciprocal. A variety of information was considered in order to ascertain the targeted species including, what fish was of the highest value, the area and depth in which it was caught and the month and time of day it was caught, noting it is difficult to assess the actual target in a multi-species fishery.

Dr Prince stated that this information could be used to assess the catch of bycatch species and assess if the set TAC was working. Dr Morison said the information would be useful in monitoring changes in catch composition, which could assist in showing how effectively new gear modifications were working. Dr Knuckey noted that Dr Klaer's report showed that approximately 7-8% of the logbook information collected was invalid due to bad recording.

Dr Klaer gave another power point presentation on modelling, previously presented at an industry workshop to attempt to improve understanding of stock assessments by industry. It was agreed that this would help RAG members do their work better.

Item 6 – ISMP

6.1 Final ISMP Report 2007

Due to the problems at PIRVic, the AFMA Observer Section had been asked to produce the 2007 ISMP Report, in the same format as the last PIRVic report. Garry Collins and Mitchell Zischke attended the meeting for the Observer Section, with Mr Collins giving members a verbal brief.

He informed members that AFMA had received the 2006 ISMP Report from PIRVic late last month, but it had only recently been given to the Observer Section. No-one in the RAGs to date has seen the 2006 ISMP Report which provides useful information for assessments. Mr Zischke is in the process of looking at the 2006 ISMP Report and has made a start on the 2007 ISMP Report which was a contractual requirement of PIRVic. Mr Collins stated that he wanted a review of the whole process including who would complete the annual reports in the future.

Mr Collins informed members that AFMA Management is in the process of contacting PIRVic to see if AFMA can have a copy of the spreadsheets they used. This would hopefully assist in the reports being more easily produced. Without PIRVic's spreadsheets, new templates would need to be designed. Mr Collins asked members if they needed any changes to the original reports. Slope RAG advised that there were problems with the length frequency data in the Slope assessments.

Action Item 8 – AFMA Garry Collins and CSIRO Neil Klaer – On-going
Garry liaise with Neil on progress of the 2007 ISMP Report and data requirements for assessments.

Members stated that data were a much more important issue than the report. Assessments need the data, not the report. There are issues with the shark data for Shark RAG. The reports are however useful for other reasons.

Calculations of discards are an issue for assessments, there is a need to contact PIRVic to ascertain how this was completed.

Action Item 9 – CSIRO Neil Klaer – August 2008
Neil to contact PIRVic to ascertain how the calculations of discards were completed for assessments.



Members identified a number of issues that need to be addressed in the ISMP monthly reports including;

- ISMP protocols for collection – separate age frequency
- Use of FAO codes, would prefer CAAB codes in reports.
- Check data for whole of fishery. GAB data for survey and ISMP currently identical.
- Reports should show more spatial resolution (Eg: orange roughly has several management zones).
- Different scales used for length frequency in Slope RAG reports. Need to be the same scale.
- Are basket quotas being reported by species type? Eg: Deepwater shark – basket: three main species.
- Need spatial structure in deepwater shark assessments.
- GAB needs to be split into the original 4 sectors/zones, reports are shown in 3 sectors/zones.
- Amend ISMP data requirements as identified by each individual RAG. (Eg: Slope RAG concerned about number of species including blue eye trevalla, grenadier spawning and non-spawning and ribaldo)
- Increase level of information in monthly reports to include where catch was sampled, whether at sea or at port, by quarter, by species, by area. This information is needed to assess whether there are ongoing problems in achieving representative sampling.
- Look at distribution of catch and target the ports that receive the most catch.

Action Item 10 – AFMA Garry Collins and Beth Gibson – end 2008 Garry and Beth to liaise on issues identified by RAG members in the ISMP Reports
--

Mr Collins informed members that the new ISMP process will not be implemented until the ISMP review is completed and signed off, which will not be completed in this year.

Dr Prince requested that his views on this subject be recorded in the minutes. He stated that AFMA had previously asked the RAGs for their advice in regards to the ISMP program being taken over by AFMA. The RAGs did not recommend that the program should be taken over by AFMA partly due to the fact that AFMA acts in an enforcement role, so therefore would not be easily accepted by industry in the ISMP role. Now the program has problems, which the RAGs anticipated would happen. The RAGs advice about the earlier change in the program was ignored and now advice was sought from the RAGs on the reduction in days that samples will be collected by observers.

The ISMP was designed to collect certain CVs on discard rates. It is not believed that a reasonable level of discard information will be acquired with the current days allowed. The information may also be less reliable.

Mr Collins stated that there is still a problem getting access to some vessels. During the review they will look at the implications of being unable to get onto vessels. If the days are cut, the data that AFMA will provide may need to change. Members stated that there is a need to look at where the main distribution of catch is and target those ports to collect data. The reduction in sampling at Eden is a major problem. GAB needs to have the original 70 days of coverage. There is a need to preserve or increase coverage in the major ports and if necessary allow the smaller ports to lose coverage. Targeting the larger ports, like Eden, will help to achieve the most representative sampling.



6.2 Review Of Interim ISMP Targets

RAG members discussed this item and gave the following comments. RAG members did not endorse the amended (interim) otolith and length frequency reductions and would prefer the old targets. With respect to the reduction in the number of seadays conducted by AFMA observers, it was pointed out that the original ISMP sea day targets were a result of a robust statistical analysis of the variation in discard rates in the different regions of the fishery. The number of seadays was determined to ensure that set CVs for discarding were achieved especially for species/regions where high discarding occurred. The fact that the fleet may have reduced in size as a result of the buyout does not imply that the at sea sampling program can be reduced proportionately with the expectation that the sampling program will still maintain these CVs. Doing so is likely to jeopardise the quality of the discard data obtained by observers.

Members stated that the review needed to look at the purposes of the program as the program requirements and objectives have changed. The program also needed to take into account information that was being collected through other programs. Resources are available via the RAGs, MACs, and Commission etc.

The review needs to include specific terms of references and parameters and be run by people who are suitably qualified. Once the program is designed by the ISMP Review Committee the statistical design work would be put out for tender. There was also consideration for a Consultant, but members were unsure how this could be funded. Members were advised that there are some funds built into the ISMP program for reviews.

Members discussed who they would like to have on the ISMP Review Committee. Initial suggestions included the SESSF RAG Chairs, a CAF member, Assessment Scientists, an Industry member and an AFMA Environment member. Members believed that having such a large group would cause difficulties in getting everyone together. Subsequently, members stated that as long as the SESSF RAG Chairs had opportunity for input into the process, they did not all have to be a part of the committee.

Members proposed the following membership for the ISMP Review Committee:

Ian Knuckey, Garry Collins, Beth Gibson, one stock assessment scientist (likely Neil Klaer), Dave Johnson from environment as needed, with Garry providing secretariat support.

6.3 Terry Walker's ISMP Analysis

This item was for information only but should be considered by RAGs for CPUE time series for certain species. Terry Walker's reports are available on the website.

Item 7 – Other Business

7.1 BRS 'Uncertain Species Project' and How It Will Interact With SESSF RAGs

This item was covered in the individual RAG meeting held in Canberra on 25th and 26th June 2008.

No further business was raised.

Item 8 – Next Meeting

As per individual RAG requirements, outlined in individual RAG meeting minutes.



Member would consider another Joint SESSF RAG meeting next year to collaborate on issues common to all of the RAGs. It was generally felt that the joint meeting format had been a success.

Item 9 – Close

The meeting closed at 2.55pm.

PARTICIPANTS AT JOINT SESSF RAG – 27 JUNE 2008

Chairman

Tony Smith (CSIRO)

SlopeRAG Members

Sandy Morison (BRS)

Malcolm Haddon (TAFI)

John Jarvis (Industry)

Steve Auld (AFMA)

Geoff Tuck (CSIRO)

Bruce Taylor (Fisheries Victoria)

Will Mure (Industry)

Susan Osborn (AFMA/EO)

ShelfRAG Members

Ian Knuckey (Fishwell Consulting)

Rich Little (CSIRO)

John Jarvis (Industry)

Steve Auld (AFMA)

Neil Klaer (CSIRO)

Sandy Morison (BRS)

Wayne Cheers (Industry)

Josh Davis (AFMA/EO)

SharkRAG Members

Jeremy Prince (Biospherics)

Craig Hariss (Industry)

Phil Domaschenz (AFMA)

Robin Thomson (CSIRO)

Mr Wayne Cheers (Industry)

Sally Weekes (AFMA/EO)

Deepwater RAG Members

Jeremy Prince (Biospherics)

Kevin McLoughlin (BRS) for Sandy Morison

Darci Wallis (AFMA/EO)

Angus Nichols (Industry)

Beth Gibson (AFMA)

Observers

Fritz Drenkhahn (SETFIA)

Kyne Krusic-Golub (Fisheries Victoria)

Kevin Rowling (NSW Fisheries)

Sally Wayte (CSIRO)

Jim Collins (Industry)

Garry Collins (AFMA)

Chelsea Buckley (AFMA)

Emma Lawrence (BRS)

Andrew Sampaklis (BRS)

Belinda Barnes (BRS)

Jeff Moore (GABIA)

David Galeano (AFMA)

Mitchell Zischke (AFMA)

Joint SESSF RAG Executive Officer

Susan Osborn (AFMA)



Apologies

Terry Walker (MAFFRI)

Rudy Kloser (CSIRO)

Jim Raptis (Industry)

Mr Tony Lavalle (Industry)

Kyriakos Toumazos (Industry)

Rory Macauley (WA Fisheries)

Les Scott (Industry)

Peter Riseley (Industry)

Mr Rocco Musumeci (Industry)

Semi Skoljarev (Industry)

Actions Arising from Joint SESSF RAG - 27 June 2008

Action Item	Action Person	Timeframe
1. Provide plain English explanatory statement in the introduction to assessments and provide plain English sentence to explain use of discount factors between tiers.	RAG Chairs	On-going
2. SESSFRAG to consider results of MSE and advise on the process forward. Provide a plain English explanation of the process to be followed.	SESSFRAG	August 08 meeting
3. Provide paper on SESSFRAGs interpretation of transition from B_{MSY} to B_{MEY} and send to AFMA, via the RAG Chairs.	SESSFRAG Chair / Tony Smith	August 08
4. Look at capacity for David Galeano to assist RAGS on economic issues.	Beth Gibson (AFMA)	August 08
5. Continue to provide RAGs with updates on the effects of the buy-out to the SESSF, to show if indicators change or the fishery changes.	David Galeano (AFMA)	On-going
6. Provide input into the process that could be followed for species to come out of listing (Eg: conservation dependent) that were subject to a stock rebuilding strategy (Stocks now rebuilt).	SESSFRAG	August 08 meeting
7. Consider experience of GABRAG in incorporating FIS data into assessments.	SESSFRAG	August 08 meeting
8. Garry to liaise with Neil on progress of the 2007 ISMP Report and data requirements for assessments.	Garry Collins (AFMA) and Neil Klaer (CSIRO)	On-going
9. Neil to contact PIRVic to ascertain how the calculations of discards were completed for assessments.	Neil Klaer (CSIRO)	August 08
10. Garry and Beth to liaise on issues identified by RAG members in the ISMP Reports.	Garry Collins and Beth Gibson (AFMA)	End 2008

