

# **RSA Program Review Update**

**Dr. Michael Sissenwine  
RSA Review Panel Chair**

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# RSA Review Panel

Dr. Michael Sissenwine, Chair (NEFMC)

Ms. Deirdre Boelke (NEFMC)

Mr. Ryan Silva (GARFO)

Ms. Susan Olsen (GARFO)

Ms. Cheryl Corbett (NEFSC)

Dr. Dan Hennan (NEFSC)

Dr. Brandon Muffley

(MAFMC, Representative/Observer)

# RSA Program Review Timeline

Milestones	Target Dates
NEFMC adopts review priority	September 2017
ExComm issues Guidance	February 2018
Develop work plan and outline	March-April
Input from Committees	May-June
Report Drafting (except recommendations)	June-December
On Line Survey	August-September
Interviews	October-November
Drafting of findings and recommendations	November 28-29
Report drafting, consultations (e.g., legal)	<del>December-January</del> Jan-Mar
Final report	<del>Jan 2019</del> April 2019

- *F1. RSA highly successful, especially Scallops.*
- *F2. However, there are concerns about some aspects of the Programs.*
- *F3. The role of RSA is unspecified: what is, or is not, appropriate for support by RSA?*
- *F4. Sea scallop surveys lack an overall design- they are very useful, but we can do better.*
- *F5. There is substantial administrative workload.*
- *F6. RSA may no longer be viable for some species, but may be viable for other species in the future.*

# Draft Recommendations (i.e., Suggestions)

- *R1. Be careful not to “screw up a good thing”*
- *R2. Several ideas for improving RSA programs*
- *R3. Clarify the Role of RSA: Adopt a Mission Statement for RSA.*
- *R4. Consider a series of options for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of scallop surveys.*
- *R5. Consider creating an Omnibus FMP for RSA that would be available for all fisheries.*

# REPORT STATUS

- **Most of the background information appropriate for a review report has been drafted; more work needed.**
- **Substance of Findings and Recommendations (F&R) agreed by entire review panel at face to face meeting.**
- **Current draft elaborating on F&R is about 30 pages—lots of ideas ranging from fine tuning to “big!”**
- **NMFS members of review panel provided input to elaboration of ten concerns addressed by F&R 2.**
- **Most of the 30 pages of elaboration on F&R has not been reviewed or approved by NMFS members.**

# Caveats for following slides

- *Assuming we want to make some progress today, I can present some of the ideas from the current draft report with the caveats about review and approval by NMFS members.*
- *Since the recommendations on the concerns of Finding 2 received the most input from the full review panel, I will focus on these recommendations.*
- *However, I would like to introduce the Council to mostly my thinking on another recommendation because it requires more substantive change. Having more time to think about substantive change is usually a good thing.*

## F2. Concerns about some aspects of RSA Programs

1. Inadequacies in priority setting processes.
2. Perceived weaknesses and lack of transparency in proposal review processes.
3. Limited pool of RSA applicants and recipients.
4. Awarding RSA fishing opportunities instead of monetary awards creates unique challenges for scientists and the fishing industry.
5. Fairness in the ways RSA fishing opportunities are used.
6. Timeliness of RSA awards.
7. Lack of clarity about financial oversight of grants.
8. Results are not feeding back into the management process as well as they could be.
9. Inadequate access to data produced by RSA, and issues of ownership of data.
10. Lack of collaboration among scientists participating in RSA grants and NMFS scientists.



## R2. Ideas NEFMC should consider

1. **Inadequacies in priority setting processes:**
  - a) Invest more time and effort in development of priorities and specific deliverables;
  - b) PDT work with Center to specify status and expected deliverable;
  - c) Peer review of priorities (maybe by SSC);
  - d) Budget RSA by topic as guidepost;
  - e) Align RSA priorities with mission statement (if developed);
  - f) Record of stakeholder input from each meeting.
2. **Perceived weaknesses and lack of transparency in proposal review processes**
  - a) Improve communication about rules for review;
  - b) Improve industry participation at management reviews.

## R2. Ideas NEFMC should consider

3. **Limited pool of RSA applicants and recipients:**
  - a) Consider more outreach like using the Sea Grant network to highlight opportunities to participate in RSA;
  - b) Other ideas under (4) could address this as well.
  
4. **RSA vs. monetary award:**
  - a) Establish standard procedure on how to specify value estimates for each program.
  - b) Identify mechanisms that could be used to respond to inaccurate price estimates and award adjustments.
  - c) Consider allowing transfer of RSA or DAS between years.
  - d) Consider reserving a portion of RSA to offset low price estimates.
  - e) Consider additional comp fishing incentives and flexibility (more exemptions).

## R2. Ideas NEFMC should consider

### 5. Fairness about fishery compensation:

- a) If a concern could highlight in a mission statement.
- b) Conduct an evaluation of how RSA fishing opportunities have been used to date.
- c) If a problem is documented, there are tools that could be used to improve fairness moving forward.

### 6. Timeliness of RSA awards:

- a) NMFS and NEFMC should prepare detailed time table for entire RSA process from priority setting to final reports.
- b) NEFMC should consider initiating priority setting earlier in the year.
- c) Consider staggering the announcements so they are not open simultaneously.

## R2. Ideas NEFMC should consider

### 7. Financial oversight:

- a) Having high degree of confidence is important.
- b) NMFS should conduct an internal audit of its financial oversight procedures and strengthen them as appropriate.

### 8. Results feeding back into the process:

- a) For scallop survey awards a post award meeting to share and review survey plans should be held in April each year.
- b) Advisory Cmte for each award to provide input pre, during and post research to increase utility of results.
- c) Separate Cmte to enhance monitoring and tracking RSA results.
- d) More formal communication of progress reports.
- e) Applicants specify how results have been used before more are awarded.
- f) Consider RSA “Share Days” for Herring and Monkfish programs.
- g) Periodic subject based updates on status of RSA research.

## R2. Ideas NEFMC should consider

### 9. Inadequate access to data – data ownership:

- a) Data sharing policy and rights of data ownership should be clarified in funding announcement and online.
- b) There is no formatting requirement, but RSA data is public property and should be accessible. Data warehousing would require additional resources. Could build that in cost of grant.
- c) NMFS and NEFMC should develop regular reports to summarize status of RSA projects, maybe several updates during the year and an annual report.

### 10. Lack of collaboration with NMFS scientists:

- a) NEFMC should encourage scientists to collaborate on RSA projects.
- b) Opportunities for collaboration greatly enhanced under cooperative agreements?
- c) Advisory Committee meetings described above (8b) would improve collaboration as well.

# Is It Time for an Alternative Approach???

- *The ideas presented in the previous 6 slides are generally refinements of the current approach:*
  - *Mostly solicitation of proposals for many (tens) relatively short term (one or a few years) competitive grants.*
  - *Coordination between grants after the fact.*
  - *NMFS scientist have minimal input to the design of research they are expected to use.*
- *New Approach- **C**ooperative **A**greement for **R**esearch **S**et **A**side **P**rograms (**CARSAP**).*
- *CARSAP- most extreme of 5 options to improve sea scallop surveys (Recommendation 4).*
- *There is no consensus on the options.*

## CARSAP

- **Team of researches including NMFS scientists to collaborate within the scope of the agreement. NMFS scientists engaged from initial ideas to applications.**
- **Could foster cooperation between the current “players.”**
- **Long term (five years renewable indefinitely).**
- **Governance roles for industry, CARSAP PIs, NEFMC, NMFS.**
- **Administrative burden (including financial oversight) reduced.**
- **Forum for planning and research design.**
- **Could increase value, transparency, fairness, flexibility (e.g., bank windfalls) of monetizing RSA.**
- **Flexible in secondary distribution of funds (e.g., quicker, easier).**
- **Might accept private sector funding.**
- **Collaborative approach might attract Congressional support.**

***Time may not be right, but let's not reject for fear of change.***

# Next steps

- Schedule Webex(s) to review progress.
  - Seek legal advice if appropriate.
  - Complete report.
  - Final Report currently moved to the April 2019 Council Meeting.
  - Council review of report and decision about next steps.
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- *Any questions or suggestions today to help refine draft recommendations?*