



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

April 19, 2002

Ms. Kimberly S. Dietrich
Association for Professional Observers
P.O. Box 30167
Seattle, WA 98103

Dear Ms. Dietrich: *Kim*

Thank you for your letter regarding the status of the report on the Fisheries Observer Insurance, Liability and Labor Workshop. Unfortunately, the report is still in draft form. The final version will not be available until the organizer of the workshop, Dennis Hansford, returns to our office from his military leave assignment and has the opportunity to complete the final editing (he is expected back later this month). Once the report is completed, we will send the Association for Professional Observers a copy.

Regarding your second request for information on follow-up discussions with the Department of Labor (DOL), a letter was sent last summer from NMFS to Mr. Tom Obert of the Wage and Hour Division, following up on his comments regarding the applicability of the Service Contract Act to the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. The request was turned over to Michelle Bechtoldt upon Mr. Obert's retirement. She has indicated that the DOL has researched our request and an opinion will be issued in the near future. We will inform you as soon as we receive a final response from DOL.

We appreciate the Association for Professional Observers' continued interest and support of NMFS Observer programs. Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Victoria Cornish
National Observer Program
Office of Science and Technology

cc: Dan Ito, NMFS North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program
Sue Salvesson, NMFS Alaska Region

