

October 25, 2001

David Potter
Chief, Fisheries Sampling Branch
NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543



P.O. Box 30167
Seattle, WA 98103

Dear Mr. Potter:

The Association for Professional Observers (APO) was extremely pleased when we received a copy of the Management Control Review (MCR) on NMFS Observer Programs and Service Delivery Models just over one year ago. It is our understanding that many of the recommendations have been accomplished (i.e., deadlines are now past) and we greatly appreciate the work that has been done to date. The APO is writing each program requesting a progress report on actions to date. Ideally, the progress report would include a list of all recommendations, the actions taken to date to achieve each recommendation and future plans for action on recommendations not yet addressed for each fishery.

The APO fully supports the recommendations in the MCR and would like to see full implementation as soon as possible. One of the APO's goals is to improve communication between observers and the agency. Observers play an integral role in the management of our nation's fisheries. The APO supports the retention of a corps of professional observers who understand the importance of the data they collect and the importance of their interface with the fishing industry. We strive to achieve these goals by providing information to observers in three ways: via our bi-weekly electronic news summary, through our quarterly newsletter and by having information available to observers on our website. We will post any progress reports on our website so observers have easy access.

Thank you for providing any information on the status of MCR recommendations on the Marine Mammal Protection Act Observer Programs including the Northeast multi-species gillnet, spiny dogfish gillnet, monkfish gillnet, mid-Atlantic coastal gillnet and North Carolina beach haul seine and the Sustainable Fisheries Act Observer Programs including Northeast multi-species trawl, summer flounder trawl, scup trawl, sea scallop dredge and large pelagic longline.

Sincerely,

Kimberly S. Dietrich
Executive Officer

Cc: Patricia Kurkul, Northeast Regional Administrator
Dr. Michael Sissenwine, Science and Research Director, NEFSC