

October 25, 2001

Elizabeth Scott-Denton
Bycatch Observer Program Manager
National Marine Fisheries Service
4700 Avenue U
Galveston, TX 77551



P.O. Box 30167
Seattle, WA 98103

Dear Ms. Scott-Denton:

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 addressed by the MCR 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 Southeastern Shrimp Trawl Observer Program.

Sincerely,

Kimberly S. Dietrich
Executive Officer

Cc: Dr. Joseph E. Powers, Southeast Regional Administrator
Dr. Nancy Thompson, Science and Research Director, SEFSC
James Nance, Galveston Laboratory