

**TASK GROUP OF WG-FSA ON REPORTING FORMS
AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION
ON BOARD LONGLINE FISHING VESSELS**

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The Scientific Committee has approved the recommendation of WG-FSA that a task group be formed to consider comments of scientific observers on the utility and feasibility of data recording forms and procedures currently in use for observations on board longline fishing vessels (Annex 5, paragraphs 3.33 and 3.34).

2. The task group will be carrying out its work intersessionally by correspondence. It should report back to WG-FSA at its 1998 meeting in October 1998.

3. The membership of the group comprises technical coordinators of national scientific observation programs, the Secretariat's Data Manager and Scientific Observer Data Analyst (SODA). The membership of the group is also open to any Member of the Scientific Committee who wishes to participate. The Science Officer was appointed as coordinator of this group.

4. It is intended that the group would first deal with a number of comments received from scientific observers at the 1997 meeting of WG-FSA (Annex 5, paragraphs 3.10, 3.31, 3.33, 3.35, 7.9 and 7.10). The work of the group will include the following:

- (i) technical coordinators will consult, at a national level, with all scientific observers who took part in CCAMLR-related programs during the last two fishing seasons. Scientific observers will be asked whether they experienced similar problems to those reported to WG-FSA or any other problems in the conduct of observations, including the use of data reporting forms and instructions published in the *Scientific Observers Manual*;
- (ii) technical coordinators will assess, first individually at a national level and then as a group, all comments and proposals received from scientific observers;
- (iii) the Data Manager and Scientific Observer Data Analyst will consider any changes proposed to reporting forms and observer instructions in order to evaluate their potential impact on the structure and content of the existing Scientific Observer Database;
- (iv) the group will advise on those revisions or proposals which call for immediate changes to existing reporting forms and instructions; and
- (v) the group will revise and prepare drafts of the revised forms and instruction for consideration by WG-FSA at its next meeting.

5. The proposed timetable of the group's work is as follows:

Action	Deadline	Acting Members of the Group
Circulation to the group of all documents relevant to the formation of the group and its task	November 1997	Coordinator
Request comments from scientific observers	January 1998	National technical coordinators
Collate and analyse comments and proposals received from observers	February 1998	National technical coordinators
Submit collated comments and proposals to the Secretariat	March 1998	National technical coordinators
Analyse comments with respect to their potential impact on the structure and content of existing scientific observer database	April 1998	Data Manager and Scientific Observer Data Analyst
Consult with the group on changes required to existing forms and instructions	May 1998	Coordinator
Revise forms and instructions, as required	May 1998	Coordinator, Data Manager and Scientific Observer Data Analyst
Circulate revised draft forms and instructions to the group for approval.	May 1998	Coordinator
Prepare the group's report to WG-FSA	August 1998	Coordinator