

**Guidelines for the Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee
And Subcommittees
DRAFT 3/29/04**

MEETINGS

Open Meetings

Unless otherwise determined in advance for reasons outlined in the Government in the Sunshine Act, all meetings of the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee (MPA FAC) will be open to the public. All materials brought before or presented to the MPA FAC during the conduct of an open meeting will be available to the public for review or copying at the time of the scheduled meeting.

Subcommittee Meetings

Subcommittee meetings will be open to the public. Preparatory work sessions (e.g. those held via conference call to prepare for a meeting) need not be public. However, all results of such work sessions shall be forwarded to the MPA FAC for deliberation before the information is used to advise federal agencies. Subcommittees will also forward their advice to the MPA FAC for deliberation.

Non-members may be invited to make presentations or comments to the Subcommittee, but should not participate in Subcommittee discussions or the development of recommendations to be forwarded to the full FAC.

Procedures

Roberts Rules of Order will be used as general guidelines to facilitate FAC meetings. The intent of the FAC is to operate in a manner to foster discussion and civility.

Voting

If votes are taken, they will be decided by the margin prescribed in Roberts Rules, unless the FAC decides to set different voting rules.

ROLES OF OFFICIALS, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Chair

The Chair works with the designated federal officer (DFO) to establish priorities, identify issues which must be addressed, and plan meeting agendas. An "Executive Committee" has been formed to support the chair in carrying out these tasks. In addition, the Chair is responsible for certifying the accuracy of minutes developed by the FAC to document its meetings.

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair serves on the Executive Committee, assists the Chair in facilitating the meeting, and chairs FAC meetings in the absence of the Chair.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, and the Chairs and Vice Chairs of each of the three Subcommittees. The Executive Committee assists the Chair in establishing priorities, identifying issues to be addressed, and planning meeting agendas.

Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

The DFO serves as the government's agent for all matters related to the MPA FAC's activities. By Law, the DFO must: (1) approve or call the meetings of the MPA FAC; (2) approve agendas; (3) attend all meetings; (4) adjourn the meetings when such adjournment is in the public interest; and (5) chair the meeting when so directed by the agency head.

In addition, the DFO is responsible for providing adequate staff support to the FAC, including the performance of the following functions: (1) notifying members of the time and place for each meeting; (2) maintaining the roll; (3) maintaining minutes of the FAC's deliberations; (4) attending to official correspondence; (5) maintaining official FAC records and filing all papers and submissions prepared for or by the FAC, including those items generated by Subcommittees; (6) collect, validate and pay all vouchers for pre-approved expenditures; and (7) preparing and handling all reports, including the annual report as required by FACA.

Ex Officio Members

Ex Officio members participate in the discussions and deliberations of the MPA FAC and its Subcommittees as do regular members except that they do not vote on the FAC or its Subcommittees. In order to preserve the independence of FAC recommendations, ex officios and MPA staff should not be direct participants in writing recommendations of the FAC or its Subcommittees.

Role of MPA Center Staff

MPA Center staff are available to the MPA FAC and its Subcommittees as subject matter experts and "resource people." With the exception of the Designated Federal Officer, they do not serve as staff to the FAC or its Subcommittees. Staff may be assigned by the MPA Center Director or the Designated Federal Officer to perform specific tasks to facilitate FAC and Subcommittee meetings, such as note taking.