

Subpart B--Management Measures

§ 680.20 Arbitration System.

(a) *Applicability.*

(1) Arbitration System.

All CVO QS, Arbitration IFQ, Class A IFQ holders, PQS and IPQ holders must enter the contracts as prescribed in this section that establish the Arbitration System. Certain parts of the Arbitration System are voluntary for some parties, as specified in this section. All contract provisions will be enforced by parties to those contracts.

(2) Open negotiation.

Any holder of uncommitted IFQ may negotiate with any holder of uncommitted IPQ, the price and delivery terms for that season or for future seasons for any uncommitted IFQ and uncommitted IPQ. Uncommitted IFQ holders and uncommitted IPQ holders may freely contact each other and initiate open negotiations.

(3) Document submittal information.

Submit documents and reports to NMFS as follows:

by mail to

the Regional Administrator, NMFS,
P.O. Box 21668,
Juneau, AK 99802;

by courier to

NMFS,
709 West 9th Street,
Juneau, AK 99801;

or by fax to 907-586-7465.

(b) *Eligibility for Arbitration System.*

(1) Arbitration Organization.

The following persons are the only persons eligible to join an Arbitration Organization:

(i) Holders of CVO QS,

(ii) Holders of PQS,

(iii) Holders of Arbitration IFQ,

(iv) Holders of Class A IFQ affiliated with a PQS or IPQ holder, and

(v) Holders of IPQ.

(2) Persons Eligible to Use Negotiation and Binding Arbitration Procedures.

The following persons are the only persons eligible to enter contracts with a Contract Arbitrator to use the negotiation and Binding Arbitration procedures described in paragraph (h) of this section to resolve price and delivery disputes or negotiate remaining contract terms not previously agreed to by IFQ and IPQ holders under other negotiation approaches:

(i) Holders of Arbitration IFQ, and

(ii) Holders of IPQ.

(3) Persons Ineligible to Use Negotiation and Binding Arbitration Procedures.

Holders of IFQ that are affiliated with holders of PQS or IPQ are ineligible to enter contracts with a Contract Arbitrator to use the negotiation and Binding Arbitration procedures described in paragraph (h) of this section to resolve price and delivery disputes or negotiate remaining contract terms not previously agreed to by IFQ and IPQ holders under other negotiation approaches.

(c) *Preseason requirements for joining an Arbitration Organization.*

All holders of CVO QS, PQS, Arbitration IFQ, Class A IFQ affiliated with a PQS or IPQ holder, and IPQ must join and maintain a membership in an Arbitration Organization as specified in paragraph (d) of this section. All holders of QS, PQS, IFQ, or IPQ identified in the preceding sentence must join an Arbitration Organization at the following times:

(1) For QS holders and PQS holders except as provided for in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, not later than May 1 of each year for the crab fishing year that begins on July 1 of that year.

(2) For IFQ holders and IPQ holders, not later than 15 days after the issuance of IFQ and IPQ for that crab QS fishery if that IFQ or IPQ holder does not also hold QS or PQS.

(3) During 2005, QS and PQS holders must join an Arbitration Organization as described in paragraph (d) of this section not later than August 15, 2005.

(4) Persons receiving QS, PQS, IFQ, or IPQ by transfer after these dates must join an Arbitration Organization at the time of receiving the QS, PQS, IFQ, or IPQ by transfer.

(d) Formation process for an Arbitration Organization.

(1) Arbitration Organizations must be formed to select and contract a Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, Contract Arbitrator(s), and establish the Arbitration System, including the payment of costs of arbitration, described in this section for each crab QS fishery. All persons defined in paragraph (a)(1) of this section must join an Arbitration Organization.

(i) Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization. Holders of Arbitration QS and Arbitration IFQ must join an Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization. This Arbitration Organization may not have members who are not holders of Arbitration QS or Arbitration IFQ. Arbitration QS holders and Arbitration IFQ holders may join separate Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations. The mechanism for forming an Arbitration Organization is determined by the members of the organization.

(ii) PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization. Holders of PQS or IPQ must join a PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization. This Arbitration Organization may not have members who are not holders of PQS or IPQ. PQS holders and IPQ holders may join separate PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations. The mechanism for forming an Arbitration Organization is determined by the members of the organization.

(iii) Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization. Holders of CVO QS or Class A IFQ affiliated with a PQS or IPQ holder must join an Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization. This Arbitration Organization may not have members who are not holders of QS or IFQ affiliated with a PQS or IPQ holder. CVO QS holders and Class A IFQ holders may join separate Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations. The mechanism for forming an Arbitration Organization is determined by the members of the organization.

(iv) Limitation on joining an Arbitration Organization. For a crab QS fishery during a crab fishing year, a person who holds:

(A) PQS/IPQ may join only one PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization;

(B) Affiliated QS/IFQ may join only one Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization; and

(C) Arbitration QS/IFQ may join only one Arbitration QS/IFQ Organization.

(2) Each Arbitration Organization must submit a complete Annual Arbitration Organization report to NMFS. A complete report must include:

(i) A copy of the business license of the Arbitration Organization;

(ii) A statement identifying the members of the organization and the amount of Arbitration QS and Arbitration IFQ, Non-Arbitration QS and Non-Arbitration IFQ, or PQS and IPQ held by each member and represented by that Arbitration Organization;

(iii) QS, PQS, IFQ, and IPQ ownership information on the members of the organization;

(iv) Management organization information, including:

(A) The bylaws of the Arbitration Organization;

(B) A list of key personnel of the management organization including, but not limited to, the board of directors, officers, representatives, and any managers;

(v) The name of the Arbitration Organization, permanent business mailing addresses, name of contact persons and additional contact information of the managing personnel for the Arbitration Organization, resumes of management personnel; and

(vi) A copy of all minutes of any meeting held by the Arbitration Organization or any members of the Arbitration Organization.

(3) An Arbitration Organization, with members who are QS or PQS holders, must submit a complete Annual Arbitration Organization Report to NMFS in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section by August 20, 2005, for the crab fishing year beginning on July 1, 2005, and by May 1 of each subsequent year for the crab fishing year beginning on July 1 of that year.

(4) An Arbitration Organization, with members who are IFQ or IPQ holders, must submit a complete Annual Arbitration Organization Report to NMFS in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section by not later than 15 days after the issuance of IFQ and IPQ for that crab QS fishery.

(e) Role of Arbitration Organization(s) and annual requirements.

(1) General.

The members of each Arbitration Organization must enter into a contract that specifies the terms and conditions of participation in the organization.

(i) The contract among members of an Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization, or a PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization shall include the terms, conditions, and provisions specified in paragraph (e)(2) of this section.

(ii) The contract among members of an Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization shall include the terms, conditions, and provisions in paragraph (e)(3) of this section.

(2) Provisions for Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations, and PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations.

(i) Selection of Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s). A provision authorizing the Arbitration Organization to act on behalf of its members in the selection of and contracting with the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s) under paragraph (e)(4) of this section.

(ii) Confidentiality of information. A provision that a member that is a party to a Binding Arbitration proceeding shall sign a confidentiality agreement with the party with whom it is arbitrating stating they will not disclose at any time to any person any information received from the Contract Arbitrator or any other party in the course of the arbitration. That confidentiality agreement shall specify the potential sanctions for violating the agreement.

(iii) Provision of information to members. A provision requiring the Arbitration Organization to provide to its members:

(A) A copy of the contracts for the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator for each fishery in which the member participates; and

(B) A copy of the Market Report and the Non-Binding Price Formula for each fishery in which the member participates within 5 days of its release.

(iv) Information release.

(A) A provision requiring that the Arbitration Organization deliver to NMFS any data, information, and documents generated pursuant to this section.

(B) In the case of a PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization(s):

(1) A provision that requires the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization to provide for the delivery of the names of and contact information for its members who hold uncommitted IPQ, and to identify the regional designations and amounts of such uncommitted IPQ, to Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations either directly or through a third-party data provider so the information may be provided to any persons that hold uncommitted Arbitration IFQ for purposes of Share Matching, Binding Arbitration, and Post Arbitration Opt-in;

(2) A provision that prohibits the disclosure of any information received under this provision to any person except those Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations, or their third-party data provider so that information may be provided to holders of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ. The provision will require that information concerning uncommitted IPQ be updated within 24 hours of a change of any such information, including any commitment of IPQ, and that information be provided to those persons that hold uncommitted Arbitration IFQ. This provision may include a mechanism to provide information to uncommitted Arbitration IFQ holders through a secure website, or through other electronic means;

(3) A provision that requires the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization to arrange for the delivery to all holders of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ through the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations holders or their third-party data provider the terms of a decision of a Contract Arbitrator in a Binding Arbitration proceeding involving a member that holds uncommitted IPQ within 24 hours of notice of that decision. This provision may include a mechanism to provide information to uncommitted Arbitration IFQ holders through a secure website, or through other electronic means; and

(4) A provision that requires the holders of uncommitted IPQ to provide information concerning such uncommitted IPQ as necessary for the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization to comply with this paragraph and prohibits the disclosure of any such information by such holder to any person, except as directed in this paragraph.

(C) In the case of a Arbitration QS/IFQ Organization(s):

(1) A provision that requires Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations holders, or their third-party data provider to provide information concerning uncommitted IPQ from PQS/IPQ Arbitration

Organization(s) as necessary for the Arbitration IFQ holder to use that information in a timely manner.

(2) A provision that prohibits the disclosure of any such information concerning uncommitted IPQ from PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization to any person, except as directed therein.

(D) Third-party Data Provider provision.

Notwithstanding any provision in this section, an Arbitration Organization required to supply or receive information under this section must hire administrative personnel or may contract with a person who will arrange for the receipt and delivery of information as required. Any such third party that receives such information cannot be affiliated with or employed by or related to any QS, PQS, IFQ, or IPQ holder in any crab QS fishery and must enter a contract that:

(1) Prohibits such third person from releasing any information received to any person except as specifically provided by this section; and

(2) Prohibits such third person from entering taking any employment from or establishing any relationship, except under a contract meeting the requirements of this section for a period of 3 years after the termination of the contract.

(v) Costs. A provision that authorizes the Arbitration Organization to enter into a contract with all other Arbitration Organizations for the payment of the costs of arbitration as specified under this section.

(A) The Arbitration Organizations must establish a contract that requires the payment of all costs of the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s), dissemination of information concerning uncommitted IPQ to holders of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ, and the costs of such persons associated with lengthy season approach, share matching approach, Binding Arbitration, quality and performance disputes, to be shared equally so that IPQ holders pay 50 percent of the costs and Arbitration IFQ holders and Class A IFQ holders pay 50 percent of the costs.

(B) Each person shall pay an amount of the cost based on the amount of IPQ or IFQ held by that person at the time of application to an Arbitration Organization.

(C) PQS holders shall advance all costs and shall collect the contribution of IFQ holders at landing subject to terms mutually agreed to by the Arbitration Organizations.

(vi) Negotiation methods. A provision that prohibits the Arbitration Organization from engaging in any contract negotiations on behalf of its members, except for those necessary to hire the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s).

(vii) Enforcement of the contract. Violations of the contract shall be enforced under civil law.

(3) Provisions applying to Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations.

The provisions that allow for the provision of information to members, payment of costs, limits on the transfer of QS, PQS, IFQ, and IPQ, and enforcement of the contract as described under paragraphs (e)(2)(iv), (v), (vii), and (viii) will apply to the contract among members of an Affiliated QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization(s).

(4) Process for selection of Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s).

(i) For each crab fishing year, QS holders who are members of Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organization(s) and PQS holders who are members of PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organization(s), by mutual agreement, will select one Market Analyst, one Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s) for each crab QS fishery. The number of Contract Arbitrators selected for each fishery will be subject to the mutual agreement of those Arbitration Organizations. The selection of the Market Analyst and the Formula Arbitrator must occur in time to ensure the Market Report and non-binding price formula are produced within the time line established in paragraph **(f)(4)(i) and (g)(2)(vii)(B)** of this section.

(ii) The Arbitration Organizations representing Arbitration QS holders and PQS holders in a crab fishery shall establish by mutual agreement the contractual obligations of the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s) for each fishery. The contractual obligations of the Market Analyst, the Formula Arbitrator and Contract Arbitrators will be enforced by the parties to the contract.

(iii) The same person may be chosen for the positions of Market Analyst and Formula Arbitrator for a fishery.

(iv) A person selected to be a Contract Arbitrator may not be the Market Analyst or Formula Arbitrator, and shall not be affiliated with, employed by, or otherwise associated with, the Market Analyst or Formula Arbitrator, for that fishery.

(5) Notification to NMFS.

Not later than June 1 for that crab fishing year, except as provided in paragraph (e)(6) of this section, the Arbitration Organizations representing the holders of Arbitration QS and PQS in each fishery shall notify NMFS of the persons selected as the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s) for the fishery in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section.

The Arbitration Organizations shall include a list of Arbitration Organizations that mutually agreed to the selection of the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s) and signatures of representatives of those Arbitration Organizations and a copy of the contract with Market Analyst, the Formula Arbitrator, and each Contract Arbitrator. The notification must include a curriculum vitae and other relevant biographical material for each of these individuals.

(6) First-year implementation.

During 2005, the selection of and establishment of the contractual obligations of the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s) as required under this section shall occur not later than September 1, 2005.

(7) IFQ and IPQ issuance and selection of the Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrator(s).

NMFS will not issue CVO IFQ and IPQ for a crab QS fishery until Arbitration Organizations establish by mutual agreement contracts with a Market Analyst, Formula Arbitrator, and Contract Arbitrators for that fishery and notify NMFS.

(f) Roles and standards for the Market Analyst and process for producing the Market Report.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of this section:

(i) The Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations shall establish a contract with the Market Analyst to produce a Market Report for **each crab QS** fishery. The terms of this contract must specify that the Market Analyst must produce a Market Report that shall provide an analysis of the market for products of that fishery.

(ii) The Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations may, by mutual agreement, include a provision in the contract with the Market Analyst to forgo production of a Market Report for a crab QS

fishery if the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations anticipate that the crab QS fishery will not open for fishing during a crab fishing year. If such a provision is included in the contract with the Market Analyst, the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations must include a provision in the contract with the Market Analyst to produce a Market Report not later than the June 30 for the crab QS fishery that was expected to remain closed but subsequently opens for fishing during the crab fishing year.

(2) The contract with the Market Analyst must specify that:

(i) The Market Analyst **will** base the Market Report on **a survey of the market for crab products produced by the fishery.**

(ii) The Market Analyst will note generally the sources from which he or she gathered information. The Market Report must include only publicly available data and information. Data and information will be considered publicly available if they are published in a manner that makes them available, either for a fee or at no cost, to the public at large.

(iii) The Market Report shall consider the following factors:

(A) Current ex-vessel prices, including ex-vessel prices received for crab harvested under Class A IFQ, Class B IFQ, and CVC IFQ permits;

(B) Consumer and wholesale product prices for the processing sector and the participants in the arbitration (recognizing the impact of sales to affiliates on wholesale pricing);

(C) Innovations and developments of the harvesting and processing sectors and the participants in the arbitration (including new product forms);

(D) Efficiency and productivity of the harvesting and processing sectors (recognizing the limitations on efficiency and productivity arising out of the management program structure);

(E) Quality (including quality standards of markets served by the fishery and recognizing the influence of harvest strategies on the quality of landings);

(F) The interest of maintaining financially healthy and stable harvesting and processing sectors;

(G) Safety and expenditures for ensuring adequate safety;

(H) Timing and location of deliveries; and

(I) The cost of harvesting and processing less than the full IFQ or IPQ allocation (underages) to avoid penalties for overharvesting IFQ and a mechanism for reasonably accounting for deadloss.

(iv) There shall only be one annual Market Report for each fishery.

(v) The Market Analyst **must** not issue interim or supplemental reports for **any crab QS fishery unless the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations, by mutual agreement, include a provision in the contract with the Market Analyst for the production of interim or supplemental reports for a crab QS fishery. If the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations have a mutual agreement to produce interim or supplemental reports, the contract with the Market Analyst must specify the terms and conditions under which those interim or supplemental reports will be produced.**

(3) The Market Analyst shall not disclose any information to any person not required under this section.

(4) In 2005, the Market Report shall be produced not later than September 30, 2005 or 25 days prior to the first crab fishing season for that crab QS fishery whichever is later in that crab fishing year as required under this section.

(i) In all subsequent years **and except as provided in paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of this section**, the Market Report **for each crab QS fishery must** be produced not later than 50 days prior to the first crab fishing season for that crab QS fishery, **unless the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations, by mutual agreement, include a provision in the contract with the Market Analyst to establish a different date for production of the Market Report for that crab QS fishery.**

(ii) The contract with the Market Analyst must specify that the Market Analyst will provide **the Market Report** in that crab fishing year to:

(A) Each Arbitration Organization in that fishery;

(B) NMFS Alaska Region in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section; and

(C) The Formula Arbitrator and any Contract Arbitrator(s) for the fishery.

(g) Roles and standards for the Formula Arbitrator.

(1) **Except as provided in paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section:**

(i) The Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations shall establish a contract with the Formula Arbitrator to **produce** a Non-Binding Price Formula **for each crab QS fishery.**

(ii) **The Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations may, by mutual agreement, include a provision in the contract with the Formula Arbitrator to forgo production of a Non-Binding Price Formula for a crab QS fishery if the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations anticipate that the crab QS fishery will not open for fishing during a crab fishing year. If such a provision is included in the contract with the Formula Arbitrator, the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and the PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations must include a provision in the contract with the Formula Arbitrator to produce a Non-Binding Price Formula not later than June 30 for the crab QS fishery that was expected to remain closed but subsequently opens for fishing during the crab fishing year.**

(2) The contract with the Formula Arbitrator must specify that:

(i) The Formula Arbitrator will conduct a single annual fleet-wide analysis of the markets for crab to establish a Non-Binding Price Formula under which a fraction of the weighted average first wholesale prices for crab products from the fishery may be used to set an ex-vessel price; and

(ii) The Non-Binding Price Formula shall:

(A) Be based on the historical distribution of first wholesale revenues between fishermen and processors in the aggregate based on arm's length first wholesale prices and ex-vessel prices, taking into consideration the size of the harvest in each year; and

(B) Establish a price that preserves the historical division of revenues in the fishery while considering the following:

(1) Current ex-vessel prices, including ex-vessel prices received for crab harvested under Class A, Class B, and CVC IFQ permits;

(2) Consumer and wholesale product prices for the processing sector and the participants in arbitrations (recognizing the impact of sales to affiliates on wholesale pricing);

(3) Innovations and developments of the harvesting and processing sectors and the participants in arbitrations (including new product forms);

(4) Efficiency and productivity of the harvesting and processing sectors (recognizing the limitations on efficiency and productivity arising out of the management program structure);

(5) Quality (including quality standards of markets served by the fishery and recognizing the influence of harvest strategies on the quality of landings);

(6) The interest of maintaining financially healthy and stable harvesting and processing sectors;

(7) Safety and expenditures for ensuring adequate safety;

(8) Timing and location of deliveries; and

(9) The cost of harvesting and processing less than the full IFQ or IPQ allocation (underages) to avoid penalties for overharvesting IFQ and a mechanism for reasonably accounting for deadloss.

(C) Include identification of various relevant factors such as product form, delivery time, and delivery location.

(D) Consider the “highest arbitrated price” for the fishery from the previous crab fishing season, where the “highest arbitrated price” means the highest arbitrated price for arbitrations of IPQ and Arbitration IFQ which represent a minimum of at least 7 percent of the IPQ resulting from the PQS in that fishery. For purposes of this process, the Formula Arbitrator may aggregate up to three arbitration findings to collectively equal a minimum of 7 percent of the IPQ. When arbitration findings are aggregated with 2 or more entities, the lesser of the arbitrated prices of the arbitrated entities included to attain the 7 percent minimum be considered for the highest arbitrated price.

(iii) The Non-Binding Price Formula may rely on any relevant information available to the Formula Arbitrator, including, but not limited to,

(A) Information provided by the QS, PQS, IPQ and IFQ holders in the fishery, and

(B) The Market Report for the fishery.

(iv) The Formula Arbitrator:

(A) May meet with IFQ holders who are members of any single FCMA cooperative collectively;

(B) Shall meet with IPQ holders individually;

(C) Shall meet with distinct FCMA cooperatives individually; and

(D) Shall meet with IFQ holders who are not members of the same FCMA cooperative individually.

(v) The Formula Arbitrator may request any relevant information from QS, PQS, IPQ, and IFQ holders in the fishery, but the Formula Arbitrator shall not have subpoena power.

(vi) The Formula Arbitrator may obtain information from persons other than QS, PQS, IPQ, and IFQ holders in the fishery, if those persons agree to provide such data. Any information that is provided must be based on activities occurring more than three months prior to the date of submission to the Formula Arbitrator.

(vii) The Formula Arbitrator shall keep confidential the information that is not publicly available and not disclose the identity of the persons providing specific information.

(viii) (A) In 2005, the non-binding price formula shall be produced not later than September 30, 2005 or 25 days prior to the first crab fishing season for that crab QS fishery whichever is later in that crab fishing year as required under this section.

(B) In all subsequent **years and except as provided in paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section**, the **Non-Binding Price Formula must** be produced not later than 50 days prior to the first crab fishing season for that crab QS fishery, **except that the Non-Binding Price Formulas for the western Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery and the eastern Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery must be produced not later than 30 days prior to the first crab fishing season for those crab QS fisheries.**

(C) The contract with the Formula Arbitrator must specify that the Formula Arbitrator will provide the non-binding price formula in that crab fishing year to:

(1) Each Arbitration Organization in that fishery;

(2) NMFS in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section; and

(3) The Market Analyst and all Contract Arbitrators in the fishery.

(ix) The Formula Arbitrator shall not disclose any information to any person unless required under this section.

(h) Roles and standards for the Contract Arbitrator(s).

(1) General.

For each crab QS fishery, the Arbitration QS/IFQ Arbitration Organizations and PQS/IPQ Arbitration Organizations shall establish a contract with all Contract Arbitrators in that fishery that specifies that each Contract Arbitrator may be selected to resolve a dispute concerning the terms of delivery, price, or other factors in the fishery.

(2) Selection of Contract Arbitrators.

The contract with the Contract Arbitrator shall specify the means by which the Contract Arbitrator will be selected to resolve specific disputes. This contract must specify that for any dispute for which the Contract Arbitrator is selected, the Contract Arbitrator will comply with the last best offer arbitration method as set forth in this section.

(3) Negotiation and Binding Arbitration Procedure.

The contract with the Contract Arbitrator(s) shall specify the following approaches for negotiation and Binding Arbitration among members of the Arbitration Organizations:

(i) Restrictions on collective negotiation. An IFQ and an IPQ holder may negotiate individually. Groups of IFQ holders may negotiate collectively with an IPQ holder only under the following provisions:

(A) Members of an FCMA cooperatives may participate collectively with other members of the same FCMA cooperative in Binding Arbitration except as otherwise provided under this section.

(B) Members of different FCMA cooperatives shall not participate collectively in Binding Arbitration.

(C) IPQ holders shall not participate collectively. Only one IPQ holder shall enter into Binding Arbitration with any IFQ holder or IFQ holder(s).

(D) An Arbitration Organization must not negotiate on behalf of a member. This shall not prohibit the members of an Arbitration IFQ Arbitration Organization from negotiation if the Arbitration Organization qualifies as an FCMA cooperative.

(ii) Open negotiations. At any time prior to the date of the first crab fishing season of a crab fishing year for that crab QS fishery, any holder of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ may negotiate with any holder of uncommitted IPQ, the price and delivery terms for that season for any uncommitted IFQ and uncommitted IPQ.

(A) Uncommitted Arbitration IFQ holders and Uncommitted IPQ holders may freely contact each other and initiate open negotiations.

(B) If Arbitration IFQ holders and IPQ holders do not reach an agreement on price, delivery terms, or other terms after committing shares, an Arbitration IFQ holder may initiate Binding Arbitration in accordance with the procedures specified in this section in order to resolve disputes in those price, delivery terms, or other terms.

(C) Once IFQ or IPQ has been committed, the IFQ holder and IPQ holder cannot engage in open negotiation using those shares.

(iii) Lengthy season approach.

(A) Prior to the date of the first crab fishing season for that crab QS fishery in that crab fishing year a committed IPQ holder and one or more committed Arbitration IFQ holders may choose to adopt a Lengthy Season approach. The Lengthy Season approach is an alternative method to the Binding Arbitration proceedings.

(B) A Lengthy Season approach allows a committed IPQ holder and a committed Arbitration IFQ holder to agree to postpone negotiation of specific contract terms until a time during the crab fishing year as agreed upon by the Arbitration IFQ holder and IPQ holder participating in the negotiation. The Lengthy Season approach allows the Arbitration IFQ holders and IPQ holder involved in the negotiation to postpone Binding Arbitration, if necessary, until a time during the crab fishing year. If the parties reach a final agreement on the contract terms, Binding Arbitration is not necessary.

(C) If a committed IPQ holder and one or more committed Arbitration IFQ holder(s) are unable to reach an agreement on whether to adopt a Lengthy Season approach, they may request mediation to assist the parties in determining whether to adopt a Lengthy Season approach. The parties may request a Contract

Arbitrator to act as a mediator. If the mediation proves unsuccessful or is not selected, the Arbitration IFQ holder may initiate enter Binding Arbitration to determine whether to adopt a lengthy season approach.

(1) Binding Arbitration may begin immediately with the same Contract Arbitrator.

(2) If the Contract Arbitrator serves as a mediator in an unsuccessful mediation, either party may request another Contract Arbitrator for the Binding Arbitration.

(iv) Share Matching.

(A) At any time 120 hours (five days) after NMFS issues IFQ and IPQ for that crab QS fishery in that crab fishing year, holders of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ may choose to commit the delivery of harvests of crab to be made with that uncommitted Arbitration IFQ to an uncommitted IPQ holder. The issuance of IFQ and IPQ for a crab QS fishery occurs on the time and date that IFQ and IPQ amounts for that crab QS fishery are posted on the NMFS, Alaska Region website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov>.

(B) To commit Arbitration IFQ, the holder of uncommitted IFQ must offer an amount of Arbitration IFQ:

(1) not less than 50 percent of the Arbitration IFQ holder's total uncommitted Arbitration IFQ, or an amount of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ equal to the total amount of uncommitted IPQ available, whichever is less, if the Arbitration IFQ holder is not an FCMA cooperative; and

(2) not less than 25 percent of the Arbitration IFQ holder's total uncommitted Arbitration IFQ, or an amount of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ equal to the total amount of uncommitted IPQ available, whichever is less, if the Arbitration IFQ holder is an FCMA cooperative.

(C) Any holder of uncommitted IPQ must accept all proposed Arbitration IFQ commitments, up to the amount of its uncommitted IPQ. The commitment of IPQ will take place on receipt of notice from the holder of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ of the intention to commit that IFQ.

(D) After matching, an Arbitration IFQ holder and an IPQ holder may decide to enter mediation to reach agreement on contract terms. The Arbitration IFQ holder and IPQ holder may request a Contract Arbitrator to act as a mediator to facilitate an agreement.

(1) If the mediation proves unsuccessful, or if mediation is not selected, the Arbitration IFQ holder may initiate Binding Arbitration which may begin immediately with the same Contract Arbitrator.

(2) If the Contract Arbitrator serves as a mediator in an unsuccessful mediation, the Arbitration IFQ holder may request another Contract Arbitrator for the Binding Arbitration.

(v) Initiation of Binding Arbitration. If an Arbitration IFQ holder intends to initiate Binding Arbitration, the Arbitration IFQ holder must initiate the Binding Arbitration procedure not later than 360 hours (15 days) after NMFS issues IFQ and IPQ for that crab QS fishery in that crab fishing year. Binding Arbitration is initiated after the committed Arbitration IFQ holder notifies a committed IPQ holder and selects a Contract Arbitrator. Binding Arbitration may be initiated to resolve price, terms of delivery, and other disputes. There will be only one Binding Arbitration Proceeding for an IPQ holder but multiple Arbitration IFQ holders may participate in this proceeding. This limitation on the timing of Binding Arbitration proceedings does not include proceedings that arise due to:

(A) The lengthy season approach;

(B) Performance disputes; and

(C) Quality disputes.

(vi) Joining a Binding Arbitration Proceeding. Any uncommitted Arbitration IFQ holder may join a Binding Arbitration proceeding as a party by committing the shares to the arbitration and providing notice to the IPQ holder and the Contract Arbitrator(s). An Arbitration IFQ holder may join a Binding Arbitration proceeding only if uncommitted IPQ is available. Once shares are committed to a Binding Arbitration Proceeding they cannot be uncommitted. The contract with the Contract Arbitrator may specify the terms and timing of joining the proceedings.

(vii) Arbitration Schedule Meeting. The Contract Arbitrator shall meet with all parties to a Binding Arbitration proceeding as soon as possible once a Binding Arbitration proceeding has been initiated for the sole purpose of establishing a schedule for the Binding Arbitration. This schedule shall include the date by which the IPQ holder and Arbitration IFQ holder(s) must submit their last best offer and any supporting materials, and any additional meetings or mediation if agreed to by all parties. This meeting will discuss the schedule of the Binding Arbitration proceedings and not address terms of last best offers.

(viii) Terms of Last Best Offers. The Contract Arbitrator will meet with the parties to the Binding Arbitration proceeding to determine the matters that must be included in the last best offer, which may include a fixed price or a price over a time period specified by the parties, a method for adjusting prices over a crab fishing year, or an advance price paid at the time of delivery.

(ix) Submission of Last Best Offers. The parties to a Binding Arbitration proceeding shall each submit to the Contract Arbitrator(s) a last best offer defining all the terms specified for inclusion in a last best offer by the Contract Arbitrator. An Arbitration IFQ holder that is an FCMA cooperative may submit a last best offer that defines terms for the delivery of crab harvested by members of that FCMA cooperative with IFQ held by the cooperative. An Arbitration IFQ holder that is not an FCMA cooperative may submit a last best offer that defines the term of delivery of crab harvested with IFQ held by that person. The IPQ holder that is a party to the proceeding shall submit a single offer that defines terms for delivery of crab harvested with all IFQ that are subject to the proceedings.

(x) Arbitration Decisions. The Contract Arbitrator(s) shall decide among each offer received from an Arbitration IFQ holder and the offer received from the IPQ holder. Each arbitration decision shall result in a binding contract between the IPQ holder and the Arbitration IFQ holder defined by the terms of the offer selected by Contract Arbitrator(s). An arbitration decision applies to all committed IFQ and committed IPQ in that arbitration.

(xi) Announcement of Decisions.

(A) If last best offers are submitted at least 15 days before the first crab fishing season for that crab fishing year for that crab QS fishery, arbitration decisions shall be issued no later than 10 days before the first crab fishing season for that crab fishing year for that crab QS fishery. Otherwise, the Contract Arbitrator will notify the parties of the arbitration decision within 5 days of the parties submitting their last best offers.

(B) The Contract Arbitrator will notify the parties by providing each Arbitration IFQ holder and IPQ holder that is a party to the Binding Arbitration proceeding, a copy of any decision. The decision is binding on the parties to the Binding Arbitration proceeding.

(4) Basis for the Arbitration Decision.

The contract with the Contract Arbitrator shall specify that the Contract Arbitrator will be subject to the following provisions when deciding which last best offer to select.

(i) The Contract Arbitrator's decision shall:

(A) Be based on the historical distribution of first wholesale revenues between fishermen and processors in the aggregate based on arm's length first wholesale prices and ex-vessel prices, taking into consideration the size of the harvest in each year; and

(B) Establish a price that preserves the historical division of revenues in the fishery while considering the following:

(1) Current ex-vessel prices, including ex-vessel prices received for crab harvested under Class A IFQ, Class B IFQ, and CVC IFQ permits;

(2) Consumer and wholesale product prices for the processing sector and the participants in the arbitration (recognizing the impact of sales to affiliates on wholesale pricing);

(3) Innovations and developments of the harvesting and processing sectors and the participants in the arbitration (including new product forms);

(4) Efficiency and productivity of the harvesting and processing sectors (recognizing the limitations on efficiency and productivity arising out of the management program structure);

(5) Quality (including quality standards of markets served by the fishery and recognizing the influence of harvest strategies on the quality of landings);

(6) The interest of maintaining financially healthy and stable harvesting and processing sectors;

(7) Safety and expenditures for ensuring adequate safety;

(8) Timing and location of deliveries; and

(9) The cost of harvesting and processing less than the full IFQ or IPQ allocation (underages) to avoid penalties for overharvesting IFQ and a mechanism for reasonably accounting for deadloss.

(C) Consider the Non-Binding Price Formula established in the fishery by the Formula Arbitrator.

(ii) The Contract Arbitrator's decision may rely on any relevant information available to the Contract Arbitrator, including, but not limited to:

(A) Information provided by the QS, PQS, IPQ and IFQ holders in the fishery regarding the factors identified in paragraph (h)(4)(i) of this section; and

(B) The Market Report for the fishery.

(iii) Each of the Arbitration IFQ holders and the IPQ holders that is party to the proceeding may provide the Contract Arbitrator with additional information to support its last best offer. The Contract Arbitrator must receive and consider all data submitted by the parties.

(iv) The Contract Arbitrator may request specific information from the Arbitration IFQ holder(s) and IPQ holder that will be useful in reaching a final decision. The Contract Arbitrator will not have subpoena power and it is in the sole discretion of the person from whom information is requested as to whether to provide the requested information.

(5) Limits on the Release of Data.

The parties to a Binding Arbitration proceeding shall be precluded from full access to the information provided to the Contract Arbitrator.

(i) Arbitration IFQ holders that are party to an arbitration proceeding shall have access only to information provided directly by the IPQ holder to the Contract Arbitrator for that Binding Arbitration proceeding.

(ii) IPQ holders that are party to an arbitration proceeding shall have access only to information provided directly by an Arbitration IFQ holder to the Contract Arbitrator for that Binding Arbitration proceeding.

(iii) The Contract Arbitrator shall keep confidential the information provided by any QS, PQS, IFQ, or IPQ holders in the fishery and not disclose the identity of the persons providing specific information except as provided in paragraph (h)(6) of this section.

(iv) The Arbitration IFQ holders and IPQ holders shall not release information received in a Binding Arbitration proceeding to persons who were not party to that Binding Arbitration proceeding other than the final result of that arbitration proceeding except as provided for in paragraph (h)(6) of this section.

(6) Information Provided to NMFS.

The Contract Arbitrator must provide any information, documents, or data required under this paragraph to NMFS in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section not later than 30 days prior to the end of the crab fishing year for which the open negotiation or arbitration applied. The contract with the Contract Arbitrator must specify that the Contract Arbitrator provide NMFS with:

(i) A copy of any minutes from any meeting attended by that Contract Arbitrator between or among

any PQS or IPQ holders concerning any negotiations under this section;

(ii) Any last-best offers made during the Binding Arbitration process, including all contract details, the names of other participants in the arbitration, and whether the bid was accepted by the Contract Arbitrator; and

(iii) A copy of any information, data, or documents given by the Contract Arbitrator to any person who is not a party to the particular arbitration for which that information was provided. The Contract Arbitrator must identify the arbitration to which the information, data, or documents apply, and the person to whom those information, data, or documents were provided.

(7) Enforcement of Binding Arbitration decisions.

The decision of the Contract Arbitrator for Binding Arbitration shall be enforced among the parties to that arbitration.

(8) Failure of Contract Arbitrator(s).

Except as provided for in paragraph (h)(6) of this section, the failure of a Contract Arbitrator to perform shall be enforced by the Arbitration Organizations.

(9) Post Binding Arbitration opt-in.

(i) An Arbitration IFQ holder with uncommitted IFQ, may opt-in to any contract that results from a completed a Binding Arbitration procedure with any IPQ holder that has uncommitted IPQ.

(A) All the terms from the arbitrated contract will apply. The Contract Arbitrator may determine fees and a time frame by which a Post Binding Arbitration opt-in may occur if those terms are not specified in the arbitrated contract.

(B) Once exercised, the opt-in results in a contract that is binding on both the Arbitration IFQ and IPQ holder.

(ii) To initiate the opt-in process, the holder of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ will notify the holder of uncommitted IPQ in writing of its intent to opt-in.

(iii) Holders of uncommitted Arbitration IFQ may opt-in to a contract resulting from a completed Binding Arbitration procedure with a person that holds uncommitted IPQ for that fishery.

(iv) If the IPQ holder and the Arbitration IFQ holder are unable to resolve a dispute regarding whether the opt-in offer is consistent with the original contract from the completed Binding Arbitration procedure, the dispute may be decided by the Contract

Arbitrator to the original arbitration that resulted in the contract to which the Arbitration IFQ holder is seeking to opt-in. The Contract Arbitrator will decide only whether the proposed opt-in terms are consistent with the original contract.

(10) Performance disputes.

If an IPQ holder and an Arbitration IFQ holder are unable to resolve disputes regarding the obligations to perform specific contract provisions after substantial negotiations or when time is of the essence, the issues of that dispute shall be submitted for Binding Arbitration before a Contract Arbitrator for that fishery.

(i) Binding Arbitration resulting from a performance dispute can occur at any point during or after the crab fishing year. The dispute must be raised by the IPQ holder or the Arbitration IFQ holder. Arbitration of that performance dispute must be initiated prior to the date of the first crab fishing season for the following crab fishing year in that crab QS fishery.

(ii) Performance dispute arbitration shall follow the applicable procedures described for a Binding Arbitration in paragraph (h)(3) of this section, except that the time frame for the procedure applicable to a performance dispute will be determined by the Contract Arbitrator once the dispute has been raised.

(iii) If a party fails to abide by the arbitration decision, a party may pursue available contract remedies.

(iv) The costs of arbitrating performance disputes shall be provided from the general fees collected by the Arbitration Organizations pursuant to paragraph (e) of this section.

(v) The Contract Arbitrator may assign fees to any party bringing frivolous complaints. Any such fees shall be paid by the party and not from the fees collected under paragraph (e)(2)(vi) of this section.

(11) Quality disputes.

When disputes regarding the quality of the harvested crab arise within the context of an existing contract, the parties may settle the disputes within the context of the arbitration system according to the following:

(i) In cases where the IPQ holder and Arbitration IFQ holder(s) have agreed to a formula-based price for crab but where they cannot reach an agreement on the quality and price of the crab, the IPQ holder and Arbitration IFQ holder(s) will receive their share of the

value of the amount of crab delivered based on the provisions of the contract.

(ii) In quality disputes where the Arbitration IFQ holders prefer to use actual ex-vessel price and not a formula-based price and a dispute arises regarding crab quality and price, the dispute should be referred to a mutually agreeable independent quality specialist firm. This independent quality specialist firm will determine the quality of the crab. This information will be used as the basis for subsequent price determinations. The IPQ holder and Arbitration IFQ holder(s) with this quality dispute shall share the cost of hiring the specialist firm and agree to abide by its findings according to the terms of their agreement.

(i) Other procedures and administrative decisions.

The Arbitration Organizations, Market Analyst, Contract Arbitrator, Formula Arbitrator, and the Third Party Data Provider are authorized to adopt arbitration system procedures and make administrative decisions, including additional provisions in the various contracts, provided those actions are not inconsistent with any other provision in the regulations.