



**Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission**  
1444 Eye St., NW, 6th Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

**CONFERENCE CALL SUMMARY**

**American Lobster Advisory Panel**  
**Monday, January 28, 2002**  
**3:00 PM**

**Participants:**

Heather Stirratt  
Todd Jesse

Bob Nudd  
David Spencer

Robert Baines  
Jon Carter

**Motions:**

No motions were presented during the meeting.

**Summary:**

***Update on Management Board Activity to Date***

Commission staff provided a brief update on recent Lobster Management Board activity. Particular attention was given to the Board's approval of draft Addendum III in October 2001. Staff noted that public hearings were held by states from Maine to Maryland during November and December of last year. Staff also explained that the Board is anticipated to take final action on draft Addendum III during the February 2002 meeting. In addition to Addendum III, staff briefed the Advisory Panel on the status of Amendment 4 and forthcoming discussions involving draft Addendum IV.

***Review and Comment on Draft Addendum III***

The Advisory Panel was asked to provide comment to the Lobster Management Board on draft Addendum III. The Panel offered the following comments by area:

1. Area 1
  - The Management Board's motion allowing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to monitor the percentage of v-notched egg bearing females in commercial catches during 2002 to ensure that at least 50% of the catches are v-notched, is counteractive to the LCMT process. The LCMT for Area 1 should have had the opportunity to comment on this action before the Board voted to implement this option for Massachusetts.
  - The Management Board's motion as described above imposed a very short timeframe on Massachusetts's fishermen to achieve 50% of the desired 100% v-notching rate.
2. Area 6
  - The practice of v-notching has always applied specifically to female lobsters only. Therefore there should be no problem with the addition of the word female under Section 2.1.5.2 for years 2007 and 2008.
3. General Comments (Not Area Specific)

- There was general concern expressed about the circular escape vent sizes proposed in Addenda II and III. The Panel recommends that circular escape vent sizes corresponding to gauge size increases should be further evaluated to confirm correctness.
- There was general consensus that implementation dates for gauge size increases should be at the beginning of each calendar year. The arguments for this suggestion are that fewer individuals are fishing during this time of year and thus the transition would be easier and that enforcement of the new gauge would be easier at this time. The Panel also recommended that NMFS and the LCMTs provide some comment on the selection of implementation dates for gauge size increases in future deliberations.

### ***Review Work to Date on Transferability Workshop***

Commission staff briefed the Advisory Panel on work accomplished to date regarding the transferability workshop. The panel was asked to comment on the preferred date of this workshop. Specifically, the panel was asked to choose between an August or October 2002 ASMFC meeting weeks. It was explained that holding the workshop during one of the meeting weeks would allow Commissioners to participate in this important discussion forum. The Panel noted difficulties in attending a workshop during the prime season for fishing. Staff explained that it would take a minimum of six months to coordinate this workshop and that the workshop would last only one day with ample advance notice. Given this information, the Panel agreed that August 2002 would be better than October 2002. The Panel was briefed about potential speakers for the workshop including:

- 1). John Sorlein (Area 2 representative)
- 2). Steven Smith (Outer Cape Cod Area representative)
- 3). John Sutinen (URI Professor)
- 4). Jim Wilson/Jim Acheson (UME Professor)

Commission staff asked that the Panel consider and nominate additional speakers for inclusion in the transferable trap tag program workshop. The Panel nominated the following individuals as additional speakers for the workshop:

- 5). Joe Fessenden (ME Enforcement)
- 6). ??? (Someone who can speak from enforcement perspective of a currently implemented program)
- 7). National Marine Fisheries Service Representative
- 8). State Board Members (1 or 2; Florida may be able to provide a speaker from a program that is already being implemented in the spiny lobster fishery)

Commission staff promised to keep the Advisory Panel apprised of all future work regarding the transferability workshop.

### ***LCMT Composition***

David Spencer inquired into the addition of "LCMT Composition" to the February 2002 Board meeting agenda. Commission staff explained that the State of Massachusetts has submitted a request for additional membership to the LCMT for Area 1. This request stems primarily from

the perception that inequality exists amongst state voting rights on the Area 1 LCMT. As such, this issue is anticipated for discussion during the Management Board meeting. Commission staff explained that a memorandum, which outlines the requirements for LCMT membership under Amendment 3, problems relative to use of the word “minimum” as opposed to “maximum, and suggested revisions to the text in Amendment 3 for resolution of these problems, would be available soon to stimulate further thought and discussion on this topic.

Advisory Panel members were divided on the issue of LCMT composition. Nonetheless, the Panel agreed that a maximum number of voting members on each LCMT was needed to avoid the problem of having too many people voting on LCMTs.