

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
THE ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY PLAN

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report from Dr. Steve Freese on the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Electronic Technology Plan. The GAP appreciates the work that went into the plan, and agrees that the ability to collect more timely fisheries dependent data in a cost-effective, less intrusive manner could be of great value to managers, industry, and recreational fishermen. At the same time, the GAP believes that many aspects of the plan are still too vague. In particular, the GAP has a number of questions about costs and workload.

While the GAP supports pursuing technological solutions that could streamline current reporting requirements, it is not clear who will bear the costs for these systems. It is also not clear which NMFS staff will be working on the implementation, nor what the associated workload implications will be for current council priorities. If there is to be some kind of cost sharing, the GAP would like to see clear guidelines for how costs will be calculated and how any money will be spent. As a related note, the GAP would like to highlight that technology should ultimately drive costs down. The assumption implicit in this plan is that monitoring and reporting costs are likely only to increase under this plan.

Finally, the GAP notes that while some technologies like voice recognition could make reporting easier, realities on a vessel (e.g. engine and other noise) may prove hard to overcome, and equipment must be designed to accommodate working conditions on vessels. The GAP recommends careful consideration of whether fishermen and recreational anglers are likely to see real benefits before pursuing some of these solutions.

PFMC  
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