

period of 10.8 days with 25.8 hours of transmissions by the LFA sonar array.

In addition, the *RV Cory Chouest* successfully participated in two Fleet operations during this reporting period: (1) Fleet Battle Experiment Kilo (FBE Kilo), and (2) Ship/Helicopter Antisubmarine Readiness/Effectiveness Measuring (SHAREM) 146 Program.

FBE Kilo was a set of experiments designed to test and evaluate certain war-fighting initiatives in an operational environment and were part of the Navy's Sea Trial process, which aims to use technology and innovative concepts in war games, experiments, and exercises in an effort to develop the Navy of the future. In an FBE Kilo exercise conducted during this period, the *RV Cory Chouest* participated along with elements of the 7th Fleet, the *USS Carl Vinson* carrier strike group, and other U.S. and Australian Navy units.

In the area of undersea warfare and theater anti-submarine warfare, the experiment aimed to test undersea warfare planning and command and communications procedures involving local anti-submarine warfare commanders and the theater anti-submarine warfare commander. During FBE Kilo, the Navy planned and executed a series of tests of the SURTASS LFA sonar and Passive Acoustic Systems.

This mission included operation of the HF/M3 sonar and compliance to the mitigation requirements. This operational deployment consisted of a single mission covering a period of 13.2 days with 31.7 hours of transmissions by the LFA array. As a result of FBE Kilo, the Navy concluded that LFA sonar warrants ongoing fleet use and experimentation to continue the LFA program.

The SHAREM 146 Program was a major, multi-national Naval exercise consisting of a single mission covering a period of 7.5 days with 17.9 hours of transmissions by the LFA array.

In summary, during the reporting period of the Annual Report, the *R/V Cory Chouest* operated for a total of 40 days with 95.9 hours of LFA transmissions.

Summary of Monitoring Under the 2003–2004 LOAs

The percentage of marine mammal stocks estimated to be exposed to noise between 120 and 180 dB (re 1 microPa) from the LFA sonar array, both pre- and post-operational risk assessment estimates, were all substantially below the 12-percent maximum percentage authorized under the LOAs. Except for the short-finned pilot whales off Guam with a 1.85-percent risk of exposure, all

other estimated exposures were below 1.0 percent, with most being below 0.50 percent (Navy, 2004). The post-operational incidental harassment risk assessments demonstrate that there were no marine mammal exposures to received levels at or above 180 dB (Navy, 2004). During the seven missions, no sightings of marine mammals were noted by the trained personnel responsible for marine animal monitoring. During 6 of the 7 missions, no marine mammal vocalizations were identified on the SURTASS passive sonar displays. While participating in FBE Kilo, long-range vocalizations from humpback, blue and fin whales were identified on the SURTASS passive sonar displays. However, none of the marine mammals identified during transmissions were located in the vicinity of the SURTASS LFA sonar operations and these animals never approached the SURTASS LFA sonar mitigation (safety) and buffer zones.

The HF/M3 sonar operated continuously during the course of the missions in accordance with the LOA. As required by the LOA, the HF/M3 sonar was "ramped up" prior to operations. During three of the missions, there were HF/M3 alerts, which were identified as possible marine mammal detections. No additional correlating data was available to further verify, identify, or clarify these detections. Because these detections met the minimum shutdown criteria (i.e., multiple detections (two or more) within the same area), the Navy's requisite protocols were followed, and LFA sonar transmissions were suspended a total of four times. Because there were no visual or passive acoustic confirmation, these contacts were most likely false alarms.

Authorization

NMFS has issued two LOAs to the U.S. Navy, authorizing the incidental harassment of marine mammals incidental to operating the two SURTASS LFA sonar systems for training, testing and routine military operations. Issuance of these two LOAs is based on findings, described in the preamble to the final rule (67 FR 46712, July 16, 2002) and supported by information contained in the Navy's required annual report on SURTASS LFA sonar, that the activities described under these two LOAs will result in the taking of no more than small numbers of marine mammals, and the total taking will have no more than a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks, and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stocks for subsistence

uses. These LOAs also comply with the NDAA amendments to the MMPA.

These LOAs remain valid through August 15, 2005, provided the Navy remains in conformance with the conditions of the regulations and the LOAs, and the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements described in 50 CFR 216.184–216.186 (67 FR 46712, July 16, 2002) and in the LOAs are undertaken.

Dated: August 13, 2004.

Phil Williams,

*Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–19346 Filed 8–23–04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 081604C]

Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT); Fall Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: In preparation for the 2004 ICCAT meeting, the Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section to ICCAT will hold two fall meetings.

DATES: The open sessions will be held on September 9, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and October 21, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Closed sessions will be held on September 9, 2004, from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., September 10, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., October 21, 2004, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and October 22, 2004, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Written comments should be received no later than August 27, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hilton Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Written comments should be sent to Erika Carlsen at NOAA Fisheries/SF4, Room 13114, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Erika Carlsen, 301–713–2276.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Advisory Committee to the U.S. Section to ICCAT will meet in an open session to consider information on stock status of highly migratory species and 2004 management recommendations of ICCAT's Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS). The

only opportunity for oral public comment will be during the October 21, 2004, open session. Written comments are encouraged and, if mailed, should be received by August 27, 2004 (see **ADDRESSES**). Written comment can also be submitted during the open sessions of the Advisory Committee meeting.

During its fall meetings, the Advisory Committee will hold several executive sessions, which are closed to the public. The 1st session will be on September 9, 2004, after the adjournment of the first open session. A second closed session will be held on September 10, 2004. During its second fall meeting, the Advisory Committee will again go to into executive session on October 21, 2004, immediately following the adjournment of the second open session. The final closed session will be held on October 22, 2004. The purpose of these sessions is to discuss sensitive information relating to upcoming international negotiations.

NMFS expects members of the public to conduct themselves appropriately for the duration of the meeting. At the beginning of the public comment session, an explanation of the ground rules will be provided (e.g., alcohol in the meeting room is prohibited, speakers will be called to give their comments in the order in which they registered to speak, each speaker will have an equal amount of time to speak, and speakers should not interrupt one another). The session will be structured so that all attending members of the public are able to comment, if they so choose, regardless of the degree of controversy of the subject(s). Those not respecting the ground rules will be asked to leave the meeting.

Special Accommodations

The meeting locations are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Erika Carlsen at (301) 713-2276 at least five days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: August 18, 2004.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 04-19349 Filed 8-23-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 081804C]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (NPFMC) Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BS/AI) groundfish plan teams will meet in Seattle, WA.

DATES: The meetings will be held on September 15-17, 2004. The meetings will begin at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, September 15, and continue through Friday September 17.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Building 4, Room 1055 (BS/AI Plan Team) and Room 2076 (GOA Plan Team), Seattle, WA.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501-2252.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane DiCosimo, Diana Stram, NPFMC; telephone: 907-271-2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Principal business is to review: Draft Economic Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report, draft Ecosystems Consideration Chapter, draft Ecosystem Assessment, draft stock assessments for target-categories, and recommend preliminary specifications for 2005/06.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the NPFMC's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Gail Bendixen, 907-271-2809, at least 5 working days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: August 19, 2004.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E4-1884 Filed 8-23-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 081804A]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Ad Hoc Groundfish Trawl Individual Quota Analytical Team (TIQ Analytical Team) will hold a working meeting which is open to the public.

DATES: The TIQ Analytical Team working meeting will begin Tuesday, September 7, 2004, at 9:30 a.m. and may go into the evening if necessary to complete business for the day. The meeting will reconvene at 8 a.m. and continue until business for the day is complete on Wednesday, September 8, 2004.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Jefferson Room at the Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel, 8235 NE. Airport Way, Portland, OR 97220; telephone: 503-281-2500.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE. Ambassador Place, Suite 200, Portland, OR 97220-1384.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Jim Seger, Staff Officer (Economist); telephone: 503-820-2280.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the TIQ Analytical Team meeting is to review the results from the public scoping plan, review progress on analytical tasks, and discuss the organization and assignments for drafting an Environmental Impact Statement. Although non-emergency issues not contained in the TIQ Analytical Team meeting agenda may come before the group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal committee action during these meetings. TIQ Analytical Team action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and to any issues arising after publication of this notice requiring emergency action