



Minutes
Diving and Boating Safety Committee
February 25, 2019

Voting Members Present:

Brian Bencoter, Ph.D., *DBSC Chair*, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
Matthew Ajemian, Ph.D., Assistant Research Professor, HBOI
Michael Brady, Ph.D., Dept. Chair & Professor, Dept. of Exceptional Student Education
Tanja Godenschwege, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
Elizabeth McNamee, B.S., Diving & Boating Safety Officer (Primary)
Jeanette Wyneken, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Biological Sciences

Non-Voting Members Present:

Wendy D. Ash Graves, CSP, Director, Environmental Health & Safety, *Ex-Officio*
James Nelson, Alternate Diving & Boating Safety Officer (HBOI), *DBSO Alternate Member*

Members Absent: N/A

Division of Research/ Ad Hoc Consult: Jack Ludin, J.D., LL.M., Deputy General Counsel

Committee facilitators: Elisa Gaucher, M.B.A., Assistant Vice President for Research Integrity
Judith Martinez, M.Ed., Coordinator, Research Integrity

Start Time: 2:00p.m.

Adjourned: 3:45p.m.

• **Introduction and Welcome**

- Welcome to new DBSC Chair Dr. Brian Bencoter

• **Confidentiality disclosure**

- It's necessary to be able to discuss things openly in the context of this group with the purpose of those discussions staying within in the group. This helps to preserve the voice of the committee speaking as one committee. As the committee is going to be dealing with cases of non-compliance, it's important to have open discussions about these and other topics. It's critical that the integrity of what is being discussed here remains within the context of the committee. If there are any discussions or questions from outside of the committee, please defer it to the leadership of the committee or the Research Integrity office to be able to assist. The intent is to raise awareness of the level of sensitivity of information shared at committee meetings and that is the purpose of having had all the members sign the confidentiality disclosure agreements.

- **Committee member COI disclosure with agenda items**

N/A

- **Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

- **Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.**

- **Old Business**

N/A

- **New Business**

- **DBSO Float Plan Approval Recommendations**

- There's a requirement on the float plan app form for the PI and DBSO to sign off prior to the actual launch date. It was proposed that the new app have qualifications in place to eliminate the need for the approval process. The 2 DBSO's weighed in on it and produced an organized response to present to the committee regarding approval versus notification.
- DBSO's believe they should have an active approval process, wherein they actively approve each individual float plan. Training is currently only 3 days for the MOCC which is the only training students have and typically do not have enough experience.
- DBSO's experience several issues of non-compliance in terms of researchers: not submitting float plans with appropriate dates, inappropriate shore contacts, or not submitting float plans altogether. The compliance isn't very good and DBSO's are worried.
- With transitions to the DBSC committee and change to a new DSO it is preferable to have more training for researchers and the belief is the program is not at the point where it needs to be where passive approval would be the sensible approach. DBSO would like to have confidence in our program as it is revamped.
- The need for PI approval on the float plan is not explicitly stated on the manual. DBSO states the need for PI to actively approve a float plan not just be included on an email which might be missed.
- The new DBSO and change of the program aims to provide a new level of care which will be increased and will be evident through the new processes and include: removing the burden on the PI's and providing them services they didn't have before, including additional information that may better inform their trip, or point out things that they may not have considered. DBSO's provide the benefit of additional checks and balances.
- Since airboat training requirements have additional hours beyond the MOCC, question regarding whether there should be apprenticeship added on to non-airboat training for experience equivalency. DBSO states that additional training hours still would not be sufficient to adequately capture all environments, weather conditions, etc. other scenarios that researchers will experience in the real world so checks and balances would better capture these specific possibilities.
- Concerns are raised regarding how much experience a researcher must have before being considered qualified enough to supersede the need for submitting float plan. DBSO states that the program and submission of float plan needs to be standard and all-encompassing for entire university regardless of experience level.
- Concerns that active approval might impede research as 5-day window of submission has created restriction if PI has sudden need to go out after the lead time. Proposal is made to minimize lead time to 3-days instead.

- Discussion regarding changes made to float plan and what constitutes a minor or major change. Committee needs to decide what is considered a minor change or a major change that would require submitting a new float plan
- Proposal for a recommended 3-day lead time for a 6-month trial period
- Question is posed on what the 6-month trial period aims to learn and how will it be assessed whether or not active float plan approvals will be necessary or not. DBSO states that in order to determine that float plan approvals may need to be reconsidered is if during the 6 month trial period there is full compliance, and a higher degree of competence and confidence in a university wide program. It would also need to be evaluated what would lead the users to determine that it would be beneficial to do away with the float plan approvals moving forward such as whether it holds up research, creates a burden on researchers

Motion made and seconded to implement a 3-calendar day submission window for float plans in advance of planned activity for a 6-month trial period as well as testing the virtual float plan application. Implementation is contingent on formally outlining what triggers the need for a new float plan. This 6-month timeline will begin when the float plan app is ready for use across the university. At the conclusion of the 6-month trial period, users will be polled on their experience and DBSO's will generate a report of results and their assessments to present to the committee for review to guide needs. Motion passed with 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.

- Action item: Committee needs to decide what is considered a minor change or a major change that would require submitting a new float plan
- Action item: Outline what the criteria would be for evaluating the success and utility of the survey, addressing what we are going to poll the users with; what kinds of questions will be asked, how will those be used to render a decision at the end of the 6-month trial period.

• **Diver Authorizations**

- The AAUS and thus FDA diving manual requires that the board vote on authorizing and accepting new scientific divers into our program who have fulfilled the standards set by both AAUS and FAU. One new scientific diver certification, and 3.5 new Depth Authorizations. DBSO requests vote to officially accept them in their certifications and authorizations.

Motion made and seconded to approve the new diver certification and authorizations. The motion was passed with 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.

• **Non-Compliance Reports**

- Non-compliance issue arose wherein two vessel operators both went on an off-shore project at the same time and listed one another as a shore contact which does not comply with the need for this contact to be someone on shore who has appropriate communication access to track operator's departure and return times, and notifying needed personnel to start searches or send assistance in the event of an emergency. Lab personnel involved apologized, PI has not responded to incident. This lab has previously submitted last minute float plans, gone out without float plans altogether within the same month, and safety inspection revealed issues as well so there is concern whether there are issues within the lab itself. This non-compliance case presents need to include who can be a shore contact on the boating manual and specifically stating what requirements are needed of the shore contact i.e. being on shore, having access to a phone, etc. This case also supports the need for PI to

- actively approve float plans as PI would have been able to capture the overlap. DBSC recommends DBSO seek out feedback from PI to weigh in on the issue.
- Second issue of non-compliance involves lab which is using blanket float plans for trips and thus not receiving active approval from the PI. Recommendation is that float plan instructions be made available on how to complete a float plan and what should be included, who should sign, etc. Regarding non-compliance, PI/lab will be informed that the DBSC interprets the float plan in such a way that an active signature is needed and supports the DBSO in acquiring appropriate signature on submitted float plans.
 - In reviewing the manual and Florida state regulations, a university-wide non-compliance issue was discovered in that the Florida Fish and Wildlife commission requires all persons born after 1988 are required to carry a Florida safe boater's license. There are two exemptions to that rule: 1) having US Coast Guard captain/merchant mariner's credentials 2) equivalent NASBLA card from another state. MOCC used to apply but was dropped from the list and is no longer an equivalent certification. Proposal is made to include this license as a pre-requisite to the MOCC for all FAU boating operators across the board regardless of age. This requirement should be implemented effective immediately and operators must be in compliance before their next boating trip with their card in hand. MOCC certification can still be completed but operators will not be allowed on the water without the Florida Safe Boater's license. This does not apply to kayakers.

Two members leave meeting at 3pm, with a quorum of 4 remaining.

- **Changes to Charter and Role & Function policy**

- Summary of changes made to the document:
 - Layout has been changed so as you go through it, you'll see the purpose of the board under AAUS' standards. More layout than in the previous version with focus on AAUS language
 - Changing the name from Diving and Boating Safety Committee to Diving and Boating Control Board which is language directly out of AAUS
 - Tagging the boating onto the regulatory requirements that have a diving control board to make it the Diving and Boating control board. The regulatory aspect is exclusive to diving and the rest is what FAU wants to maintain the same protections over the boating program
 - Clarification of responsibilities and function for each part of the Control Board including Chair, members, Research Integrity with the addition of EH&S's role
 - The roles of the DBSO and Alternate DBSO have been defined
 - Expanded and clarified the role and responsibilities of the Diving & Boating Control Board outlining what is and what is not the board's role especially in relation to EH&S and authority of the DBSO's
 - Added non-compliance reports and certifying depths for divers
 - Merged the previous Charter into this policy document

- Action item: Committee to review the revised Role & Function Policy between now and next meeting and to be prepared to discuss edits or questions and make a vote at that time.

- **Float Plan Web App**

- Version one is currently being tested at HBOI and has been going well. Plans are to transfer server to Boca for EH&S to be main administrators. A meeting will be scheduled to have further discussion with OIT regarding the status of the app.

- There is a need to move the testing forward at other campuses and it is proposed to test on one or two labs to gain feedback from FAU users.
- Action item: Pilot test the float plan app with one or two active labs at FAU for a few weeks before releasing to the full university.
- **Manual Update**
 - Diving and Boating manuals have been split into individual manuals. DBSO is currently working on the Diving manual and hopes to be done within the next few weeks, updating the manual to comply with AAUS standards. Once this is complete DBSO will proceed to review boating manual.
- **Other Business:**
 - Instructor Trainer for Divers Alert Network (First Aid, CPR, Emergency Oxygen, and related BLS courses) - Tabled
 - Spring semester DBSC meetings – calendar holds have been sent out for the meetings throughout the year which will take place on the fourth Monday of each month beginning at 2pm

Motion made and seconded to adjourn: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained

End time 3:45pm