



Minutes  
**Diving and Boating Safety Committee**  
**May 22, 2017**

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**Members Present:** Dale Gawlik, Ph.D., Chair, Program Director & Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences  
Gabriel Alsenas, Director, Core Facilities  
Robert Coulson, Research Programs Coordinator, SeaTech Research Center  
David Muncher, Diving & Boating Safety Officer, EH&S  
James Nelson, Diving & Boating Safety Officer, HBOI  
Gary Rose, M.D., Associate Professor, Medicine

**Members Absent:** Joshua Voss, Ph.D., Assistant Research Professor, HBOI  
Jeanette Wyneken, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Biological Sciences  
Matthew Ajemian, Ph.D., Assistant Research Professor, HBOI

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

**Environmental Health & Safety Administration:** Arnie Harrison, MHSA, FLHCRM, Interim Director,  
Environmental Health & Safety Department

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

Start Time: 2:06 PM

Adjourned: 3:11 PM

- **Introduction and Welcome**
  
- **Committee member COI disclosure with agenda items**  
N/A
  
- **Review of Minutes from Previous Meeting**
  - **Motion was made and seconded to approve the April 11<sup>th</sup> Minutes**  
**6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained**
  
- **Old Business**  
*DOI-MOCC Training Course Progress*

- Update that the backlog of researchers needing training has been cleared and expectation that the number of registrants will decrease in the upcoming months minimizing the need for training offerings. Currently 16 operators have been certified.
- Discussion of feasibility of providing course offering at southern location. DBSO's evaluated SeaTech and came across issues that make it an unsuitable venue including: lack of safe area to fire flare guns, open water to set up slow speed and at speed maneuvering course as there's a no-wake zone and the area is too narrow. Recommendation by committee to explore other options expanding outside of FAU to places such as lakes and county parks throughout the area.

*Updated distribution list of active divers/boaters*

- Report that there are approximately 8 PIs/labs at HBOI and 7 PIs/ labs between the Boca/Davie campuses. Accurate lists of boaters were provided for HBOI and SeaTech but additional updates are needed for a current list from the Boca/Davie campuses. Chair calls for need to establish better communication with boaters as there aren't so many that the situation is unmanageable. Discussion regarding how to maintain accurate distribution lists as DBSO has no access to student records and is experiencing issues keeping track of students who join or leave the labs. Recommendation to have PI's be contacted annually and asked to provide an update of their lab members. This communication can provide a list of who is currently registered as an active diver/boater to help PI's better report who has left/is new, etc.
- Action Item: DBSO (Boca/Davie): to develop a way to keep track (or better track) active divers/boaters.
  - Motion made and seconded to have a process in place by the end of January 2018 to annually update all boaters and divers. Motion seconded. 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.

*Liability Waiver*

- Changes were made by Risk Manager and sent to Legal Counsel for review who approved. Concerns regarding the proposed language and how it would capture exceptions. Agreement that the statement "All questions for specifics can go to risk manager" captures any special circumstances that may arise.
- Discussion whether changes needed to be made the waiver itself or only to the manual. Agreement that changes must be made in the manual with need for follow up by legal to review the waiver and determine whether changes are needed.
- DBSC Chair and DBSO-Boca/Davie will discuss the implementation and communication
- Action Item: Legal Counsel: Review whether Liability Waiver needs changes to better clarify who the waiver is and is not applicable to

- **New Business**

*Survey of boat operators*

- Discussion of the information captured on the survey to evaluate the needs of the boater's/boat safety program. Committee is asked to review this survey and provide comments/suggestions to the DBSO. DBSC Chair and DBSO will meet to discuss the suggested changes and implementation into the survey as well as communication for distributing to the boating community.
  - Proposal to remove appendices from the manual and instead keep them as separate forms that will be housed on the EH&S website online. Stated benefit would be to minimize the need for the DBSC to meet and vote on changes to these forms as they are currently reviewed by the DBSC because the contents of the manual are the purview of the committee whereas forms are not. Concerns were raised that the committee will still need to approve changes to the forms regardless of where they are housed.
- Action Items:
- 1) Committee- Review and submit comments or modifications to the “Boat Safety Program – Needs Survey” by June DBSC meeting.
  - 2) DBSC Chair and DBSO (Boca/Davie)- Meet to discuss submission of comments to the survey, implementing proposed changes and communication/distribution of the survey to the boating community.
  - 3) DBSO (Boca/Davie)- Have revised survey, communication language and proposed date of distribution ready to present to the DBSC at the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*Application/Intake Form- Boat Safety Program Boat Application*

- Review of the questions presented in the boat application form. Needs to be modified to remove extraneous information that is not necessary for the purposes of the program or committee.
- Action Item: DBSOs- Modify the “Boat Safety Program Boat Application” to remove unnecessary questions and condense into a shorter form.

*DBSC Role and Function Policy*

- Discussion regarding this document being the aforementioned Rules and Procedure and confirming signature authority from the Vice President for Research as this is a DOR initiated policy because the committee reports to DOR.
  - Discussion of whether “imminent danger” should be defined specifically. Several members agreed there is existing language that define it which can be incorporated into the policy.
- Action Items:

- 1) DBSO will look up and provide Research Integrity with AAUS language defining imminent danger to be included into the DBSC Role and Function Policy
- 2) DBSC will look up additional definitions of imminent danger as defined by the State of FL, etc.
- 3) DBSC will review and submit comments and edits to Research Integrity for modification of the policy

### *Subcommittee Report*

N/A

Gabe Alsenas has been nominated to secure chairs for each subcommittee and present the names at the June meeting.

### *Airboat Operator Training*

Proposal was made to develop an implementation program for the Airboat Operator Training module of the DOI-MOCC training course. Recommendation for DBSO's to become trained to teach the module and be able to provide official training for FAU. Concerns raised included lack of airboats or funds to rent airboats, and lack of funds to cover expenses required for the DBSO's to be trained which would run about \$3,000-\$5,000.

Recommendation was made to pay outside company to provide trainer with expertise to offer training once a year and train the 7-8 persons who on average are getting airboat certified at FAU. This again raised concerns regarding cost and limitations of only having one offering a year when certification may be required several times throughout the year.

Agreement to meet in the middle and once certified, have DBSO's shadow the airboat trainers to learn how to conduct the training and grow more comfortable teaching the course. DBSO's would then adopt a program similar to the DOI-MOCC intended for this additional module.

- Action items: DBSOs: Conduct a feasibility study for implementing airboat training course internally or outsourcing training for the estimated 7 - 8 airboat operators per year. Include: pros/cons, hurdles, options for alternatives, cost of hiring external consultant, estimated need of offerings, etc.

### *Tracking Float Plans*

Recommendation to learn Float Plan systems that individual labs have already in place and their tracking procedures of researchers on the water.

Concerns raised regarding the safety practices of tracking float plans to establish a process to ensure that researchers return from their on-water research activities. Seatech has front desk personnel in charge of coordinating check-in/check-out of researchers who submit float plans. DBSO at HBOI has a board at the marina where he can track every boat going in and out. There is currently no float plan tracking mechanism at the Boca/Davie campuses.

DBSOs have met with OIT to discuss and evaluate the use of the Frevvo form developer to capture float plans and automatically populate them into a database. Discussions are in the works with committee member to designing an app on a smartphone that will also populate float plans and have the ability to make changes to the float plan or close them out in real time. Need an integrated automated system as database repository for the float plans and even dive plans that come through Frevvo.

- Action items: Present details of how Frevvo will be used to streamline float plan database and where this information will be maintained, who will have access, etc.

## **Other Business:**

### *Boating Incident Report*

Trailer traffic accident produced damage to the car but not to the boat, uncertain whether insurance claim will be made. In the case that no insurance claim is made, no further action is needed from DBSO or DBSC. Discussion whether this is a matter for the DBSC as a boating incident or whether it is a standard traffic incident. Committee deliberated at which point it becomes a boating incident and whether it begins at trailering, when the boat is on the ramp, when the boat is already on the water, etc. Legal counsel will be asked to make determination.

The second incident raised to the committee involved an airboat sinking in the Everglades requiring salvage. This incident will require an accident investigation including interview of the respective parties involved, reporting of all the facts surrounding the incident to develop a preliminary report to present to the DBSC. Committee will then make a determination on whether any further action will need to be taken.

- Action items:
  1. Legal Counsel: Define at which point an incident classifies as a boating incident rather than a traffic incident.
  2. DBSO (Boca/ Davie): compile and submit incident report for next meeting.

### *All-Hands Meeting for Diving & Boating Research Community*

Proposal to invite diving and boating researchers to an all-hands meeting in mid-Fall (October) to increase avenues of communication between the newly constituted DBSC under the purview of the Division of Research. The meeting will also provide the opportunity to discuss with the researchers all the changes that have been made so far as well as review the results of the boating needs survey which should be distributed in August.

### *Other*

Revisiting the question of who is allowed on vessels at HBOI. Legal counsel will be asked to define these parameters in writing.

- Action items: Legal counsel: Clarify who is allowed on vessels at HBOI.