

**EMS (Environmental Management System) Committee of the NOAA Beaufort Lab**  
Initial Meeting of Committee 22 January 2008

Attendees: Mark Fonseca – Chair (NOS), Joseph Bizzell (NOS), Erik Williams (NMFS), Ronnie Bradley (NOS), Christine Addison (NOS), Roldan Muñoz (NMFS), Jill Fegley (NERRS), and Barbie Byrd (NMFS); Absent – Anna Hilting (NOS)

- 1) The committee discussed the identity of itself. The committee will review current practices, identify needs for improvement, and set forth goals and recommendations including the tracking of the recommendations. The committee will not act in an enforcement capacity. Committee members will also be available for individuals at CCFHR to contact regarding questions, ideas, and concerns. The Chair suggested that members put “Member EMS Committee” on their door to remind everyone who their representatives are. The committee then went around the table for everyone to have a chance to bring forth topics to consider.
- 2) One idea was that the committee should be involved and/or review purchases and contracts to determine how they correspond with our EMS and to make recommendations for improvement. The recycling contract was mentioned as an example. There is a movement by NCCOS (?) to have language in contracts that require those business to adhere to the EMS of the lab.
- 3) The NERRS representative mentioned that we should look at the possibilities to combine some purchases (e.g., copy paper) to enable us to buy in bulk in order to decrease overall cost, packaging, shipping costs, and energy to transport goods.
- 4) The committee mentioned that some details of what the lab already does in accordance with EMS was written and distributed by former Safety Officer, Sabrina Pittillo. This should be reviewed and used as a springboard for future direction.
- 5) The committee discussed the demarcation between EMS vs. Safety, recognizing that the line may be blurred in some instances. The Chair provided a useful way to distinguish the two issues. “EMS is what we do to the environment. Safety is what the working environment can do to us.”
- 6) The committee discussed how to raise awareness and instill action in everyone, recognizing that personalizing the EMS would be useful. Examples provided were the following: to inform everyone what has been done by the lab and by the committee, and to provide information on light bills/kilowatts used through time so employees can recognize how much energy is used at the facilities and what EMS can do to decrease this.
- 7) The subject of our collective carbon footprint was discussed. Should EMS organize and encourage off island activities to offset that footprint? Committee members thought this was a good idea.
- 8) The EMS committee has been formed in a way to offer representation of the different components of the lab (NOS, NMFS, and NERRS). However, the suggestion was made to have a representative of someone involved in contracting/purchasing and maintenance. This could

improve ideas coming out of the committee and allow for some questions to be answered “in situ” by these representatives.

9) The minutes should be archived and available to all employees at CCFHR. These minutes also will be emailed to the entire lab. This will help us track progress that has been made on committee recommendations and provide information to auditors of the lab’s work and commitment to implement the EMS in the form of on-the-ground actions.

10) The committee discussed taking a section of the lab (e.g., vessels) at a time to review current practices, what has been to improve them, and what else can be done. It is likely that a subset of the committee would be involved in the review, reporting back to the entire committee at the quarterly meetings.

11) Joseph Bizzell told the committee that he will be attending a meeting next month of EMS representatives from different centers; they will discuss how to enhance EMS at each of the centers. CCFHR will have to have its own EMS plan that will be signed by the center director. The question was raised as to whether it will be a plan (e.g., the lab will only purchase recycled batteries) or a policy (e.g., the lab will conduct activities in a manner consistent with reducing impacts on the environment). This was not clarified. The goal of the EMS committee is to determine the actions needed to implement a plan or policy.

12) Joseph Bizzell reminded the committee of upcoming audits for NCCOS. There will be an internal audit in June by NCCOS and an external audit between October and December by independent auditors.

12) Jill Fegley (NERRS) requested clarification of how to integrate the policies by NERRS and NCCOS because they have their own requirements instituted by the state. Joseph Bizzell stated that as a partner of NCCOS that those entities must participate in the plan the same as NCCOS or to a higher standard.

13) The committee discussed how to share files/archive with NERRS. The CCFHR Intranet is not available to NERRS. Ronnie Bradley will look into the best way to share information and files.

14) The committee discussed what items will come out of the meetings. Will it develop an EMS implementation/action plan for the lab? This action plan will be ever-changing. It was suggested that the committee use a shared excel file to document the actions it recommends and the process of their implementation.

15) The committee agreed to have its second meeting before the quarterly timeframe. The Chair will propose this meeting after the minutes have been reviewed and distributed to all employees.