

UK's Fleet of Public Sector Research Vessels Working Group

Terms of Reference

The MSCC Working Group overseeing the strategic coordination of the UK's fleet of Large (>50m) public sector research vessels is focussing on improving links and cooperation between member organisations and with industry.

1. To consider options and implications for the future size and configuration of the UK's fleet of public sector research vessels. In particular:
 - options for planned replacement of vessels as they near the end of their useful life, and
 - propose cost effective options for the joint ownership and/or joint procurement of new vessels.
- 1.1 This work should take account of the work of the Marine Industries Liaison Group [MILG] on private sector provision of research vessel capability.
- 1.2 To review the potential for new technologies to reduce the requirement for specialist ship time, considering options for the medium-long term.
- 1.3 To develop appropriate agreements to facilitate sharing or bartering between the organisations involved. This work may include equipment and expertise as necessary.
2. To exchange ship programme information and work to achieve maximum efficiency in ship use. This will include consideration of:
 - the co-ordination across the UK's fleet of public sector research vessels, their voyages and available time
 - combining work on vessels chartered from various Departments and Agencies to optimise efficiency
 - combining programmes where logistics allow co-working (for example, adding additional research targets to statutory monitoring programmes)
 - optimising utilisation and programming of the public sector fleet, including outsourcing where competitive costing allows. This work should include consideration of the work of the MILG on private sector provision.
 - the ongoing and enhanced co-ordination and bartering activities with other Member States and internationally, where efficiencies can be achieved.
3. To produce reports to MSCC that includes a summary of activities to be delivered as a softcopy report in the designated MSCC format.

4. Membership of the Working Group shall include a representative from the following MSCC organisations:

- Scottish Government (SG) [Chair]
- Marine Scotland (MS)
- National Environment Research Council, National Oceanography Centre (NOC)
- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)
- National Environment Research Council, British Antarctic Survey (BAS)
- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)
- Welsh Government
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- MSCC Secretariat.