



# Marine Management Organisation

## Board Meeting Minutes: 4 July 2023 (Public)

Location – Lancaster House, Newcastle

### MMO Board

Hilary Florek (HF) – Chair  
Belinda Howell (BH)  
David Lyall (DL)  
Peter Judge (PJ)  
Terence Jagger (TJ)  
Tony Delahunty (TD)  
William Roberts (WR) via MS Teams, ARAC Chair  
Rob Wilson (RW) via MS Teams, RemCom Chair

### MMO Executive Leadership Team & Business Leads

Tom McCormack (TMc) – Chief Executive Officer  
Jenny Stewart (JS) – Director of Planning and Change  
Michelle Willis (MW) – Director of Finance and Resources  
Pete Clark (PC) – Director of Operations  
Trudi Wakelin (TW) – Director of Marine Development (Domestic and International)  
Steph Campbell (SC) – Director of Digital and Analysis  
Selina Stead (SS) – MMO Chief Scientific Advisor

### Defra

Mike Rowe (MR) – Director, Marine and Fisheries, by invitation

### Additional MMO Attendees

Patrick Schneiders (PS) (items one to four only)  
Daniel Ward (DW) (Global Marine only)  
Katie McPherson (KMc) (Global Marine only)

### Apologies

None

### Board Secretariat

Julia Templeton (JT)  
Ali Haynes (AH)

### 1. Welcome and Introductory Remarks/Declaration of Interests

- 1.1 HF welcomed all to the meeting.
- 1.2 There were no further Declarations of Interest to those previously reported.

### 2. Minutes and Actions of 14 June 2023 Board Meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the 14 June Board meeting were adopted, points of best practice for future minutes were raised.
- 2.2 The board requested that the executive confirm its responsibility in relation to FES, a forthcoming workshop will discuss the business case and governance.
- 2.3 The Board discussed its role in relation to the MMO Climate Change Adaption Report, a statutory reporting requirement submitted to Defra. The group considered the contextual value of the report, with the Board encouraged to attend MMO Goals Workshops with this in mind.

### 3. ARAC Effectiveness Paper

- 3.1 BR highlighted the recent completion of the ARAC Effectiveness Review, sharing recommendations which could support the effectiveness of the ARAC over the next 12 to 24 months; recommendations include enhancing secretariat support to ensure meeting agendas reflect organisational top priorities, further consensus building around the 'deep dives' and the pursuits of ARAC, and focusing discussion to remain strategic. These recommendations would support the objectivity of the ARAC, ensuring the committee acts as a critical friend to the organisation.
- 3.2 On behalf of the Board, HF thanked BR for the report and the work towards completing the Effectiveness paper.

### 4. Board Effectiveness Review

- 4.1 PS summarised the group response to the Board Effectiveness review which took feedback from Board members and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
- 4.2 The review reflected a desire to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Board meetings, clarifying Board remit to ensure that the executive and board sub-committees are empowered to undertake their roles.
- 4.3 The Board expressed a range of views around the need to establish a clear, visible, strategic framework in which the Board operates, including how the Board delegate authority while retaining accountability.
- 4.4 Discussion was held in relation to the volume of workshops and briefing sessions being offered to the Board which could be reduced with a view to retaining the Board focus on the big issues. This was welcomed in view of empowering the executive, and effective use of Board members' time.
- 4.5 The criteria for effective executive/non-executive relations were discussed with a key focus on trust and transparency. It was raised that more attention should be given to the scope and remit of the Board in view of the Scheme of Delegations (SoD) and responsibility for strategic oversight. It was recommended that the next review of the board terms of reference (ToR) takes this into account, focusing on common goals and values, and how accessible, transparent information can be shared with the Board. It was further suggested that Board members should review their individual MMO portfolios to establish clear points of contact.
- 4.6 HF reflected that the discussion and Ways of Working workshop held prior to the meeting had helped to explore and focus on some of the issues highlighted by the review, and how the Board could work together to clarify its role and remit and, alongside the Executive to ensure trust, transparency and confidence.
- 4.7 It was reported that the Investment Committee's Terms of Reference had been previously circulated, that PJ had agreed to chair the Committee, and the arrangements for the first meeting could now be scheduled.
- 4.8 HF noted that the Review had highlighted some very helpful areas of focus for the Board going forward and thanked PS for conducting the Review.

### 5. CEO Update

- 5.1 TMc updated the Board on the strategic and organisational activities since the previous meeting. Notably, this update advised of a series of stakeholder visits and an all-colleague conference being arranged by Planning and Change, and a report into the Unusual Mortality Events in progress with MMO's Evidence Team.

- 5.2 TD updated the Board on recent engagement with the fishing industry and regional IFCAs, primarily in relation to Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs). It was noted that MMO's frontrunner FMPs have been completed. HF thanked TD and MMO leads for the work and time commitment taken to visit the coastal areas and engagement with fishers.
- 5.3 HF requested an update on MMO's 3Cs Programme is brought to the next meeting.

## **6. Defra View from the Bridge**

- 6.1 MR looked ahead to Defra's forthcoming "Fisheries Moment" and "Marine Environment Moment", expected to launch by September 2023.
- 6.2 MR shared that further upcoming announcements including a communications push on the highly protected marine areas (HPMAs) recently approved.
- 6.3 The Board discussed the next spending review (SR) and the MMO/Defra ambition for dynamic, real-time fisheries management. Investment opportunities and industry engagement were highlighted, with the Board agreeing to be collectively ambitious in considering the "gold standard" for fisheries management, the group discussed the starting point for this ambitious review.

## **Operational**

## **7. Global Marine Ocean Mind Contract**

- 7.1 The Board were asked to provide their approval for the MMO to undertake market engagement ahead of going out to tender for global satellite surveillance. The context was provided, noting the historic benefits of satellite surveillance to the Blue Belt Programme have included the effective monitoring of large economic exclusive zones (EEZ), understanding the nature of shipping and fishing movements informing not only IUU activity, but also risk of pollution. The MMO issue intelligence reports, recommendations and guidance to territories in line with surveillance findings.
- 7.2 PJ declared his interest through his role at the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI), noting it would be useful to ensure MMO was engaging with territories in the South Atlantic area in relation to any data already collected from the area.
- 7.3 BH declared a further interest through her role with Digital Catapult, who investigate new technologies as they are developing.
- 7.4 The board discussed the products MMO gains from its surveillance contract, compliance with data protection legislation, the value added to overseas territories and partner countries and ownership of intellectual property.
- 7.5 The Board gave approval for the Global team to initiate the commercial process.

## **8. Proposed Board Schedule 2024**

- 8.1 The proposed Board Schedule for 2024 was outlined. The schedule gives consideration to the recommendations of the Phippard Review, notably the scrutiny, challenge and stakeholder engagement responsibilities of the Board.
- 8.2 The Chair requested that the first meeting of the MMO Investment Committee is scheduled for the autumn of 2024, outlining the objective that all Board and sub committee dates are agreed 18 months in advance.
- 8.3 It was agreed that the Board members would flag any problematic dates to the secretariat allowing alternative dates to be investigated.

## **Strategic**

## **9. Fisheries Export Service (FES) Update**

- 9.1 An update on the FES business case was provided including the route to approval, timelines and governance.
- 9.2 MW drew the Board's attention to the independent assurance/scrutiny that the Defra Red Team's provide in relation to the completeness and feasibility of the business case.
- 9.3 The board commended the work of the project team to arrive at a position where Devolved Administrations are content with the offering as set out in the business case.
- 9.4 MW shared how the benefits of FES will be clearly set out in the business case, consideration to how these have changed over time will be made at the upcoming FES workshop(s), particularly from a traceability, sustainability and

linked market value perspective.

## **10. Corporate Plan**

- 10.1 JS set out the revisions to year two of the Corporate Plan, which take account of the items deprioritised during year one as a result of changing priorities with Defra. The board were asked to provide a steer in relation to the proposed amended content.
- 10.2 Clarification was provided that while REM is subject to consultation with Defra, it is omitted from the Corporate Plan. MMO awaits instruction around its role in relation to REM, with any forthcoming request will be manageable through change control.
- 10.3 The Board fed back on the MMO Strategy and Corporate Plan, asking for a greater focus on outputs to provide the organisation with a greater understanding of its achievements and any delivery gaps and delays, supporting future funding requests to Defra.
- 10.4 Cost recovery ambitions were discussed noting that these are subject to policy and Ministerial appetite during future spending review periods.
- 10.5 The board commended the clarification provided by the Corporate Plan, providing agreement to approve the year two revisions.

## **11 Stakeholder Framework**

- 11.1 JS highlighted the proposal to improve MMO's approach to stakeholder engagement. The proposal includes investigating expert, external support services to bolster the communications expertise available to MMO.
- 11.2 The Board agreed that increasing the communications and stakeholder expertise available to MMO is of great importance, notably to support with horizon scanning and key, emerging issues.
- 11.3 The value of MMO's news bulletin to fishers and colleagues was discussed, it was highlighted that board members should have access to this.

## **Closing Matters**

## **12 AoB**

- 12.1 TMc outlined the forthcoming all colleague call, promoting attendance by board members where possible.
- 12.2 TD highlighted the Evidence team's investigation into Unusual Mortality Events on the English coast, noting opportunity for MMO to join up with devolved administrations to investigate shared issues. Further opportunities to address the co-ordination of science across UK administrations was considered.
- 12.3 HF highlighted that the next Board meeting will be held in the Southwest including a stakeholder visit,
- 12.4 HF thanked everyone for their attendance and called the meeting to a close.