

**Law Enforcement Committee Report  
April 4, 2016  
Doug Boyd, Chair**

**Law Enforcement Technical Committee (Tab L-4a)**

The LETC commented on enforcement implications of the 9-mile AL, MS, and LA reef fish boundary, and on the newly implemented Aquaculture FMP. In response to LETC concerns regarding the Aquaculture FMP, NOAA General Counsel noted that the new regulations require that restricted access zone buoys be marked with the aquaculture permit number, and NMFS has the authority to order the removal of facilities where the permit has been suspended or revoked.

**Draft Protocol for Background Checks of AP Candidates (Tab L-4b)**

The LETC recommended the applicant's driver's license number or state issued ID number be added to the AP online application form. The LETC also recommended that, in the signature and date section, the checkbox to authorize background checks be revised to read, "By checking this box, I consent to allow NOAA/State law enforcement to provide a marine fishery background check to be provided to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council." The LETC noted that some state agencies are unable to separate violations involving federally managed species from other marine fishery violations, so the background checks would be for all marine fishery violations regardless of species. The following motion passed without opposition.

**Without opposition, the Committee recommends, and I so move that the Council approve the Proposed Protocol Form for Background Checks on Gulf Council Advisory Panel Applicants as revised.**

**Other Business – TED Compliance**

On the issue of courtesy inspections being counted toward the percent of noncompliance by the Office of Protected Resources, Dr. Roy Crabtree felt that violations found by courtesy inspections are mostly minor and would not count heavily against TED compliance. One Committee member suggested that there may be a need for a certification program for net makers.

**Officer of the Year**

With Council members meeting in closed session as a committee of the whole, the Committee voted by secret ballot for their top two of the five candidates, and staff tabulated the results. The winner of the inaugural 2016 Officer of the year award will be announced by the Chair of the Law Enforcement Committee at full Council.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my report.