

COMMUNIQUÉ

MARINE NATIONAL FACILITY STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING #84: Wednesday, 12 December 2018

The 84th Marine National Facility (MNF) Steering Committee (SC) meeting was held in Hobart on 12 December 2018. The SC reviewed MNF operations, discussed strategic developments and reviewed schedule options for last round of applications.

Update on independent review of access framework

The Steering Committee has endorsed a proposal to undertake an independent review of the MNF access framework—i.e. the Principles of Access and the Assessment of Granted Voyages. The purpose of the review is to ensure that in moving to full year operations of RV *Investigator* we continue to facilitate access that, over the life-time of the vessel, continues to deliver high impact and high quality science and the greatest possible benefit to the nation.

Dr Bruce Mapstone has been engaged to undertake the review, which has now commenced and will be completed by the end of May 2019. The Review will be informed by consultation across the science community, government, industry users and other relevant stakeholders, including other research vessel operators within Australia and overseas.

Further information about the review, including the Terms of Reference, is available on www.mnf.csiro.au

Voyage schedules

The new funding announced in the 2018 Budget has allowed a significant scaling up of operations in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 schedules, with the latter reaching up to 303 research days delivered.

At the December meeting, the SC considered options for the 2020-21 voyage schedule, following assessment by the Scientific Advisory Committee and the National Benefit Assessment Panel.

The final schedule and the outcomes of the multi-year applications will be published in February.

Incoming MNF Steering Committee Chair

With Dr Ian Poiner's term as Chair concluding on 30 June 2019, Dr Sue Barrell, FTSE, commenced in the role of SC Chair in transition on 1 January 2019, and will formally take on the role as Chair of the MNF SC on 1 July 2019. Sue has recently retired from the role of Chief Scientist, and Group Executive, Science and Innovation, at the Bureau of Meteorology.

Sue is committed to science leadership, mentoring and advocacy, and continues to be actively involved in international efforts, primarily through the Executive Council of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the WMO Commission on Basic Systems. Sue is a Fellow of the Academy of Technology and Engineering and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Dr Barrell, as a highly respected scientist with international science credentials and board experience, is well placed to take the reins in leading the SC into a new phase of growth in the MNF.

Dr Poiner will continue to assist the transition until 30 June 2019.

In conclusion

Since the announcement of the new funding, the MNF, with endorsement and directions from the SC, has been reviewing and improving processes, systems and procedures to meet the demands of the transition to full year operations. This, in combination with the outcomes of the independent review of the access framework, will provide a solid basis to support full year operations from July 2019.

The transition to full year operations has its challenges but the MNF is well advanced in the process and continues to successfully provide essential science infrastructure to the Australian marine science community leading to significant benefits to the nation.

Dr Ian Poiner
Chair, MNF Steering Committee

