



Communique

Marine National Facility Steering Committee Meeting #91

MNF Steering Committee #91

The 91st MNF Steering Committee (SC) meeting was held on 9 October 2020.

MNF 2030 strategy

The MNF's new strategy - *MNF 2030* - has been approved by the SC for release in October 2020. The Strategy has been developed in response to an [independent review of the previous MNF access framework](#) completed in 2019. The review was conducted by Dr Bruce Mapstone and involved wide consultation with our stakeholders, including government, industry and the research community.

MNF 2030 is a milestone strategy for the MNF to guide the use of Australia's dedicated marine research capability for the next 10 years in the delivery of safe, efficient and excellent marine research to benefit the nation.

Building on our significant achievements to date, *MNF 2030* seeks to ensure that access to the MNF is broad and equitable, and that the research we enable is aligned with Australia's national research priorities.

A copy of *MNF 2030* can be downloaded from the MNF website:

<https://mnf.csiro.au/en/About/MNF-2030-Strategy>

Come onboard with *MNF 2030*

MNF will be holding webinars during November 2020 to promote *MNF 2030*.

The 1-hour webinars will provide an overview of *MNF 2030* and explain improvements to the process for accessing fully-funded sea time, including description of the new streams of access.

A Q&A session with MNF staff will follow the end of the presentation.

The following event webpage has further details and webinar registration:

<https://events.csiro.au/MNF2030>

Managing during the pandemic

The Committee noted the significant efforts made to support safe at sea operations, with voyages on RV *Investigator* resuming in late July 2020 after a four months suspension. With input from health and medical experts, a comprehensive MNF COVID-19 Management Framework has been developed and incorporates detailed protocols to manage the various activities pre, during and post voyage.

All voyage personnel undergo COVID-19 testing and daily health checks in the lead up to a voyage.

Strict quarantine measures have also been implemented for interstate crew and scientists. MNF continues to adapt the protocols to meet the needs of upcoming voyages to ensure the safety of all personnel can be maintained.

The Committee is pleased that the MNF has been successful in procuring a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) point of care testing machine that will enable at sea testing for COVID-19. The machine offers rapid turnaround of results for up to 4 parallel tests within 45 minutes and it will be used to test any symptomatic case arising while the vessel is at sea.

Call for Primary Applications in 2021

The Committee has endorsed the timing for next call for primary applications. This will open on 15 February 2021 and will be for applications to cover an 18-month schedule period between January 2023 and June 2024, thereby making up for cancellation of the call in 2020. The period between July and December 2022 has been set aside to reschedule those voyages impacted by COVID which could not be accommodated in 2020-21.

The following webpage provides currently planned voyage schedules:

<https://mnf.csiro.au/en/Voyages/Schedules>

Farewell and thanks to SC Members: Gary Prosser and Martina Doblin

The SC thanked Gary Prosser and Martina Doblin for their dedication and contribution during their terms as Members of the Steering Committee.

The Committee extended their sincere best wishes to both Gary and Martina in their future endeavours.

An announcement of replacement in the two vacated positions will be made once the appointments by the CSIRO Board are finalised.

Dr Sue Barrell

Chair, MNF Steering Committee