

CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSIONERS  
AND CONTRACTING GOVERNMENTS  
IWC.CCG.521

**Draft agenda for the meeting of the RMS Working Group,  
University Arms Hotel, Cambridge, UK, 28 February to 2 March 2006**

Further to Circular Communication IWC.CCG.510 of 30 September 2005, please find attached a draft agenda for the above intersessional meeting of the RMS Working Group. The Secretariat has developed this draft agenda in consultation with Mike Tillman (USA) the convenor and proposed Chair of the RMS Working Group and with Henrik Fischer, Chair of the Commission. A provisional list of documents will follow in due course.

It is anticipated that the majority of time will be spent on item 5, i.e. an exploration of how to proceed with the development of an RMS. Over the years, and particularly recently, a huge amount of effort has been spent by Contracting Governments, the Chair of the Commission and the Secretariat on attempts to develop an RMS. Although significant progress has been made on a range of technical matters and draft Schedule language has been prepared, major policy issues remain and reaching agreement on what an RMS 'package' should comprise continues to be elusive. Consequently, before entering into discussions on any of the potential RMS elements it would be useful to give consideration to:

- (1) whether it is likely that progress on a single RMS package can be made, and if so how this might be done, including consideration of some form of 'high level' meeting; or
- (2) whether the impasse is such that further collective work should be postponed for the time-being but with individual governments or groups of governments free to work together if they so choose.

Written views on (1) and (2) would be most welcome in advance of the meeting as these would help the Chair to structure discussions. Clearly it is for the Commission to decide on the direction of any further work, but the RMS Working Group may wish to develop guidance/recommendations for review by the Commission at IWC/58. Given that there was little time in Ulsan to discuss the intentions of Resolution 2005-4 in detail, submissions from Contracting Governments on their understanding of what is meant by a 'high level' meeting and how such a meeting would help resolve issues are particularly encouraged.

**It would be helpful if written contributions could be submitted to the Secretariat by 1 February 2006 so that they can be circulated to Contracting Governments prior to the meeting.**

Finally, if you have not already done so, please inform the Secretariat whether your government intends to participate in the RMS intersessional meeting. Note that the block reservation of rooms at the University Arms Hotel is only being held until 27 January 2006 (see Circular Communication IWC.CCG.510 for information on accommodation).

Dr Nicky Grandy  
Secretary to the Commission