

# SC/67A/E/06 Rev1

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## Progress Report on IWC Initiative on Strandings - May 2017

Claire Simeone



INTERNATIONAL  
WHALING COMMISSION

# **Progress Report on IWC Initiative on Strandings – May 2017**

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## **BACKGROUND**

The Scientific Committee recommended during SC66a in 2015 that an Intersessional Steering Group on Strandings be established. At IWC66 in October 2016 the Commission considered and endorsed recommendations from SC66a and SC66b, as well as from the Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues Working Group. This report summarizes the work carried out by the IWC Intersessional Steering Group on Strandings between May 2016 and April 2017.

## **SUMMARY**

Current members of the Intersessional Steering Group on Strandings include: Simeone (Convenor), Deaville, Gulland, Herr, Jepson, Marcondes, Mazzariol, Rosa, Rowles, Ryeng, Simmonds, Stimmelmayer, and Wimmer. *Ex officio* members include Donovan, Fortuna, Smith and Ferris.

During IWC66, the Commission endorsed a recommendation to establish a Strandings Coordinator post, and an Expert Panel on strandings to provide guidance on strandings response and investigations.

### ***Expert Panel Selection***

Simeone solicited nominations from the Intersessional Steering Group for experts with a variety of areas of expertise in January 2017. The Secretariat additionally solicited nominations from ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS, as these groups have expressed interest in the work of the IWG, and saw a need for collaboration on the issue of strandings. In accordance with the Terms of Reference recommended during SC66b, the Expert Panel should include representation and areas of expertise from: 1) regional experts in stranding response; 2) diverse agencies and organizations; and 3) multi-disciplinary expertise.

The list of nominees was provided to the Intersessional Steering Group for review, and selection of Panelists was achieved through an online voting process. Nominees that received votes from more than 50% of SG votes were selected to serve on the Expert Panel (see Appendix 1: *List of experts selected by Intersessional Steering Group to serve on first Expert Panel on Strandings*).

Four experts from the United States received >50% of votes, while two nominees from Asia received just less than 50% of votes, resulting in no panelists from Asia. Because Simeone has been serving as the Convenor to date, she volunteered to continue to serve in a Coordinator capacity until an official Stranding Coordinator can be solicited and hired. The Intersessional Steering Group will need to discuss whether a representative from Asia should be selected for the Expert Panel.

Curricula vitae have been provided by all selected Panelists for review by the Intersessional Steering Group, and are available by request.

### ***Strandings Initiative Governance***

The Intersessional Steering Group on Strandings was tasked during SC66b with selecting the Expert Panel, overseeing its first meeting (including the development of the budget), and working with the Secretariat as appropriate.

The Intersessional Steering Group worked with the Secretariat to develop a draft governance structure for the IWC Initiative on Strandings (see Appendix 2: *Draft governance for IWC Initiative on Strandings*). These take into account the interest of several Commission committees in this topic, including the Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee and the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues. The structure outlines guidance for a first meeting of the Expert Panel, which is expected to take place in late 2017.

### ***Stranding Coordinator***

The Intersessional Steering Group worked with the Secretariat to develop a draft job description for the Stranding Coordinator position (see Appendix 3, *Draft job description for Stranding Coordinator*). The job description will be discussed during the SWG. Among the details to be reviewed are the roles and responsibilities of the position, and whether a full-time or part-time position is recommended.

**APPENDIX 1. List of experts selected by Intersessional Steering Group to serve on first Expert Panel on Strandings**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Ocean Basin/Sea</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Organization Type</b>
Dr. Sandro Mazzariol	Italy	Mediterranean	University of Padova	Academia
Rob Deaville	UK	North Atlantic	CSIP	NGO
Dr. Ursula Siebert	Germany	North Sea/Baltic Sea	University of Hannover	Academia
Dr. Frances Gulland	USA	North Pacific	The Marine Mammal Center	NGO
Katie Moore	USA	North Atlantic	IFAW	NGO
Dr. Claire Simeone	USA	North Pacific	NOAA/TMMC	Government agency/NGO
Dr. Raphaela Stimmelmayer	USA	Arctic	North Slope Borough	Government agency
Doug Coughran	Australia	South Pacific	Independent Contractor	Government agency
Daren Grover	New Zealand	South Pacific	Project Jonah	NGO
Dr. Gaby Hernandez	Costa Rica	Pacific/Caribbean	SENASA	Government agency
Dr. Marcy Uhart	Argentina	South Atlantic	University of California, Davis	NGO/Academia
Dr. Milton Marcondes	Brazil	South Atlantic	Instituto Baleia Jubarte	NGO
Dr. Aviad Scheinin	Israel	Mediterranean	Israel Marine Mammal Research and Assistance Center	NGO

# **APPENDIX 2: Draft governance structure for IWC Initiative on Strandings**

## **1. Introduction**

At IWC66 in October 2016 the Commission considered and endorsed recommendations on strandings developed at Scientific Committee annual meetings (SC66a and SC66b) and from the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues. These had taken into account recommendations from two recent IWC workshops on stranding response: (1) *The Investigations of Large Mortality Events, Mass Strandings and International Stranding Response Workshop*, San Francisco, December 2015, focused on response and investigations of cetacean strandings, with a focus on unusual or large scale mortality events and (2) *The Workshop to Develop Practical Guidance for the Handling of Cetacean Stranding Events*, Kruger National Park, May 2016, focused on building global capacity for effective cetacean stranding response, in particular highlighting relevant actions in the Commission's Welfare Action plan.

In particular, the Commission endorsed a recommendation to establish a Stranding Coordinator post, and an Expert Panel on strandings to provide guidance on stranding response and investigations.

This document provides proposals on Governance of the Strandings Initiative, including proposed Terms of Reference for the Expert Panel and Steering Group arrangements. These take into account the interest of several Commission committees in this topic, including the Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, and the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues.

## **2. Terms of Reference and *modus operandi* for the Expert Panel on Strandings<sup>1</sup>**

The Expert Panel will (IWC, 2017, p. 304) undertake the key activities given below.

- (1) Identify and, as appropriate, develop
  - (a) 'best practice' for stranding response, including protocols for how to respond effectively;
  - (b) sampling protocols including how to conduct scientific investigations to meet the needs of the Commission; and
  - (c) advice on how to communicate stranding science and management decisions.
- (2) Assist member states (and regional or national networks) to build strandings response capacity, in general and specifically, through:
  - (d) the development of curricula for training (live strandings response and scientific investigation) and a plan for the delivery of training events;
  - (e) a strategy for handling requests received by the Secretariat, including assistance in coordination of emergency response;

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<sup>1</sup> Support services for the activities of the Expert Panel are outlined in a separate budget document.

- (f) a strategy for the development of information through a variety of avenues including consideration of a centralised data repository and the reporting of unusual cetacean events; and
- (g) opportunities for communication and collaboration.

(3) Provide an annual or biennial report on activities through the Steering Group on Strandings to the Commission (including the Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, and Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues). This will include (a) incidents of unusual cetacean events and responses to these and (b) an estimated budget for each biennium for review by the Steering Group before submission to the Commission.

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed by the Expert Panel and suggestions for modifications submitted to the Steering Group.

## **2.1. MEMBERSHIP**

The Expert Panel should include the following representation and areas of expertise:

- (a) regional experts in stranding response, including those leading the work on the Global Marine Animal Stranding Toolkit (GMAST);
- (b) experts from diverse agencies and organisations (e.g. governmental, NGO, academia);
- (c) multi-disciplinary experts (e.g. logistics, biology, medicine, pathology, epidemiology, toxicology, database management, stranding management); and
- (d) International Stranding Response Coordinator.

The Expert Panel shall select a Chair to serve a [*three-year*] term of office.

The Coordinator shall be a member of and provide support to the Expert Panel. This support will include: contacting the Expert Panel for guidance on strandings events for which advice has been requested; the development of quarterly reports of activities for the Expert Panel members; and development of an annual report for submission through the Steering Group to the Commission (Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, and Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues). These reports shall also be made available on the IWC website.

The initial membership of the Panel will be decided by the Steering Group. Panel members should serve for periods of [*two-four years*] with the objective of [*overall biennial turnover of no more than half of the membership*] to ensure continuity. This shall be decided by the Chair and the Steering Group based upon availability of members, expertise, performance and if necessary, lottery. Should a vacancy arise mid-term, the Chair will recommend a replacement to the Steering Group, who shall decide. If the Chair feels that a member of the Panel is not contributing to the work as expected over a two-year period, he/she may recommend to the Steering Group that the person is removed from the Panel. The Steering Group shall decide.

## **2.2. MODUS OPERANDI**

The Chair in co-operation with the Coordinator shall organise at least one Expert Panel meeting every biennium. The report of the meeting shall be prepared by the Coordinator and the agreed report will be distributed through the Steering Group to the Commission (Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, and Working Group on Whale Killing

Methods and Welfare Issues), as well as placed on the IWC website. The website will also host all associated papers and reports.

Work in between meetings will be undertaken electronically, and via webinars or conference calls.

The Coordinator shall be responsible for arranging all support services to the Expert Panel, and for contacting the Expert Panel for guidance concerning any event which might be occurring. The Coordinator shall provide quarterly reports of activities to the Expert Panel members, and an annual report to the Commission committees.

The Expert Panel may establish committees of Expert Panel members, or their representatives, on an *ad hoc* or standing basis as it deems necessary. Such Committees shall report to the Expert Panel. The Coordinator shall support any such committee.

### **3. DRAFT Terms of Reference and *modus operandi* for the Steering Group on Strandings<sup>2</sup>**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The Standing Working Group on Environmental Concerns recommended that an Intersessional Working Group on Strandings be established in 2015. This group was then charged with developing an Expert Panel to provide expertise on a variety of stranding topics. The Steering Group of the Intersessional Working Group was asked to oversee the first meeting (including the development of the budget) of the Expert Panel.

*It is proposed that the that the Scientific Committee should recommend that the Commission should establish a Steering Group for the strandings initiative with representation from the Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, and the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues. In the interim period before the next Commission meeting, representatives from the Conservation Committee and WG-WKM&WI will be invited to join the existing Scientific Committee Intersessional working group. Draft Terms of Reference are given below.*

#### **3.2. TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

The overall objective of the Steering Group is to guide and assist the work of the Expert Panel on Strandings and co-ordinate work on strandings amongst the Expert Panel, Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues and Commission. This work will include:

- (a) overseeing the first meeting of the Expert Panel;
- (b) developing an initial budget and reviewing subsequent budgets proposed by the Expert Panel for recommendation to the Commission;
- (c) appointing Panel Members (with advice from the Chair and Co-Ordinator) and ensuring appropriate turnover of membership and continuity;
- (d) providing a conduit for communication amongst the Expert Panel, Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues and Commission.

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<sup>2</sup> Support services for the activities of the Expert Panel are outlined in a separate budget document.



### 3.3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Steering Group will include [*up to four*] representatives nominated by the Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee and the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues. The Scientific Committee chair (or his/her appointee) and the Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues Working Group Chair (or his/her appointee) will be permanent members. The Secretariat, International Stranding Response Coordinator and Chair of the Expert Panel will be *ex officio* members. The Steering Group will be chaired by a national delegate [*elected by the Steering Group/ appointed by the Commission*].

### 3.4. MODUS OPERANDI:

The Chair in co-operation with the Coordinator shall organise at least one meeting every biennium, in association with either the Scientific Committee or Commission meetings. The report of the meeting shall be prepared by the Coordinator and the agreed report will be distributed to the Expert Panel, Steering Group, Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee, and Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues, as well as placed on the IWC website.

Other business shall be conducted electronically.

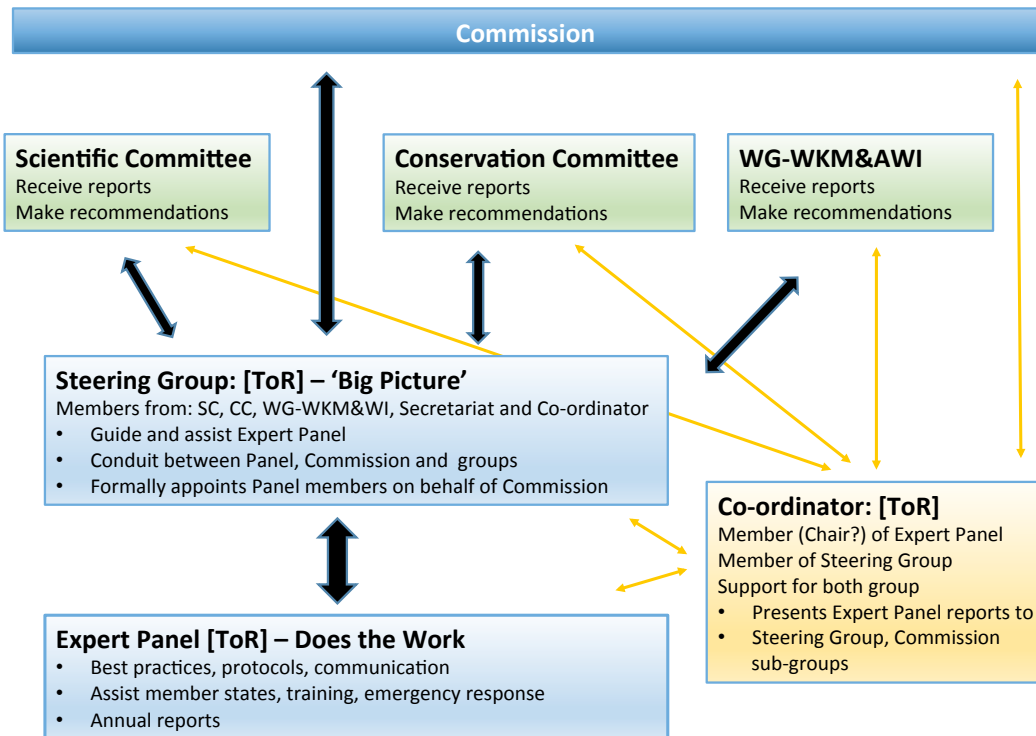


Figure 1. Proposed governance structure for the Strandings Initiative, including flow diagram for communication.

<sup>1</sup> Support services for the activities of the Expert Panel are outlined in a separate budget document.

## APPENDIX 3. Draft job description for Strandings Coordinator



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### INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION Stranding Response Coordinator - JOB DESCRIPTION Employment Details

Department:	<i>Enter Department</i>
Reporting to:	<i>Insert line manager job title here</i>
Grade:	<i>Choose an item.</i>
FG£ salary range:	<i>Enter lower &amp; upper salary range</i>
FG£ UK equivalent salary Range <sup>3</sup> :	<i>Enter here</i>
Contract type:	<i>Choose an item.</i>
Contract length:	<i>Enter here or type n/a if not applicable</i>
Hours per week:	<i>Enter here</i>
This role requires international travel:	<i>Choose an item.</i>
Line management responsibilities	<i>Enter here if applicable</i>
Budget management responsibilities	<i>Enter here if applicable</i>

### Summary of Role

As set forth in IWC/66/Rep01(2016), the Intersessional Working Group on Strandings shall select an Expert Panel, which will include an International Stranding Response Coordinator. In addition to convening the Expert Panel, the Coordinator shall work to further the initiative on Strandings, a joint initiative of the SC, CC and WKM&WI WG.

### Key Tasks and Responsibilities

- Convene the newly established Expert Panel on Strandings
- Organize and convene a meeting of the IWC Expert Panel on Strandings (fall/winter 2017)

<sup>3</sup> Gross - Correct at time of writing. The International Whaling Commission is an international organisation not subject to UK income taxes. Instead, IWC salaries are subject to 'staff assessment' which is paid to the Commission. The UK equivalent salary is disclosed to show what the equivalent salary would be under the UK tax system.

- Organize and carry out capacity building through: ‘in-country’ trainings using IWC-endorsed curricula; apprenticeships for key trainees; and the establishment of advanced training curricula for growing national networks
- Work with Expert Panel to develop a strategy for handling requests received by the Secretariat for training and/or response
- Expand work with Intergovernmental Organizations who share similar responsibility and goals on this topic
- Assist the IWC with its work on other initiatives of focus, as needed (e.g. ship strike, entanglement)
- Represent the IWC in relevant and appropriate venues (e.g. meetings and conferences)
- Work with IWC Secretariat to increase engagement with other IGOs, in order to produce outcomes that advance mutual, relevant goals
- Attend IWC meetings as needed
- Any other tasks that may be required by the organization that are commensurate with the job role.

### **International Travel**

*If this role requires international travel, please give summary-level details here. If the role does not require international travel, please type 'n/a'.*

Completed by:	
Authorised by:	
Date:	