



2011-2013

Activity Plan

for

**The Professional Fish Harvesters
Certification Board**

Message from the Chair

As Chairperson of the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB), I am pleased to present the Board's three-year Activity Plan for 2011-2013. My signature below, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the PFHCB, is indicative of our accountability for the preparation of this plan, and for achieving the goals and objectives therein. Full consideration has been given to those Strategic Directions of Government related to the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, and it has been determined that the Board has no direct role in the accomplishment of those strategic directions.

Since 1997, the Board has been serving the professional fish harvesters of our province, through the establishment and implementation of Canada's first professional certification program for commercial fish harvesters. The Board of Directors and staff of the PFHCB take great pride in the Board's accomplishments to date, and we commit to supporting the realization of our vision, mission, and objectives, as outlined in this plan.

Supplementary to this Activity Plan, the Board is also required to submit Activity Plans for the Appeal Board of the PFHCB and Disciplinary Board of the PFHCB. As Chairperson of the PFHCB Board of Directors, I accept responsibility for ensuring that these Boards meet their respective planning and reporting obligations under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. It is worth noting; however, that the Disciplinary Board has not been enacted to date, and no appointments have been made by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. For that reason, no Activity Plan is being submitted for this planning period. At such time that the Disciplinary Board is enacted the PFHCB will commence the required planning and reporting procedures.

The PFHCB remains committed to its objectives as outlined in the *Professional Fish Harvesters Act*, and will contribute, in every way possible, to improving the professional status of commercial fish harvesters in Newfoundland and Labrador. To that end, I accept accountability for ensuring that all efforts are made to attain the results specified in this plan.

Finally, being a category 3 public entity, the Board will continue to fulfill its obligations under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, on an ongoing basis, by preparing 3-year activity plans supplemented by annual progress reports.

Sincerely,



William Broderick
Chairperson
PFHCB Board of Directors

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1.0 Overview

The Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB) became operational in 1997 following proclamation of the *Professional Fish Harvesters Act* by the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly. This legislation, the first of its kind in Canada, recognizes fish harvesting as a professional occupation. The PFHCB is mandated to register and certify commercial fish harvesters in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The concept of professionalization originated and was first discussed with fish harvesters in 1990. Subsequently, a federal/provincial working group was formed and a model for the certification of fish harvesters was developed. Spearheaded by the Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW) and supported by Fisheries Co-operatives, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DFA), as well as other government agencies and educational institutions, the concept of professionalism in the commercial inshore fishery was the subject of a number of community consultations.

Consultations with fish harvesters at the community level were held in 1991 and 1994 to further refine the professionalization program and criteria. There was over 90% acceptance of professionalization by fish harvesters at these sessions.

When the PFHCB became functional in 1997, the DFO registration system and its categories of full-time/part-time fisherman was replaced with a new certification system, which included three levels of professional certification: Apprentice Fish Harvester, Professional Fish Harvester Level I, and Professional Fish Harvester Level II.

The certification criteria include a combination of education requirements and experience/dependence on the commercial fishery. Existing fish harvesters were "grandfathered" into the new certification system in 1997/98, with those harvesters having at least 7 years of fishing experience receiving the highest certification level (Level II). New entrants to the commercial fishery enter as Apprentices and are eligible to upgrade to Level I and Level II upon completion of a minimum number of education credits and full-time fishing years.

The PFHCB is a non-profit self-supporting organization created by and operating for the benefit of all Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) commercial fish harvesters. The PFHCB currently registers and certifies some 11,000 Newfoundland and Labrador fish harvesters. The Board reports annually to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the minister responsible for the *Professional Fish Harvesters Act*.

2.0 Current Board of Directors

The PFHCB operates under the direction of a 15 member Board of Directors, in accordance with the *Professional Fish Harvesters Act*. Board members are appointed by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture upon recommendation from the respective organizations identified in Section 5 of the *Act*. The current PFHCB board members are:

Bill Broderick	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
George Feltham	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Cyril Dalley	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Dwight Spence	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Mildred Skinner	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Mike Noonan	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Vacant Position	Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Roy Freake	Association of NL Fisheries Cooperatives
Craig Taylor	Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Ken Carew	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Canada)
Kimberly Penney	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Canada)
Paul Dinn	Department of Education
Glenn Blackwood	Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University
Dennis Hughes	Human Resources and Social Development (Canada)
Dr. Scott MacKinnon	Independent Appointee by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture

3.0 Staff and Sub-Committees

Staff – The PFHCB has a staff of four full-time permanent employees, as follows:

Mark Dolomount – Executive Director
Elizabeth Smith – Office Manager
Cheryl Jamieson – Assessor
Velma Barnes – Executive Secretary

Executive Committee – In accordance with the *Act* and By-Laws, the Executive Committee oversees and implements the policies of the Board, as required, between meetings of the Board. The current Executive Committee Members are:

Bill Broderick – Chairperson	Cyril Dalley – Vice-Chairperson
George Feltham – Secretary	Ken Carew – Member at Large
Mark Dolomount (Ex-Officio)	

Education Committee – This sub-committee convenes, as required, on matters and issues related to education, training, and certification upgrading criteria. The current Education Committee members are:

Mark Dolomount (PFHCB)	Jack Greenham (Fish Harvester)
Elizabeth Smith (PFHCB)	Roy Gibbons (Marine Institute)
Executive Committee members (as available)	

Public Relations Committee – This committee convenes, as required, on matters and issues related to public relations, such as the promotion of fish harvesting as a professional occupation. The current Public Relations Committee members are:

Mark Dolomount (PFHCB)
Kimberly Penney (DFO)

Elizabeth Smith (PFHCB)
Executive Committee members
(as available)

4.0 Objectives

The objectives of the PFHCB are clearly defined in Section 4 of the *Act*. All activities of the Board are related, either directly or indirectly, to these objectives. These objectives are:

- (a) to promote the interest of fish harvesters as a professional group;
- (b) to be responsible for defining the standards for professionalization;
- (c) to provide an advisory role to the federal and provincial governments in the formation of fisheries policies consistent with the common good of fish harvesters, namely in the areas of resource conservation, fish quality improvements, a reasonable return to participants, optimizing product value, and the safety of fish harvesters and the public;
- (d) to operate and maintain a fish harvester registration system;
- (e) to develop, evaluate and recommend courses under the professionalization program;
- (f) to issue certificates of accreditation to qualifying fish harvesters; and
- (g) to develop, maintain and monitor compliance of a Code of Ethics;

5.0 Primary Lines of Business

1. *Registration and Certification of NL Commercial Fish Harvesters*

The PFHCB has been responsible for registering and certifying all commercial fish harvesters in Newfoundland and Labrador since 1997. Professional Fish Harvesters are required to submit a certification renewal application form annually and pay the annual registration fee of \$50.00. New Entrants are required to file a new entrant application form and pay the annual registration fee of \$50.00.

Upon approval of their application for certification, fish harvesters are issued a certification card inscribed with their name, PFH #, and certification level. The entire application/certification process is conducted in accordance with the *Professional Fish Harvesters Act*, the PFHCB Certification Criteria, and the PFHCB By-Laws.

Collection of annual registration fees is the PFHCB's primary source of operating revenue. Approximately 11,000 fish harvesters were registered with the PFHCB in 2010.

2. *Delivery of Basic Safety Training (MED A3)*

Apprentice fish harvesters are required by Board criteria to complete a Basic Safety Training course prior to commencing their second fishing season. In 2002, the Board developed and introduced a Basic Safety Training (MED A3) course for Apprentice Fish Harvesters and new entrants to the fishing industry.

The five-day basic safety MED A3 course includes two days of General Seamanship and Stability, one day of Marine Emergency Duties (MED A3), and two days of Marine Advance First Aid. Harvesters preferring to complete the MED A1 course at the Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University (MI) will be exempt, but the course must be completed prior to commencing their second fishing season.

This course also meets the federal Transport Canada mandatory Marine Emergency Duties (MED) requirement for harvesters on vessels fishing inside 25 miles (less than 150 GRT). As a result of Transport Canada's April 1st, 2008 MED deadline, many Level I and Level II fish harvesters have also taken the course in (or near) their communities in the past several years in order to fulfill this federal requirement.

3. *Assisting Fish Harvesters with Certification Upgrading and Skills Development*

Fish harvesters who wish to upgrade their certification level from Apprentice to Level I, or from Level I to Level II, must complete a minimum number of education credits and full-time fishing years, as per PFHCB criteria. Fish harvesters pursuing certification upgrading and skills development receive a range of information, guidance and advice from PFHCB staff.

While the vast majority of fisheries training is delivered by the Marine Institute, the Board does deliver a Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) program, which enables fish harvesters to acquire credits toward certification upgrading.

PLAR was introduced by the Board, as a pilot project, in 2000. This program provides an opportunity for experienced Apprentice and Level I harvesters to obtain credit from prior learned fishing skills and earn a higher certification level. Harvesters who avail of PLAR must be able to successfully demonstrate their prior learned skills through an assessment by a trained Level II professional fish harvester assessor. Up to 75 education credits can be attained if an individual successfully challenges and passes the ten skill sets available.

4. *Public Relations and Advocacy Initiatives*

Through its Public Relations committee, and in partnership with other key industry groups such as the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH), the Board is continually engaged in a variety of activities related to Public Relations and Advocacy on behalf of the professional fish harvesters of Newfoundland & Labrador.

Promoting commercial fish harvesting as a professional occupation, including raising awareness about the skill requirements, technological advancements, and economic value of the industry, is central to the Board's overall activity plan. This is achieved through ongoing initiatives utilizing a variety of media sources.

Additionally, the Board plays an advisory role to the federal and provincial governments in an effort to achieve public policy that is consistent with the overall good of fish harvesters and their industry. In this regard, key areas that the Board is currently working in are Safety, Fisheries Licensing, Certification & Training, and Skills Development.

6.0 Values

The staff members of the PFHCB work directly for, and on behalf of, certified professional fish harvesters and their industry. Board activities, including the work of Board members, staff and sub-committee members, are focused on improving the lot of certified professional fish harvesters - as individuals and as a collective group. For these reasons, the values of the PFHCB are focused on the fish harvesters it represents, as follows:

Respect – Representatives of the PFHCB will endeavor to increase their understanding and appreciation of the commercial fishery, the significant contribution it makes to our local, provincial and national economies, and the high degree of skill and knowledge required to be successful in the fish harvesting profession.

Confidentiality – Representatives of the PFHCB will treat all personal information provided to the Board by certified fish harvesters in strict confidence. Personal information of certified fish harvesters will be used only for the purpose of determining certification status, and shall not be shared without written permission.

Impartiality – Representatives of the PFHCB will remain unbiased in implementing and administering Board criteria, activities and programs. No individual's needs shall compromise, or take precedence over, the collective interests of all professional fish harvesters.

Service and Quality – The long-term success of the PFHCB in meeting its objectives depends on its ability to provide value to certified fish harvesters. This will be achieved by establishing and maintaining an office staff that demonstrates professionalism, courtesy and competence when dealing with clients. The Board and staff will also demonstrate fiscal responsibility, by way of an annual external audit.

7.0 Primary Clients

The primary clients of the PFHCB are the 11,000 certified professional fish harvesters of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Board's objectives and activities are focused directly on certified commercial fish harvesters and their industry.

Additionally, in carrying out its activities and meeting its objectives, the PFHCB consults and partners with various key industry groups and agencies, including:

Association of Newfoundland & Labrador Fisheries Cooperatives
Canada Customs and Revenue Agency
Canadian Coast Guard

Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters
Canadian Red Cross
Canadian Sealers Association
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Department of Youth Services & Post Secondary Education
Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW/CAW)
Fisheries and Marine Institute of Memorial University
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Labour Market Development Secretariat
Memorial University
Service Canada
Transport Canada
Workplace Health, Safety & Compensation Commission

8.0 Vision

The PFHCB vision is a viable Newfoundland and Labrador commercial fishery, sustained by independent professional fish harvesters committed to demonstrating appropriate knowledge, skills and commitment to safely and successfully meet the human resources needs of their industry, from which they can maintain their livelihood with respect and dignity.

The PFHCB also shares the vision of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, as it pertains to the harvesting sector of the industry, through its mandate to enhance professionalism in the commercial fishery. The vision of the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture is sustainable fishing and aquaculture industries that achieve their optimum economic contribution to the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

9.0 Mission

The mission statement of the PFHCB represents the key longer-term results that the PFHCB works toward in fulfilling its objectives, as outlined in the *Act*. The Board's primary objectives are related to the certification and overall professionalization of NL commercial fish harvesters. The mission statement is accompanied by measures and indicators to assist in monitoring and evaluating success.

By 2016, the PFHCB will have continued to make advancements in the areas of fisheries training and public awareness of professional fish harvesters and their occupation.

Measure #1 – Continued to make advancements in the area of fisheries training.

Indicators: Expanded training opportunities for Apprentice and Level I fish harvesters who chose to pursue Level II status.

Improved access to training opportunities for professional fish harvesters required to meet federal Transport Canada fisheries-related certification requirements.

Worked with Transport Canada, Marine Institute, and other industry organizations to increase fish harvester awareness of their professional certification and training requirements.

Identified funding sources to assist professional fish harvesters pursuing fisheries training.

Measure #2 – Continued to make advancements in the area of public awareness of professional fish harvesters and their industry.

Indicators: Engaged in activities aimed at increased public awareness of the skills and knowledge required to be a certified professional fish harvester.

Engaged in activities aimed at increased public awareness of the annual socio-economic value of the inshore commercial fishery.

10.0 Strategic Issues

The issues identified in this Activity Plan are a reflection of the challenges that continue to face our commercial fishery as a result of many factors, including public perception of fish harvesters and their industry, and a greater emphasis on fisheries training by the federal and provincial governments.

For this planning period, the Board has identified three primary issues and subsequent objectives by which it intends to address each issue. Each objective is accompanied by measures and indicators to assist in monitoring and evaluating success.

Issue #1 – Mandatory Training and Certification

The new revised Marine Personnel Regulations of the *Canada Shipping Act* came into force on July 1, 2007, and have had a significant impact on NL fishing crews. These new regulations, being phased in over an eight year period (2007-2015), will significantly increase the level of training and certification required by Canadian fishing crews. For example, certified Masters and Officers of the Watch, previously only required on vessels >60 Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT), will now be mandatory on all vessels >15 (GRT) by November 7, 2012. Additionally, by November 7, 2015, operators of vessels <15GRT will also require Small Vessel Operator Proficiency (SVOP) training.

These added federal training and certification requirements, coupled with an existing shortage of certified fishing masters and mates, will make it increasingly difficult for NL owner/operators to acquire the required certification, and find and retain certified crewmembers.

Objective #1: By December 31, 2011, the PFHCB will have continued its support of fish harvesters in understanding and fulfilling their Transport Canada mandatory training and certification requirements.

Measure #1: Continued its support of fish harvesters in understanding Transport Canada mandatory training and certification requirements.

Indicators: Attended Transport Canada's Canadian Marine Advisory Council meetings, and other meetings and sessions as required, in order to attain detailed information on federal training and certification requirements.

Disseminated information regarding mandatory federal training and certification requirements.

Measure #2: Continued its support of fish harvesters fulfilling their Transport Canada mandatory training and certification requirements.

Indicators: Delivered MED A3 training courses to fish harvesters.

Assisted the Marine Institute with registration and delivery of MED A1 training, Fishing Master training, Officer of the Watch training, and ROC-MC training.

Assisted fish harvesters in securing financial support for tuition fees related to mandatory training requirements.

Objective #2: By December 31, 2012, the PFHCB will have continued its support of fish harvesters in understanding and fulfilling their Transport Canada mandatory training and certification requirements.

Objective #3: By December 31, 2013, the PFHCB will have continued its support of fish harvesters in understanding and fulfilling their Transport Canada mandatory training and certification requirements.

Issue #2 – Strategic Direction for Communications

In recent years there has been a growing sense of negativity surrounding the harvesting sector of the province's commercial fishery. This negativity has been recognized by the provincial Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture as an issue that jeopardizes the future of our inshore fishery and an issue that must be addressed.

The PFHCB has a mandate around communication and public relations that includes the promotion of fish harvesting as a professional occupation, and the NL fishing industry as a valuable contributor to our local and provincial economies. Since 2008, in an effort to address a number of issues, including the issue of negativity surrounding the fishing industry, the PFHCB has been working on the development and implementation of a strategic communications plan which identifies key messages, target audiences, and specific communications activities.

Objective #1: By December 31, 2011, the PFHCB will have implemented elements of its strategic communications plan aimed primarily at improving the image of professional inshore fish harvesters in Newfoundland & Labrador and their industry.

Measure: Implemented elements of its strategic communications plan aimed primarily at improving the image of professional inshore fish harvesters in Newfoundland & Labrador and their industry.

Indicators: Created and distributed a variety of multi-media materials, as directed by the Communications Committee and/or Executive Committee, aimed specifically at improving the image of professional inshore fish harvesters and their industry.

Objective #2: By December 31, 2012, the PFHCB will have continued implementing elements of its strategic communications plan aimed primarily at improving the image of professional inshore fish harvesters in Newfoundland & Labrador and their industry.

Objective #3: By December 31, 2013, the PFHCB will have continued implementing elements of its strategic communications plan aimed primarily at improving the image of professional inshore fish harvesters in Newfoundland & Labrador and their industry.

Issue #3 – Certification and Training of Commercial Sealers

It has become widely accepted among sealing industry stakeholders that effective training is key to achieving the most humane, viable and professional hunt possible. Such training will form the foundation on which the industry begins to rebuild its international reputation and markets. Furthermore, there has also been strong support for sealers, who currently have no formal training or certification requirements/options, to move toward professional certification.

In 2010, the PFHCB, acting on a mandate received from sealing industry stakeholders, has begun working with sealing industry representatives on the development of a training and certification model for NL sealers. This work will continue throughout this planning period.

Objective #1: By December 31, 2011, the PFHCB will have assisted the sealing industry with the development and delivery of essential training for commercial sealers, and with the development of a professional certification program for sealers.

Measure #1: Assisted the sealing industry with the development and delivery of essential training for commercial sealers.

Indicators: Participated, with the support of key sealing industry representatives, in the development of training materials for commercial sealers.

Participated, with the support of key sealing industry representatives, in the delivery of essential training to commercial sealers.

Measure #2: Assisted the sealing industry with the development of a professional certification program for sealers.

Indicators: Initiated consultations with sealing industry stakeholders on the development of a professional certification system for commercial sealers.

Worked with key sealing industry representatives to assess consultation feedback in order to determine next steps for developing a professional certification system for commercial sealers.

Objective #2: By December 31, 2012, the PFHCB will have continued assisting the sealing industry in the development and delivery of essential training for commercial sealers, and the development of a professional certification program for sealers.

Objective #3: By December 31, 2013, the PFHCB will have continued assisting the sealing industry in the development and delivery of essential training for commercial sealers, and the development of a professional certification program for sealers.

11.0 Contact Information

To inquire or comment on the contents of this Activity Plan or for additional information about the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board please contact:

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