



Review of SAB Working Groups

A Presentation to the
NOAA Science Advisory Board

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Outline



- Purpose
- Issue
- Highlights from Review
- Next Steps



Purpose

- To present the results of a review of SAB working groups including changes to the Terms of Reference and continuation of the group



Issue



The SAB Subcommittee Concept of Operations (ConOps) was revised in early 2017 to include a review of standing working groups every two years in conjunction with the renewal of the SAB charter.



Issue

The ConOps states that the reviews will result in a recommendation from the SAB for whether NOAA should maintain working groups, make suggested revisions to the Terms of Reference (TOR) and other changes to working group operations.



Review Process

Data on Working Group reports and meetings held from 2012-2017 were sent to NOAA liaisons, Chairs and SAB liaisons for each working group.

Questions that varied somewhat by respondent included: impact of reports, whether the respondent thought reports were fully considered by the SAB or NOAA, continuation of the group and whether changes are needed in the group's TOR.



Results of Review-Continuation



- NOAA and SAB liaisons were asked if they recommend the group to continue. All liaisons recommended continuation.

NOTE: The EISWG is mandated under WRFIA and so the continuance question was not applicable.



Results of Review-TOR change



Changes recommended for TORs:

- CWG - TOR was revised once and is still relevant but it may be a good time to revisit to change and/or narrow the TOR.
- DAARWG - NOAA liaison and Chair recommend a number of changes; TOR has not been revised since the group began.



Results of Review-TOR change



Changes recommended for TORs:

- EISWG –Agreement by all respondents that the TOR must be revised to reflect new mandates under the Weather Research and Forecasting Act.
- ESMWG - General agreement that the TOR is still relevant with no major changes needed.



Results of Review- Impact and Consideration of Reports



- CWG - Has not had a report since 2009 so the questions on impacts of the reports on science portfolio and if reports were fully considered by SAB/NOAA are not relevant.
- DAARWG - The NOAA liaison gave examples of the impact of the reports on the science portfolio; there was general agreement that reports were fully considered by the SAB and NOAA.



Results of Review- Impact and Consideration of Reports



- EISWG-There was a mixed reaction to the impact of reports on the science portfolio; the NOAA liaison responded that the 2016 report on the review of NOAA partnership policy has been put on hold due to the change in Administration; similarly the Co-Chair reported that some EISWG members were less positive about the impact of their reports on NOAA science portfolio. On the full consideration of reports by the SAB and NOAA, the Chair said for the most part the SAB has fully considered the reports but the NOAA Administration has been slow to take action.



Results of Review- Impact and Consideration of Reports



- ESMWG- All of the reports have been timely, if not ahead of practices in NOAA's portfolio. Details of how the reports had an impact are seen in the NOAA responses to the findings. There was general agreement that the reports had been fully considered by the SAB and NOAA, however one NOAA liaison stated that while the working group reports are at a high level in NOAA, they are not necessarily known at mid- and lower levels. Additional efforts could be made to better disseminate the WG's reports; this is something the program liaisons should consider.



Results of Review-Best Practices and Changes to WG Processes



- Some highlights on suggested changes:
 - Clarifying and strengthening the role of the SAB and NOAA liaisons;
 - Providing SAB top-down guidance on working group activities;
 - Adding a verbal report on the working group quad charts at SAB meetings
 - Providing support for planning across working groups to discuss synergies and priorities.
 - Clarifying/simplifying the approval process for new members.
- The responses to questions on best practices and changes in working group operations are in the context of operating procedures in the Working Group Concept of Operations and do not need to be approved by NOAA.



Next Steps

- SAB considers the Working Group Review Report and sends recommendations to NOAA for final action on: continuation of groups, changes to be made to Terms of Reference, and any other recommendations, as appropriate.
- NOAA completes review of the report and sends decisions to SAB for action.
- SAB sends action items to working groups with reports on completed actions due in six months.