

**FISHERMEN AND SCIENTISTS RESEARCH SOCIETY  
PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Halifax -- June 16, 2003

**11 COMMERCIAL LONGLINE VESSELS PARTICIPATING IN GROUND FISH SENTINEL PROGRAM**

Eleven commercial longline vessels have been selected to participate in the 2003/2004 4VsW Sentinel Program, a joint project of the Fishermen and Scientists Research Society (FSRS) and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The Program is a continuation of the Sentinel Program begun in 1995. The FSRS is a non-profit partnership between fishermen and scientists, whose objective is to learn more about the health of fish stocks in the Maritimes Region.

The 2003/2004 4VsW Sentinel Program consists of two components. One is a Sentinel (Stratified Random) Survey in which fishing locations are preselected randomly by computer. The second is a Commercial Index which will permit a limited amount of commercial fishing effort following fishermen's customary fishing patterns. Scientists would like to establish a series of catch rate and abundance indices which will be valuable in the assessment and management of primary groundfish resources. In addition to providing valuable data, Sentinel Programs foster a closer working relationship between fishermen and fisheries scientists and managers.

Applications to participate in the Program were reviewed on May 30, 2003 in Dartmouth by a Selection Committee representing a cross-section of interested parties, including representatives from the FSRS, the Guysborough County Inshore Fishermen's Association and the Halifax West Commercial Fishermen's Association. Mr. Clarrie MacKinnon served as independent chair of the Committee.

The Selection Committee reviewed all applications for agreed upon criteria, including personnel and personal suitability, violations/sanctions history, references, past participation, general experience, and vessel safety and suitability. "With fewer applications, the work of the Selection Committee has become less difficult but we continue to use a point rating system that ensures fairness and integrity," says Chair Clarrie MacKinnon. "The process has been in place since 1995, much longer than any of us ever expected. The information obtained through the Sentinel Program is very valuable and the Selection Committee urges more interest. Despite the smaller number of applicants, those selected for 2003/2004 continue the tradition of top quality, exceptional participants.

Participating in the 2003/2004 4VsW Sentinel Program are: Nick Henneberry - Sambro, Paul Drew - Sambro, Rick Jewers - Ecum Secum, James Baker - East Jeddore, Randy Boutilier - Mushaboom, James Gray - Sambro, Dale Garrison - Sambro, Patrick Gray - Sambro, Victor Gray - Sambro, Jerry Creamer - Phillips Harbour, and Edwin Kirk - Sambro.

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