

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES INTEGRATED OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEMBERSHIP BALANCE PLAN**

(1) **Name.** United States Integrated Ocean Observing System Advisory Committee

(2) **Authority.** The United States Integrated Ocean Observing System Advisory Committee (Committee) was established by the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere in the Under Secretary's capacity as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator as directed by Section 12304(d) of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (the Act), as amended by Section 103 of the Coordinated Ocean Observations and Research Act of 2020 (COORA) (Public Law 116-271, Title I). 33 U.S.C. § 3603(d). The Committee shall function solely as an advisory body and in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App.

(3) **Mission/Function.** The Committee, per Section 3603(d)(2) of Title 33, United States Code, shall advise the NOAA Administrator and the Interagency Ocean Observing Committee¹ (IOOC) on:

- administration, operation, management, and maintenance of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (System), including integration of Federal and non-Federal assets and data management, data sharing, and communication aspects of the System, and fulfillment of the purposes set forth in 33 U.S.C. § 3601;
- expansion and periodic modernization and upgrade of technology components of the System;
- identification of end-user communities, their needs for information provided by the System, and the System's effectiveness in disseminating information to end-user communities and the general public;
- a national surface current mapping network designed to improve fine scale sea surface mapping using high frequency radar technology and other emerging technologies to address national priorities, including Coast Guard search and rescue operation planning and harmful algal bloom forecasting and detection that— (I) is comprised of existing high frequency radar and other sea surface current mapping infrastructure operated by national programs and regional coastal observing systems; (II) incorporates new high frequency radar assets or other fine scale sea surface mapping technology assets, and other assets needed to fill gaps in coverage on United States coastlines; and (III) follows a deployment plan that prioritizes closing gaps in high frequency radar infrastructure in the United States, starting with areas

¹ The IOOC is established at 33 U.S.C. § 3603(c)(2).

demonstrating significant sea surface current data needs, especially in areas where additional data will improve Coast Guard search and rescue models;

- fleet acquisition for unmanned maritime systems for deployment and data integration to fulfill the purposes of the Act, as amended;
- an integrative survey program for application of unmanned maritime systems to the real-time or near real-time collection and transmission of sea floor, water column, and sea surface data on biology, chemistry, geology, physics, and hydrography;
- remote sensing and data assimilation to develop new analytical methodologies to assimilate data from the System into hydrodynamic models;
- integrated, multi-State monitoring to assess sources, movement, and fate of sediments in coastal regions;
- a multi-region marine sound monitoring system to be— (I) planned in consultation with the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of the Navy, and academic research institutions; and (II) developed, installed, and operated in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of the Navy, and academic research institutions; and
- any other purpose identified by the Administrator, the Council², or the IOOC.

(4) Points of View. The Committee shall be composed of approximately fifteen members appointed by the NOAA Administrator. Members shall be qualified by education, training, and experience to evaluate scientific and technical information related to the design, operation, maintenance, or use of the System, or use of data products provided through the System. Expertise, as well as sector representation, needed to accomplish U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee tasks and provide necessary perspectives include the following.

- Scientific institutions
- Marine Technology industries
- Ocean and Great Lakes observing systems
- Coastal & Great Lakes user communities (Shellfish, Finfish, Aquaculture, Ocean Energy)
- Non-governmental organizations (Ocean conservation, recreation, non-consumptive use)

² The Committee may advise the Council upon request pursuant to 33 U.S.C. § 3603(d)(1) and (d)(2)(E). The Council refers to the Ocean Policy Committee established by Section 8932 of Title 10, as amended by P.L. 116-283 (2021) (formerly named the National Ocean Research Leadership Council). The functions of the Council are described at 33 U.S.C. § 3603(c)(1).

- State, Local, Tribal interests
- National/International Ocean Leadership
- Modeling (Ocean & Great Lakes Simulation and Prediction)
- Data management and data sharing practices

Membership Balance is not static and may change.

(5) Other Balance Factors. Appointments should consider geography and experience working productively with committees and workgroups. Appointments shall be made without discrimination on the basis of age, ethnicity/race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or cultural, religious, or socioeconomic status.

(6) Candidate Identification Process.

a) Process used to identify a cross-section of candidates directly affected, interested, and qualified

The U.S. IOOS Office publishes a Federal Register Notice (FRN) to solicit applications at least once every three years. The call for applications is posted on the ioos.noaa.gov public website. To ensure a robust a pool of candidates, NOAA uses outreach communications such as press advisories, emails, website posts, newsletters, blogs, and social media. The vacancy announcements are distributed to professional associations and societies, industry, academia, current and prior U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee members, minority organizations, and other areas where desired expertise can be solicited. Membership is determined using criteria described above (both expertise and other balance factors) to address the Committee needs for expertise and balance. Once approved by the NOAA Administrator, these nominees are then offered appointment and begin the background check process upon acceptance of the offer of appointment.

b) Identify the agency staff involved in determining balance on the Federal advisory committee

A review group from NOAA and the IOOC reviews the candidates and develops recommended and alternative candidates for review by the Assistant Administrator of the National Ocean Service and the NOAA Administrator. The review group includes the Director of the U.S. IOOS Office, members of the IOOC, and program staff from the U.S. IOOS Office.

c) Briefly describe how Federal advisory committee vacancies, if any, are handled by the agency.

In the event of a vacancy, the review group described above will consult to confirm the vacancy should be filled by the a person with expertise and experience comparable to the previous member who formerly occupied the seat, or to develop a rationale for modifying the balance on the Committee. Once the expertise/experience sought has been confirmed or modified, the U.S. IOOS Office follows the recruiting process described above. A vacancy appointment shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacancy, and an individual so appointed may be subsequently

appointed for two full three-year terms if the remainder of the unexpired term is less than one year.

d) State the membership term limit of Federal advisory committee members, if applicable.

Members are appointed for one three-year term, renewable once. Member terms may be staggered to prevent the loss of institutional memory when terms expire, with the goal of no more than one half of the Committee's membership terms expiring annually.

(7) Subcommittee Balance. The U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee makes a proactive effort to ensure balance on any subcommittees. Members are asked for their preference regarding subcommittee assignment but are informed that they may not receive their first choice if changes must be made to ensure balance. The Designated Federal Officer makes final subcommittee assignments based on member preferences, areas of expertise, and geographic balance.

(8) Date Prepared/Updated. June 15, 2021