REPORT

1. Opening
The Chair, Ms Ellen Fasmer, Norway called the meeting to order on 7 October at 10 am in the meeting room at NEAFC HQ. She welcomed everybody to the third meeting this year. All Contracting Parties, some reporting parties and a representative of the NAFO Secretariat were present. The Chair reminded delegates that this was a group of technical experts and everybody could speak freely in his or her technical capacity. The participants presented themselves and the institutions they represented.

2. Appointment of rapporteur
The Secretariat was appointed rapporteur.

3. Discussion and adoption of the Agenda
The Chair went through the revised agenda. She wished to discuss Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure for AGDC under Any Other Business. She also asked the Secretariat to amend the headings of two agenda items to clarify they were NEAFC issues. She emphasised the group was working on becoming more of an integrated NAFO/NEAFC group and asked NEAFC to send a copy of the final report to NAFO.

4. Data exchange
4.1. Overall view (1st semester 2011)
The Chair referred the meeting to AGDC 2011-03-10, data transmission. This clarifies the protocol the FMC uses to send information to NEAFC. The Secretariat explained that some information is still being received by email although this is supposed to have been phased out. There are still some problems, for example if POS messages are received without ENT or EXI messages or CAT reports received without COE or COX. The NAFO representative indicated that in
NAFO missing VMS messages have been occasionally observed. NAFO prepares a document, similar to AGDC 21011-03-10 prepared by NEAFC, during its Annual Compliance Review exercise. There was an agreement that it would be helpful if NAFO circulates a similar document for the next year’s meeting. The Icelandic representative pointed out there is no information from Belize which shows a follow up from yesterday’s PECCOE meeting. The Secretariat clarified that in the past some information has been sent by email but Belize was informed that this was not helpful and did not comply.

5. **Documents referred by PECCOE for discussion**
The Chair drew the meeting’s attention to two documents sent from AGDC after the May meeting, one to PECCOE (AGDC 2011-03-04) and one to STACTIC (AGDC 2011-03-09). These documents are prepared by the Chair with reference to the report from the AGDC-2011-02 meeting to answer queries to AGDC from either group.

5.1 **NAFO STACTIC issues**
Doc AGDC 2011-03-06 prepared by NAFO was introduced by the representative of the NAFO Secretariat and is a report to AGDC on NAFO’s latest Annual Meeting in September. It reiterated that NAFO wishes to be fully integrated with AGDC. The STACTIC Contracting Parties supported proceeding and implementing a system of security certificate management (see AGDC 2011-03-07). STACTIC agreed it is the FMC’s responsibility to cancel messages, not the individual vessels. There is a new field called OO – observer on board – in the COE message in NAFO. There will need to be an amendment to the NAF website.

5.2 **NAFO – Secretariat provisions on confidentiality**

5.3 **NEAFC – Secretariat security and confidentiality issues**
The NEAFC Secretariat presented AGDC 2011-03-05. The last meeting agreed that both Secretariats would work together to map what is in place and what is needed. NEAFC wishes to apply ISO 27001 and adapted the table in 2011-03-07. Some of the provisions of the ISO standard are not met by NEAFC’s internal guidelines and some have not been considered. The document was prepared before PECCOE for both groups and has now been partly superseded by a new document.

AGDC 2011-03-08 (also PE 2011-03-32) reflects previous discussions within AGDC. PECCOE approved an amendment to Appendix 1 of Annex IX of the Scheme of Control and Enforcement (the NEAFC Scheme) on the paragraph
entitled “Communication Security” to finalise the discussion on the HTTPS gateways issue and to harmonise with the change already made in NAFO’s Control and Enforcement Measures (see AGDC-03-07).

This document also proposes that PECCOE considers the possibility of improving and updating points 1, 2 and 3 of the same appendix dealing with data within the Scheme.

Finally the document proposes that PECCOE considers the need for a new recommendation for an overall system of confidentiality and security.

The document also has three requests to AGDC:

• to convene a meeting of security and confidentiality experts to prepare text for this new proposal
• to discuss the matrix to evaluate these issues which would be completed by individual FMCs to give NEAFC an overall picture of needs and evaluation
• to consider the need for the overall recommendation on data exchange storage, security and management.

The Norwegian representative pointed out that, for example, Annex IX in the NEAFC Scheme, point 1 field of application does not mention port state control. The NEAFC Secretariat agreed this needed to be updated. The Norwegian representative also pointed on the fact that VMS signals according to Article 11, and reports relating to Articles 12 and 13 in the scheme resides in the databases of the contracting parties in addition to the copies that were forwarded to the secretary. The management of data in the VMS database is not regulated by the Scheme of Control and Enforcement and has evolved over the years without strict rules on exchange of information, confidentiality, etc. With electronic PSC the data will reside only with NEAFC and not be available in the Flag State. Therefore there will be greater needs for security and business continuity and to define minimum standards. There will be financial, as well as other, implications for service providers, soft and hardware and the Secretariat needs clear guidelines.

The Chair asked for comments. She pointed out there is a lot of detail to be clarified and any recommendation needs to clearly state guidelines that can be implemented for both Secretariats. The representative from the European Commission wondered whether Contracting Parties needed to have the same level of security. The Chair agreed this was one of the problems and individual Contracting Party legislation may be very different. The NEAFC Secretariat feels it is important for the AGDC to establish either a minimum or ideal set up. The different Contracting Parties will then have to decide whether they can confirm whether they can comply. AGDC needs to establish what is relevant to both Secretariats in ISO 27001 and then it is up to Contracting Parties whether or not
to agree. Sweden felt the group should propose what levels of security are needed and also look at costs.

The Chair asked the group to reflect on the item and return to it later. Does the group consider there should be a special meeting on the issue of security, perhaps in February? The Icelandic representative felt it is important for AGDC to be flexible and use experts where necessary and felt this would be a good idea. The EU Commission felt that participants at any such meeting should be well prepared. He suggested that AGDC should consider security and safety, as well as business requirements, and a list of questions should be sent to experts in advance of any meeting. EU-Sweden agreed. EU-Ireland asked what basic requirements NEAFC requires. Iceland agreed that it is imperative that questions are asked in advance and the meeting should include end users so they can pose queries. Iceland reminded the group that there have been suggestions in the past that data should not be stored by inspection platforms although they should have access to it.

The NEAFC Secretariat suggested that some draft questions should be circulated finalised and circulated at least a month before the meeting so that participants can come with answers. It may be that the group will need to include service providers that do not work for national administrations. The NAFO representative clarified that the ISO suggestions in 2011-03-08 bullet points and table and the list of issues from AGDC 2011-03-05 would form the basis for the questionnaire.

Greenland felt the questionnaire should be answered by members of AGDC as well. The European Commission felt that the data held by the NEAFC Secretariat and the issue of its security should be examined in advance. The NEAFC Secretariat already has two separate storage databases on two servers and two backup systems.

The European Commission felt that AGDC should propose sending PECCOE a paper asking what level of security is needed for different data. Iceland felt it is important to bear in mind that inspectors should have data. If data is not stored at the NEAFC Secretariat the Secretariat would not know if reporting from vessels is accurate. He felt the system should be improved technically and ensure more flow of information to inspectors.

The Chair confirmed there was agreement on a meeting. Some work would need to be done in advance to ensure it is fruitful. The NAFO representative suggested that this could be a virtual meeting. NAFO has had virtual meetings with about 20 participants. The Chair agreed that SharePoint™ would be useful in preparing the meeting. The Faroe Islands and Russian Federation felt a face to face meeting would be more productive, particularly given the time differences between Canada and the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation and the European Commission does not have an external video conferencing system.
The NEAFC Secretariat suggested that countries that are NAFO Contracting Parties and do not belong to NEAFC should be invited and this was agreed.

It was agreed that a two-day meeting should be held in late February or early March. NEAFC and NAFO could circulate questions to FMCs before the end of November and ask for responses by mid January. The questionnaire will include what NEAFC has now, what is outsourced, what products it uses, etc. On the first day of the meeting participants should describe the responses to the questionnaire. On the second day there should be discussions and agreement on the way forward.

The Chair pointed out that formally speaking, System Security Administrators should be nominated by all Contracting Parties in accordance with Appendix 1 of Annex IX of the NEAFC Scheme. However, this provision has never been active in practice for any Contracting Party.

With a reference to Document AGDC 2011-03-08, the Chair summed up that the meeting was in agreement on using the ISO 27001 standard. Furthermore that there was agreement on advising NEAFC to create an overarching Recommendation on security and confidentiality in line with that standard, replacing number 4 of the Appendix of Annex IX in the NEAFC Scheme.

Regarding the matrix in the document, Norway considered that a new column on access to data would be appropriate. Norway also felt that the matrix would be improved if it was more clearly divided into two parts, e.g. by using a thicker line to make the separation.

On the substantive task, the Chair reminded the meeting that it would be a task for the Commission to decide on attributing levels of confidentiality. AGDC should give advice on what high, medium and low confidentiality means, but not on what should go into each category.

Norway enquired on why there were two columns for VMS.

The Secretariat explained that VMS data is generally restricted, but that some subsets can be used for scientific purposes. It would therefore be appropriate to look at such subsets separately from the general issue of VMS data. The specific subsets may vary.

Regarding the issue of adding a column on data accessibility, the Secretariat noted that this may be better reflected through a separate table.

The Contracting Parties agreed that Document AGDC 2011-03-08 constituted a good starting point for work on these issues.
The Secretariat explained that regarding this issue we have been waiting for developments on the legal side. The FAO Agreement was not expected to enter into force before 2013. Contracting Parties therefore needed to proceed on the basis of what we now have.

The aim is to start using the system on 1 January 2012. Some Contracting Parties will be involved in trials in implementing it already in December 2011. However, it would not be a problem if some Contracting Parties were not ready from the outset, as both systems would be in operation for some time. However, the Secretariat expected the new system would be fully operational for all Contracting Parties during the first quarter of 2012.

Contracting Parties agreed that very good work had been done and asked some questions for clarification regarding the operational side of the system, to which the Secretariat responded to with explanations. This included discussions on who can send PSC forms to the port State and if emails are automatically generated in the system to notify the relevant parties.

In addition to providing explanations on operational issues, the Secretariat pointed out that the new system was in fact not a change in the substance of the current system. What was changing was only the technology used. All the current steps of getting confirmation from the flag State and port State would be the same.

The Secretariat stressed that everyone realizes that, like for any other new system, some problems might arise when Contracting Parties start using the system, but any problems will be addressed as soon as they arise. Furthermore, the Secretariat pointed out that the system may eventually have to be adjusted when the FAO PSMA comes into force.

The NAFO Secretariat confirmed that NAFO is interested in looking at this system.

The Chair pointed out that any eventual conclusions regarding the work on security and confidentiality might affect the system.

The European Union raised the point of the system possibly being aligned to electronic logbooks. The Secretariat pointed out that that possibility would depend on what is eventually decided regarding ERS, where no final decision has yet been made.

6. Documents to be referred by AGDC to STACTIC/PECCOE
6.1 ERS/Electronic logbook issues (PECCOE)

The Chair drew attention to Document AGDC 2011-03-03, mapping differences between different approaches regarding electronic logbooks, in accordance with what was agreed at the last AGDC meeting. She noted that the document had been completed later than
had been hoped for. It had originally been intended to be a joint paper by the EU and Norway, but this final paper was by Norway alone.

The EU commented that contributions from the EU into this paper had been removed.

Norway stated that the paper was in accordance with the mandate that had been given. It presented the differences and similarities in the reports exchanged between parties according to Norway’s bilateral ERS agreements with the EU and Iceland, and the NEAFC Scheme and NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures. He drew attention to the annexes, which set out these differences and similarities. He explained that among the major differences there was frequency in reporting catches and the information contained in reports.

Russia agreed that this demonstrated what was being done by the leaders in electronic logbooks. However, in identifying the appropriate system for NEAFC and NAFO it would be important to have a discussion on why XML was better than NAF for our purposes. Russia agreed to the Chair’s suggestion that this be discussed under agenda item 7.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) made the point that focus should be placed on setting standards for implementing XML systems, not on the details of how such systems should be implemented. Contracting Parties do not need to implement a copy of the EU system or the Norwegian system, but simply implement whatever system best suits them so long as it meets the standards set.

The EU was not supportive of the paper, as it presented a narrow view. Rather than looking only at operations in NEAFC and NAFO waters, we should look to an ERS system that can be the basis for data in many different contexts and can be used everywhere. The system can be used to send inspection reports, pull whole logbooks from FMCs, etc. However, he stressed this was not a question of implementing the EU system rather than the Norwegian system, but rather a question of setting up a single NEAFC system by joining the EU and Norway systems. We should use the strength of both systems and avoid their respective weaknesses. In such a system, the logbook would be in the FMCs and the key element would be the communications between FMCs and NEAFC.

Norway stressed again that the document as presented reflects what had previously been decided. In preparing such a document Norway had been fulfilling the task it had undertaken.

The Chair reminded the meeting that a particular way forward had been agreed on in February. Delegates are of course free to change their minds, but the fact remains that the current paper reflects what had been decided should be AGDC’s answer to PECCOE.

The EU expressed the opinion that PECCOE should be presented with a complete proposal, and not with this document.
Iceland pointed out that the original question from the Commission to PECCOE had been to look at possible implications of electronic logbooks. There was therefore no need to refrain from giving a response until we have managed to build a whole system. He considered there to be three basic options: 1) use essentially the current system, with new ways of communicating messages; 2) make a new system by building on elements from the bilateral EU/Norway agreement; and 3) implement something completely new. PECCOE has to report something to the Annual Meeting. At minimum, the available options should be presented along with a request for guidance. It would not be appropriate to go to the Annual Meeting with the message that we are not yet ready to report anything.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agreed that the document fulfils the requirements as they had been set out and stated that it provided a good overview. While the EU was correct in saying that there were elements that could be improved, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) felt that most of the elements that are needed were there.

The EU stated that delegates were not actually very far from each other in their opinions. It was simply a question of having a system that combines the strength of both approaches. We needed to combine the available system into a new good system.

The Secretariat pointed out that the key issue was to determine what information we need for our purposes, regardless of how that information is then communicated. He reminded delegates that when we started setting up a VMS system there were several allegedly perfect systems presented as the correct way forward. Rather than combining these systems as such, we defined what we needed and based solutions on that rather than on what was being done in alternative systems.

Iceland stated that that this was the reason why it had been important to highlight the differences in ERS systems. We can then decide if we need the relevant information. He furthermore pointed out that mapping shortcomings was also important. For example, if logbooks not being on board the vessels created problems for inspectors, that must be highlighted.

The EU stressed that going to XML was a big change and a big investment. It therefore needed to be done properly, and the benefits must be maximised.

The Chair pointed out that some of the possible benefits that the EU was referring to were not necessarily relevant for our purposes. For example, aggregated reports had been taken out of the NEAFC Scheme as they were not considered important for control and enforcement.

The EU stated that having all transfer of information over the same platform would constitute a benefit in itself. While there was nothing inherently wrong with the approach
that is reflected in the document, such an approach lacks several elements that should be included, such as the option of pulling out whole logbooks.

The Chair summed up that the issue at hand is whether to send the document to PECCOE. As there was no consensus on doing that, the document would not be sent to PECCOE.

7. Management of the North Atlantic Format (NAF)

Following the initiative of Russia under the previous agenda item, the Chair opened a discussion on the benefits of XML over the current implementation of the NAF format. She pointed out that NAF consisted of data-elements2-letter codes and their definitions, and a slashes delimited syntax for transmission.

The EU stated that a major benefit of XML is that it is a W3C standard that is recognised by all software producers, and can therefore be read and used by all software. It has a hierarchy which allows the building of structures on the data. It also makes it possible to restrict how data is sent and makes it possible to define patterns for different fields (such as requiring a report to include pre-defined components).

Iceland pointed out that when we started to introduce the system we have, communications were very different from today. The primary aim was to have the same format for the message the whole way from the vessel to the inspector, via the FMC and the Secretariat. It makes sense to use the best technology we have to do this. The size of messages used to be a major issue, but that is no longer the case and solutions that were formed to deal with the issue of message size are therefore not necessarily relevant now. Above all, we must keep in mind that the main purpose of the system is to serve control and enforcement, and we should use improved technology to do this better if we can.

The EU said that it had before produced a document that explains XML in this context, and that it might be useful to distribute that document to AGDC members. The Chair agreed and asked the EU to distribute it when it had the opportunity to do so.

The EU emphasised that the current codes used in the NAF should be kept. They would contribute to maintaining simplicity in a system that could otherwise become unnecessarily complicated. He stressed his opinion that XML is clearly what we should go for. It is a world standard that would make all programming easier and less expensive. It would offer possibilities that NAF does not offer. All programmes already have built in applications for XML but for NAF we have to programme everything ourselves.

Russia recognised that XML had several benefits over NAF. However, he stated that this would not necessarily make it necessary to adopt XML if NAF was sufficient for our needs.
The EU noted that it could be argued that we did not need to go from X25 to https, but that it had had many advantages. He considered the move to XML as a similar situation.

The Secretariat noted that if no changes were foreseen, NAF would suffice. However, there was a continuous development in what we are doing. For example, the adoption of ERS provided a good opportunity to move to XML.

7.1 NEAFC/NAFO issues
7.2 Issues raised by other NAF users
7.3 AGDC website and intercessional work

The Chair suggested that AGDC should use the SharePoint™ already made for AGDC by the NAFO Secretariat to distribute documents.

The EU suggested that if this approach is used it might be useful if participants received an email notification whenever a document is added. The Secretariat stated that it would ensure that such email notifications would be included.

The Chair said that an earlier email from the NAFO Secretariat inviting AGDC participants to register at the SharePoint™ would be re-sent.

The NAFO Secretariat commented that they use SharePoint™ widely for sharing documents and making comments. They had good experience of using SharePoint™ -.

8. Any other business

The Chair drew attention to Document AGDC 2011-02-21, a document from the last meeting. This is a NEAFC Recommendation setting the Terms of Reference for AGDC, where there are many references to NAFO. She raised the question of formalizing better the involvement of NAFO in AGDC.

The NAFO Secretariat pointed out that there are concerns regarding the legal boundaries of NAFO’s participation in a group that is formally set up by NEAFC, even if it is explicitly open to participation from NAFO representatives. NAFO participates fully in practice, and intends to continue to do so, but it would improve things if NAFO had a clearer official status at AGDC.

Iceland noted that the nature of AGDC should make it easier for it to function as a body belonging formally to more than one organisation. AGDC does not make any decisions, but only gives advice. As such, it can serve many masters more easily than a body that is expected to make decisions. He added that joint work by NEAFC and NAFO is appropriate in the issues AGDC deals with.

The NEAFC Secretary confirmed that he has discussed the status of AGDC with his colleague, the NAFO Secretary. They agree that the issues dealt with by AGDC are of a
nature that makes it mutually beneficial for them to be dealt with jointly rather than separately. They also agree that it would be proper for NAFO to have a formal standing within AGDC as a fully equal partner with NEAFC, rather than continue a situation where formally NAFO is participating in a group set up by NEAFC. He stated that he would take this matter up with the NEAFC Contracting Parties, and unless he met unexpected opposition from them he would work with the NAFO Secretary to change the foundations of AGDC. As a timeframe, he suggested it might be possible for the relevant Contracting Parties to formally turn AGDC into a joint body at the Annual Meetings of NEAFC and NAFO in 2012.

The Chair asked if the meeting wanted to consider any changes to the current AGDC Rules of Procedure. Iceland stated the opinion that it would not be appropriate to go through such an exercise at this time, as it would be better to first complete the process of making AGDC a joint body of NEAFC and NAFO. Revised Rules of Procedure would potentially be agreed by a re-constituted AGDC within a reasonably short timeframe. Other delegates agreed with that sentiment.

9. Report to the 2011 Annual Meeting of NEAFC

The draft report will be distributed shortly, and delegations will be given an opportunity to suggest amendments before the report is finalised.

The Chair said that in addition to the report of the meeting, she expected to create a report that combined the three meeting reports of this year. It would be that combined report that she would present to the NEAFC Annual Meeting. The Chair suggested that the report should be sent to NAFO as well as NEAFC, and delegates agreed.

10. Date and place of next meeting

The Chair reminded delegates that they had agreed to hold a special two-day meeting on security and confidentiality after February 15 2012. The meeting will be held at NEAFC HQ in London.

After some discussion on the most appropriate timing and length of the next regular AGDC meeting, it was decided to have a two-day meeting at NEAFC HQ in London in late May or early June.

11. Closure of the meeting

The Chair closed the meeting at 15:30.