



DEC 02 2016

Mr. William Hanson
Chair
NOAA Hydrographic Services Review Panel
330 13th Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Hanson:

Thank you for your letter following the September 2016 Hydrographic Services Review Panel meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, and your kind words regarding my service to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Nation. The National Ocean Service reported that your meeting was quite productive. I very much appreciated the informative highlights contained in your letter and recommendations from the issue papers.

NOAA's Deputy Administrator VADM Manson Brown and I are pleased to have the Panel's additional three issue papers, "Hydrography, A Core NOAA Mandate," "Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS®), Critical Data for Critical Decisions," and "U.S. Latitudes-Longitudes-Elevations to Change in 2022." The complete set of six issue papers on NOAA's Navigation Services will be a valuable resource for the next Administration and I will share them with the NOAA transition team for inclusion in NOAA's transition documents. The new Administration will benefit from these summaries of major issues and key recommendations, including resourcing hydrographic data acquisition and real time observing infrastructure, the criticality of accurate datums and positioning, how NOAA's Navigation Services contribute to coastal resilience, recapitalizing NOAA's retirement-eligible hydrographic survey fleet, and addressing priority survey requirements in the Arctic for navigation safety.

Thank you for continuing to include stakeholder participation in your meetings. The Panel provides a unique forum to discuss stakeholder perceptions of NOAA's products and services. The feedback from Great Lakes stakeholders at the Cleveland meeting was insightful, particularly on communications, partnerships, observational data, and mapping and charting. NOAA will use this input as it considers how best to meet the needs of Great Lakes maritime and coastal communities. I noted particularly the need for improved collaboration between NOAA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Federal channel navigation. Coast Survey Director RDML Shep Smith shares this concern and has made it a priority to resolve.

To follow up on our discussions on the ongoing fleet recapitalization, I want to share two recent milestones with you. The NOAA Fleet Independent Review Team final report and the NOAA Fleet Plan: *Building NOAA's 21st Century Fleet* have been finalized and released publicly. You may be interested to review the recommendations and discuss at a future public meeting.

THE ADMINISTRATOR



They are accessible, respectively, at <http://www.oma.noaa.gov/find/media/documents/final-report-independent-review-team-noaa-fleet-recapitalization> and <http://www.oma.noaa.gov/find/media/documents/noaa-fleet-plan-building-noaas-21st-century-fleet-0>.

I urge you to continue your good work to advise the next NOAA Administrator. The growing technical, environmental, and logistical challenges of 21st century marine transportation will require the Panel's ongoing leadership, bold ideas, and visionary thinking to help NOAA advance its navigation-related programs and services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'KDS', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kathryn D. Sullivan, Ph.D.
Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere