

MARINE FACILITIES ADVISORY BOARD

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Marine Facilities Advisory Board (MFAB) is to acquire views from the UK's marine science community, in order to advise the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) on the current capability and future needs of the NCLRI Marine Facilities award with a particular focus on the National Marine Equipment Pool (NMEP). As the commissioned marine facilities form part of the broader ocean observing infrastructure, MFAB will also help advise the development of the British Oceanographic Data Centre (BODC) and the physical samples repositories (e.g. British Ocean Sediment Core Research Facility (BOSCORF) as outlined in (Annex C).

MFAB forms part of the governance framework for the NCLRI Award (Annex A) to provide assurance to NERC that NOC is managing the award in the most effective and cost-efficient way to reflect the community's current and future needs. In addition, the outputs of MFAB will help inform the future commissioned capabilities and will be made available to the Future Marine Research Infrastructure (FMRI) Programme.

ACTIVITIES

MFAB will regularly review the status of equipment in the NMEP (e.g. condition, level of use, expected future demand). Reviews will be conducted in consultation with the UK scientific user community, noting advances in technology, and the linkages with BODC and physical sample repositories. MFAB will undertake these activities within the constraints of the annual National Capability Large-scale Research Infrastructure (NCLRI) funding award to provide advice to NOC on the development of the NCLRI capabilities. The MFAB Chair will report on annual activities to the CPEB.

HOW MFAB WORKS

MFAB will meet in spring and autumn annually when members provide views from their section of the community. Agendas will be agreed with the MFAB Chair and the NOC Associate Director for National Marine Facilities and will include:

1. Minutes and matters arising.
2. Reports on community engagement undertaken and the outputs of MFAB working groups.
3. Reports on equipment condition and maintenance lists, provided by NMF annually.
4. Recommendations for retirements and investment of equipment in the NMEP.
5. Review and input into the annual NMF Technology Roadmap¹.

Meeting papers will be agreed by the chair and NMF team, and then circulated to members two weeks in advance. Draft minutes will be circulated to the chair and NMF team within one month and to members shortly after, to enable actions to be

¹ <https://noc.ac.uk/files/documents/about/ispo/COMMS1415-TECHNOLOGY-ROADMAP-2023.pdf>

started. Finalised minutes will be published on-line. Members may also be asked to provide input to working groups on specific capabilities funded by the NCLRI award.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership, (Annex B), which should be kept under review, should include:

A chair who is independent of NOC

An external equipment specialist

An international barter partner

NERC Head of Marine Planning

NOC Chief Operating Officer

NOC Associate Director, National Marine Facilities

Head, British Oceanographic Data Centre

Head, British Ocean Sediment Core Research Facility

Up to ten members from the UK marine scientific user community² with a requirement that five are present to be quorate.

Members are appointed based on their expertise, rather than to represent their institution. Term of service is three-years and members may be invited to continue beyond the end of the first term, by up to a further three years. Maximum term of service is six years. Turnover of members will be staggered, when necessary, to maintain experience within the Board.

Members may nominate a colleague to attend a meeting if unavailable. If a member is unable to attend more than two meetings in succession, the chair reserves the right to appoint an alternative member.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We aim to appoint members from all sections of the community and from any career stage, to represent disciplinary areas covering all areas of NERC marine sciences which use NERC marine-related facilities / equipment.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

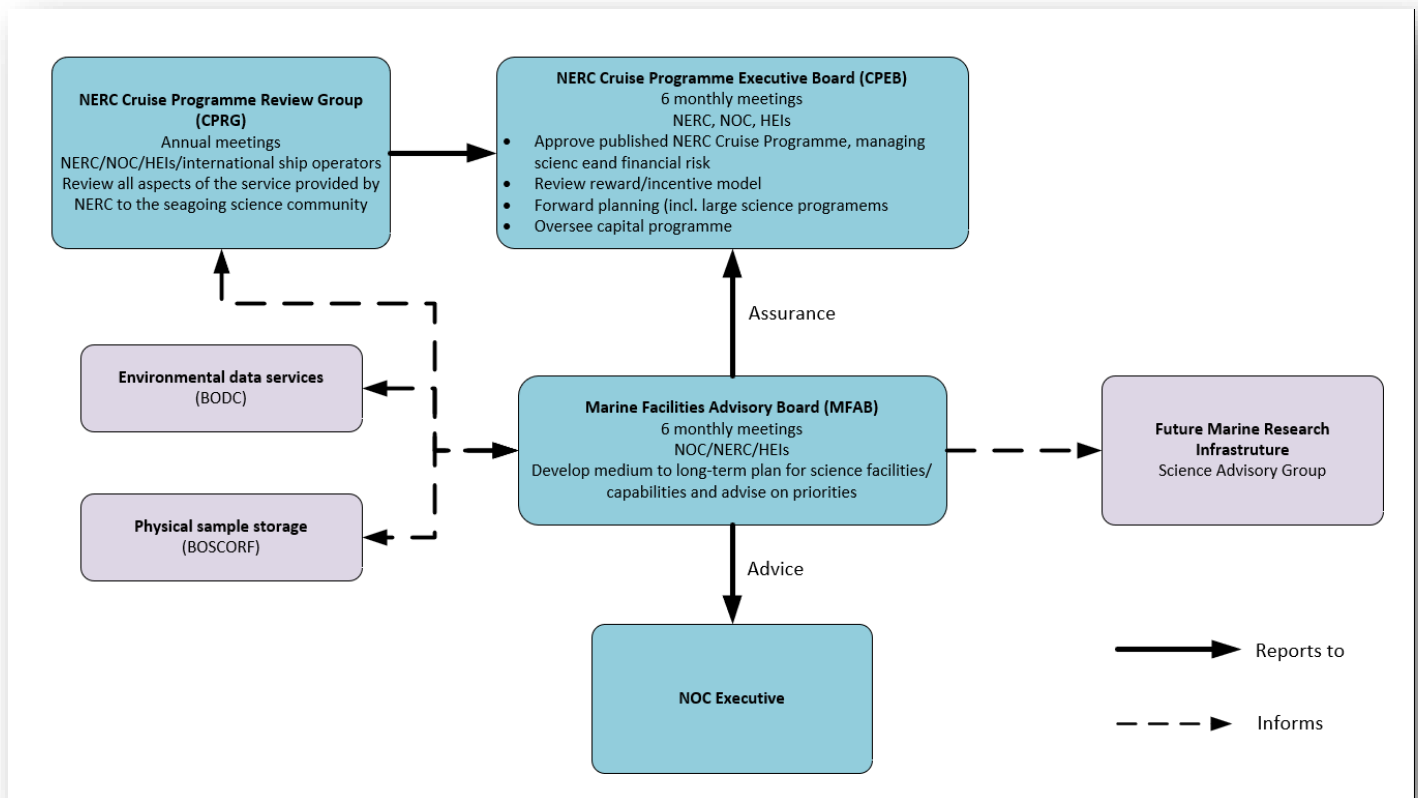
The National Oceanography Centre (NOC) applies the NOC approach to GDPR. For further information, please see the [NOC Privacy Notice](#).

Expenses

Unless otherwise authorised, positions are unremunerated. Meetings will be conducted on-line, however, if in person, reasonable expenses may be claimed, e.g. travel to meetings. A copy of the Non-Employee Expenses Procedure will be provided to members, in advance of any in-person meetings.

² The marine science community is defined as that established by the [National Oceanography Centre \(NOC\) Association](#): a network of identified, institutional representatives of Universities and research centres.

Annex A – NCLRI Marine Facilities Governance Framework



Annex B: Membership of the Marine Facilities Advisory Board – 2024

Name	Affiliation	Role
Professor Tiago Alves	University of Cardiff	Member
Dr Gaye Bayrakci	National Oceanography Centre	Member
Dr Veronique Creach	Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science	Member
Dr Rob Hall	University of East Anglia	Member
Dr Stephen Jones	University of Birmingham	Member
Professor Tim Smyth	Plymouth Marine Laboratory	Chair
Dr Gabriele Stowasser	British Antarctic Survey	Member
Dr Michelle Taylor	University of Essex	Member
Vacancy		International barter partner
Dr Adrian Baker	Defence Science and Technology Laboratory	External equipment specialist
Vacancy (3)		
Vacancy (4)		
Vacancy (5)		
Dr Natalie Powney	Natural Environment Research Council	Head of Marine Planning
National Oceanography Centre representatives		
Dr Eleanor Darlington	National Marine Facilities	Head of Marine Facilities Programmes
Dr Maaten Furlong	National Marine Facilities	Associate Director for NMF
Helen Oldridge	National Marine Facilities	Head of Scientific Engineering
Dr Alex Phillips	National Marine Facilities	Head of Marine Autonomous and Robotic Systems Development
Dr Veerle Huvenne / Dr Filipa Carvalho	National Marine Facilities	MARS Chief Scientist
Dr Helen Snaith	British Oceanographic Data Centre	Represent EDS
Dr Suzanne MacLachlan	British Ocean Sediment Research Facility	Represents physical sample storage
Prof Penny Holliday	NOC Executive	Chief Scientific Officer
Julie Pringle-Stewart	NOC Executive	Chief Operating Officer
Dr John Siddorn	NOC Executive	Chief Executive
Jackie Pearson	Partnerships Team	Secretary

Annex C

The National Marine Equipment Pool (NMEP)

The NMEP, part of the NCLRI, is the UK's centralised marine science equipment pool. It is maintained and operated by the NOC engineers and technicians within the National Marine Facilities (NMF). The current and future NMEP capabilities are described in the NMF Technology Roadmap³.

National Marine Facilities (NMF)

The NOC-run NMF has a remit to develop, coordinate and provide major platforms, observing systems and technical expertise required by the UK's marine science community. It is primarily funded via a National Capability Large Research Infrastructure award, but also undertakes charters, commercial operations, and research to supplement this income. The funding pays for the maintenance and operations of the RRS *James Cook*, RRS *Discovery*, and the NMEP for use by the UK marine science community, together with the technicians and infrastructure to support this activity.

British Oceanographic Data Centre (BODC)

BODC is the NOC-managed, NERC-designated UK national data centre for marine data. Under the remit of the [NERC Data Policy](#), BODC is responsible for the long-term archiving and availability of all marine data funded by NERC research projects. As a NOC Group, BODC works closely with NMF to deliver a seamless data life cycle from collection, to archival, to user discoverability and availability.

British Ocean Sediment Core Research Facility (BOSCORF)

Operated by the NOC, BOSCORF is the UK national deep sea core repository, set up by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) to store marine sediment cores collected by NERC ships and NERC-funded researchers. BOSCORF maintains databases of its collections, and these can be searched online through the Index to Marine and Lacustrine Geological Samples (IMLGS).

BOSCORF provides specialist non-destructive logging facilities and cores entering the repository are routinely logged.

Further information:

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National Oceanography Centre
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³ <https://noc.ac.uk/files/documents/about/ispo/COMMS1415-TECHNOLOGY-ROADMAP-2023.pdf>

ACRONYMS

- BODC British Oceanographic Data Centre
- BOSCORF British Ocean Sediment Core Research Facility
- CPEB Cruise Programme Executive Board
- EDS Environmental Data Service
- MARS Marine Autonomous Systems
- NCLRI National Capability Large Research Infrastructure
- NMEP Subset of NOC equipment pool underpinned by NCLRI funding
- NMF National Marine Facilities