New Equipment Safety Review Subcommittee
Standard Operating Procedure
Origination Date: July 1, 2013
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Background
The New Equipment Safety Review (NESR) subcommittee, hereafter referred to as the NESR subcommittee, under the Division of Marine Fisheries Safety Committee, is the review committee for new equipment purchases to determine if the safety standards for these items are met. The intent of the subcommittee is to standardize the current buyer request for safety review process within sections and allow for employees to submit requests to purchase to the NESR for the subcommittee to review. Equipment purchase requests are reviewed to ensure the item purchased meets criteria required to meet various safety guidelines as noted in the DMF Safety Manual. DMF Safety Manual

Historically the guidelines were vague and lacked a centralized location for various templates, specifications, and a timely turnaround for safety review before purchase. The New Equipment Safety Review subcommittee established a new charge in 2013 to address these deficiencies.

Charge
1) Review and develop the NESR subcommittee processes, instructions, and training to be housed in an easily accessible area for DMF staff.
2) Keep DMF staff informed on NESR subcommittee processes and ensure they are reviewed during new employee orientations (i.e., work with HR to add to the checklist to be reviewed by supervisors).
3) Develop, document, and maintain a list of items that do not need to be reviewed by subcommittee (e.g., items on state contract except ..., the same item was previously reviewed and approved by the subcommittee for the same use, etc.).
4) Identify and update or develop templates for staff to use to prompt information to be considered for safety review and house these items in an area easily accessible by staff including consideration for developing a folder or system to house forms for equipment previously approved that is accessible to other DMF staff to use as reference.
5) Develop a list of standards for some equipment to help guide staff (e.g., in N.C. boat trailers carrying 4,000 or more pounds must have brakes, etc.).
6) Review and approve or disapprove equipment submitted to the subcommittee within a specific time period (e.g., within 10 work days). Any questions or needed information is to be relayed back to the section through the section’s subcommittee member to communicate with the person requesting purchase of the equipment.
7) Chair is to document reviews on summary forms in accordance to DENR templates.

Purpose
The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to document and establish the commitment and objectives of the New Equipment Safety Review subcommittee. This SOP serves as a framework to guide the recommendations for committee policy-setting and related decision-making responsibilities of the committee. The committee will also focus on consistent and timely reviews.
Glossary of Terms
For this document, the following definitions apply:

- **NESR** - New Equipment Safety Review subcommittee; a subcommittee of the DMF Safety Committee responsible for the review and subsequent approval of new equipment purchases.
- **Buyer** - DMF staff requesting purchase of new equipment. The buyer will consult with their applicable section representative on the policies and procedures for purchasing new equipment.
- **Section Representative** - Each section of DMF will have a designated person (or persons depending upon section size and locations) to serve on the New Equipment Safety Review subcommittee. This individual will work as a consultant with the buyers in his/her section and as a liaison to the Co-Chairs to ensure all purchase requests are complete prior to submission to the NESR.
- **Co-Chairs** - Head up the committee, oversees processes and timelines ensures communications with the Section Representative of their approval status.
- **Purchasing Agent** - DMF staff member responsible for the actual ordering of new equipment. This individual will communicate with the buyer on timelines, backorders or other issues.

Scope of Authority
The authority for this SOP resides with the New Equipment Safety Review under the DMF Safety Committee. Revisions to this SOP require agreement and acceptance by all DMF Safety Committee members and the approval of the Deputy Director. The NESR committee is responsible for assessing the needs and making recommendations to the Buyer in order for equipment to meet safety guidelines.

Mission Statement
To ensure items purchased meet the safety guidelines set forth through the DMF Safety Policy guidelines. The committee will be focused on careful, timely reviews in order to make recommendations toward acquiring and maintaining safe use of equipment.

Objectives
- Ensure policies, procedures, and reviews are centralized and easily accessible by all DMF personnel
- Continue to document and track equipment reviews
- Make recommendations to ensure safe use of equipment purchased

Deliverables
- Updated, detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
- Timely reviews
- Current assessment of new and existing equipment purchase reviews
- Open communication between the NESR subcommittee and the buyer
Critical Success Factors
Critical success factors have been identified as important to ensure the success of the NESR subcommittee. These factors include:

- Accountability on the Buyer to utilize the tools provided to purchase safe equipment
- Accountability for the Co-chairs to ensure reviews are completed in a timely manner
- Open communication between the subcommittee members and the Buyer
- Active participation of all subcommittee members

Membership
Each DMF Section Chief is to designate one person. The designated person must be experienced with various equipment used within their section; additionally they must be able to promote the NESR subcommittee process through the section, and be an active participant representing their section on the subcommittee. This person needs to have the ability to organize review of new equipment and request additional information about the equipment before submitting to the NESR subcommittee. The person will have two primary responsibilities.

1) Coordinate section-level review of equipment before review by the NESR subcommittee and be the sole contact person between the section and subcommittee for correspondence on equipment being reviewed.
2) Serve on the NESR subcommittee.

Sections needing a lot of field equipment should consider an experienced technician, biologist, officer, supervisor, etc. who has experience purchasing equipment. Sections who primarily operate from office settings should consider an experienced person with knowledge of office equipment.

Terms and Resignations
The committee co-chairs will be assigned by the Deputy Director and will be responsible for leading the subcommittee and communicating with all parties involved. If a subcommittee member resigns, the resigning member is responsible for recommending a successor.

Participation
Membership participation is expected and should not be delegated to substitutes unless previous arrangements have been made.

Meetings
Meetings will be conducted quarterly or on an as needed basis. Members are expected to attend and actively participate in all meetings. Subcommittee co-chairs will also be required to attend DMF Safety meetings to update and report on the status of subcommittee objectives.
Recording
Meeting minutes and subcommittee activities including status on issues, recommendations, and actions taken must be recorded by the co-chairs and provided to all subcommittee members and the Deputy Director. A draft of the meeting minutes must be distributed to all members within five (5) business days of the meeting. Responses or corrections should be submitted within three (3) business days of the original distribution date, after which the minutes will be approved and posted in the NESR folder under Minutes MEETINGS.

Reporting
The committee co-chairs are responsible for providing a summary report each month to the Deputy Director summarizing work status, decisions reached, and issues resolved.

Updates to the SOP
This SOP is a living document, to be reviewed and updated whenever substantial changes are needed to the structure or workings of the NESR subcommittee. Updates must be dated and include a summary of changes made by whom as indicated in the attached Revisions Log. Revisions require agreement and acceptance by all subcommittee members and the approval of the Deputy Director.

APPROVED BY: ___________________________     Date: ______________

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Steps

1. **Buyer:**
   - Reviews or writes a request to purchase a specific item for their section.
   - Reviews the already approved equipment in the New Equipment Safety Review sub-committee Library folder: Library
   - If the requested item is not in the pre-approved folder, the Buyer submits a request to their NESR subcommittee Section Representative using the Template Specifications form. Each category has templates in folders that are specific to those items. The folders are in the Library folder: Library
   - If the subcommittee identifies issues with the original submission, the Buyer will revise specifications of equipment to comply with subcommittee recommendations.
   - If approved, the Buyer forwards the subcommittee’s approval to the Purchasing Agent for purchase. The Buyer is also responsible for obtaining budget approval, accounting codes and for following purchasing policy.
   - Receives and inspects equipment for compliance as listed in the approval.
   - Ensures equipment is maintained and operated in accordance with the equipment instruction manual.

2. **Section Representative:**
   - Reviews completed templates to be sure the specifications are accurate.
   - Works with Buyer to determine if purchase is an emergency request or any other information the committee may need for review.
   - Acts a liaison between the buyer and the subcommittee co-chairs.

3. **Co-Chairs**
   - Receive request from the Section Representative and logs request into the Review Log form: Review Log Form
   - Determine if request needs to be disseminated to committee using the following criteria:
     a. Was the equipment previously reviewed?
     b. How is the item going to be used?
     c. Are there any potential safety risks with using the equipment as proposed in the equipment use?
     d. What are the proper specifications to suit this piece of equipment (ie: trailer weight will work for boat)?
     e. What type (if any) of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is needed?
   - If the item needs review, an email with the link to the Review Log form will be sent to the subcommittee for their responses.
   - If item does not need review, the chairs document on the Review Log form why a review is not needed and emails the form to the Section Representative.
   - Keeps open communication with Buyer and the Section Representative in regards to the status of review times (within 14 days; or times could be longer if concerns are brought up, or if the submission is incomplete).
   - Email requests to committee for review, comments, and approval or denial. Include a due date within the subject line – typically 10 days.
   - Arrange meetings to review and discuss requests or other committee business as needed, with full committee or applicable individuals.
4. **Subcommittee**
   - Reviews requests, researches item, and makes comments to determine the following:
     a. No laws will be broken,
     b. Follows the DMF Safety Manual
     c. Equipment Specifications meet the job it is required to perform.
     d. If a subcommittee member has concerns or questions, they will email the chairs to submit questions to the buyer
   - Reviews should be performed within 10 calendar days unless it is an emergency purchase, which are 5-7 calendar days. Emergency reviews are items that are needed right away to ensure there isn’t a work stoppage or hinders the DMF mission, yet cost effective
   - An item is considered approved if there is a two-thirds consensus from responding committee members (non responders will not be considered in the 2/3 computation) and if there are no material concerns noted.
   - If at any time a member is not comfortable issuing an approval due to unfamiliarity or reason, communication with the chairs is required as to why an approval wasn’t given.

5. **Purchasing Agent**
   - Does not approve or deny buyer requests from a safety standpoint.
   - Reviews request to ensure item is on state contract; if not, provides alternatives.
   - Works with the buyer to identify additional information needed for purchase such as if the purchase is within state guidelines

**Template Guidelines**
- Include a field if it is an emergency purchase
- Use the table template specifications. Include link / catalog page for committee’s ability to access for research.
- Give a brief description of how the equipment will be specifically used.
- Section Cost Codes or other specific instructions for the Purchasing Agent
Buyer gets necessary approvals from supervisor to order items

Buyer checks the NESR Library to find existing specs on items

Steps to take if not available:
- Make sure items are on the State Contract site.
- Create detail specifications from dealer
- Use the templates

Yes

Buyer uses the correct forms to submit request to their Section Rep

The Buyer’s Section Rep reviews documentation for accuracy (Incomplete items get sent back for Buyer to research further)

Section Rep presents to subcommittee Co-chairs to determine if further review is needed

No

Co-chairs will log the status of the subcommittee’s review to ensure the deadlines are met. Communicates with Section Representative of approval status

Co-chairs return approved package to the Section Representative

Section Representative delivers results to Buyer

Section Representative delivers results to Buyer

Buyer moves forward with Purchase

Buyer moves forward with Purchase

Buyer checks the NESR Library to find existing specs on items

Buyer uses the correct forms to submit request to their Section Rep

Yes

Co-chairs return approved package to the Section Representative

Section Representative delivers results to Buyer

Buyer moves forward with Purchase

TERMS

Buyer- Person wanting to purchase equipment

Section Rep- Designated person on New Equipment Safety Review Subcommittee who works as a consultant with the buyer and liaison to the Chairs to ensure all info is complete for review

Co-Chairs- Head up the committee, oversees processes and timelines ensures communications with the Section Representative of their approval status

Purchasing Agent- This person does the ordering. Also communicates with buyer on timelines,
Main Path:

Folder Structure

**FOLDER NAMES**

**FAQ STANDARDS**- this folder houses a spreadsheet of a listing of all the items reviewed by the committee. Any questions or discoveries of a piece of equipment—such as recalls, best practices, inspections or anything else that is a guideline or policy—would go in this folder.

**FORMS**- all the New-Equipment templates are housed here. The only forms that should be in here are the blank templates. We can write protect them so no one can overwrite on them. They have to save as a new document.

**LIBRARY**- this is where all the previously reviewed specs, templates, approvals are located.

**MEETINGS**- this folder will house all the meeting agenda and minutes from the Committee meetings.

**PENDING COMMITTEE REVIEW**- This folder will act as a placeholder to house the current request information—spec, template, review log along with any other information needed for the committee to make a decision. Once the item has finished thru the review process those documents would then be moved to the library. The Chair then updates the Summary Report Log. (Next folder) Ideally you would see this folder empty, or contents with Pending purchase dates during budget freeze, or if there is no activity.

**SUMMARY REPORTS**- This folder is only used by the Deputy Director and the subcommittee Co-Chairs.