

Northwest Atlantic



Fisheries Organization

Serial No. N6940

NAFO SCR Doc. 19/024

**SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL MEETING – JUNE 2019**

**Data Collection and Processing Protocols for the United States NEFSC Surveys, 1963-2018**

Katherine A. Sosebee, Paul Kostovick, and Nancy McHugh

**Abstract**

Standardized groundfish surveys have been conducted at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center since 1963. The way in which data were collected has evolved over time from various forms of paper logs to automated computer data entry systems. The paper logs were used from 1963-2001 and changed as computer capabilities increased and sampling requirements changed. Initial paper logs collected information that could fit into an 80 character record, as that was the limit of cards in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, more information could be collected. In 1991, biological sampling changed from a certain number per watch to a certain number per tow and a new individual species log was created. In 2001, a new computerized data collection system (FSCS-Fisheries Scientific Computing System) was deployed on the spring survey. This system allowed for digital data collection and some real-time data validation. Biological sampling requirements were more automated and post-tow auditing was faster than from paper logs. In 2011, a completely revised system (FSCS 2.0) was implemented on the fall survey. This system was Oracle based and allows for more flexible sampling, more accurate weights with all containers barcoded and quicker post-tow auditing.