

MEMBERSHIP BALANCE PLAN
NOAA Ocean Exploration Advisory Board

- (1) **FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE NAME:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ocean Exploration Advisory Board
- (2) **AUTHORITY:** 33 U.S.C. 3405 directs the NOAA Administrator (who is also the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, hereinafter “Under Secretary”) to establish an Ocean Exploration Advisory Board (OEAB). The OEAB functions as an advisory body in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App.
- (3) **MISSION/FUNCTION:** The purpose of the OEAB is to advise the Under Secretary on matters pertaining to ocean exploration including the identification of priority areas that warrant exploration; and the development and enhancement of technologies for exploring the oceans, managing the data and information, and disseminating the results. The OEAB also provides advice on the relevance of the program with regard to the NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan and other guiding documents.
- (4) **POINTS OF VIEW:** The OEAB will consist of approximately ten members, including a Chair, designated by the Under Secretary in accordance with FACA requirements. The Under Secretary has the discretion to appoint a Vice Chair. Consideration will be given to members that are experts in fields relevant to ocean exploration, including ocean scientists, engineers and technical experts, and experts in education and communications. Membership will be open to individuals from academia, government, industry, non-governmental not-for-profit organizations, and other ocean-related institutions. Consideration will also be given to members that have national and international reputations, or have degrees or professional qualifications in: physical, chemical, or biological oceanography, social sciences, or ocean engineering, technology, operations, education, and/or communications. Members will be appointed as “special government employees” (SGEs) and will be subject to the ethical standards applicable to SGEs.
- (5) **OTHER BALANCE FACTORS:** The categories of professional sector, geographic, gender and ethnic diversity are considered in the selection of OEAB members but are secondary to the scientific and technical expertise required.
- (6) **CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS:** NOAA solicits candidates for the OEAB from appropriate organizations, including the Consortium for Ocean leadership, National Academy of Sciences, professional societies, university consortia, NOAA line and program offices, and existing and former Board members. These solicitations will ensure that candidates are identified in areas of relevant scientific, technical, and other areas of expertise. Consideration is given to members from sectors such as academia, industry, and not-for-profit. The OEAB Designated Federal Officer (DFO) evaluates the list of candidates. Individuals who have not met the criteria of the requests to organizations are removed. Existing vacancies on the OEAB are reviewed and candidates who provide expertise in the vacant topics are put on a short list.

The short list is reviewed and refined by the DFO, the Office of Ocean Exploration and Research Deputy Director, and the Office of Ocean Exploration and Research Director. A revised short list plus the full list of candidates are provided to the Under Secretary for consideration along with all supporting materials (e.g., statement of interest, 2-page CV or resume). Vacancies are filled, to the extent possible and desirable, by individuals with similar expertise.

- (7) **SUBCOMMITTEE BALANCE:** The process for determining balance on OEAB Subcommittees is the same as that used for the OEAB.
- (8) **OTHER:** N/A
- (9) **DATE PREPARED/UPDATED:** February 10, 2016