A Rich Tradition
A Prosperous Future
A Professional Occupation
Now it's nineteen-ninety-four,
I go fishin' no more.... Don't you think that it's cruel?
Almost fifty years old,
And today I was told I should go back to school.
I've got no diploma,
And I've got no papers to prove what I am;
Life can be hard for me,
'Cause I've got no degree; I'm a fisherman.

I am a fisherman,
And just like my father before me, I'm a preacher, a teacher;
I can be anything
That you want me to be.
And I am the critic,
Who fights the politicians to get the work done;
'Cause I'm Jack of all trades,
But least I can say, I'm a fisherman.

NL Singer/Songwriter Eddie Coffey (1996)
Presentation Summary

• Brief background on the PFHCB.
• What does it means to “Professionalize”?
• The PFHCB’s role in achieving a more professional industry. What are we doing?
• Working together to advance the professional development of our Industry.
• Positive trends and signs of success.
• Conclusion – What is our ultimate goal?
The Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board

A Brief Background
A brief background

• Established in 1997, following the proclamation of the Professional Fish Harvesters Act.

• Numerous consultations were held with fish harvesters between 1991 and 1998, with resounding levels of approval.

• The DFO Personal Fishing Registration system was transferred to the Board.

• A new certification system, as approved by fish harvesters, was introduced. (Apprentice, Level I & II)
A brief background ...continued

- Existing fish harvesters were “grandfathered in” based on historical attachment to the fishery.
- New entrants now require a combination of education credits and full-time fishing years in order to upgrade to Level I and Level II.
- There are important linkages between PFHCB certification and DFO federal licencing policy.
- Initially, in 1997 there were 17,000 fish harvesters registered. In recent years the numbers are in the 11,000-12,000 range.
What does it mean to “Professionalize”? 
What does it mean to “Professionalize”?

• It’s about being recognized for the specialized skills and experience required to be successful.

• It involves bestowing professional status on those who have a long term attachment, and setting qualifying standards for new entrants.

• It’s about ensuring that fish harvesters have the skills and knowledge required to succeed in this extremely demanding and rapidly changing industry… particularly young people entering the industry today.
What does it mean to “Professionalize”? …continued

• Is the ability to catch fish important? Absolutely!

• But there are other equally important abilities. The ability to…
  – navigate safely.
  – survive an accident at sea.
  – operate and manage a business.
  – understand the management and sustainability of the ocean’s resources.
  – consistently land a quality product.
  – and the list goes on.
What does it mean to “Professionalize”? …continued

• However, it’s more than just skills and training.
• It’s about respect and recognition.
• Respect for the level of skill and knowledge required to be successful in the fishing industry.
• Recognition for the valuable economic contribution the fishing industry makes to our rural communities, province and country.
• It’s also about fish harvesters taking ownership of their industry.
The PFHCB’s role in achieving a more professional industry.

What are we doing?
PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?

Though the PFHCB’s primary role is a registration/certification/accreditation body, its influence and contribution to professional development and safety has been far reaching and effective.

PFHCB Criteria

• As a result of Certification Criteria set by the PFHCB, fish harvesters are receiving safety-related training in record numbers - training they would not otherwise received.

• The 1st requirement upon registering with the PFHCB is to complete a mandatory Basic Safety Training course (MED A1, A3, or equivalent).
PFHCB’s Role – *What are we doing?*

- In order to upgrade their certification level (and be eligible to operate their own fishing enterprise), harvesters must complete a total of 120 education credits.

- This training would normally include:
  - Fishing Masters
  - Gear Construction & Maintenance
  - Stability
  - Engine/Vessel Maintenance
  - Marine Radio Operation
  - Fishing Techniques & Technology

- It is worth noting that nearly all fisheries training is either directly or indirectly related to safety.

- As a direct result of PFHCB certification, and its linkages to DFO regional licencing policy, harvesters receiving the transfer of Core fishing enterprises in NL meet minimum standards for training and certification.
PFHCB Delivery of Safety Training

• With a mandatory Basic Safety Training requirement in place, and more than 6,000 Apprentices to train, the PFHCB took it upon itself to develop and delivery its own program.

• A 5-day BST course developed, which included:
  – Marine Emergency Duties (Transport Canada authorized provider)
  – Marine First Aid (Canadian Red Cross authorized provider)
  – Safe Fishing Operations
  – General Seamanship and Stability

• 35 professional fish harvester instructors were training in adult education techniques and curriculum content at MI.
Since 2002, the PFHCB has delivered Basic Safety Training (including MED A3 and Marine First Aid) annually throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Total training completed to date, includes:
- 605 Courses
- 158 different fishing communities
- 8,200 fish harvesters

In addition to delivering its own safety course, the PFHCB has worked closely with MI to promote the delivery of their MED A1 course (for >25NM).

In total, since 2002, more than 10,000 NL fish harvesters have received mandatory safety training.
Development & Delivery of PLAR

• In 2000, the Board developed a Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Program for Apprentice and Level I fish harvesters.

• The rational was to avoid duplicate learning for those harvesters who have acquired technical skills through “hands-on” learning and experience, and to award formal credit for this informal learning.

• Learning outcomes and assessment/grading procedures were developed in partnership with MI, and 12 Level II assessors were trained.

• Since 2000, 3,912 assessments have been conducted, with 969 harvesters receiving credits toward upgrading.
PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?

Curriculum Development/Enhancement

- In addition to developing and delivering its own programs, the PFHCB is constantly working with fishing industry partners to enhance existing training and develop new programs/curriculum.

Technical Certificate in Harvesting – The PFHCB worked closely with MI to develop a comprehensive 18 week (2-semester) program dedicated to harvesters pursuing Level II certification. The Technical Certificate program was introduced in 2007, and provides participants with a broad skill-set specific to the needs of the inshore fishery. This is the first fisheries program of its kind in Canada.
**PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?**

**Adult Literacy** – The PFHCB has partnered with the CCPFH on two occasions to develop educational tools aimed at identifying and addressing literacy issues among commercial fish harvesters.
- Instructor Training Guide on Essential Skills
- Essential Skills Assessment Tool

**Fishing Masters IV by Distance** – The Board has worked directly with the CCPFH and MI on the Development of the new FMIV distance learning tool. The Board is piloting this tool in partnership with MI beginning this fall.

If successful, this new and innovative learning tool will vastly improve accessibility to FMIV training.
PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?

**Stability E-Simulator** – The PFHCB has been working directly with the CCPFH and its other industry partners on the development of this learning tool aimed at the development of “video game” style computer software that will enable fish harvesters to visually learn basic principles of fishing vessel stability.

**New Transport Canada OOW Certificate** – Having identified a need for a new level of TC certification for watchkeepers on fishing vessels, the PFHCB has worked directly with Transport Canada on establishing a new Certificate of Competency as Officer of the Watch – Fishing (OOW-F).

The Board’s formal proposal was accepted by TC, and our proposed curriculum was incorporated verbatim.
PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?

**NL Fisheries Safety Video** – The PFHCB has partnered with WHSCC and DFA to develop the new NL fisheries safety video, “Getting Back Home”. Having identified the need for an up-to-date fisheries safety video, unique to the specific circumstances and needs of the NL industry, the Board was a driving force in getting this project started, and stayed directly involved through to its completion.

The PFHCB, using the contact information from our datadase, has recently mailed a copy of the DVD to the home of every commercial fish harvester in the province.

**Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters** – The PFHCB is an active member of the CCPFH National Safety Committee. The committee deals with issues of common concern for Canadian fish harvesters, and is currently chaired by Mark Dolomount of the PFHCB.
PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?

Advocating on Fisheries Safety/Training

- The PFHCB is the primary advocate on fish harvester safety and professional development in NL. No other organization (Government or NGO) has been as proactive or unwavering on fish harvester safety.

Promotion of Fisheries Training – The PFHCB continuously promotes fish harvester training, and encourages fish harvesters at all certification levels to upgrade their skills and professional certification.

Assisting Harvester with Training Needs – On a regular basis, staff of the PFHCB assist fish harvesters assess their training/certification needs (PFHCB and/or TC), and assists them in gaining access to their required training.
Securing Funding for Fisheries Training – Each year, reps of the PFHCB meet with senior officials of Service Canada and HRLE in an effort to ensure that fisheries training remains a funding priority for government.

Canadian Marine Advisory Council (CMAC) – Since the Board’s inception, it has been a member of CMAC, and has had representatives attend all regional and national CMAC sessions.

- Since 2001, the PFHCB has been directly involved in CSA regulatory reform consultations – through CMAC and directly through Transport Canada Marine Safety in Ottawa.
- The PFHCB has been assessing/interpreting changes to the federal regulations and informing NL harvesters on the impending regulatory impact.

PFHCB’s Role – What are we doing?
Supporting NL Compliance with the MPR

- In addition to meeting the certification/training requirements of the PFHCB (provincially), NL fish harvesters are required to meet the mandatory training/certification requirements of Transport Canada’s Marine Personnel Regulations (federally).

- Some examples:
  - The 2008 mandatory MED deadline.
  - ROC-MC certification
  - Mandatory Master certification (vessels of various lengths)
  - Watchkeeping requirements
  - Marine First Aid requirements
  - Minimum Safe Manning Requirements
What Does the PFHCB do to “support” the MPR?

- The Board had significant input during the consultation phase (of the CSA 2001 regulatory review) in an effort to make the new regulations meaningful and achievable for NL fish harvesters. (ie. Certificates of Service)

- Staff of the Board have followed the regulatory reform process closely and have a solid understanding of the federal regulatory requirements.

- The Board has been diligent in informing/educating NL fish harvesters on the new federal regulations, and assisting them to interpret their individual requirements.

- The Board has been instrumental in assisting fish harvesters acquire their required training and comply with the federal regulations.
Working together to advance the professional development of our industry.
The need to work together

- There is no one “professionalization solution.”
- There are many groups working in a variety of ways to promote professionalism in the NL fishery. For example:
  - The PFHCB as outlined (and the CCPFH)
  - The DFA through quality and marketing initiatives
  - DFO by involving harvesters in management & science
  - Transport Canada in their effort to ensure that all operators and crew have appropriate levels of training
  - The MI by developing & delivering quality training
  - The FFAW through initiatives like the Sentinel Surveys and Fisheries Stewardship program
The need to work together …continued

• However, the biggest contributors are fish harvesters themselves. For example:
  – More harvesters, young and old, are choosing to do training. (FM’s, MED’s, Trades, Degrees)
  – Harvesters are increasingly more focused on quality.
  – More conscious of conservation measures. (ie. V-notching)
  – Owner operators are more business oriented.
  – More harvesters understand and are involved in fisheries management and science.
  – Harvesters are keeping up with advances in technology.

• We are making great steps in the right direction.
Positive Trends
and Signs of Success.
Positive Trends and Signs of Success

- We are confident that the work of the PFHCB and its industry partners has contributed significantly to the improvements we have seen in the past decade or so.

*Transportation Safety Board Statistics* – Statistics of the TSB show a positive downward trend in fishing-related incidents and fatalities, particularly since 2002.

*An Improving Culture of Safety* – There has been a noticeable improvement in the “safety culture” among fish harvesters (acknowledged by TC & TSB), for example:
  - Vessels are better equipped with safety equipment
  - Harvesters are better trained and prepared to respond
  - More and more small vessel harvesters are wearing PFD’s
  - Safety is discussed more and increasingly being embraced
Positive Trends and Signs of Success …continued

Best Trained Fisheries Labour Force – It has been documented that NL now has the best trained fisheries labour force in the country (in terms of the amount and level of training).

– 950+ Fishing Master IV
– 350+ Fishing Master III, II and I
– 1,600+ ROC-MC
– Nearly 100 with Watchkeeping Mate Certification
– 30 have completed Nautical Science Diplomas (ON I &II)
– More than 10,000 have completed MED Training

Highest Compliance with TC’s MPR – As a direct result of the work of the PFHCB, in collaboration with the Marine Institute, FFAW and other industry partners, NL is recognized as being the province most compliant with the new Marine Personnel Regulations.
Positive Trends and Signs of Success …continued

Recognition from Transport Canada (CMAC/RAC) – The PFHCB in recent years has been given a great deal of recognition by Transport Canada (regionally and nationally) as being leaders in the area of fisheries safety and training.

Recognition from the Canadian Red Cross – In May 2010, the Canadian Red Cross awarded the PFHCB their prestigious *Partners in Humanity Award* for “their role in reducing the risk of drowning and injury in the fishing industry.”

Recognition of Fish Harvesters as “Professionals” – Over the past decade we have seen an increasing level of respect for commercial fish harvesters, and an increasing level of pride in those who proudly refer to themselves as professional fish harvesters.
In Conclusion…
What is our ultimate goal?
In Conclusion …Our Ultimate Goal

• Full-time professional fish harvesters operating enterprises that are economically viable, and from which they can draw a meaningful livelihood for themselves and their professional crew members.

• Enterprises being operated safely, efficiently, and in such a way to ensure the long term sustainability of the enterprise, the community, and the resource.

• Fish harvesters being recognized and respected as the skilled professionals they are, and their industry being appreciated for the enormous social and economic contribution it makes to our rural communities, province and country.
Thank You! Questions?