1. Management councils face many difficult challenges in the 21st Century:
- rebuilding stocks
- reducing overcapacity
- sustaining fishing communities
- implementing ecosystem-based approaches
- improving research & management cost-effectiveness

2. 2001 International Workshop - Building Capacity for 21st Century Fisheries Conference findings:
- worldwide, fishery management training is insufficient for current and future needs
- managers need core competencies to evaluate and integrate complex biological, ecological, economic and social information
- recommended strategies include:
  - define competencies for each management context
  - design training strategies based on needs
  - develop certifiable training

3. 2004 U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy (19-14) recommendations:
- all newly appointed regional council members should complete a training course within six months of appointment
- without training, members may participate in council meetings, but may not vote
- core competencies include:
  - fishery science & basic stock assessment
  - social science & fishery economics
  - relevant laws and regulations
  - conflict-of-interest policies
  - the public process for developing FMPs

A possible national training strategy to improve U.S. fishery management capacity

Guiding principles:
- involve council members in all stages of development
- emphasize flexible approaches
- include benchmarking, evaluation, and adaptability
- integrate, where appropriate, w/ other NOAA Fisheries training

Strategy:
- form steering committee including council members
- survey council members on training needs
- conduct national workshop
- w/ councils, design program for council training
- develop implementation plan

What do council members think about the idea of training?

A panel presentation at the Workshop for Members of the Regional Fishery Management Councils, in Baltimore, MD (October 19, 2004) discussed training needs and strategies to improve U.S. fishery management capacity. Participants responded to the following questions:

1. Would training help councils meet their responsibilities?  POTENTIALLY

   Why needed:
   - overwhelming information requirements
   - transition from “constituency representative” to “effective manager”
   - improve effectiveness of discussion

   Concerns:
   - training as a pre-requisite for voting (timing)
   - accounting for experience of nominees
   - accommodating existing training efforts
   - regional vs. national training and issues

2. Are there critical RFMC training needs?  YES

   Competencies:
   - parliamentary procedures
   - regulations/national standards
   - law and litigation issues
   - communication skills
   - fisheries science & management
   - understanding NMFS perspective
   - relevant external management processes

   Other suggestions:
   - communications training for scientists/staff
   - handbook-glossaries, lists of contact people
   - fishing vessel experience for non-fishing members
   - visiting national and regional offices
   - briefing on existing FMPs

3. Does the proposed national strategy (see above) make sense?  YES