



NOAA FISHERIES

Fisheries Information System Program

About the Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Professional Specialty Group

As part of the Fisheries Information System (FIS) program, the Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Professional Specialty Group (QM/CI PSG) brings experts together from across NOAA Fisheries and our partner institutions to provide trainings; conduct workshops; promote timely, cost-effective management and policy-making; and foster a broad and enduring culture of quality throughout the fisheries data community.

About FIS

The Fisheries Information System program is a state-regional-federal partnership that supports sound, science-based fisheries management. FIS does so by fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration and funding innovative projects to improve the quality of fisheries-dependent data.

FIS Program Contacts

Michael Liddel

Acting Program Director
michael.liddel@noaa.gov

Lisa Peterson

lisa.peterson@noaa.gov

Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Success Story

Streamlining the Permitting Process: Value Stream Mapping for the PIRO Permits Database Improvements

The Challenge

The fisheries permitting process is a complex and exacting one, encompassing application, tracking, compliance, printing and mailing certificates and form letters, renewals, record keeping, and payment processing. Effective permit management is critical to supporting fishing industries, as well as sustainable science and management. Nowhere are these complexities more apparent than in the Pacific Islands Regional Office Permits Program, which manages an array of permits across a vast and diverse area. The National Permitting System—which enables online application, renewal, payment, and tracking—was launched nearly a decade ago, but many of the Pacific Islands’ permits issues are still managed using a separate, outdated database.

The Goal

The PIRO Permits Program aimed to improve the efficiency of permit processing, and to inform a seamless transition to a more robust permits management system.

The Approach

The PIRO Permits Office turned to the Quality Management and Continuous Improvement Professional Specialty Group to identify the permitting process workflow for the Hawaii longline fishery, through a value stream mapping (VSM) workshop. By visualizing each step in the process, the team was able to identify inefficiencies and spot opportunities to improve the current processing of permits and transition to a new system.

The Outcome

The workshop led to immediate improvements in the office’s permits management protocols and validated initial recommendations for modernizing the permitting process. Mapping out the steps helped the team identify ways to integrate more online features with the NPS to approve permits, which saves time and paper. In fact, reflecting the agency’s cost savings, the fee for applying online for a Hawaii longline permit was reduced to \$31, compared to \$52 for a paper application. In addition, the Permits Office now has a clear roadmap, complete with timelines and resource needs, to continue modernizing their permits management system.

To learn more about scheduling a workshop, funding opportunities, and the FIS commitment to enhancing the NOAA Fisheries culture of quality, visit www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/commercial-fishing/fisheries-information-system-program.

