

## AGENDA

Meeting: International Commercial Fishing PFD Working Group  
 Attendees: List of Attendees in Zoom Invitation  
 Date: Wednesday, September 14, 2022  
 Time: 11:00am-12:00pm ET  
 Location: <https://bassett.zoom.us/j/92949730415?pwd=QVJtYldLdFlodGkyRDJuZEQ1ejl5Zz09>

<i>Discussion Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>	<i>Time</i>
- <i>Welcome</i>	Julie Sorensen	5 min
- <i>General Updates</i>	Jennifer Lincoln	5 min
- <i>Development of a Lifejacket Design</i>	Charles Freeman	20 min
- <i>Discussion</i>	Open Discussion	20 min
- <i>Next Steps</i>	Julie Sorensen	5 min

*Title*

“Development of a Lifejacket Design”

*Description*

PFDs save lives. We know it, the fishermen know it, and the Coast Guard definitely knows it. Yet, we still have far too many deaths and injuries related to overboard incidents in the commercial fleets across the U.S. Why? Our research specifically examines commercial shrimpers in the Gulf of Mexico to conduct one-on-one user needs assessments and prototype development to find a solution. Through a human-centered design approach, our team looks at the major issues (comfort, movement, respiration, and cultural) reported by the shrimpers for the WHY behind the extremely low-rate of PFD usage while on deck and on the water. We will share findings from our research as well as recent prototype developments to further advance PFD usage across the U.S.

*Speaker Bio*

**Dr. Charles Freeman** is an associate professor and director of the Center for Retail and Cotton Product Development. Currently, Dr. Freeman works with the Athlete Engineering program on new material application for stretch sensors to monitor and evaluate health, safety, and performance of high-risk

occupations. His main research focuses on the assessments and new prototype development of personal flotation devices (PFD) for use in commercial fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. His projects have supported interdisciplinary graduate student research from the fields of Food Science, Chemical Engineering, Wildlife and Fisheries, and Clothing and Textiles. Prior research areas of interest have focused on product development and innovation specifically around new textile innovations and product design.

### *Background for Quarterly Call*

#### **International Commercial Fishing PFD Working Group**

In 2018, researchers from around the world assembled in St. John's, Newfoundland to attend IFISH5 [The International Fishing Industry Safety and Health Conference], the only international conference dedicated to fishing, aquaculture, and seafood processing occupational health and safety. The conference was organized by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Memorial University and the Northeast Center (NEC) and offered participants from many backgrounds and disciplines an opportunity to attend keynote lectures, workshops, presentations, and poster sessions on commercial fishing safety research.

During the 2018 conference, the Northeast Center partnered with national and international commercial fishing safety researchers to organize a panel discussion entitled "Changing Commercial Fishing Personal Flotation Use Behavior: what can we learn from efforts to address the most important safety technology adoption challenge of our time?". The panel was well attended and safety researchers who participated strongly advocated for keeping the conversation and collaboration going. The NEC agreed to organize an international work group of commercial fishing researchers interested in the topic of lifejacket use and since then the number of attendees has grown considerably. The group includes over 100 international researchers, safety trainers, and interested parties.

The group meets quarterly with a virtual platform, to build connections with other researchers, share resources, and further collaborations among individuals, organizations and countries seeking to increase PFD use in commercial fishing. Recordings of recent presentations may be found on the IFISH website: <https://ifishconference.ca/pfd-work-group/>

Anyone interested in learning more about this international group of commercial fishing safety researchers should contact [rebecca.weil@bassett.org](mailto:rebecca.weil@bassett.org).

### *Upcoming Meetings 2022*

- Wednesday, December 7: 11-12 ET

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