



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

July 18, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: Northeast Fishery Observer Program Observers, Industry Funded Scallop Observers, At-Sea Monitors, Dockside Monitors, and Service Providers.

FROM: Amy Van Atten
Branch Chief, FSB 

SUBJECT: Incident Report Updates, FY 2011 Special Management Program Updates, and New eVTR Option for Groundfish Vessels.

The objectives of this memo are to: Notify NEFOP Observers (Observers), Industry Funded Scallop (IFS) Observers, At-Sea Monitors (ASMs), and Dockside Monitors (DSMs) of recent changes to the Online Incident Report; accompany the updated Special Management Programs (SMP) cheat-sheet and outline FY 2011 changes for Observers and ASMs; and provide details about new Electronic Vessel Trip Reporting (eVTR) options for commercial groundfish vessels.

The purpose of the Online Incident Report is to document incidents that occur to personnel acting in the capacity of an Observer, ASM, or DSM, and to alert appropriate Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) staff of issues occurring in the field, so that they can be dealt with in a timely manner. Due to a recent exclusion of a regulatory requirement for DSMs to inspect vessels' fish holds the following Incident Types have been removed from the report: "Topman/Escort Deficiency," and "DSM Safety Refusal."

IFS Observers have been added to the "Position Title," and "Incident Type" section has been updated with IFS where applicable. Personnel reporting an incident while acting in the capacity of an IFS Observer should be sure to select the added IFS Observer distribution email list NEFSC.scallopincident@noaa.gov located on Page 2 of the report. Included with this memo is an updated copy of NEFOP Incident Report and instructions; these updated copies should be filed in your Regulatory Compliance and Fishermen's Forms Binder in section (GHI), and outdated copies should be removed.

Electronic copies of the Incident report can be found on the NEFSC Fisheries Sampling Branch website at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/fsb/> under the "Forms" section. As a reminder, all incidents must be reported within 12 hours after the incident occurred or within 12 hours of landing, depending on which is applicable.

NEFOP Memo 11-007 (Page 1 of 2)



Special Management Programs (SMP) were initiated with the implementation of Amendment 13 to the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan in 2004. Traditionally, SMPs have had special reporting requirements, observer call-in requirements, gear restrictions, and higher rates of coverage. In addition to the fact that data collected on these trips are used to monitor additional management schemas, Observers and ASMs need to be aware that these trips have specific reporting requirements, and particular gear types associated with them. In order to aid ASMs and Observers with the details that are associated with these trips, the "Groundfish Special Management Program Cheat-Sheet" was created. Included in this memo is the updated version for Groundfish Fishing Year 2011. The main objectives of this cheat-sheet are to help ASMs and Observers identify: Gear types with an outline of gear restrictions by time and area; proper program codes for corresponding SMP and program type; physical boundaries associated with each individual SMP; and identification guides for specialized trawl gear types required in some SMPs by certain vessels. Please add this cheat-sheet to your current collection, and remove the SMP cheat-sheet for Fishing Year 2010.

Owners or operators of commercial groundfish vessels with federal permits will now have the option to voluntarily submit their vessel trip reports, or VTRs, for each fishing trip to NOAA electronically (also called eVTR's) beginning in July. Paper VTR's are typically 8 digits long and electronic VTR's are typically 14 digits long that correspond with the permit/year/month/day/hour.

Vessel trip reports are required in many fisheries, including groundfish, to provide information on when and where catch occurred. Among other uses, these logs provide a link between the catch and the fish stock from which it came, which is critical for good stock assessments.

Electronic reporting will make the collection of important data on fishing vessel activity more efficient, convenient and timely for the fishing industry, fishery managers, and other data users. Vessel trip reports will be encrypted prior to transmission to maintain the confidentiality of data being transmitted.

If you are on a NEFOP trip (regardless of gear type) with no associated iPAQ data except for OBSCON then the eVTR should be reported in the same spot as you normally record the VTR serial number on the paper data. Please comment on in the corresponding "Comments" field on the Vessel & Trip Log that the vessel trip report number is in fact an eVTR.

If you are on a trip where associated trip data must be provided on the iPAQ then record the eVTR in the appropriate location on the iPAQ. At-Sea Monitoring only paper logs and iPAQ have a space both for the paper VTR and eVTR.

As a reminder for both paper and electronic VTR's if there is more than one vessel trip report filled out for the trip, record the lowest VTR number.

