



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Date Issued: 4/2/2015

Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery

Fishing Year 2015 Observer Set-Aside Compensation Rates

Effective Date: March 1, 2015

The Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service have worked together to calculate the initial observer set-aside compensation rate for fishing year 2015. We will revisit these rates in May once Framework Adjustment 26 is implemented, if approved, to see if any mid-year adjustments are necessary.

Fishing Year 2015 Initial Compensation Rates

The compensation rate for open areas for limited access vessels fishing under days-at-sea (DAS) is **0.08 DAS per DAS fished** (the vessel is charged 0.92 DAS for each DAS fished with an observer onboard). This rate allows the fishery to achieve the needed observer days for the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology requirements. The current rate is a slight increase in the compensation rate from last year but is equivalent to the compensation rate in fishing years 2012 and 2013.

Although there are no fishing year 2015 allocated access area trips at the start of the fishing year, limited access scallop vessels may take fishing year 2014 compensation trips broken in the last 60 days of fishing year 2014 in the first 60 days of fishing year 2015 (i.e., through April 29, 2015). The compensation rate for these compensation trips is **150 lb** in addition to the vessel's possession limit for the trip for each day or part of a day an observer is onboard.

Although limited access general category individual fishing quota vessels will not be able to fish within the access areas at the start of fishing year 2015, they may possess an additional **150 lb per trip** in open areas when carrying an observer.

We selected these compensation rates because we expect that they provide sufficient compensation for the observer fee while also providing sufficient observer coverage based on anticipated coverage levels needed for the start of fishing year 2015.

For limited access vessels on access areas trips, the compensation rate provides an average buffer of approximately \$1,580 per day over the \$675 per day cost of the observer at the expected price of scallops. For limited access vessels on open area trips, the buffer is approximately \$2,425. For limited access general category vessels, the compensation rate provides an average buffer of approximately \$1,580 per trip over the \$675 per day cost of the observer at the expected price of

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scallops, assuming trips are one day in length. All observer compensation rates were calculated using an average scallop price of \$11.15 per pound.

We intend for these excess funds to account for variations in the fishery, such as lower scallop price and landings per day fished (also called landings per unit effort), without creating financial incentive to extend an observed trip.

PLEASE NOTE: These are initial rates because we may consider changing the compensation rate as we gather fishery information throughout fishing year 2015, such as scallop price, length of trips, scallop landings per day fished, and overall rate of observer set-aside usage.