SEFHIER

Better Data, Better Management

Michelle Masi, Ph.D. - SEFHIER Program Manager
NMFS|Southeast Regional Office
Michelle.Masi@noaa.gov

SEFHIER Program Goals

- Produce reliable estimates of catch and effort for federally permitted for-hire vessels

- Immediate data uses - validate minimum catch and effort estimates

- Future data uses require calibration and benchmarking to existing data collections

- Anticipated benefits of SEFHIER
  - Improved for-hire data for management, including:
    - Increased accuracy & timeliness of data
    - Census-based reporting
    - Reduction in recall bias
  - Improved monitoring & compliance

SEFHIER Program Updates

- As program compliance improves, SEFHIER is shifting from an outreach focus to a data analysis focus

  - Jan, 2023 – brought on data analyst contractor; another analyst by end of 2023

- SEFHIER had annual budget cuts, while resource needs have continued to increase

  - FY21 = $2.65 million budget

  - FY22/23 = only $1.5 million budget (i.e., loss of 750k, for the Validation Survey)

- Program compliance notifications

  - Program moving towards automated non-compliance notifications – using emails (e.g. OLE now sending email notices for non-positioning VMS units; compliance team now sending emails in lieu of calls, about compliance or data errors)

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | National Marine Fisheries Service

SEFHIER Program Updates

- As of January, 2023: Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS) added venting/descending fields for released catch; **SEFHIER did not add these fields** (therefore, logbooks will differ among programs, in this regard)

  o <u>Only for SRHS vessels</u>: if a released species is entered in the logbook, the fields "number descended" and "number vented" will now appear; they do not appear if no catch was reported as released

  o If the captain is fishing in shallow water, where descending/venting is not necessary, then you can leave these venting/descending fields blank

  o SRHS will use the data to improve the discard mortality estimates for SRHS

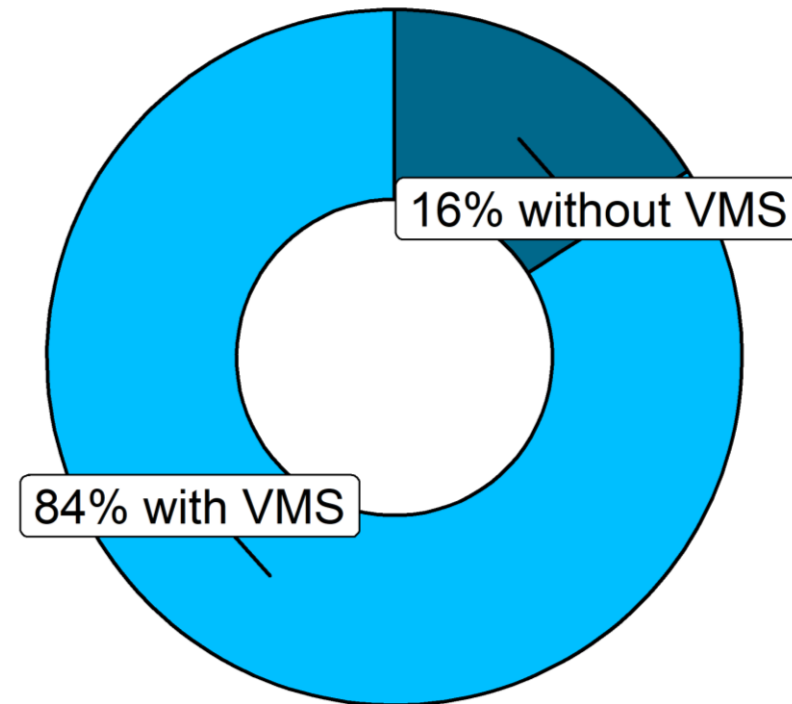 o More information on the SRHS "Return 'Em Right Program" can be found at https://returnemright.org/

Quantifying Program Compliance

(Data from: January 1 - Dec 31, 2022)

% Gulf For-hire Permitted Vessels with a Reporting Account, by Type

- 22.4% eTrips Accounts
- 6% VMS Accounts
- 71.6% VESL Accounts
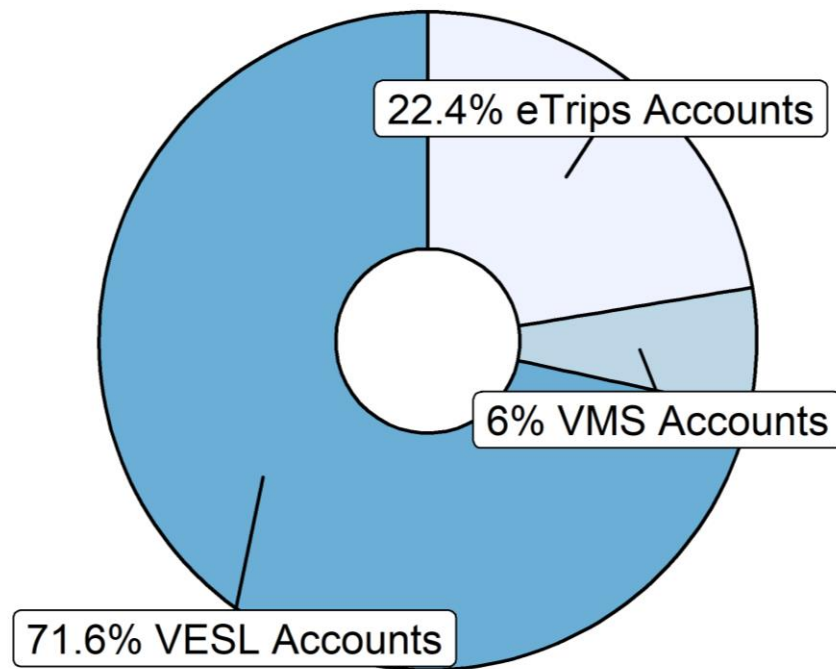
Proportion VMS Compliant
(out of the total # of Gulf for-hire permitted vessels)

- 16% without VMS
- 84% with VMS

NOAA FISHERIES

Gulf (OLE): Enforcement Actions

(as of January 11th, 2023)

- In 2022, SEFHIER sent 74 non-compliant vessels to OLE for further investigation (i.e., either never reported and/or never registered a VMS unit)

  o 48 vessels are now considered compliant

  o The 26 remaining vessels are pending enforcement follow-up action

Administrative Reg Changes
(Rulemaking Process, Declaration Burden Framework)

1. <u>Change: allow one declaration for dual SEFHIER/Commercial vessels – currently a separate declaration is required for each program</u>

   o Modify (administratively) the data pathway, to allow one declaration to serve as notification for both sectors. For this to apply, a vessel must:

      ✓ Have both a federal commercial reef fish & one Gulf for-hire permit
      ✓ Have a VMS unit that is type-approved in both sectors
      ✓ Declare using a VMS declaration form, that is transmitted through the VMS system (i.e., commercial only allows VMS or IVR submission pathways, and of those SEHFIER only has VMS)
      ✓ Declare with the declaration form for the sector the vessel is operating in (e.g. commercial trip, use commercial declaration)

Administrative Reg Changes
(Rulemaking Process, Declaration Burden Framework)

2. <u>Change: require a declaration submission timeframe</u>

   ○ SEFHIER relies on an automated compliance algorithm to match a vessel's declaration to the corresponding trip logbook (where the matching occurs using the trip start date & time fields, between forms)

      ▪ Concern: declarations can be submitted months in advance of a trip start date; and when the SEFHIER algorithm doesn't find a matching logbook, it holds the vessel out of compliance – impacting permit renewal

      ▪ Change is expected to have a minimal impact on for-hire captains, as 98% of SEFHIER declarations are being submitted within 24 hours of the trip start time

      ▪ Benefits: decreased admin burden (less calls required, when fewer non-compliance issues), and increased efficiency in permit renewals (less non-compliant issues)

Other Reg Changes Under Consideration
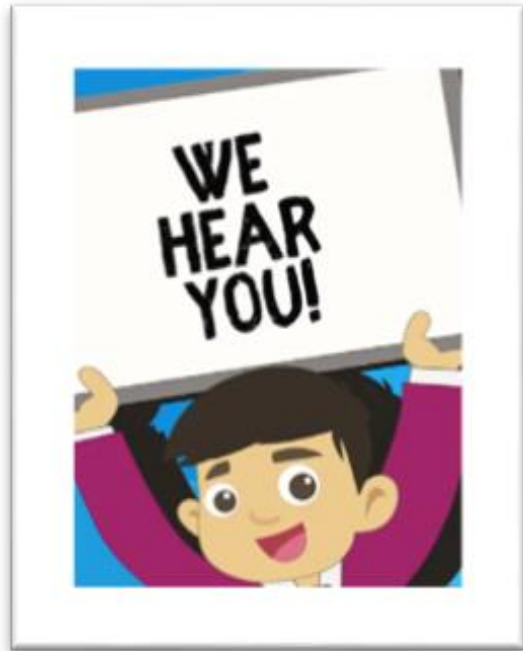
- Eliminate the requirement of needing SEFHIER reports from trips occurring in landlocked freshwater bodies

- Some VMS units (noting: its not vendor specific) are not positioning while the for-hire vessel is stored under cover (e.g. in a storage building) – SEFHIER is exploring options for these instances

- SEFHIER is exploring whether the VMS installation requirements can be lifted for SEFHIER's cVMS units, as a qualified installer may not be necessary for cVMS units

- Others? If so, let's discuss…

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | National Marine Fisheries Service

SEFHIER Program Reminders

- Power Down Exemption (PDE) vs Equipment Failure Exemption:

	Power Down Exemption	Equipment Failure Exemption
Can vessel still move on water?	No	Yes; for up to 10 days (after 10 days VMS unit must be functional or 2nd EFE approved)
Can I power off the unit?	Yes, after approval; vessel must not move on water for at least 72 hours	Yes, after approval
Submission Process	PDE Online Request Form	EFE Online Request Form
Annual Limitations	None	Limited to 2 per calendar year
OLE Approval Process	Semi-automated approval process	Automated, conditional approval from OLE; final approval after failure documentation is received/processed
Documentation Required?	Recommendation to keep print out of approved PDE email from OLE on vessel	Submitted request form (recommend to keep printed copy onboard vessel) & documentation of failure within 30 days

- SEFHIER PDEs:
  - https://grunt.sefsc.noaa.gov/apex/fer/r/fer_forms/power-down-request?session=25596639517417
  - 241 SEFHIER PDEs approved to date (through January 15 2023)

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | National Marine Fisheries Service
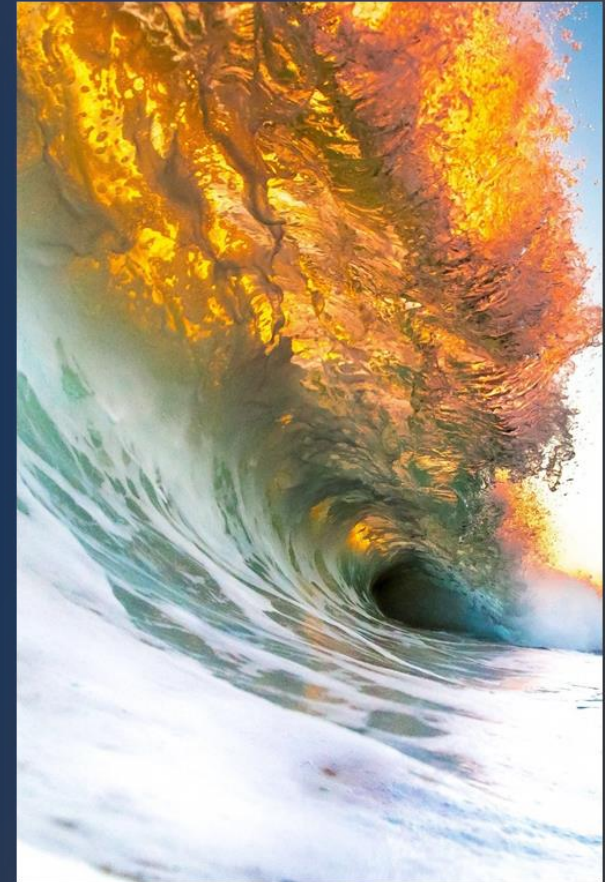
NOAA FISHERIES

SEFHIER Program Reminders

- SEFHIER program staff may call you when our automated algorithms find:
  - Compliance issues (e.g. missing declaration for a submitted logbook, or missing logbook for submitted intended fishing declaration), and/or
  - Data errors in submitted trip reports

- Some of the data/validation errors that SEFHIER program staff may call you about include:

  - Unusual number of fishing hours; reported trip end time before trip start time; trip start time in declaration inconsistent with logbook trip start time, etc.

  - ❖ We do this to ensure Better Data, Better Management for our Program – thank you for assisting us when we call!

Acknowledgements

❖ SEFHIER program staff & Council staff

❖ **Special thanks to our for-hire constituents!**