



Tab F, No. 4(a)



SEFHIER: Administrative Regulation Changes



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



1st Administrative Change:

Allow One Declaration for Dual Commercial Reef Fish & For-Hire Federally Permitted Vessels



Concern/burden (with current regulation):

- Dually permitted vessels must submit a declaration to each sector, for every trip
- Submission pathways differ between sectors (and are defined in the regulations):
 - **VMS (for-hire and commercial)**
 - Software application (for-hire only)
 - Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone line (commercial only)
- Declaration fields (the information collected) differ between sectors:
 - e.g. Commercial declarations also ask for gear & species, and don't have pre-landing information
 - e.g. For-hire declarations ask trip start date/time, estimated end date/time, and landing location



1st Administrative Change:

Allow One Declaration for Dual Commercial Reef Fish & For-Hire Federally Permitted Vessels



Administrative, regulation modification:

- Modify 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 and at least one of the four Gulf for-hire permits
 - Have a VMS unit approved in both sectors
 - Declare using a VMS declaration form that is transmitted through the VMS system
 - Vessels in the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey (SRHS) are excluded, due to software requirements for the survey
 - Use the VMS declaration form that is associated with the sector they are operating in:
 - Use commercial VMS declaration for a commercial trip
 - Use for-hire VMS declaration for a for-hire trip
 - Use commercial VMS declaration for an out of fishery trip (e.g. getting gas)



2nd Administrative Change: **Require a Declaration Submission Timeframe**

Concern/burden (with current regulation):

- SEFHIER relies on an automated compliance algorithm to match a vessel's logbook to the declaration; matching based on trip start date and time
- Declarations can be/are submitted months in advance
 - Increased possibility of trip start times being different between forms (i.e., on day of a trip, a trip may start late due to weather, or customers running late)
- Burden (administrative and for the industry):
 - When the algorithm doesn't find a match, SEFHIER staff must call the fisherman to get the correct time so that staff can manually override the vessel's compliance status
 - Fisherman may have to go back months into their records to determine what the correct start time should have been; when out of compliance they cannot renew/transfer permit(s)
 - OLE does not get timely information about trips when declaration emails go out to them days/months in advance of the trip start date



2nd Administrative Change: **Require a Declaration Submission Timeframe**

Administrative, regulation modification:

- Require a trip declaration submission window – to be no more than 24 hours in advance of the trip start.

Minimal expected impact on the industry:

- 2022 SEFHIER declaration data showed:
 - < 2% (163 out of 9,611) of declarations were submitted > 24 hours in advance of trip start time
 - 98% of declarations were submitted within 24 hours of trip start time (85% were submitted within 1 hour)
- Benefits:
 - Decreased administrative burden (i.e., more staff time devoted to ensuring quality data) & increased efficiency in permit renewals (i.e., the permit holder would be less likely to have a non-compliant status, due to a matching error)

Additional Background Information



Differences between commercial reef fish and for-hire declaration forms



| Data type | Differences |
|--|---|
| Trip Activity | Commercial: indicates region (e.g., GOM, HMS, SA, Caribbean, Out of Fishery) SEFHIER: indicates fishing activity (intended fishing or non-fishing trip) |
| Trip Type | Commercial: Commercial, charter, or recreational SEFHIER: commercial, charter, headboat, recreational, research |
| Fishery | Commercial uses species question to indicate sector SEFHIER: question is not asked |
| Gear | Commercial: limited list based on regulations; gears available change by sector selected SEFHIER: comprehensive full gear list |
| Estimated Trip end date/time (only required for for-hire fishing trip) | Commercial: Commercial uses pre-landing notifications separate from declarations SEFHIER: required only for for-hire trips as a pre-landing notification |
| Landing Location Code (only required for for-hire fishing trip) | Commercial: Commercial uses pre-landing notifications separate from declarations SEFHIER: required only for for-hire trips as a pre-landing notification |