

Southeast For-Hire Electronic Reporting Program

Who is impacted by this program?

All charter and headboat captains on vessels with federal Gulf of Mexico reef fish or coastal migratory pelagic for-hire fishing permits must follow the reporting requirements.

A letter from Dr. Roy Crabtree, NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Administrator:

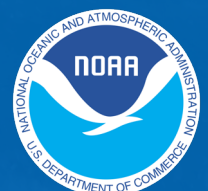
Greetings,

I would like to give you an update on our progress on developing and implementing the new for-hire electronic reporting program. In the 18 months since the Council approved new electronic reporting requirements for federally permitted for-hire vessels, NOAA Fisheries has been developing the Gulf-specific program in conjunction with a similar program for the Atlantic region. This task has been daunting and has proven to be more complex than originally anticipated. Developing a comprehensive reporting program covering vessels from Texas to Maine involves seventeen states, four Fishery Management Councils, two regional Fishery Commissions, two NOAA Regional Offices, and multiple NOAA Science Centers.

We originally anticipated implementation of the Gulf electronic reporting program sometime in 2019. However, unanticipated technical requirements, and challenges associated with developing a program that covers a broad geographic area have delayed the process. We are now aiming to implement the new Gulf reporting requirements in 2020. The implementation will come in two phases.

This electronic reporting program is expected to be beneficial to both scientists and fishermen. After validation and calibration, we anticipate this more detailed and timely information will better position the Council and NOAA Fisheries to make management decisions that benefit the resource and those of you who rely on it to make a living. We need your help to make this program a success and appreciate your patience and collaboration as we work toward rolling out this program.

Roy Crabtree



Revised Implementation Schedule

Phase I – Expected early 2020

Trip Declaration (Hail-Out) before leaving the dock.

Prior to departing on a trip, you would fill out a short electronic form to let NOAA Fisheries know who you are, what type of trip you are taking, and where and when you will return to port. If you are not going fishing, no additional trip information is needed! If you take a charter or headboat trip, you must submit an electronic logbook report for each trip.

Logbook at the end of the trip, before offloading fish.

Your logbook would include information on trip operations, passengers on board, and what they caught. This information could help managers and scientists track quotas, determine the value of the fisheries, and assess the health of fish stocks.

Phase II – Expected late 2020

Location Tracking Device permanently affixed to the vessel.

Assuring when your vessel leaves and returns to the dock would allow NOAA Fisheries to validate logbook reports, determine compliance, and create a better picture of the entire trip.

What Can You Do to Help Prepare?

Start thinking about how you want to submit logbooks

- VMS – satellite-based
 - A list of approved VMS units can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yybjbfez>
- Mobile phone application – cellular-based
- Web site (tablet or PC) – web-based



Submit landing locations for approval

- You must have your dock(s) or landing location(s) approved by NOAA Fisheries staff to ensure adequate information for enforcement.
- Any landing location approved for the Gulf commercial reef fish sector can be used by for-hire operators, without additional approval. You can find a list of already-approved landing locations at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3xdrjp2>
- The form to request approval of a new landing location will be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5z6fet2>





Learn More

- Read our Frequently Asked Questions at: <https://tinyurl.com/y5z6fet2>
- Sign up for Southeast Fisheries Bulletins at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4cfaj2r>
- Any questions should be directed to the Southeast Regional Office @ 727-824-5305.

Feedback from Captains on the Development of For-Hire Reporting Requirements

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries collaboratively hosted a series of eight workshops to engage federally permitted for-hire operators about the new electronic reporting requirements.

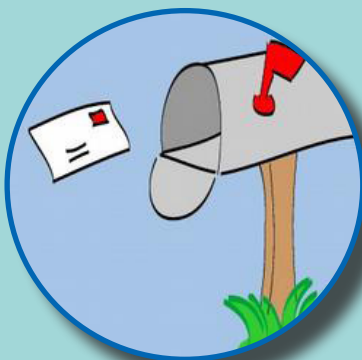
Read a summary of the issues discussed at <https://tinyurl.com/CaptainsMeetings>



What can you expect from NOAA Fisheries and the Gulf Council in the near future?

When the final rule is published, permit holders will be sent an informational packet outlining Phase I requirements and steps you will need to take to begin reporting. We will be hosting a series of training and information sessions across the Gulf coast before the new reporting requirements are final.

Phase II requirements will be implemented later in 2020 and a notice will be sent to permit holders announcing the implementation date and requirements. We anticipate hosting informational workshops to prepare you to begin location tracking reporting in 2020.



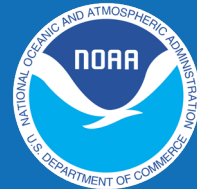
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The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council developed an electronic reporting plan for for-hire vessels that establishes requirements for federally permitted charter vessels and changes requirements for headboats.

NOAA Fisheries is developing a final rule to implement the plan. The actions would increase the amount and type of information collected from the for-hire industry and fishermen, with the intention of improving fisheries management and science.

NOAA Fisheries continues to work on solutions that will satisfy the new reporting requirements in the most user-friendly manner possible.



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