

§ 679.32 Groundfish and halibut CDQ catch monitoring.

(a) Applicability

This section contains requirements for CDQ groups, operators of vessels, and managers of processors that harvest and/or process groundfish CDQ, including vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA that are halibut CDQ fishing.

(b) PSQ catch.

Time and area closures required once a CDQ group has reached its salmon PSQ or crab PSQ are listed in § 679.7(d)(7) through (10). The catch of salmon or crab by vessels using other than trawl gear does not accrue to the PSQ for these species. The discard of halibut by vessels using pot or jig gear will not accrue to the halibut PSQ if this bycatch has been exempted from the halibut PSC limit under § 679.21(e)(3)(i)(A) and (e)(4) in the annual specifications published in the *Federal Register*.

(c) Vessels eligible for groundfish and halibut CDQ fisheries.

The following information must be provided by the CDQ group for all vessels that are groundfish CDQ fishing and all vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA that are halibut CDQ fishing.

(1) Request for approval of an eligible vessel.

Prior to a vessel participating in the CDQ fishery, a CDQ group must submit to NMFS a completed request for approval of an eligible vessel as described at § 679.5(n)(4). NMFS will approve all vessels for which a completed request is submitted. Once approved, a vessel will remain eligible until December 31 of the last year in the current CDQ allocation cycle under § 679.30(d), or until the CDQ group removes the vessel from eligibility under paragraph (c)(2) of this section. A list of eligible vessels for each CDQ group will be publicly available from the Alaska Regional Office or on the NMFS website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov>. The CDQ group must provide a copy of the NMFS-approved eligible vessel request to the operator of the approved vessel. The vessel operator must maintain a copy of the eligible

vessel request approved by NMFS onboard the vessel at all times while harvesting, transporting, or offloading CDQ.

(2) Removing a vessel from eligibility.

A CDQ group may remove a vessel from eligibility to harvest CDQ on its behalf by advising NMFS by letter of the removal. Removal of a vessel from eligibility to harvest CDQ will be effective on the date that NMFS approves the request and notifies the CDQ group of NMFS's approval. Upon receipt of notification of NMFS's approval, the CDQ group must notify the operator of the vessel of the vessel's removal from eligibility to harvest CDQ on behalf of the CDQ group.

(d) Requirements for vessels and processors.

In addition to complying with the minimum observer coverage requirements at § 679.50(c)(4), operators of vessels groundfish CDQ fishing and managers of shoreside processors or stationary floating processors taking deliveries from vessels groundfish CDQ fishing must comply with the following requirements:

(1) Catcher vessels without an observer.

(i) Operators of catcher vessels less than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA must retain all groundfish CDQ species, halibut CDQ, and salmon PSQ until they are delivered to a processor that meets the requirements of paragraph (d)(3) or (d)(4) of this section, unless retention of groundfish CDQ species is not authorized under § 679.4, discard of the groundfish CDQ species is required under subpart B of this part, or, in waters within the State of Alaska, discard is required by the State of Alaska.

(ii) Catcher vessels delivering unsorted codends. Operators of catcher vessels delivering unsorted codends to motherships must retain all CDQ and PSQ species and deliver them to a mothership that meets the requirements of paragraph (d)(4) of this section.

(2) Catcher vessels with observers.

Operators of catcher vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.29 m) LOA must comply with the following requirements:

(i) If using trawl gear, the vessel operator must:

(A) Retain all CDQ species and salmon PSQ until they are delivered to a processor that meets the requirements of paragraph (d)(3) or (d)(4) of this section unless retention of groundfish CDQ species is not authorized under § 679.4 of this part, discard of the groundfish CDQ species is required under subpart B of this part, or, in waters within the State of Alaska, discard is required by laws of the State of Alaska;

(B) Retain all halibut and crab PSQ in a bin or other location until it is counted and sampled by a level 2 observer; and

(C) Provide space on the deck of the vessel for the level 2 observer to sort and store catch samples and a place from which to hang the observer sampling scale.

(ii) If using nontrawl gear, the vessel operator must either:

(A) Option 1: Retain all CDQ species. Retain all CDQ species until they are delivered to a processor that meets the requirements of paragraph (d)(3) or (d)(4) of this section unless retention of groundfish CDQ species is not authorized under § 679.4 of this part, discard of the groundfish CDQ or PSQ species is required under subpart B of this part, or, in waters within the State of Alaska, discard is required by laws of the State of Alaska. Have all of the halibut PSQ counted by the level 2 observer and sampled for length or average weight; or

(B) Option 2: Discard some CDQ species at sea. May discard some CDQ species at sea if the following requirements are met:

(1) Observer sampling station. The vessel owner provides an observer sampling station that complies with § 679.28(d) so that the level 2 observer can accurately determine the average weight of discarded CDQ species. A valid observer sampling station inspection report described at § 679.28(d)(8) must be on board the vessel at all times when a sampling station is required; and

(2) Species composition. Each CDQ set on vessels using hook-and-line gear is sampled for species composition by a level 2 observer.

(3) Shoreside processors and stationary floating processors.

The manager of a shoreside processor or stationary floating processor must comply with all of the following requirements:

(i) Prior notice to observer of offloading schedule. Notify the level 2 observer of the offloading schedule of each CDQ delivery at least 1 hour prior to offloading to provide the level 2 observer an opportunity to monitor the sorting and weighing of the entire delivery.

(ii) CDQ and PSQ by weight. Sort and weigh on a scale approved by the State of Alaska under § 679.28(c) all groundfish and halibut CDQ or PSQ by species or species group.

(iii) PSQ by number. Sort and count all salmon and crab PSQ.

(iv) CDQ and PSQ sorting and weighing. Sorting and weighing of CDQ and PSQ must be monitored by a level 2 observer.

(v) CDQ delivery report. Submit a CDQ delivery report described at § 679.5(n)(1) for each delivery of groundfish CDQ.

(vi) AFA inshore processors. Take deliveries from a vessel engaged in directed fishing for pollock CDQ without following an approved CMCP as described at § 679.28(g).

(4) Catcher/processors and motherships.

The operator of a catcher/processor or a mothership taking deliveries of unsorted codends from catcher vessels must comply with the following requirements:

(i) Prior notice to observer of CDQ catch. Notify the level 2 observer(s) before CDQ catch is brought onboard the vessel and notify the level 2 observer(s) of the CDQ group and CDQ number associated with the CDQ catch.

(ii) Observer sampling station. Provide an observer sampling station as described at § 679.28(d). A valid observer sampling station inspection report described at § 679.28(d)(8) must be on board the vessel at all times when a sampling station is required.

(iii) Obtain the data entry software provided by the Regional Administrator ("ATLAS software") for use by the observer and ensure that observer data can be transmitted from the vessel to NMFS at any time while the vessel is receiving, catching or processing CDQ species.

(iv) Catcher/processors using trawl gear and motherships. The operator of a catcher/processor using trawl gear or of a mothership taking deliveries of unsorted codends from catcher vessels must weigh all catch on a scale that complies with the requirements of § 679.28(b). A valid scale inspection report described at § 679.28(b)(2) must be on board the vessel at all times when a scale is required. Catch from each CDQ haul must be weighed separately. Catch must not be sorted before it is weighed, unless a provision for doing so is approved by NMFS for the vessel. Each CDQ haul must be sampled by a level 2 observer for species composition and the vessel operator must allow level 2 observers to use any scale approved by NMFS to weigh partial CDQ haul samples.

(v) Catcher/processors using nontrawl gear. Each CDQ set on a vessel using hook-and-line gear must be sampled by a level 2 observer for species composition and average weight.

(e) Recordkeeping and reporting.

(1) Catch record.

The manager of a shoreside processor or stationary floating processor must submit to NMFS the CDQ delivery report required in § 679.5(n)(1). The CDQ representative must submit to NMFS the CDQ catch report required in § 679.5(n)(2). Additionally, all other applicable requirements in § 679.5 for groundfish fishing must be met.

(2) Verification of CDQ and PSQ catch reports.

CDQ groups may specify the sources of data listed below as the sources they will use to determine CDQ and PSQ catch on the CDQ catch report by specifying "NMFS standard sources of data" on their request for approval of an eligible vessel. In the case of a catcher vessel using nontrawl gear, the CDQ group must specify on their request for approval of an eligible vessel whether the vessel will be retaining all groundfish CDQ (Option 1) or discarding some groundfish CDQ species at sea (Option 2). CDQ species may be discarded at sea by these vessels only if

the requirements of paragraph (d)(2)(ii)(B) of this section are met. NMFS will use the following sources to verify the CDQ catch reports, unless an alternative catch estimation procedure is approved by NMFS under paragraph (e)(3) of this section.

(i) Catcher vessels less than 60 ft (18.29 m) LOA. The weight or numbers of all CDQ and PSQ species will be the same as the information on the CDQ delivery report if all CDQ species and salmon PSQ are retained on board the vessel until delivered to a processor, and sorted and weighed in compliance with paragraph (d)(3) of this section.

(ii) Catcher vessels delivering unsorted codends. The weight and numbers of CDQ and PSQ species will be determined by applying the species composition sampling data collected for each CDQ haul by the level 2 observer on the mothership to the total weight of each CDQ haul as determined by weighing all catch from each CDQ haul on a scale approved under § 679.28(b).

(iii) Observed catcher vessels using trawl gear. The weight of halibut and numbers of crab PSQ discarded at sea will be determined by using the level 2 observer's sample data. The weight or numbers of all groundfish CDQ and salmon PSQ will be the same as the information submitted on the CDQ delivery report if all CDQ species and salmon PSQ are retained on board the vessel until delivered to a processor, and sorted and weighed in compliance with paragraph (d)(3) of this section.

(iv) Observed catcher vessels using nontrawl gear.

(A) Option 1. The weight of halibut PSQ discarded at sea will be determined by using the level 2 observer's sample data. The weight of all groundfish CDQ will be the same as the information submitted on the CDQ delivery report if all CDQ species are retained on board the vessel until delivered to a processor, and sorted and weighed in compliance with paragraph (d)(3) of this section (Option 1); or

(B) Option 2. The weight of halibut PSQ and all groundfish CDQ species will be determined by applying the level 2 observer's species composition sampling data to the estimate of total catch weight if any CDQ species are discarded at sea.

(v) Catcher/processors using trawl gear. The weight and numbers of CDQ and PSQ species will be determined by applying the level 2 observer's species composition sampling data for each CDQ haul to the total weight of the CDQ haul as determined by weighing all catch from each CDQ haul on a scale certified under § 679.28(b).

(vi) Catcher/processors using nontrawl gear. The weight of halibut PSQ and all groundfish CDQ species will be determined by applying the level 2 observer's species composition sampling data to the estimate of total catch weight, if any CDQ species are discarded at sea.

(3) Alternative methods for verification of CDQ and PSQ catch.

The method to be used to determine CDQ and PSQ catch for each vessel must be listed by a CDQ group on the request for approval of an eligible vessel. A CDQ group may propose the use of an alternative method, such as using only one observer where normally two would be required, sorting and weighing of all catch by species on processor vessels, or using larger sample sizes than could be collected by one observer, by submitting an alternative fishing plan attached to its request for approval of an eligible vessel. NMFS will review the alternative fishing plan and approve it or notify the qualified applicant in writing if the proposed alternative does not meet the requirements listed under paragraphs (e)(3)(i) through (iv) of this section. The CDQ group must provide a copy of the approved alternative fishing plan to the operator of the approved vessel. A copy of the alternative fishing plan approved by NMFS must be maintained onboard the vessel at all times while it is operating under the alternative fishing plan. Alternative fishing plans are valid for the remainder of the calendar year in which they are approved. Alternatives to the requirement for a certified scale or an observer sampling station will not be approved. NMFS will review the alternative fishing plan to determine if it meets all of the following requirements:

(i) The alternative proposed must provide equivalent or better estimates than use of the NMFS standard data source would provide and the estimates must be independently verifiable;

(ii) Each haul or set on an observed vessel must be able to be sampled by an observer for species composition;

(iii) Any proposal to sort catch before it is weighed must ensure that the sorting and weighing process will be monitored by an observer; and

(iv) The time required for the level 2 observer to complete sampling, data recording, and data communication duties must not exceed 12 hours in each 24-hour period and the level 2 observer must not be required to sample more than 9 hours in each 24-hour period.

(f) Halibut CDQ

(1) Applicability.

The CDQ group, the operator of the vessel, the manager of a shoreside processor or stationary floating processor, and the Registered Buyer must comply with the catch monitoring requirements of this paragraph (f) and with the R&R requirements of § 679.4(e) for the catch of CDQ halibut or while CDQ halibut fishing.

(2) Accounting for catch of groundfish CDQ while halibut CDQ fishing.

The manager of a shoreside processor or stationary floating processor must report on a CDQ delivery report described at § 679.5(n)(1), all groundfish CDQ delivered by vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA while halibut CDQ fishing and all sablefish CDQ delivered by vessels of any size while halibut CDQ fishing. The CDQ group must report on a CDQ catch report described at § 679.5(n)(2), all groundfish CDQ caught by vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA while halibut CDQ fishing and all sablefish CDQ retained by vessels of any size while halibut CDQ fishing. This groundfish CDQ will accrue to the CDQ group's groundfish CDQ allocations. The manager of a shoreside processor and the CDQ group are not required to report on the CDQ delivery report, groundfish, except sablefish CDQ, that is caught by vessels less than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA while halibut CDQ fishing, and this catch (except sablefish CDQ) will not accrue against the CDQ group's groundfish CDQ allocations.

(3) Groundfish CDQ retention requirements.

Operators of vessels less than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA are not required to retain and deliver groundfish CDQ species while halibut CDQ fishing, unless required to do so elsewhere in this part. Operators of vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA are required to comply with all groundfish CDQ and PSQ catch

accounting requirements in paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section, including the retention of all groundfish CDQ, if Option 1 under § 679.32(d)(2)(ii) is selected. CDQ species must be discarded when required by other provisions in subpart B of this part or, in waters within the State of Alaska, when discard is required by laws of the State of Alaska.

(4) Observer coverage requirements.

The owner or operator of a vessel equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA halibut CDQ fishing as defined at § 679.2 or shoreside processors taking deliveries from vessels equal to or greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) LOA that are halibut CDQ fishing must comply with observer coverage requirements at § 679.50(c)(4) and (d)(4).

(5) Seabird avoidance requirements.

The CDQ group, and vessel owner or operator must comply with all of the seabird avoidance requirements at § 679.42(b)(2).