

years shall be available for use in the next full funding year of the schools and libraries mechanism in accordance with the public interest and notwithstanding the annual cap.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

48 CFR Chapter 2

Notice of Public Meeting; Utilities Privatization

AGENCY: Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, and the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Installations and Environment, are co-sponsoring a public meeting to discuss potential deviations to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 (Contract Cost Principles and Procedures) for contracts awarded under the statutory authority at 10 U.S.C. 2688 (Utility systems; conveyance authority). Under the Department of Defense Utilities Privatization Program, by September 2005, the Department will complete a privatization evaluation of each utility system at every Active Duty, Reserve, and Guard installation, within the United States and overseas, that is not designated for closure under a base closure law. The co-sponsors of the meeting would like to hear the views of interested parties regarding which provisions, if any, of FAR part 31 are significantly problematic for utility contractors and the reasons why.

DATES: The meeting will be held on July 21, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., local time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in Room C-43, Crystal Mall 3, 1931 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Capitano, Office of the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, by telephone at 703-847-7486 or by e-mail at david.capitano@osd.mil.

Michele P. Peterson,

Executive Editor, Defense Acquisition Regulations Council.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 635

[Docket No. 030604143-3143-01; I.D. 030403C]

RIN 0648-AQ90

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Swordfish Quotas

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes to amend the regulations governing the North and South Atlantic swordfish fisheries to implement recommendations adopted at the 2002 meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Specifically, NMFS proposes increasing the North Atlantic swordfish quota to 3,877 metric tons (mt) whole weight (ww) in 2003 and to 3,907 mt ww in 2004 and 2005. Additionally, NMFS proposes establishing a dead discard allowance of 80 mt ww for 2003; transferring 25 mt ww of North Atlantic swordfish quota to Canada in 2003, 2004, and 2005; and allowing up to 200 mt ww of North Atlantic swordfish to be caught between 5° North latitude and 50 South latitude. Finally, NMFS proposes establishing a South Atlantic swordfish quota of 100 mt ww in 2003, 2004, and 2005 and 120 mt ww in 2006. Public hearings on this proposed rule will be announced in a separate **Federal Register** document.

DATES: Written comments on the proposed rule must be received by 5 p.m. on August 4, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent to, and copies of the Draft Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (EA/RIR/IRFA) may be obtained from Christopher Rogers, Chief, Highly Migratory Species Management Division F/SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. These documents are also available from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division website at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hmspg.html. Comments also may be sent via facsimile (fax) to 301-713-1917. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or on the Internet.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tyson Kade, by phone: 301-713-2347; by fax: 301-713-1917; or by email: Tyson.Kade@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Atlantic swordfish fishery and the tuna fisheries are managed under the Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks (HMS FMP) and regulations at 50 CFR part 635 under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA), 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.* Regulations issued under the authority of ATCA carry out the recommendations of ICCAT.

North Atlantic Swordfish Quota

Prior to the 2002 meeting, ICCAT conducted a stock assessment examining North Atlantic swordfish. The Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) concluded that the assessment indicated that the stock could support an increase in the total allowable catch (TAC) of North Atlantic swordfish. According to the stock assessment, the biomass at the start of 2002 was estimated to be 94 percent of the biomass needed to produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY). The SCRS felt that there was a greater than 50-percent chance that a TAC of 14,000 mt ww would allow the stock to rebuild to MSY by the end of 2009. Based on this information, ICCAT set a TAC of 14,000 mt ww for 2003, 2004, and 2005, which is an increase from 10,400 mt ww in 2002. Of the 14,000 mt ww, the United States is allowed to catch 3,877 mt ww (2,915 mt dw) in 2003 and 3,907 mt ww (2,938 mt dw) in 2004 and 2005. The ICCAT recommendation also states that 200 mt ww (150 mt dw) of the U.S. catch limit may be harvested from an area between 5° North latitude and 50 South latitude.

In addition to adjusting the quota, ICCAT recommended that a dead discard allowance be established by deducting 100 mt ww from the 2003 North Atlantic swordfish TAC. The United States is allocated 80 percent or 80 mt ww (60 mt dw) of this allowance in addition to the country specific quota allocation. If the amount of the dead discards exceeds the allowance, the excess must be deducted from the quota the following year. The ICCAT recommendation says that the dead discard allowance will be phased out by 2004.

ICCAT also recommended that the United States transfer 25 mt ww (18.8 mt dw) of North Atlantic swordfish quota to Canada in 2003, 2004, and 2005. The transfer of these fish would not change the relative allocation share that each country has been given. NMFS is proposing to use the 185 mt ww (139.1 mt dw) remaining in the reserve