

NOAA  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Alaska Region

**SEABIRD AVOIDANCE PLAN**



1. Name of Vessel

2. Vessel Length (LOA) and Hook-and-Line Gear Type (e.g. snap gear, conventional gear, autoline gear)

3. Name and Signature of Owner or Operator (circle which)      Date (month/day/year)

4. Select the diagram that best describes your vessel and gear and place here. See reference chart at end of instructions for selecting the diagram that best describes your fishing operation.

5. Type of Seabird Avoidance Measure or Device Used. (Check <u>all</u> that apply.)			
	Paired Streamer Line	*In the EEZ, at least one of the following additional devices must be used with Single Streamer Lines or Buoy Bag Lines (Check all that apply):	
	Lining Tube (Underwater setting device)		
	Single Streamer Line, with Snap Gear		
	Single Streamer Line*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Add weights to groundline
	Buoy Bag Line*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a 2 <sup>nd</sup> buoy bag line or streamer line
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic offal discharge to distract birds (Describe)
	Other avoidance measure (Describe)		

6. List and describe crew station assignments and the sequence of actions to deploy and retrieve the required seabird avoidance gear.	
Crew A	
Crew B	
Crew C	
Crew D	
Crew E	
Crew F	

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 8 hours per response, including the time for reviewing the instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668.

*ADDITIONAL INFORMATION*

Before completing this form please note the following: 1) The NMFS may not conduct or sponsor this information request, and you are not required to respond to this information request, unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number; 2) This information is being used to implement the Seabird Avoidance Program; 3) Federal law and regulations require and authorize NMFS to manage seabird avoidance program in Alaska; 4) Completion of this plan is required of all persons seeking to participate in directed fishing using hook-and-line gear in waters off Alaska; 5) This information is mandatory and is required to monitor the seabird avoidance program under 50 CFR part 679, under section 402(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.*) and under the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982.

The Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act requires agencies to publish one or more Small Entity Compliance Guides for each rule or group of related rules for which the agency prepares a Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis. The Small Entity Compliance Guide is to be written in plain language and explain the actions a small entity must take to comply with the rule or group of rules. NMFS has prepared a Small Entity Compliance Guide for the seabird avoidance measures and it is available at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/guide.htm> This *Seabird Avoidance Plan* will also serve to aid vessel operators in that it is written in plain language, contains illustrations of the required seabird avoidance measures, and describes most of the requirements that must be taken to comply with this rule. For the exact regulatory language, refer to Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations part 679.24(e).

INSTRUCTIONS

<p><u>Objective.</u> To ensure that vessel crews using longline gear (i.e. hook-and-line) are aware of the need to prevent the incidental mortality of seabirds and that each vessel has an effective plan for using the required seabird avoidance measures.</p>
<p><u>Compliance responsibility.</u> The Vessel Owner or Operator must complete and sign the Plan. A current Plan must be maintained onboard the vessel when using hook-and-line fishing gear. The signature of the Vessel Owner or Operator certifies that the Plan is current, that all crew members are aware of the required use of seabird avoidance measures specific to this vessel, that these measures are discussed and operationally planned, and each person’s specific responsibility is known and understood.</p>
<p><u>Changes.</u> A new Plan must be created and maintained if any changes occur in the information, e.g., operator, gear, crew station function.</p>
<p><u>Inspection.</u> The Plan must be made available for inspection upon request by an authorized officer of the U.S. Coast Guard or National Marine Fisheries Service. For observed vessels, a copy of the Plan must be made available to the observer on request and should be discussed with the observer during a pre-departure meeting.</p>
<p>1. Enter the name of the vessel</p>
<p>2. Enter the length (LOA) of the vessel and the type of hook-and-line gear used (e.g. snap, conventional, autoline)</p>
<p>3. Enter the name and signature of the Vessel Owner or Operator.</p>
<p>4. Diagram instructions: Seabird avoidance regulations are specific to vessel length, gear type and area fished. Select a diagram that best matches your gear and vessel and apply here. The diagram lists seabird avoidance requirements for your vessel and provides an illustration of the seabird avoidance gear and its proper deployment. If your gear and vessel do not match available categories perfectly, choose the closest match.</p>
<p>5. Enter type of seabird avoidance measure or device used onboard. If you use single streamer lines or buoy bag lines in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), you must also use one or more additional devices, as indicated. If you select strategic offal discharge as an additional device, describe the procedure. If in addition to required measures you use other techniques for seabird avoidance, describe the procedure.</p>

6. **List seabird avoidance tasks assigned to each crew member or crew station and the sequence of these tasks.** Include all tasks related to deployment, retrieval, adjustment and monitoring of all seabird avoidance gear and measures listed under #6. Include crew station responsible for retaining seabirds for the observer during observed hauls, if appropriate. In listing the sequencing of tasks, reflect the integration of deploying the fishing gear with the seabird avoidance tasks. Provide details that are specific to the type of hook-and-line gear you use (e.g., snap, conventional, autoline).

Answer or address the following questions for:

Deployment of gear

- (a) Which crew puts the bird avoidance gear and additional devices on the vessel?
- (b) Which crew deploys bird avoidance gear? When, relative to setting of the flag, buoy, and anchor line?
- (c) From what location is the bird avoidance gear deployed? What are the lines attached to? Davits? Rigging? Poles?
- (d) Who deploys additional devices?
- (e) Who observes and monitors that seabird avoidance gear and devices are functioning properly?  
Are the streamer lines high enough?  
Is buoy bag line deployed over the groundline? Is there adequate drag on the line to keep it taut?
- (f) Who is responsible for taking care of any deployment mishaps?
- (g) What do they do if the bird avoidance gear becomes tangled in the fishing gear?  
Cut the streamer line? Back down? Is a break-away used?
- (h) Who adjusts the seabird avoidance gear and devices when necessary for better performance?

Retrieval of gear

- (a) Who retrieves the seabird avoidance gear and additional devices?
- (b) How is it retrieved? By hand? Using a hydraulic line puller?
- (c) Who gets the bird avoidance gear and additional devices ready for the next set?
- (d) Who retrieves and stores the fishing gear?
- (e) If seabird take does occur during an observed haul, who retrieves and retains seabirds for the observer? The rollerman? Gaffer?

For example:

Crew No. 1 prepares and deploys hook-and-line gear, retains seabirds for observer sampling, retrieves and stores hook-and-line gear, seabird avoidance gear, and additional devices.

Crew No. 2 is responsible for putting bird avoidance gear and additional devices on vessel, deploys bird avoidance gear and additional devices, retrieves bird avoidance gear and additional devices, prepares and stores bird avoidance gear and additional devices.

Crew No. 3 prepares and deploys hook-and-line gear, observes and monitors that gear is functioning properly, retrieves bird avoidance gear and additional devices, retrieves and stores hook-and-line gear and bird avoidance gear and additional devices.

REFERENCE CHART FOR SELECTING DIAGRAM THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FISHING OPERATION

Vessels Type	EEZ Seabird Avoidance Gear Requirements	Diagram Number	'Inside Water' Seabird Avoidance Gear Requirements	Diagram Number
Vessels Greater Than 55 Ft Not Using Snap Gear	<i>Paired streamer lines meeting specified performance and material standards</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Single streamer line meeting specified performance and material standards</i>	<i>2</i>
Vessels Greater Than 26 Ft to 55 Ft Not Using Snap Gear <b>With</b> Mast Poles And Rigging	<i>Single streamer line and one other device</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>&gt;26 to 32 Ft, buoy bag line; &gt;32 to 55 Ft single streamer line</i>	<i>4</i>
Vessels Greater Than 26 Ft to 55 Ft Not Using Snap Gear <b>With-Out</b> Mast Poles And Rigging	<i>Buoy bag line and one other device</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>One buoy bag line</i>	<i>6</i>
Vessels using Snap Gear	<i>Single streamer line and 1 other device Vessels &gt; 55' performance standards required</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Follow same 'Inside Water' gear requirements for vessels based on length and if your vessel has masts, poles, or rigging</i>	see above

Art Credit: All vessel drawings by Nancy Behnken, graphic artist and commercial longline fisherman, Sitka, Alaska.