



Northeast Region Bulletin

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Northeast Multispecies Fishing Vessels

Changes to Eastern U.S./Canada Area Quota Monitoring Catch Apportioned by Areas Fished

Effective immediately; Retroactively applied to May 1, 2013.

In response to input from both the New England Fishery Management Council and the fishing industry, we are changing how catches for cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area are tracked. The statistical areas reported on vessel monitoring system (VMS) catch reports and vessel trip reports (VTRs) will be used to apportion catch to specific stock allocations. This change reinstates the practice that was followed by NMFS since the implementation of Amendment 16 in May 2010. We will publish a final rule to permanently implement this change as soon as possible. We will send an additional bulletin when the final rule is issued.

NMFS is also considering implementing a requirement that vessels declared into the Eastern U.S./Canada Area submit daily VMS catch reports, as recommended to NMFS by the Council. The Regional Administrator has the authority to require daily VMS reports. If vessel reporting requirements change we will broadly announce the new requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is NMFS making this Change?	NMFS implemented changes for Eastern U.S./Canada Area quota monitoring for the 2013 fishing year that began May 1 as interim measures in conjunction with Framework Adjustment 48. These changes apportioned all catch on a trip, regardless of where caught, to the Eastern U.S./Canada Area if a vessel was declared and entered into the area. Recent correspondence from the Council clarified that its intent in Amendment 16 is consistent with the apportionment by area method.
Why is NMFS considering daily VMS reporting for the Eastern U.S./Canada Area?	Substantial concerns have been raised about misreporting, given the relatively low Eastern U.S./Canada quotas, in particular for cod, and there remains an incentive to misreport. NMFS and the Council believe the daily VMS requirement while declared to fish in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area could be helpful to minimize the opportunity to misreport catches. Changes in reporting requirements, if implemented, will take additional time to develop and will be announced broadly

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region.