



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
NORTHEAST REGION  
One Blackburn Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

October 11, 2007

## **IMPORTANT**

### **MONKFISH FRAMEWORK 4 – VMS IMPLEMENTATION DELAY**

Dear Monkfish Permit Holder:

Due to unforeseen implementation issues with the vessel monitoring system (VMS) requirements of Framework Adjustment 4 (FW 4) to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan, until further notice, **VMS will not accept changes to your vessel's days-at-sea (DAS) declaration while at sea.** This letter is intended to notify monkfish permit holders of a temporary adjustment to the declaration process for vessels changing from a Northeast (NE) Multispecies DAS to a Monkfish DAS while at sea.

As stated in [Attachment B of the September 21, 2007, letter](#), any vessel with a valid limited access NE multispecies DAS permit and a valid limited access monkfish permit that is fishing exclusively in the Northern Fishery Management Area (NFMA) under a NE Multispecies Category A DAS, may change the vessel's NE Multispecies Category A DAS declaration to the corresponding Monkfish DAS declaration during the course of a trip, as long as certain criteria are met. The intent of this measure is to allow flexibility for NE multispecies DAS vessels to land the full NFMA monkfish trip limit if the incidental trip limit is exceeded during the course of their NE multispecies trip. The letter described the steps for making this change via your VMS unit, but **VMS will not be able to process these changes at this time.**

**Effective October 22, 2007**, and until further notice, the following steps must be used if you wish to change your NE Multispecies DAS declaration to a Monkfish DAS declaration, thereby allowing you to possess the full monkfish NFMA trip limit:

**You must email the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement at [NMFS.OLE.NE@Noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.OLE.NE@Noaa.gov) through your VMS unit prior to crossing the VMS demarcation line upon your return to port**, and provide the following information:

- A) Your name,
- B) Your phone number,
- C) Vessel name and Fishery Permit Number,
- D) Port of landing,
- E) Type "Monkfish Declaration" in the subject line, and
- F) State the following: "I sailed on a Multispecies A day-at-sea, fished in the Monkfish Northern Fishery Management Area, and exceeded the incidental monkfish trip limit. Please change my declaration to a Monkfish day-at-sea."

Your trip will then be processed as a monkfish trip, and your DAS will be charged accordingly. You may only change your declaration if the entire trip was fished on a NE Multispecies Category A DAS and in the NFMA. Nothing in this adjustment affects your ability to declare a monkfish trip prior to leaving port. These procedures must be used until further notice in a future permit holder letter. This is a temporary solution, and more detailed VMS procedures will be forthcoming. If you have questions, please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at 978-281-9315.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul  
Regional Administrator

