



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

January 27, 2004

SMALL ENTITY COMPLIANCE GUIDE

2004 ATLANTIC MACKEREL, SQUID AND BUTTERFISH SPECIFICATIONS

Dear Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and/or
 Butterfish Permit Holder:

This letter announces final initial specifications for the 2004 fishing year for Atlantic mackerel, squid, and butterfish, as follows:

FISHING YEAR JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2004 (METRIC TONS)				
Specifications	<u>Loligo</u> Squid	<u>Illex</u> Squid	Atlantic Mackerel	Butterfish
Max OY	26,000	24,000	N/A¹	16,000
ABC	17,000	24,000	347,000	7,200
IOY	16,872.4⁴	24,000	170,000²	5,900
DAH	16,872.4	24,000	170,000³	5,900
DAP	16,872.4	24,000	150,000	5,900
JVP	0	0	5,000	0
TALFF	0	0	0	0
RSA	127.6	0	0	0

Maximum Optimum Yield (Max OY), Allowable Biological Catch (ABC), Initial Optimum Yield (IOY), Domestic Annual Harvest (DAH), Domestic Annual Processing (DAP), Joint Venture Processing (JVP), Total Allowable Levels of Foreign Fishing (TALFF), and Research Set-Asides (RSA)

1 Not applicable
 2 IOY may be increased during the year, but the total ABC will not exceed 347,000 mt
 3 Includes 15,000 mt of Atlantic mackerel recreational allocation
 4 Excludes 127.6 mt for RSA



DISTRIBUTION OF ANNUAL LOLIGO SQUID QUOTA

The annual Loligo squid quota (DAH) will be sub-divided into quarterly periods, as follows:

PERCENT ALLOCATIONS OF <u>LOLIGO</u> QUOTA		
Quarter	Percent	Metric Tons
I (Jan-Mar)	33.23	5,606.7
II (Apr-Jun)	17.61	2,971.2
III (Jul-Sep)	17.30	2,918.9
IV (Oct-Dec)	31.86	5,375.6
Total	100.00	16,872.4

In addition, the 2004 directed fishery will be closed in Quarters I-III when 80 percent of the period allocation is harvested, with vessels restricted to a 2,500-lb Loligo squid trip limit per day until the end of the respective quarter. The directed fishery will close when 95 percent of the total annual DAH has been harvested, with vessels restricted to a 2,500-lb Loligo squid trip limit per day for the remainder of the year. Quota overages from Quarter I will be deducted from the allocation in Quarter III, and any overages from Quarter II will be deducted from Quarter IV. By default, quarterly underages from Quarters II and III carry over into Quarter IV, because Quarter IV does not close until 95 percent of the total annual quota has been harvested. Additionally, if the Quarter I landings for Loligo squid are less than 80 percent of the Quarter I allocation, the underage below 80 percent will be applied to Quarter III.

3 YEAR LOLIGO SQUID SPECIFICATIONS

This action also specifies that the Loligo squid specifications be maintained for 3 years. Pursuant to the regulatory provision that allows for the specification of 3-year specifications, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council will evaluate the need for any changes in 2005 and 2006 during the quota setting procedure for those years. If no changes are warranted, then the 2004 quota specifications for Loligo squid would remain in effect in 2005 and 2006.

SQUID/BUTTERFISH INCIDENTAL CATCH PERMIT HOLDERS

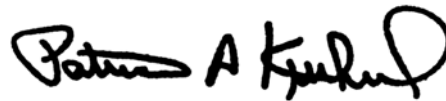
In addition, this action specifies an increase from 5,000 lb to 10,000 lb per trip to the Illex squid catch limit for squid/butterfish incidental catch permit holders. This also represents the trip limit in effect when the Illex squid directed fishery is closed.

CORRECTING AMENDMENT

Finally, this action implements a technical correction to the Atlantic mackerel, squid, and butterfish regulations by reinserting text at § 648.6 (a)(2) that was incorrectly removed. The measure allows any Atlantic mackerel vessel that exceeded the size or horsepower restrictions specified at § 648.4 (a)(5)(iii) to be issued an at-sea processor permit to receive over the side, possess and process Atlantic mackerel harvested in or from the Exclusive Economic Zone.

You may also receive permit holder letters, including closure notices, by e-mail by clicking on "NOAA Fisheries News Releases" on our website at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov>; or via fax by providing a fax number through a written request to the above address, or by faxing your request to 978-281-9135. This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia A. Kurkul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "P".

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator