

Science, Service, Stewardship



VMS Program Modifications for Atlantic HMS Fisheries

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Existing VMS Regulations in Atlantic HMS Fisheries (Status Quo)

- HMS vessels required to use VMS:
 - PLL (year round; all areas);
 - BLL (Jan. 1 – July 31; vicinity of Mid Atlantic Closed Area); and,
 - Shark Gillnet (Nov 15 – April 15; all areas)
- Automatic position reports every hour (starting 2 hours before leaving port and continuing until landing)
- Vessel owner submits installation and activation checklist (self-install permitted)



Existing VMS Regulations in Atlantic HMS Fisheries (Status Quo) Cont.

- MTUs meet current HMS VMS requirements and provide automatic position reports only
- No requirement, or capability, to report HMS target fishery or gear type(s) on board with MTUs, which limits VMS Technician's ability to determine applicable HMS regulations
- If any existing MTU unit needs replacement, the replacement unit must be an E-MTU and must be installed according to 2008 type approval notice published by NOAA OLE (Jan. 31, 2008; 73 FR 5813)



Proposed Rule to Modify Atlantic HMS VMS Requirements

- Published June 21, 2011 (76 FR 36071)
 - Five public hearings (Kenner, LA; St. Petersburg, FL; Manteo, NC; Peabody, MA; Atlantic City, NJ)
- Require E-MTU VMS units
 - Newer E-MTU VMS units can send and receive information; E-MTUs are now required in all Council-managed VMS-monitored fisheries
- Require that a qualified marine electrician install each unit



Proposed Rule to Modify Atlantic HMS VMS Requirements

- Require fishermen to declare 2 hrs before trip:
 - Target fishery
 - Gear type(s) on board
 - May reduce need for law enforcement action/boarding to determine actual activity/gears possessed
- Require fishermen to hail-in for each fishing trip 3 hrs before landing:
 - Destination
- Currently, HMS fishermen are eligible for reimbursement for E-MTU VMS units (\$3,100.00/vessel)



Costs of E-MTU VMS Units in Affected HMS Fisheries (as proposed)

Per Vessel Estimated Costs	HMS PLL (~249 Vessels)	SHK BLL (~50 Vessels)	SHK Gillnet (~30 Vessels)
E-MTU VMS Unit	\$3,100.00	\$3,100.00	\$3,100.00
Estimated Installation Cost	~ \$200.00	~ \$200.00	~\$200.00
Position Reports (per day)	\$1.44/day	\$1.44/day	\$1.44/day
Position Reports (per year)	\$466.56/year	\$305.28/year	\$218.88/year
Declaration Reports (per year)	\$4.32/year	\$25.44/year	\$18.24/year
Estimated Total Costs Year 1	\$3,770.88	\$3,630.72	\$3,537.12
Estimated Year 1 Compliance Costs	\$671.00	\$530.00	\$437.00
Estimated Year 2+ Compliance Costs	\$470.00	\$330.00	\$237.00



Feedback Received at April 2011 AP

- Concern about existing contracts with VMS service providers
 - Delayed implementation
- Maintenance costs of E-MTU VMS units
 - E-MTUs require less maintenance; two-way communication allows troubleshooting at sea
- If I have already received reimbursement for an EMTU VMS required in another fishery, am I eligible to receive an additional unit?
 - One reimbursement for type-approved E-MTU VMS per vessel



Comments Received

- NMFS should delay implementation and ensure implementation happens during period of low fishing activity
- Smaller vessels may not have enough room to fit an E-MTU VMS onboard
- Cost estimates of having units installed by marine electrician installation are too low
- NMFS should require all vessels under 24 m to have VMS
- NMFS should allow declarations via cell phone
- Fishermen cannot always hail-in 3 hours prior to landing
- NMFS should allow BOATTRACS units



For Additional Information....

- Questions about the Southeast VMS program...

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- Questions about the Atlantic HMS VMS regulations...

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