



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930

April 17, 2024

Eric Reid  
Chair, New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street Mill 2  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Eric:

We are setting the target video review rate for fishing year 2024 groundfish electronic monitoring (EM) audit model vessels at 35 percent for vessels currently enrolled in the program and 50 percent for new vessels. Vessels in the audit model EM program are required to turn on their EM cameras on 100 percent of groundfish trips and a subset of those trips are randomly selected for review. Trips are randomly selected for review after they are completed and the vessel operator has submitted the required data elements (i.e., vessel trip report, EM video), which minimizes or eliminates the potential for observer bias effects on audit model EM vessels. The audit model EM program was implemented in fishing year 2021. Each year since implementation, we have refined our approach to setting the video review rates for the program in an effort to achieve our goal of setting individual, performance-based review rates at a level that ensures sufficiently precise discard estimates.

Throughout the audit model program, we have based the video review rates on a September 2021 analysis of data from 2017 through 2020 conducted by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office's Analysis and Program Support Division. The analysis calculated the percentage of trips required to be reviewed per vessel to precisely estimate discards across groundfish species. That analysis determined that 35 percent was the minimum realized review rate required to achieve an acceptable level of confidence (30-percent coefficient of variation [CV30]) in the discard estimates. The paper<sup>1</sup> documenting this analysis was reviewed by the Center for Independent Experts; they concluded the discard estimation methodology was sufficient to meet the program goals and objectives. Using a CV30 is consistent with the performance standard determined to be sufficient for the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology; however, we are not required to use a CV30 standard and may employ a different approach in future fishing years.

Last year, for fishing year 2023, we set individual EM review rates for each vessel for the first time. This year, for fishing year 2024, we are revising our approach to setting individual, performance-based EM review rates for audit model vessels. Vessels currently enrolled in the audit model EM program will all be assigned a 35-percent target review rate, while newly enrolled vessels will be assigned a 50-percent target review rate. The Northeast Fisheries Science Center's Data and Information Systems Branch will increase and decrease trip selections

---

<sup>1</sup> Linden, D. 2021. A predictive model of discarded catch that leverages self-reporting and electronic monitoring on commercial fishing vessels. NOAA Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region. Available at: <https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2022-03/LindenEMdeltamodelpaperCIE-GARFO.pdf>



to reconcile each vessel's realized review rate (i.e., the percentage of trips that were randomly selected for review and meet current data quality standards to be used in our discard calculations) and target review rate. Individual vessel trip selection rates will continuously adjust throughout the fishing year in order to better converge on the vessel's target review rate; either adjusting higher if a vessel's realized review rate is below its target rate or adjusting lower if the vessel's realized review rate is above its target rate. We expect this approach will allow us to sufficiently monitor catch levels for audit model EM vessels in 2024 and to be responsive to changes in an individual vessel's realized review rate over the course of the fishing year.

We will continue to reimburse 100 percent of sector at-sea monitoring costs, including EM. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission will continue to administer the reimbursement program for fishing year 2024.

If you have further questions about the fishing year 2024 audit model EM video review rate, please contact Peter Christopher, Supervisory Policy Analyst, at (978) 281-9288.

Sincerely,



Michael Pentony  
Regional Administrator