

# Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Program



Greetings South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper, Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fish, and Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo Charter/Headboat Federal Permit Holders:

NOAA Fisheries has implemented reporting requirements for federally permitted for-hire vessels through the Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program. The purpose of this program is to provide more accurate and reliable fisheries information about for-hire catch, effort, and discards. By providing this information, you will directly improve data collection that is critical to population assessments and better fisheries management. Electronic reporting can also provide more timely, accurate, and reliable information for species with low catches, low annual catch limits, or that are rarely encountered.

All federal South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper, Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fish, and Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo Charter/Headboat Federal Permit Holders are required to submit trip-level electronic reports weekly. This was effective January 4, 2021. Federal permit holders with both Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) and South Atlantic/Atlantic permits are required to meet the Gulf requirements, even if you do not fish in Gulf waters. Complying with Gulf requirements will also satisfy South Atlantic/Atlantic requirements for dual permit holders.

If you have South Atlantic/Atlantic for-hire federal permits, you will be required to submit trip level electronic fishing reports by the Tuesday following a fishing week (Mon-Sun). For weeks in which no fishing occurred, you will need to submit a "Did-Not Fish" report.

Please take time to read through the enclosed toolkit thoroughly as it outlines all of the program requirements. We recommend you review other helpful items on the program website, such as the *Frequently Asked Questions* or *Guides and Tools* sections. Please reach out to us directly with any questions.

- SEFHIER program website: <https://go.usa.gov/xMBjm>
  - A customer service phone line: **1-833-707-1632, 8:00-4:30, EST**
  - A customer service email: [ser.electronicreporting@noaa.gov](mailto:ser.electronicreporting@noaa.gov)
  - Frequently Asked Questions
  - News and Announcements
  - Guides and Tools
  - Webinar schedules are announced on the program website and via Fishery Bulletins, sign up for and view Fishery Bulletins at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/outreach-and-education/southeast-regional-fisheries-news-sign-or-follow-us>

We are here to help, and truly respect your time and business operations. This program is a big transition for all of us and we look forward to working with you. Our goals are to provide each fisherman with excellent customer service, improve for-hire data collection, and reduce the amount of time you spend reporting so you can focus more time on your customers.

Sincerely,

*Your Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Team at NOAA Fisheries and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.*

Disclaimer: This publication was last updated 12/23/2021 for general information purposes only. Any discrepancies between this information and the regulations as published in official sources of information, such as the Federal Register and Code of Federal Regulations will be resolved in favor of the official sources.



# The Requirements



Federal permit holders with South Atlantic/Atlantic charter/headboat permits for Snapper-Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fish, and Dolphin/Wahoo issued by NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Regional Office (SERO), are required to electronically submit a fishing report, which includes information such as fishing effort, catch, and economic information, through NOAA Fisheries' SEFHIER Program.

- **Electronic reports must be submitted weekly for each fishing trip, using software approved by NOAA Fisheries for the SEFHIER Program.**
- **Reports must be submitted by Tuesday immediately following the fishing week (Mon-Sun).**
- **You need to submit a report each week even if you did not fish.**
- **If you know you won't be fishing for a period of time, weekly "Did-Not-Fish" reports can be submitted in advance through approved software up to 30-days in advance.**

**Note:**

Federal charter/headboat permits issued by NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Regional Office are tied to a vessel. If you own multiple vessels with different federal permits, each vessel may have different reporting requirements. As a result, individuals with multiple permits should review the toolkit that corresponds to each for-hire permit type. If your vessel also has commercial permits, you must ensure you meet those reporting requirements.



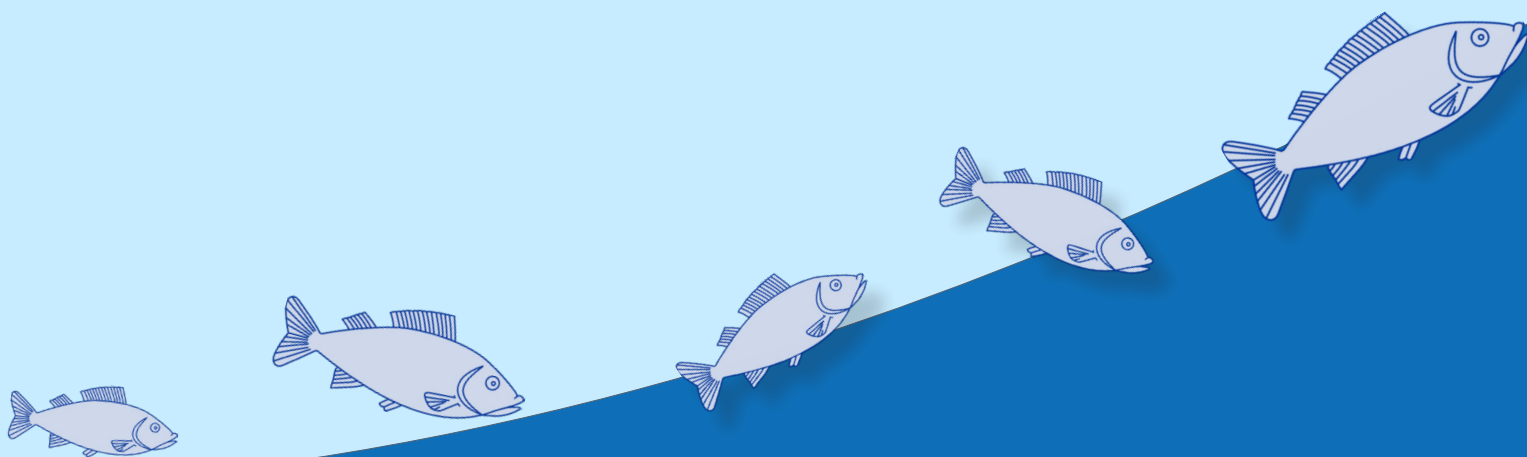
Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Program

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing-data/southeast-hire-integrated-electronic-reporting-program>

# Background

The South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils approved amendments, which were implemented by NOAA Fisheries to require federally permitted for-hire vessels to report catch and effort. Both Councils determined that trip-level reporting may provide improved monitoring of recreational quotas for timely and efficient management of the recreational fishing seasons. The new reporting requirements are expected to help improve population assessments by providing a more accurate record of for-hire vessel landings and locations. For example, the detailed economic data entered by fishermen in real time through the additional questions added to the eTrips application will enhance the ability of NOAA Fisheries and the Councils to understand the potential impacts of proposed management and regulatory change(s) on the federally permitted for-hire sector (e.g., changing bag limits, area closures). These data will also allow NOAA Fisheries to better monitor the economic health of the industry over time.

**More in-depth answers to these and other FAQs can be found on the program [website](#).**



Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Program

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing-data/southeast-hire-integrated-electronic-reporting-program>



# What Do I Report?

The Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program asks questions to gather trip information, catch, and economic information. Below are some examples of these types of data (all fields and their descriptions are listed on the SEFHIER FAQs page).

## TRIP INFORMATION

- Captain and vessel information
- Number of crew and anglers
- Trip start and end date and time
- End port (landing location)
- Hours fished
- Fishing location and fishing depth
- Fishing method



## CATCH

- All fish caught, including numbers of landed and discarded fish (no matter where caught)

Detailed economic data will enhance our ability to understand how the for-hire industry is impacted by changing fishing regulations such as trip limits and bag limits, season and area closures, and external factors such as red tides and oil spills. These data will also allow us to better monitor the economic health of the industry over time. The information can also be used to inform quota allocation decisions, fisheries research, and disaster recovery damage assessments. NOAA Fisheries economists will use these data in their cost-benefit and economic impact analyses for actions and amendments that propose regulatory changes, and always in a confidential manner.

## ECONOMIC INFORMATION

- Trip fee
- Fuel used and fuel cost



Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Program

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing-data/southeast-hire-integrated-electronic-reporting-program>

# Getting Started With Electronic Fishing Reports

## **Step 1: Select a reporting device**

- You will be able to submit reports using a device that is capable of submitting forms through an approved application.
- Ensure that your device:
  - is capable of sending reports via satellite, cellular, or internet connection,
  - is compatible with selected software application.
- A list of reporting device options and comparison of features can be found on the program [website](#) under “*Information for South Atlantic Permit Holders*”.



## **Step 2: Select a Software Program**

- Software applications must be approved for the SEFHIER Program.
- Each software vendor may offer unique features to their application. Select one that best fits your needs. A list of reporting software options and comparison of features can be found on the program [website](#) under “*Information for South Atlantic Permit Holders*”.



## **Step 3: Download Reporting Software on Your Device**

- Your software vendor will provide instructions on how to download software to your chosen reporting device. You can find vendor information on the program [website](#) under “*Information for South Atlantic Permit Holders*”.
- Ensure that your reporting device is up to date with the latest version.



## **Step 4: Set Up a User Account**

- Vendors will offer instructions on their website and provide help desk support.
- Some programs will allow permit holders to create sub-accounts for different vessels so you can choose to create separate accounts for different captains.



# Who is Required to Report?

## Owners or operators of vessels that have a South Atlantic/Atlantic issued federal Charter/Headboat permit.

- South Atlantic Charter/Headboat for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fish permit (CHS)
- Atlantic Charter/Headboat for Dolphin/Wahoo permit (CDW)
- South Atlantic Charter/Headboat for Snapper-Grouper Fish permit (SC)

Reporting is now required for all charter/headboat trips, regardless of where fishing occurs, including other regional or state waters.

## Reporting Across Fisheries

You must meet the reporting requirements for all of your permits. Some software reporting applications will allow you to submit one report for different permit combinations. To ensure you are using the right software application for your specific combination of permits, please refer to the "Approved Software" section of the Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program [website](#).

## How to report if you have the following permits:

### Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Charter/Headboat Permits



For vessels with both Gulf and South Atlantic/Atlantic federal for-hire permits, you will follow the Gulf regulations, no matter where you fish. The Gulf reporting requirements will fulfill South Atlantic/Atlantic requirements; there is no need to report twice. If you hold a Gulf Charter/Headboat permit, you should review the Gulf informational toolkit. If you do not have the Gulf informational toolkit, please check the program [website](#) for a digital copy, or contact the SEFHIER Program via phone or email for a printed copy (1-833-707-1632, 8:00-4:30, EST; [ser.electronicreporting@noaa.gov](mailto:ser.electronicreporting@noaa.gov)).

### Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office For-Hire Permits



Individuals with Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office (GARFO) and Southeast Regional Office (SERO) permits must submit the information required by both regions, but under the timing required by GARFO (within 48 hours of the trip). If you are currently reporting to GARFO on a software application that is not approved for use in the SERO Program, you will need to submit multiple reports. Some of the approved software may allow you to use one report to fulfill GARFO and SERO requirements. Check the "Approved Software" section of [website](#) for which applications are approved for GARFO and SERO.

### Highly Migratory Species For-Hire Permits



If you have both a South Atlantic/Atlantic charter/headboat permit and a Highly Migratory Species (HMS) permit, you are required to report certain HMS species within 24 hours to remain in compliance with federal HMS regulations. If you are currently reporting to the HMS program on a software application that is not approved for use in the SERO Program or vice versa, you will need to submit multiple reports. Some software applications are approved for the SERO and HMS programs and will allow you to submit one report to satisfy the requirements of federal HMS regulations. Check the "Approved Software" section of the [website](#) for which applications are approved for SERO and HMS.

### Southeast Region Headboat Survey



If you are selected to participate in, or already report to the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey (SRHS), you must use the VESL software and select the SRHS form. This also fulfills the SERO reporting requirements. Your reports will be due by the Tuesday following the fishing week (Mon-Sun).

### South Carolina Charter Vessels



If you have a South Atlantic/Atlantic Charter/Headboat permit and a South Carolina Charter Fishing Vessel License, you may continue to report using VESL software and will not need to submit an additional report. Reports through VESL, submitted weekly, will satisfy the requirements of both programs.

