



Mackerel Cobia

Snapper Grouper

Dolphin Wahoo

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Improvements to For-Hire Reporting For Federal Charter/Headboat Permitted Vessels

Advisory Panels, Spring 2025

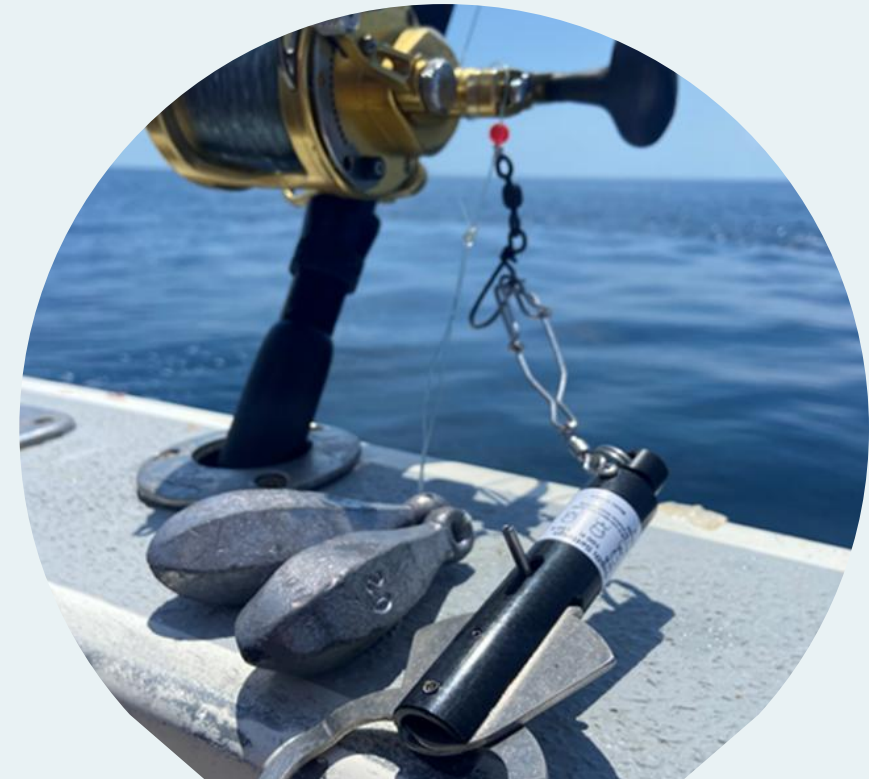


BACKGROUND



The Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program was launched in the South Atlantic in 2021 with the implementation of the Comprehensive For-Hire Electronic Reporting Amendment.

The amendment put in place or modified reporting requirements for federally permitted charter vessels and headboats in the snapper grouper (SG), dolphin wahoo (DW), and coastal migratory pelagics (mackerels; CMP) fisheries.



RECENT ISSUES



Overall compliance is low.

-83% of permitted vessels reporting at least one time in 2023.

-BUT many vessels not meeting all reporting requirements such as:

- The timing of reporting
- Submitting Did Not Fish reports
- Reporting all for-hire fishing trips

In 2023, only 37.4% of vessels were assessed to be meeting all reporting requirements of the SEFHIER program throughout the year.



BACKGROUND



In June 2024, the Council started an amendment to improve compliance with for-hire reporting requirements for federally permitted headboat and charter vessels and make improvements to the reporting programs.

The Gulf Council and the Highly Migratory Species Division of NMFS are also revamping reporting requirements for federally permitted for-hire vessels.



BACKGROUND

In March 2025, the Council discussed including possible changes to the Southeast Region Headboat Survey in the amendment.

It is important to maintain consistency in reporting requirements to minimize the reporting burden on permit holders.

At the same time, the collected data need to be useable for management.



WHY ARE CHANGES NEEDED?

Changes are needed to improve reporting for the federal for-hire fleet so that:

- Compliance improves
- Collected data can be used directly in management
- The reporting burden is minimized



WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?



Timing	Council action
March – December 2024	Gather information on current reporting programs
January & February 2025	Convene new <i>ad hoc</i> For-Hire reporting Advisory Panel and Law Enforcement Advisory Panel
March 2025	Approve for scoping (online)
April 2025	Convene Snapper Grouper, Mackerel Cobia, and Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panels
June – September 2025	Develop the amendment
December 2025	Approve for public hearings
March 2026	Review public hearing comments
June 2026	Approve for submission to NMFS
2027/2028	Regulation changes become effective

POSSIBLE ACTIONS



1. Modify the reporting frequency and timing
2. Require trip notification
3. Establish approved landing locations
4. Require participation in a validation and estimation survey
5. Revise reporting of economic data for charter vessels
6. Modify “Did Not Fish” report requirements



Reporting frequency and timing

Currently: Federally permitted charter and headboat vessels (SG, DW, CMP species) must report all fish harvested and discarded for each trip and submit weekly.

Possible changes:

Two components could be modified:

1. **Frequency** of reporting – how often to report
2. **Timing** of report submission – deadline for report to be submitted



How do other programs compare?

South Atlantic (SA), Southeast (SE) Headboat Survey, Gulf of Mexico (GOM), Greater Atlantic Region (GAR) Vessel Trip Report (VTR), and Highly Migratory Species (HMS)

	SA SEFHIER and SE Headboat Survey	GOM SEFHIER	GAR VTR	HMS
Existing	Weekly	N/A	Generally 48 hours after entering port. For recreational tilefish: 24 hours after end of trip.	Electronic report, telephone, or other means like catch cards.
Proposed	?	Prior to offload of catch, within 30 minutes of completion of the trip, or each trip daily.	No proposed changes.	Electronic report 24 hours after end of trip.

Reporting frequency

- Report once at the end of the day?
- Report after every trip?
- Other frequency?

Timing

- Within 24 hours of the end of a trip?
- Within 48 hours of the end of a trip?
- Within 1 hour of offloading catch?
- Within 30 minutes of offloading catch?
- Prior to offloading catch?
- Other timing?





Require trip notification

Currently: There are no trip notification requirements.

Possible changes:

Require trip notification when:

- The vessel is used for **fishing** (e.g., for-hire fishing, bait fishing, private recreational fishing, commercial fishing)
- The vessel is used for other **activities involving paying passengers** (e.g., sunset cruises, dolphin watching)

Landing locations



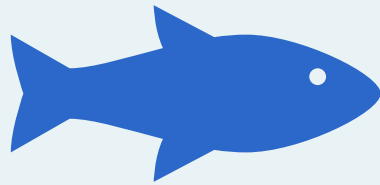
Currently: There is not a requirement to offload fish or passengers at pre-approved locations.

Possible change:

Require that federally permitted for-hire vessels land at already approved locations or submit a landing location in advance for approval.



Why are landing locations needed?



Supplies law enforcement with an exact location where a for-hire trip will offload fish and passengers.



Provides information to validate the information collected through the program.

How are landing locations approved?



Participants submit a new landing location via a website.

- Must enter a name for the location that is not already in use
- Contact information – who is submitting (name, phone, email)
- Address (street, county, city, state, zip)
- Type – Private or Public

Require participation in a validation and estimation survey



**WHAT IS
VALIDATION AND
WHY IS IT
IMPORTANT?**



VALIDATION IS "THE ACTION OF CHECKING OR PROVING THE VALIDITY OR ACCURACY OF SOMETHING."



A VALIDATION SURVEY WOULD BE USED TO CHECK THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION REPORTED.



WITHOUT VALIDATION, THERE IS NO WAY TO MEASURE HOW ACCURATE THE REPORTED DATA ARE.

Require participation in a validation and estimation survey



Currently: There is no requirement to participate in a validation survey.

Possible change:

Require participation in a survey for federally permitted for-hire vessels.

Revise reporting of economic data for charter vessels



Currently: Reporting the charter fee, fuel usage, and fuel price for each trip is required for all federally permitted charter vessels.

Possible change: Require reporting of economic information only if selected. Annually, a sub-sample of all permitted vessels would be selected to report economic data.



Modify “Did Not Fish” report requirements



Currently: “Did Not Fish” (DNF) reports are already a requirement for Southeast federally permitted charter and headboat vessels. They are submitted weekly and can be submitted up to 30 days in advance.

Does this requirement need to change?





Are DNF reports required in other programs?

South Atlantic (SA), Southeast (SE) Headboat Survey, Gulf of Mexico (GOM), Greater Atlantic Region (GAR) Vessel Trip Report (VTR), and Highly Migratory Species (HMS)

	SA SEFHIER and SE Headboat Survey	GOM SEFHIER	GAR VTR	HMS
Existing	Weekly. Limit to no more than 30 days in advance	N/A	Not required	Not required
Proposed	?	Monthly	Not required	Monthly. No limit to how far in advance.



Questions?