



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

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Reminder of Upcoming Changes for Bycatch Reduction Devices in the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery

NOAA Fisheries Service reminds all shrimp vessel owners and operators of upcoming changes in the use of bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery. In summary, these changes:

- Decertify the Expanded Mesh BRD
- Decertify the Gulf Fisheye BRD
- Establish a more restrictive placement for the Fisheye BRD.

These changes are effective **May 18, 2009**.

A BRD is certified for use in the shrimp fishery if testing demonstrates the BRD reduces finfish bycatch 30 percent by weight. New data collected aboard Gulf of Mexico shrimp vessels indicate that a fisheye-type device placed more than 9 feet forward in the cod end of the net (Gulf Fisheye BRD) does not exclude 30 percent of the finfish by weight. Therefore, beginning May 18, 2009, the Fisheye BRD may not be placed farther forward than 9 feet from the tie-off rings.

Similarly, it appears the effectiveness of the Expanded Mesh BRD has decreased. Recent tests of the Expanded Mesh BRD in the Gulf of Mexico indicate it is only achieving about a 17 percent reduction in the weight of total finfish bycatch. Beginning May 18, 2009, the Expanded Mesh BRD may not be used in the Gulf of Mexico.

Five different BRD designs can be used in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery. These include the Fisheye (less than 9 feet from the tie-off rings), Jones-Davis, Modified Jones-Davis, Composite Panel, and Extended Funnel BRDs. Illustrations of the various BRD designs, and installation instructions for some of the BRDs can be found at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/BRDs.htm>.

Additional questions regarding BRDs and their installation should be directed to the Harvesting Technology Branch, NOAA Fisheries Service, Mississippi Laboratories, Pascagoula Facility, 3209 Frederic Street, Pascagoula, Mississippi 39568-1207; phone 228-762-4591.

Official Business
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