

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposed Regulations for Headboat Vessels in the South Atlantic Fishing for Snapper-Grouper, Dolphin and Wahoo, and Coastal Migratory Pelagics

December 2013

What is the For-Hire Reporting Amendment?

- The For-Hire Reporting Amendment amends the fishery management plans for snapper-grouper, dolphin and wahoo, and coastal migratory pelagics.
- The For-Hire Reporting Amendment modifies data reporting for headboats in the South Atlantic requiring them to submit weekly electronic fishing records to NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the Science and Research Director. The new regulations are effective on January 27, 2014.

Why is the For-Hire Amendment necessary?

- One of the purposes of this amendment is to allow better monitoring of recreational annual catch limits. Exceeding catch limits has the potential to result in significant disruption in fishing behavior the following fishing year. This can reduce revenue and profit for fishermen. Overages also may decrease the ability of overfished fish populations to rebuild.

The increased frequency of headboat data reporting will help improve population assessments because it will provide a more accurate picture of headboat landings.

What are the changes to the reporting process?

- Headboat vessels fishing for snapper-grouper, dolphin and wahoo, and coastal migratory pelagic species in the South Atlantic are required to submit fishing records electronically.
- Headboat owners and operators, who are selected by the NOAA Fisheries Science and Research Director, are required to submit an electronic fishing record of all fish caught through the Southeast Region Headboat Survey, an electronic reporting system developed by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center for trips completed. Headboat owners and operators are also required to submit “no fishing” reports when no trips are taken.
- Headboat vessels are required to report weekly or at intervals shorter than a week, if notified otherwise. If no fishing activity occurred during a week, an electronic report so stating must be submitted for that week.

What if I don't submit fishing records on time?

- Headboat owners and operators who are delinquent in submitting their reports are prohibited from continuing to harvest and possess South Atlantic snapper-grouper, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, and South Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish until they have submitted all required reports.

Where can I find more information about the amendment?

- Contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office
 - By Mail:
Southeast Regional Office, c/o Karla Gore
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505
 - By FAX: (727) 824-5308
 - By Phone: (727) 824-5305
- The For-Hire Amendment is available on line at NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office Web site:
http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/s_atl/2013/for_hire_reporting/index.html
or, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Web site: <http://www.safmc.net/>.