



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Region
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Changes to Gear Requirements in the *Loligo* Squid Fishery June 21, 2010

This letter is a reminder of upcoming changes to mesh size requirements in the *Loligo* squid fishery that were implemented in the 2010 Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (MSB) Specifications and Amendment 10 to the Fishery Management Plan. These changes were previously noted in the small entity compliance guides sent on February 18 and March 10, 2010.

Effective **August 3, 2010**, the minimum mesh requirement for net strengtheners will increase from 4.5 inches to 5 inches. Trawl vessels possessing *Loligo* squid may use net strengtheners, splitting straps, and/or bull ropes or wire around the entire circumference of the codend, provided they do not have a mesh opening of less than 5 inches.

Effective **September 13, 2010**, the minimum codend mesh size for the *Loligo* fishery will increase to 2-1/8 inches during Trimester I (January to April) and Trimester III (September to December), in order to decrease finfish bycatch in the *Loligo* fishery. The minimum mesh size of 1-7/8 inches remains in effect for Trimester II (May to August).

In addition, this letter reminds you of the mesh requirements for butterfish in § 648.23(a)(2): Trawl vessels possessing 1,000 lb (0.45 mt) or more of butterfish may only fish with nets having a minimum codend mesh of 3 inches (76 mm) diamond mesh, inside stretch measure, applied throughout the codend for at least 100 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net, or for codends with less than 100 meshes, the minimum mesh size codend shall be a minimum of one-third of the net, measured from the terminus of the codend to the headrope.

Additional Information

The information provided with this letter is not a substitute for the complete regulations. All Federal permit holders and federally permitted dealers are encouraged to obtain a copy of the complete, official regulations by phoning the National Marine Fisheries Service at 978-281-9315 or by visiting our website (address provided above).

You may also receive permit holder letters by e-mail, including closure notices, by visiting our website and clicking on "Permit Holder Letters."

This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region.