



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

NOV 15 2010

Small Entity Compliance Guide

Subject: Sector Letter of Authorization (LOA) Issuance and Requirements

Dear Northeast (NE) Multispecies Permit Holder:

For vessels participating in sectors, the regulations at 50 CFR 648.87(c)(2) state that “If a sector is approved, the Regional Administrator shall issue a letter of authorization to each vessel operator and/or vessel owner participating in a sector. The letter of authorization shall authorize participation in the sector operations and may exempt participating vessels from any Federal fishing regulations... in order to allow vessels to fish in accordance with an approved operations plan...”

Prior to the start of this fishing year (FY), FY 2010, NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a letter of authorization (LOA) for each vessel participating in a sector to that sector’s manager for distribution to the sector members.

Since the start of FY 2010, NMFS has received multiple requests to transfer permits on a sector vessel to either a new vessel (vessel replacement) or into Confirmation of Permit History (CPH). Participation in a sector does not prevent vessel owners from taking these types of actions; however, if the permit is issued to a new vessel, the previous LOA is invalid and must be replaced by a new LOA for that new vessel to participate in the sector.

Therefore, if a permit holder intends to submit an application for a vessel replacement or CPH, that permit holder must also return the existing LOA for the old vessel to his/her sector manager. Vessels may not fish without a correct and valid LOA onboard. Once the permit is issued to a new vessel, NMFS will generate a new LOA specific to that vessel and send it to the vessel owner through the sector manager.

If you have any questions about this letter or other regulations, please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

