



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

April 19, 2004

Dear Federally Permitted Seafood Dealer or Vessel Owner:

NOAA Fisheries, is implementing several changes to dealer reporting requirements, including a requirement for federally permitted dealers to report a unique trip identifier, and new electronic reporting requirements. This letter is intended to describe these requirements to vessel owners and seafood dealers to help ensure more effective compliance with them.

The unique trip identifier must be reported by the federally permitted seafood dealer who purchases or receives any marine species from any vessel required to complete a federal FISHING VESSEL TRIP REPORT (FVTR). Each fishing trip is assigned a unique trip identifier which is the unique pre-assigned serial number in the upper right hand portion of each VTR.

NOAA Fisheries has been working with industry in anticipation of the implementation of dealer electronic reporting to develop a trip identifier that will be easy to use and impose the least burden on the fishing industry. Several alternatives were evaluated and tested with both dealers and vessels. We determined that the simplest trip identifier to use by both fishing vessels and seafood dealers is the serial number of the FVTR completed for that trip. If more than one FVTR is filled out for a trip, choose the serial number from any one of the FVTRs relating to that trip. At this time, only in cases where seafood dealers purchase or receive fish from vessels that are not required to report landings using the federal VTR form, are seafood dealers exempted from reporting the unique trip identifier.

In order for dealers to meet their reporting requirements, the FVTR serial number for each trip must be transferred from the vessel owner/operator to the dealer. Each FVTR contains two "Dealer Copy" pages that may be used for this purpose. However, dealers and vessel owners/operators may use a different method of transfer that better fits their individual business practices.

Starting May 1, 2004, the reporting schedule for Federally permitted dealers using electronic methods are as follows:

- A.) A Federally permitted dealer with less than \$300,000 in reported annual fish purchases (ex-vessel value) in each year from 2000-2002 has the option to electronically submit trip-level reports on a weekly basis until May 1, 2005, at which time the dealer must electronically submit trip-level reports daily.
- B.) A Federally permitted dealer with more than \$300,000 in reported annual fish purchases (ex-vessel value) in at least one year from 2000-2002 must electronically submit trip-level reports daily.
- C.) Newly permitted Federal dealers are classified as large dealers and therefore must report daily.



NOAA Fisheries is allowing for seafood dealers to have up to 3 business days after initial report submission to provide the unique trip identifier along with the price and disposition code for each trip. Price and disposition code and trip identifier must be submitted electronically.

NOAA Fisheries is continuing to investigate alternative methods to create, transfer, and submit a unique trip identifier for each trip. If you have ideas you would like to discuss, or have any questions regarding the trip identifier, please contact your local Field Office (see enclosed brochure) or contact us via email at reporting.ne@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Manjarri". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "C" at the beginning.

for Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

Regional Office

Effective May 1, 2004, NOAA Fisheries is implementing several changes to dealer reporting requirements.

John Witzig
Director, Fisheries
Statistics Office
One Blackburn Drive-
Gloucester, MA 01930
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Reginald Howe
Chief, Information Systems
Management Section
One Blackburn Drive-
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978.281.9149

Field Offices

Among the changes is a requirement for federally-permitted dealers to report a trip identifier for each trip purchased from a vessel required to submit a Fishing Vessel Trip Report (VTR).

Dealers and vessel owners will need to work together to ensure the trip identifier is transferred.

Please read on to learn more about the trip identifier and how it may affect you...

Portland, ME
Marine Trade Ctr Suite 212
2 Portland Fish Pier
207.780.3322
978.609.7747 cell

New Bedford, MA
37 N. Second Street
508.999.2452
978.609.4144 cell

Point Judith, RI
State Street 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 547
401.783.7797
978.609.4145 cell

East Hampton, NY
62 Newtown Lane #203
631.324.3569
978.609.4149 cell

Cape May, NJ
1382 Lafayette Street
P.O. Box 624
609.884.2113
978.609.4148 cell

Gloucester, MA
11 - 15 Parker Street
978.281.9286
978.609.7944 cell

Chatham, MA
29C Stage Harbor Road
508.945.5961
978.609.4142 cell

Patchogue, NY
50 Maple Avenue
P.O. Box 606
631.475.6988
978.609.4151 cell

Toms River, NJ
26 Main Street
P.O. Box 143
732.349.3533
978.609.4152 cell

Hampton, VA
1006N Settlers Landing Rd
P.O. Box 69043
757.723.3369
978.609.7643 cell

Vessel Reporting and the Trip Identifier



*Dealers and vessel owners/operators
working together to improve the status
of the fisheries*

What is a trip identifier (trip id)?

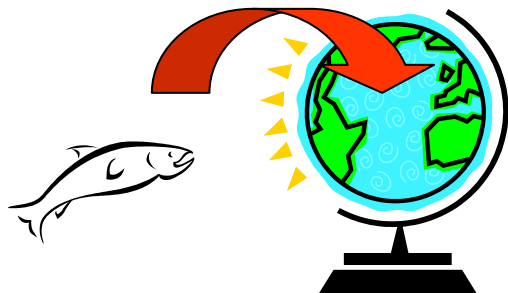
- A unique number assigned to each fishing trip by federally permitted vessels
- Used to link trip-specific information, such as:
 - Fishing Vessel Trip Reports (VTR)
 - Dealer purchase reports
 - Observer reports
 - Days at Sea reports
 - Biological sampling data
- Critical to successful fisheries management.

Why is reporting a trip id necessary?

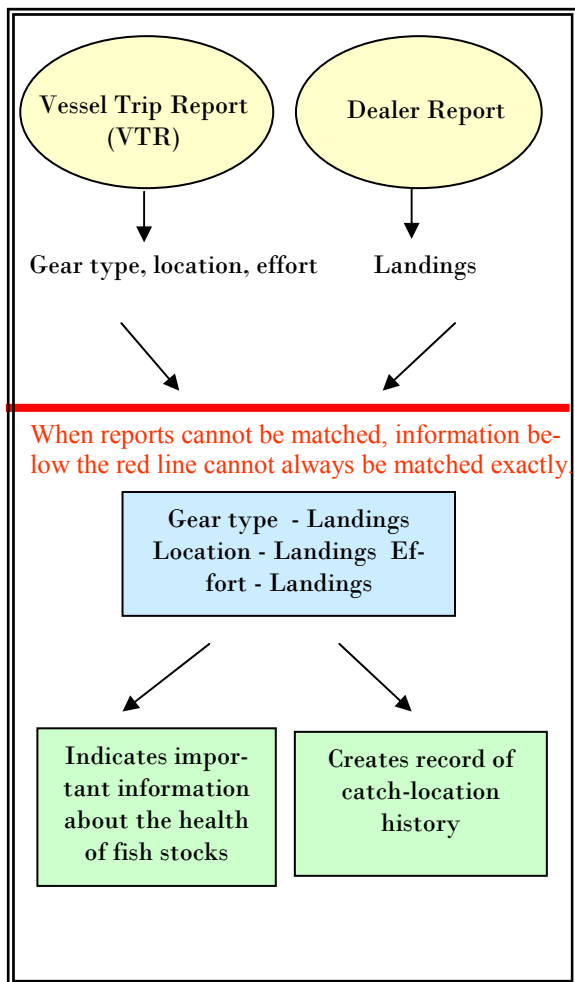
- Promotes a fully integrated databases
- Provides a more accurate and complete picture of the fisheries
- Links fishing effort and location data to the definitive landings reports
- Enables fisheries scientists and managers to better assess harvest rates and the health of fish stocks in particular areas.

How will the reporting of the trip id benefit me?

- Provides a means for improving management strategies, and help improve the status of the fisheries
- Provides a way to keep track of landings from important stock areas



Overview of current situation:



What number will be used as the trip id?

- Serial Number from the upper right-hand corner of the VTR
- If more than one VTR is completed for a trip, use the serial number of the first VTR for that trip
- VTRs are distributed to a particular vessel and should only be used to report fishing activity for that vessel

How will dealer get the trip id?

- Each VTR contains two “Dealer Copy” pages that may be given to the dealer for this purpose
- Alternative methods that better accommodate your individual business practices may be used
- NOAA Fisheries may be available to work with industry to develop alternative methods

When will this take place?

- May 1, 2004

Where can I get more information?

Phone: Local Field Office listed on this brochure

E-mail: reporting.ne@noaa.gov

Final Rule implementing these changes:

www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/doc/frdoc/04edrfr.pdf

Supporting documents for this regulatory action:

www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/doc/frdoc/04edrRIRIRFA.pdf

Copies are available from Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

What else is new in vessel reporting?

No immediate changes to vessel reporting requirements are anticipated. However, NOAA Fisheries is exploring systems to enable vessel owners and operators to report their fish catch information electronically.

