



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

NOAA Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

For Information Contact:
Sustainable Fisheries Division
(978) 281 – 9315

<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/>
Date Issued: 8/25/2015

All Federal Permit Holders

Removal of “Did Not Fish” Vessel Trip Reports
Simplification of Vessel Baseline Requirements
Effective Date: August 26, 2015

NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service has removed a reporting requirement and ended some restrictions based on vessel baseline characteristics.

ALL PERMIT HOLDERS: You are no longer required to submit “did not fish” vessel trip reports (VTRs) during months or weeks when your vessels are inactive.

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>	
Do I still need to submit VTRs?	Yes, nothing has changed with regard to submitting VTRs for every trip taken. Vessels that fish are still required to report all trips and submit them on either a monthly or weekly basis, depending on permits that they have.
Why is this happening now?	“Did not fish” reports were necessary to aid in compliance monitoring. In recent years, advancements in our monitoring systems have rendered these reports unnecessary.
My VTR forms have a spot for “Did Not Fish.” Do I need new forms?	No, we are updating our VTRs based on this change, but we will continue to accept older versions.

PERMIT HOLDERS WITH VESSEL BASELINE REQUIREMENTS:

- **Gross tonnage and net tonnage are no longer vessel baseline specifications.**
- **Vessel size and horsepower can now be upgraded more than once during the life of the permit, so long as length and horsepower upgrade limits are not exceeded.**

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>	
Why are you removing these restrictions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are removing gross and net tonnages because they are the most variable of vessel baseline specifications, and they have little effect on limiting vessel capacity compared to length and horsepower restrictions. • We are no longer limiting the number of times a vessel can upgrade its horsepower and length to provide more flexibility for vessel owners in the selection of replacement vessels and upgrades to existing vessels.

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin 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, Greater Atlantic Region.

<p>How much can I upgrade my current permit?</p>	<p>You can upgrade your vessel by 10% of your vessel's baseline length and 20% of the vessel's baseline horsepower.</p> <p>For example: Baseline Length: 50 FT Baseline Horsepower: 300 HP Max. Upgrade: 55 FT Max. Upgrade: 360 HP</p>
<p>I used my upgrade in the past. Can I still upgrade my vessel?</p>	<p>Yes, as long as your vessel's future upgrades are within 10% of the baseline length and 20% of the baseline horsepower.</p>
<p>I have a Tier 1 or Tier 2 limited access mackerel permit. Do I still have a fish hold specification?</p>	<p>Yes. This rule did not remove fish hold capacity for Tier 1 or Tier 2 limited access mackerel permits.</p>
<p>How can I check my vessel's baseline?</p>	<p>Send a letter, email or fax with your name, address, and phone number requesting your vessel's baseline specifications to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">National Marine Fisheries Service Permit Office 55 Great Republic Drive Gloucester, MA 01930-2276 Email: NMFS.GAR.Permits@noaa.gov Fax: (978) 281-9161</p> <p>Due to the anticipated high volume of baseline letter requests, please allow 60-90 days for a response.</p>
<p>What if my baseline specifications are incorrect?</p>	<p>We allow a one-time request to correct a vessel's baseline. If your baseline has been corrected in the past, we will not accept any additional correction requests.</p> <p>If your vessel's baseline has not been corrected but you think it's incorrect, please follow these steps to request a correction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit an explanation in writing why the baseline specification(s) we have on file is incorrect. • Provide third-party documents verifying the correct baseline specifications of the qualifying vessel prior to the time the limited access permit was first issued. For example: The Northeast (NE) Multispecies permits became limited access in 1994. If the limited access NE Multispecies permit currently on your vessel was first issued on May 1, 1994, then you must provide third party documentation that is dated prior to May 1, 1994. <p>Any information you provide will be reviewed and a determination will be made as to whether or not your baseline specifications will be adjusted. There is no guarantee that any adjustment will be made.</p>