



# Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Date Issued: 4/20/2016

## **Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery**

Reminder for Days-at-Sea (DAS) Credits and Fishing Year 2016 Observer Set-Aside  
Compensation Rates

*Effective Date: March 1, 2016*

### **DAS Credit Requests**

As a reminder, if you are the owner or operator of a Limited Access vessel, you may request a DAS credit for either of the following reasons:

- Good Samaritan; or
- Canceled Trip.

If you spend time at sea assisting the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) in a search and rescue operation, or help tow a disabled vessel, you may request a Good Samaritan credit for the time assisting the USCG. If the USCG or another vessel contacts you for assistance, and you are willing and able to help:

- Proceed to help the vessel in distress; and
- If you broke a DAS trip to assist the vessel, you can then submit a Good Samaritan DAS Credit Request Form to NOAA Fisheries who will verify the events with the USCG.

In addition, you may request a DAS credit for a canceled trip for any reason, provided you have no fish onboard (caught or possessed) and no fishing activity was conducted on the trip (no fishing gear was set or hauled). Your credit, if approved, will apply to the fishing year in which the trip occurred. You may carry over the DAS to the next fishing year, but you may not exceed the maximum carry over of 10 DAS for the scallop fishery. You must complete the following steps for a canceled trip DAS credit:

1. You must send a vessel monitoring system (VMS) email from sea at the time the trip is canceled, or at the earliest opportunity prior to crossing the VMS demarcation line to [NMFS.OLE.NE@NOAA.GOV](mailto:NMFS.OLE.NE@NOAA.GOV) with “DAS CREDIT REQUEST-CANCELED TRIP” in the subject line and include the following information in the body of the email
  - Operator name
  - Vessel name
  - Vessel permit number
  - Port where vessel will return
  - Date trip started
  - Estimated date/time of return to port
  - Must make a statement that no fish were onboard and no fishing activity occurred

*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.*

2. If your VMS is not operational, you must call the interactive voice response (IVR) backup line at (888) 487-9994 while at sea at the time the trip is canceled, or at the earliest opportunity prior to landing and include the information listed in item 1.
3. In addition to the VMS notification requirements, you must also submit a written DAS credit form and a copy of your completed vessel trip report (VTR) within 30 days of returning to port from the canceled trip. The DAS credit form can be found at: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/forms/dascreditform.pdf>

### Fishing Year 2016 Observer Compensation Rates

The Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center staff have worked together to calculate the initial observer set-aside compensation rate for fishing year 2016. These compensation rates are expected to provide sufficient compensation for the observer fee, while also providing sufficient observer coverage based on anticipated coverage levels needed for the start of fishing year 2016. We will retroactively apply the new observer compensation rates to any days fished with an observer on board as of March 1, 2016.

The fishing year 2016 initial compensation rates for Limited Access (LA) vessels are:

- **0.11** per DAS fished (the vessel is charged 0.89 DAS for each DAS fished with an observer onboard); and
- **175 lb** per day or part of a day for access area trips in addition to the vessel's possession limit for the trip when carrying an observer.

The fishing year 2016 initial compensation rate for Limited Access General Category (LAGC) individual fishing quota (IFQ) vessels is:

- **175 lb** per trip (open and access areas) in addition to the daily possession limit when carrying an observer.

We calculated all observer compensation rates assuming a daily rate of \$675 for the observer, and used an average scallop price of \$12.45 per pound for open area trips and \$12.49 per pound for access area and LAGC trips. We estimate the compensation rates provide the following average buffer over the daily cost of the observer:

- \$2,525 per LA DAS fished; and
- \$1,505 per access area day for LA vessels and per trip for LAGC IFQ vessels assuming trips last a single day.

These excess funds are intended to account for variations in the fishery, such as lower scallop price and landings per day fished (also called landings per unit effort), without creating financial incentive to extend an observed trip.

For details on how we've calculated these compensation rates in the past, and our expectation of

how it will impact compensation and observer coverage rates, please go to:

[http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/scallop/quotas/fy\\_2015\\_observer\\_compensation\\_rate\\_calculation\\_summary\\_final.pdf](http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/scallop/quotas/fy_2015_observer_compensation_rate_calculation_summary_final.pdf).

PLEASE NOTE: These are initial rates and we may consider changing the compensation rate as we gather fishery information throughout the 2016 fishing year, such as scallop price, length of trips, scallop landings per day fished, and overall rate of observer set-aside usage. If we adjust the initial observer compensation rates mid-year, we will send another permit holder letter announcing the new rates.

If you have any questions about a DAS Credit request, or the observer compensation rates, please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315.