



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Mid-Atlantic Species Charter and Party Vessels Electronic Vessel Trip Reports Required for all Mid-Atlantic Charter and Party Trips Effective Date: March 12, 2018

We have approved a new framework that changes reporting requirements for the Mid-Atlantic charter and party fleet. If you have a Federal charter or party permit for species managed by a Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council FMP and are on a trip carrying passengers for hire, you must:

- Submit eVTRs by electronic means through a NOAA-approved software application (see question and answer below for more information).
- Submit eVTRs within 48 hours following the completion of a fishing trip.

Vessels with Federal charter or party permits for any of the following species will be bound by this rule:

- Atlantic mackerel
- Squid
- Butterfish
- Summer Flounder
- Scup
- Black sea bass
- Bluefish
- Tilefish

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When will this regulation take effect?

A. This action will take effect on March 12, 2018. All vessel must submit eVTRs in compliance with these regulations for any trips taken on or after this date. We are delaying implementation to provide vessel owners and operators time to obtain the software application and necessary training to comply with this regulation. Although we are providing details now on the new requirements, we will provide additional information and reminders closer to March 12, 2018.

Q. Do eVTRs need to be completed prior to entering port?

A. Yes. The requirement to complete VTRs before returning to port will not change with this action.

Q. How can I submit my eVTRs? Where can I find out about NOAA-approved eVTR software applications?

A. These reports can be submitted through handheld electronic devices (i.e. phone, tablet) or through an online webportal on a personal computer. There are free and pay options for any submittal method that you choose. These choices are detailed in the table below:

If your vessel has the following: →	Tablet/SmartPhone		Personal Computer	
	Free 1. eTrips	Pay 1. eLog 2. Olrac/ Dynamic Data Logger 3. FACTS	Free 1. eTrips 2. FLDRS	Pay 1. eLog 2. Olrac/ Dynamic Data Logger 3.FACTS

The GARFO website includes details and about these NOAA-approved eVTR software applications and contacts/support for eVTR problems. They can be found at this link: <https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/evtr/electronic/index.html>.

Q. What if I don't have an electronic device onboard my vessel that enables me to submit an eVTR at sea?

A: You must submit your VTR electronically, but if you do not have a suitable device onboard your vessel, you may record the information on a paper VTR and transcribe it onto an eVTR when you are in port. You must submit the eVTR no more than 48 hrs after entering port at the conclusion of each trip.

Q. I don't know how to do eVTRs. What can I do to get training I need to complete and submit eVTRs?

A. NMFS, the Council, and approved contractors will work with vessel operators to provide training sessions on eVTR use and requirements. In addition, approved contractors provide online and/or in-person training on the use of their eVTR systems. The GARFO eVTR webpage (address above) lists contact information for eVTR contractors who can provide information on training for the approved software packages. In addition, the Council eVTR webpage (<http://www.mafmc.org/actions/evtr-framework>) maintains a schedule of meetings and trainings related to this action, as well as background documents that you may find helpful.

Q. Why is NOAA Fisheries making these changes?

A. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries are working to reduce the reporting burden on fishermen while improving data collection procedures in order to obtain data that is more timely, accurate, and useful. The time delays and inaccuracies associated with current data collection in the charter and party fishing fleets reduce our ability to

use the data in making management decisions. This action is intended to improve this data collection and improve the utility of the data.

Q. How will these changes benefit fishermen?

A. While there may be a minor and temporary increase in reporting burden as permit holders transition to electronic submission, the long-term burden will be reduced for reasons including the following:

- eVTRs can be preconfigured with data fields filled in;
- eVTRs provide a means for creating multiple reports (which are often necessary due to areas/species fished, etc.);
- eVTRs provide a convenient manner of mandatory storage; and
- eVTRs eliminates the costs/effort associated with mailing paper forms.

Q. If I have a Federal charter or party permit for a Mid-Atlantic species, but I am fishing on a commercial trip without taking passengers for hire, am I still obligated to submit an eVTR?

A. No. When not on a trip carrying passengers for hire, you may submit an eVTR or a paper form submitted by mail.