

**NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement
Alaska Enforcement Division
Report to the
International Pacific Halibut Commission**



January 1, 2011 to November 18, 2011

**NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement
Alaska Enforcement Division
P.O. Box 21767
Juneau, AK 99802**

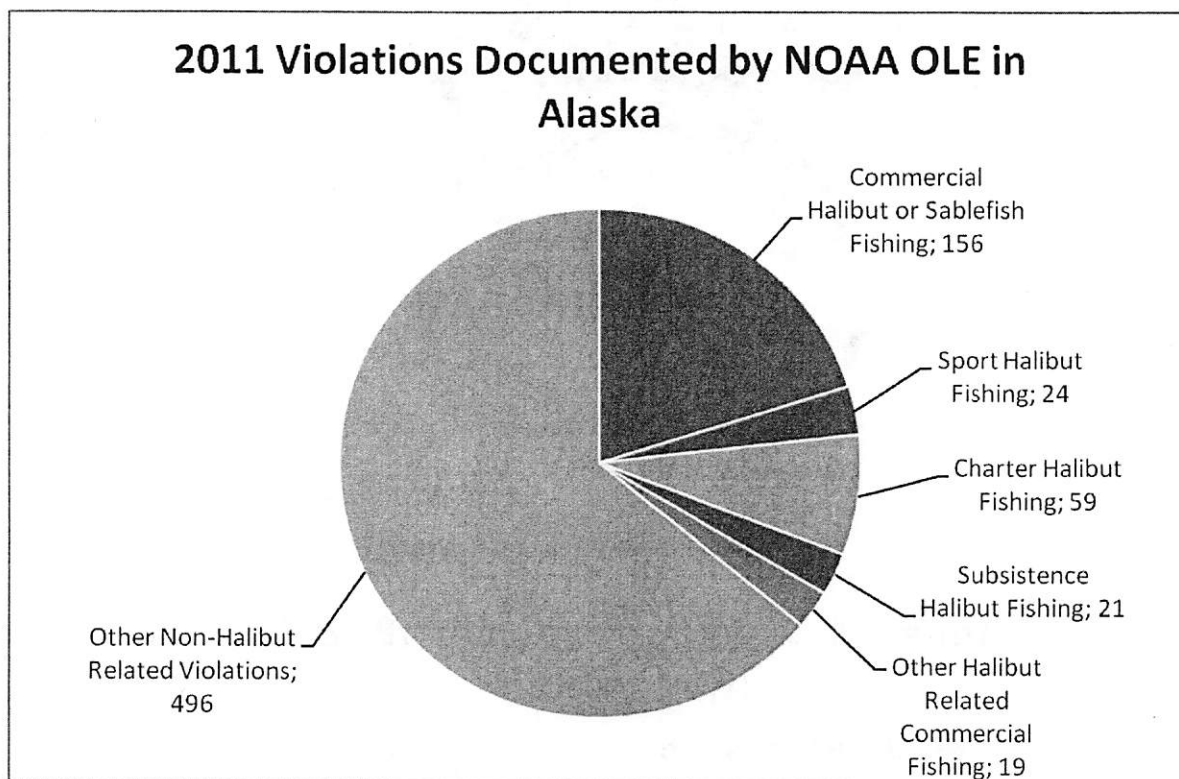
**TO REPORT VIOLATIONS:
Call 1-800-853-1964**

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

The Alaska Enforcement Division (AKD) of NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement employs a four pillared strategy to maximize compliance across all halibut harvester groups. The four primary activities are intended to increase communications and understanding between the regulated users and enforcement personnel and to decrease harm to marine resources and the marine habitat. The four pillars are: Education and Outreach, Patrols and Inspections, Investigations and Technology.

In 2011, AKD personnel dedicated approximately 11,550 hours to halibut related enforcement activities. Of these hours, approximately 850 hours were dedicated to Education and Outreach; approximately 3,200 hours were dedicated to Patrols and Inspections; and approximately 7,500 hours were dedicated to Investigations.

In 2011, AKD personnel documented approximately 775 violations. 279 (36%) were halibut related and 496 (64%) were non-halibut related.



Education and Outreach

AKD strives to maintain a positive and productive relationship with all halibut harvesters, users and industry personnel. During the time period covered in this report, NOAA AKD Officers and Agents spent over 850 hours engaged in halibut related outreach and public relations. In addition to interacting personally with the halibut harvesters on the water, on the docks and boat launches and in processing facilities daily, AKD personnel responded to hundreds of

telephonic and electronically sent inquiries. AKD personnel also staffed booths at the following organized events and trade shows providing current regulatory information and guidance intended to promote compliance and communications.

- The Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle, WA
- The Anchors Aweigh Boat Show in Anchorage, AK
- WhaleFest in Sitka, AK
- The Juneau Rotary Boat Show in Juneau, AK
- The Alaska State Fairs in Palmer & Haines, AK
- ComFish in Kodiak, AK
- The Great Alaska Sportsman Show in Anchorage, AK
- Marine Safety Day in Valdez, AK
- The Alaska Aviation and Technology Trade Show in Anchorage, AK
- Whalefest in Kodiak, AK

AKD personnel also conducted outreach meetings with charter fishing operators in Gustavus, Juneau, Elfin Cove, Sitka, Pelican, Hoonah, Angoon, Petersburg, Ketchikan, Craig, Homer, Seward, Yakutat, Haines and Skagway, AK to explain the newly adopted charter halibut regulations, logbook reporting requirements and to answer questions and to listen to comments. Commercial, sport and subsistence halibut harvesters also attended many of these meetings. NOAA OLE staff addressed the regulations that are specific to their interests and answered their regulatory questions.

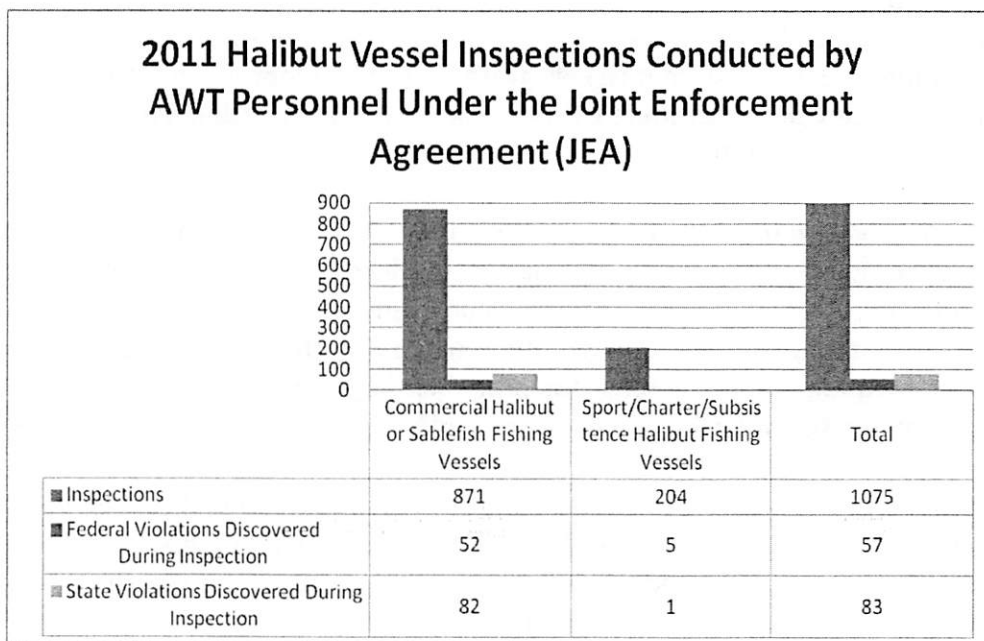
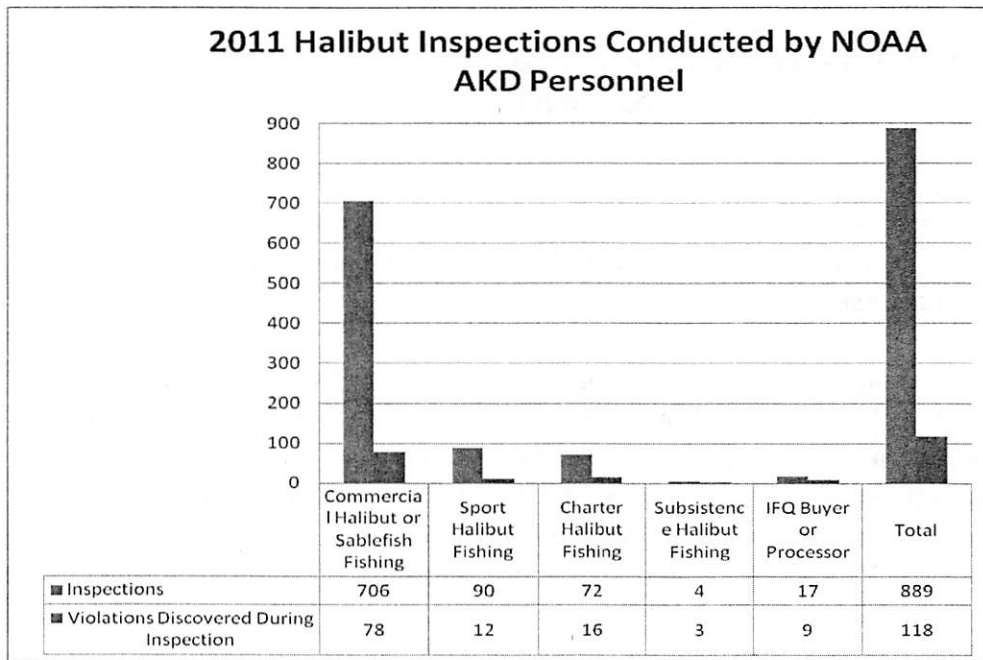
Patrols, Inspections and Partnerships

AKD personnel conduct patrols to provide a visible deterrent to would-be violators, to conduct compliance inspections and to make themselves available to the general public to provide information and guidance when and where the information is most needed. Patrols are conducted at sea, onshore and in the air.

NOAA OLE works closely with the State of Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT) and the US Coast Guard to maximize compliance by sharing information, intelligence, knowledge and resources and to provide current information to the regulated communities. The Cooperative Enforcement Agreement and Joint Enforcement Agreement with the Wildlife Troopers provide the state with federal funding for personnel, equipment and operations as well as authorize State Troopers to enforce federal fishing regulations while engaged in their regular duties.

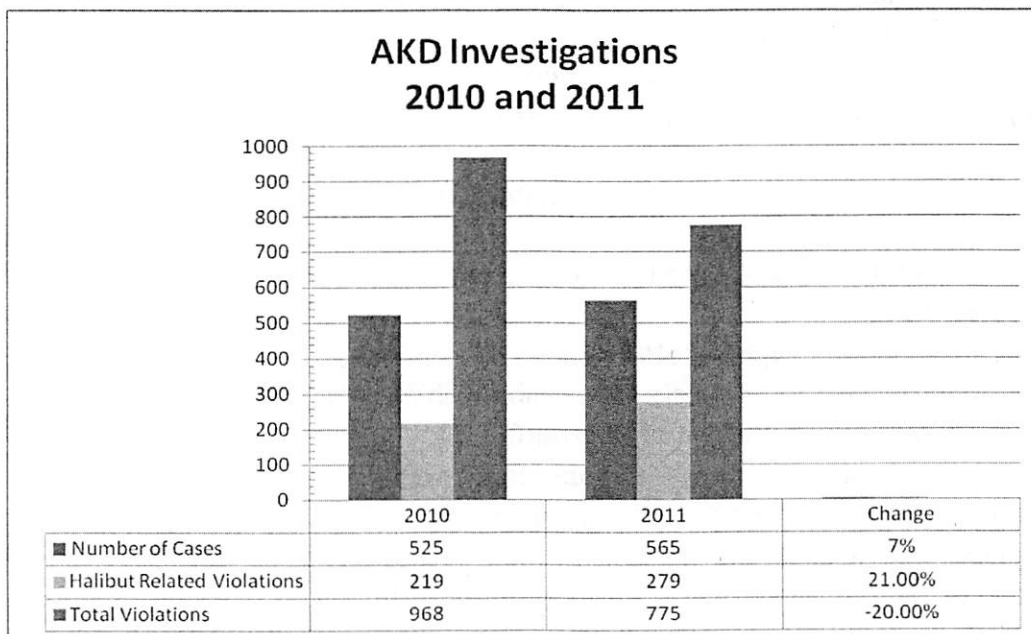
In 2011, AKD personnel spent approximately 3,200 hours engaged in halibut related patrols and inspections. During this time, 872 halibut vessel inspections (commercial, sport, charter and subsistence) were conducted. This compares to approximately 3,000 hours of halibut related patrols and inspections, with 388 halibut vessel inspections conducted by AKD personnel in 2010.

The total number of halibut vessel inspections (commercial, charter, sport & subsistence) conducted by NOAA and AWT in 2011 was 1,947. This is a 20% increase from the 1,542 halibut vessel inspections completed in 2010. The number of federal and state violations discovered during the vessel inspections decreased from 351 in 2010 to 249 in 2011.



Investigations

Reports or complaints alleging violations are investigated thoroughly and promptly by AKD personnel. In addition, NOAA investigators regularly analyze large quantities of data that may lead us to investigate questionable or missing information as well as abnormal activity. Some investigations take a few minutes to conduct, others take years. During the time period covered in this report, over 7,500 hours were invested in halibut or IFQ related investigations.



156 Commercial IFQ or CDQ halibut violations or suspected violations were documented. This compares to 122 in 2010.

- 31 IFQ halibut overages. There were 41 in 2010.
- IFQ permit holder not onboard
- Logbook violations
- PNOL violations
- Gear marking violations
- Undersized halibut
- Filleting, mutilating onboard vessel
- Hired Skipper violations
- Misreporting IFQ area fished
- Vessel Cap Overage

24 Sport halibut fishing violations or suspected violations were documented. This compares to 14 in 2010.

- Filleting, mutilating or skinning halibut onboard a vessel
- Exceeding bag or possession limits
- Sale of or attempted sale of sport caught halibut

59 Charter halibut fishing violations or suspected violations were documented. This compares to 25 in 2010.

- Logbook violations.
- Filleting, mutilating or skinning halibut onboard a vessel
- Retaining halibut greater than 37" in area 2C
- Exceeding bag or possession limits *
- Charter fishing without valid CHP *
- Exceeding line or angler endorsement limit *
- Captain or crew retaining halibut on charter vessel fishing trip *

* Often include additional logbook violations which are not counted here.

21 Subsistence halibut fishing violations or suspected violations were documented. This compares to 15 in 2010.

- Unqualified person apply for SHARC
- Improperly or unmarked subsistence halibut fishing gear
- Subsistence halibut fishing without SHARC
- Subsistence halibut fishing in Non-Subsistence area
- Subsistence halibut fishing with too many hooks
- Unlawful sale of, or attempted unlawful sale of subsistence halibut
- Power hauling subsistence gear in Sitka Sound LAMP

19 Commercial fishing violations or suspected violations involving halibut (as a prohibited species) in the groundfish fishery were documented. This compares to 22 in 2010.

- Failed to carefully release or allowed halibut to contact a crucifer or hook stripper before being released.

Use of Technology

With respect to halibut fishing, only the commercial fishing sector currently utilizes technology that has a practical use for compliance and enforcement. In 2011, 268 commercial fishing vessels used a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) satellite transceiver in lieu of the IPHC Area 4 Vessel Clearance procedures. This is up from 240 in 2010. The near real time tracking capabilities of the VMS system allow vessel operators to fish halibut in Area 4 without going into port to get an Area 4 Vessel Clearance while allowing NOAA personnel to verify a vessel's location.