

C-1 Observer Annual Report

Council motion June 9, 2016

1) The Council recommends that the draft 2017 Annual Deployment Plan evaluate the following:

- Maintain dockside monitoring on pollock deliveries.
- Continue to place vessels under 40ft in the no selection pool.
- Continue to place vessels participating in the 2017 EM pre-implementation program into no selection pool, using the priority and number of vessels that will be determined through the EM workgroup and Council process.
- Maintain the 3 sampling strata defined by gear in 2017 and continue to use the optimal allocation to evaluate deployment rates while trying to maintain the expectation of at least 3 observed trips in each NMFS area.
- Continue to allow vessels to log 3 trips at a time in ODDS, and providing automatic release from coverage for the third observed trip for vessels 40-57.5 ft in length.
- Two additional strata for Council review in the 2017 draft ADP: 1) vessels delivering to tenders; and 2) partial coverage catcher-processors.

2) The Council recommends that NMFS incorporate the following in future annual reports:

- Continue to track trips by both gear type and vessel size categories (e.g., Table 4-1 in the 2015 annual report)
- Provide an examination of observer sampling results (such as percent of hauls sampled versus total hauls per trip, and sample fractions by vessel type, size, and gear size) in Chapter 4, or as a separate report.
- Include information on debriefing times for full coverage observers.
- Continue to incorporate evaluation of the EM strata

3) The Council continues to express concern about the timeliness of the release from US Treasury of observer fees and the fact that timely distribution of the fees is critical to maintaining coverage throughout the year.

4) The Council encourages the agency to continue work on developing variance methods, incorporating recommendations from the SSC.

The Council also moves to write a letter to the National Marine Fishery Service thanking the agency for their financial support of the observer program and outlining the number of observer days and coverage rates that have been achieved. In addition, the letter would outline possible declines in observer days if additional federal funding is not received, and would request additional funding to maintain approximately the same number of annual observer days through the development and full integration of electronic monitoring in the observer program.

Finally, the Council requests NMFS postpone action on AIS's application to be a full coverage observer provider until getting input from the Council after they have received the October white paper on LL2 observer issues that will include looking at the impacts of an observer provider being in the partial and full coverage categories in terms of (1) confidential fisheries information; (2) reimbursements by the Federal government; and (3) other unfair competitive advantages.