

C1 Council motion
2025 Observer Annual Report & 2027 Annual Deployment Plan
June 6, 2026

2025 Annual Report

Given changes to the Council's future meeting schedule, the Council supports NOAA's proposal to provide relevant data to the Council at the May Council meeting to support recommendations on the following year's annual deployment plan, with the final annual report released prior to September.

Overall, the Council recommends an abbreviated annual report, with a focus on:

- Clear, plain language results on the projected and achieved observer or electronic monitoring (EM) coverage by sector and whether spatial and temporal distribution were achieved
- Statistics on the percentage of actual catch observed by gear type in the GOA and BSAI, as indicated on p. 6 and Tables 4-3 and 4-4 of the 2025 annual report
- Identification in the executive summary of any notable changes from the previous year's deployment scheme and resulting changes in trends or conclusions as to their effectiveness
- An addition to the enforcement section to identify whether the vessel or processor was able to resolve the issue inseason

2027 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP)

The Council supports the following recommendations for the 2027 ADP:

- For the partial coverage program, use the proximity allocation method (except for pelagic trawl EM) and the following strata for deployment: (observer, EM fixed gear, EM pelagic trawl), Fishery Management Plan areas (BSAI, GOA), and gear type (fixed, trawl)
- For pelagic trawl EM, maintain 100% EM at-sea monitoring and the 33% sampling rate of EM deliveries by shoreside observers
- Maintain fixed gear EM selection pool of up to 181 vessels. If needed, prioritize placement in the EM selection pool based on vessel size, fishing effort, minimizing data gaps, and cost efficiency
- Provide a process to remove or deny vessels in the EM programs if they are inactive or have repeated issues causing data loss from the EM pool
- Continue to improve EM video review times with Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and use prioritization rules to better allocate review effort to the fisheries, gear types, times, and areas most dependent on EM data for management
- Present revisions to the zero selection pool (currently <40' fixed-gear catcher vessels and jig gear) for cost efficiency purposes
- For pelagic trawl EM, ensure logbook explanations are available to EM reviewers to provide additional context for discard of pollock events; develop a secondary blind review process for pollock discard events that may advance to enforcement actions; and support an OLE focus on compliance assistance given early implementation of the program, similar to the fixed gear EM approach

The Council recommends sending a letter to the Department of Commerce on the planned transition to login.gov multi-factor authentication for all public-facing systems (such as Observer Declare and Deploy System, or ODDS) beginning as early as mid-2026. The letter should highlight the challenges for Alaska fisheries participants given unreliable internet and cell service in some areas of rural Alaska, and request reconsideration or accommodations.