

ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANTS REPORT ON  
AUTHORIZATION OF DEEP SET BUOY GEAR AND FEDERAL PERMITTING

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) reviewed questions/recommendations from the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) regarding the EC statement made at the March 2017 meeting on Agenda Item J.3, criteria for approving proposed Deep-Set Buoy Gear (DSBG) and Linked Buoy Gear (LBG) Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP). The EC met with industry, HMSMT, non-government organizations, and public to clarify the questions. The EC has the following comments in response to the questions:

1. The HMSMT requested analysis of whether the active tending definition would be suitable for areas where DSBG has not yet been tested and whether there is a need for a total “footprint area” over which the entire extent of all ten pieces of buoy gear may be spread at any one time. The EC discussed this and believes that the three-mile rule as proposed is sufficient. The fisherman have a strong economic self interest to closely monitor their gear. This is based on the limited number of hooks that can be used at any given time and the incentive to ensure that all hooks are actively fishing at all times.
2. Questions came up regarding the marking of gear and whether it is required to mark both the flags and buoys. To clarify the March statement, the official number is only required to be marked on the buoys.
3. The HMSMT expressed concern about the requirement to start initiating gear haul-back by sunset. The EC has discussed this and determined that if there is a biological or operational need that DSBG should not be in the water at night, a fixed time to have gear out of the water should be established.

PFMC  
06/13/17