

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON
PRELIMINARY REPORT ON CONTACT TO VIOLATION RATIO IN GROUND FISH
RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Captain Mike Cenci (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife), Lieutenant Jorge Gross (California Department of Fish and Game), and Lieutenant Dave Cleary (Oregon State Police) of the Council's Enforcement Consultants (EC) group presented data summaries collected by their respective state enforcement agencies in 2003 and discussed the need to consider contact to violation ratios to adjust total mortality taken in the recreational fisheries for groundfish. The compliance data were restricted in coverage by area, season, and port, and illustrate the complexity of the sampling problem.

Based on information presented to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) the overall violation rates, including fishing without a permit, were within the general range of 5% to 10%. These rates pertain to the number of violations and not to the proportion of the harvest caught in violation of the regulations. The RecFIN intercept sampling program is likely to measure violations due to ignorance of bag limits and minimum size regulations, but intentional violations are likely to be missed and could be the focus of additional data collection by the EC group. A generic adjustment factor probably could be developed and reasonably applied to all fisheries, but will require additional information and analysis. For example, do compliance rates differ between charter versus private boat trips or between overages of canary rockfish versus lingcod? Also, at issue is whether the adjustment factor would be applied to the recreational landings, or to the number of angler trips, or the number of fishing permits. The SSC suggests that the issue of discard mortality is as important a topic as developing a complicated adjustment for illegal catch.

The SSC encourages the EC group to continue taking snapshots of compliance in the recreational groundfish fishery given the tight harvest constraints that are currently in effect.

PFMC
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