

NMFS Concerns and Questions for GEMPAC (1/31 and 2/3)

Proposed Regulatory Changes

1. 3 weeks to 60 or 90 days for EM summary data and compliance reports

The intent for a 3-week turnaround was to provide vessel operators with timely feedback and address potential issues so that subsequent EM trips are corrected. Additionally, longer wait times for EM data uploads can, and have, resulted in changes to vessel account balances, requiring vessels to transfer in pounds to correct late deficits. Timely feedback to vessels helps to ensure the quality of EM data, and reliability of the EM program in meeting monitoring goals of the Catch Share Program. NMFS would ask the GEMPAC/GEMTAC in their coming deliberations to consider how a backlog up to three months of trips for a vessel may affect individual vessel owners and operators in regard to feedback reports and vessel account balances.

2. Change from two business days to 7 days for logbook data

NMFS understands that this timeline is based on current PSMFC's practices under the EFP and is an effort to reduce industry costs of an EM service provider's operation. NMFS would ask the GEMPAC/GEMTAC in their coming deliberations to consider how extending this deadline, like the previous proposed change to EM data and compliance reports, would affect vessel operations, if at all.

3. Service provider review methodology

NMFS understands that the rationale behind the alternative language is to avoid confusion by making the regulatory language clearer and more consistent. For the rationale given under Agenda Item H.7.a Supplemental GEMPAC/TAC Report 1 November 2022 that the "...purpose of the EM video review... is not to estimate ALL discards for each trip, but rather to validate the logbook estimates of discards using a standardized EM video review method..." NMFS wants to be sure that the alternative language does not discount instances where EM does, or could, provide estimates of discards for a trip under 100% review. We ask that the GEMPAC/TAC considers how/if these changes would affect EM review across all sectors and gear types.

Elimination of business rules and 10% review for bottom trawl/fixed gear EM trips

NMFS believes the original intent of reduced review rates is twofold: to lower review costs and to ensure accurate reporting with the possibility of increased review due to inaccurate logbook reporting. Without the use of business rules to potentially trigger higher review, the cost-savings incentive for accurate reporting seems to be lost. Without business rules, NMFS would ask the GEMPAC/GEMTAC to discuss how providers would address vessels that consistently under report on reviewed hauls, assuming non-reviewed hauls would also be similarly under reported. Would there be utility in revising the business rules to account for significant or systematic

differences in estimates versus eliminating them entirely? NMFS would refer the GEMPAC/GEMTAC to the business rule analysis PSMFC provided at the last meeting to view potential different scenarios for business rules.