



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Northeast Fisheries Science Center  
166 Water Street  
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

October 18, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: MRAG Americas,  
Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NFEOP) Observers

FROM: Amy S. Van Atten  
Branch Chief, Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB) 

SUBJECT: Longfin Squid Fishery Uploads

Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) observers are advised that the At-Sea Monitoring (ASM) program upload criteria for longfin squid trips is defined as: any trip that lands greater than 2,500 pounds of longfin squid. Do not use the ASM program for trips that land less than or equal to 2,500 pounds of longfin squid (use the OBSCON program only). In the past the protocol for uploading was to upload when the vessel landed greater than or equal to 2,500 lbs. The Northeast Regional office has changed the criteria and now trips landing **greater than 2,500 lbs** (not greater than or equal to) are required for uploading.

Longfin squid trips are monitored by the Northeast Regional Fishery Statistics Office to calculate total butterfish catch in the longfin squid fishery. These trips are flagged based on whether a vessel landed greater than 2,500 pounds of longfin squid. Observers are required to upload a trip via the ASM program if the trip landed greater than 2,500 pounds of longfin squid. Previously, observers could use their discretion to upload via the ASM program if they were unsure the vessel landed 2,500 pounds. For example, an observer may have recorded a total estimated weight of 2,200 pounds of kept longfin squid (as opposed to an actual weight) and was not sure whether to use the ASM or OBSCON program. Observers were advised that when in doubt use the ASM program. This protocol has been changed.

Observers should follow these specific guidelines: if a trip lands greater than 2,500 pounds of longfin squid, upload using the ASM program; if a trip lands less than or equal to 2,500 pounds of longfin squid, upload via the OBSCON program. If an observer mistakenly uploads a trip with more than 2,500 pounds of longfin squid through the OBSCON program, he/she will need to re-upload the trip properly into the ASM program, this may require travel to the Observer Training Center in East Falmouth if paper logs have been mailed. Please use the small mesh pre-trip debriefing cheatsheet as a reference, call your editor, or call the editor after hours phone (774-392-5270) if you have questions regarding uploading your trip.

If you have any questions concerning longfin squid fishery trip uploads please contact Nichole Rossi at 508-495-2128, or email [Nichole.Rossi@noaa.gov](mailto:Nichole.Rossi@noaa.gov), or Sara Weeks at 508-495-2227, or email [Sara.Weeks@noaa.gov](mailto:Sara.Weeks@noaa.gov).

Attachment: Small Mesh Pre-Trip Debriefing Cheat sheet

**Gear to Bring**

- **2 extra baskets- at least 4 total baskets**
- Logs: IAL, Inc Take, Discard, Fisherman's Comment, Twin Trawl
- References: Conveyor & Volume Cheatsheets; Peterson guides; Mammal/Turtle, Sea bird, Sharks/Pelagics Books
- Other: Camera, calipers, 100 & 12lb scales, long measuring tape, depth stick, INC Take sampling kits

**iPAQ**

- SECTORASM
  - Small mesh trips landing > 2500lbs of Atl Longfin Squid
  - Upload in 48hrs
  - Requires CEW photos
- OBSCON
  - Small mesh trips (whiting, shrimp, etc) landing ≤ 2500lbs Atl Longfin Squid
  - All Twin Trawl trips (overnight paper logs)
  - Upload in 24hrs
- If uploaded using incorrect program, Observer will be responsible for re-upload
- Upload
  - Program Code = 000, Fleet ID Code = 000
  - If vessel not in dropdown list, select "NEWVES#" & comment on Name, Hull #, Permit #
  - Select EMS\_USED if applicable

**V&T Log**

- Program Code = 000, **Fleet ID Code = 000**
- Comment if using Marel scale during trip

**Gear Log**

- Squid
  - Eliminator Trawl- Like Ruhle Trawl but w/ liner
  - 12" Dropchains- Can be any Net Type, comment dropchains = 12"  
Escape Outlet opening, length of footrope, height 12", shape 01, location 99
- Whiting
  - Raised Footrope Trawl- Comment on dropchain length and space between chains  
Excluder device Type 05
- Take your time when collecting codend & liner measurements

**Before 1<sup>st</sup> Haul**

- Communicate with captain & crew about observer duties
  - Inc Take/IAL protocols, measuring codend & liner
  - Obtaining depth measurements of the pile before it's flooded
  - Setting aside any larger discarded species
- Measure Checker Pen
  - Complete diagram and measurements of all parts and height of boards
  - Account for unusual shapes at start of the conveyor
- ID if EMS Vessel
  - Will not be able to sample from end of conveyor because of cameras
- Identify the best work area and if it's possible to work off end of conveyor

**Sub-Sampling**

- ALWAYS get a total volume of the pile

- Kept and Discarded weights are used real-time, so the more accurate you can be, the better
- Ideal situation: all kept catch runs off conveyor directly into hold and/or containers and crew picks discards off conveyor for observer to get actual weights when complete
- Alternative strategies for situations where discarded catch runs directly off conveyor:
  - Strategy 1: Collect discard volume in totes at end of conveyor  
Subsample from end of conveyor
  - Strategy 2: Total volume in pen – Total kept volume = Discard volume  
Subsample discards only from end of conveyor
  - Strategy 3: Total volume in pen  
Subsample from pen, don't separate by disposition code (unless min size)  
Subtract kept weight from total weights
- Use Catch Composition Log when accurate volume cannot be obtained (ie. splitting the codend)

#### Catch Estimation Worksheet

- 1<sup>st</sup> haul must have detailed diagram of checker pen and all measurements
  - Draw a new diagram if the original pen is altered in any way
- 10 depths every haul
- **Strategy number** written in top left corner of comment section, under tally/basket count box
- **List all species that appear in sub-sample**, even for ones where volume-to-volume is not used
- Disposition codes written with subsample species
- Volume calculations of 'other' containers used

#### Incidental Takes/IALs

- High likelihood of seeing any and all types (especially dolphins, sharks, swordfish & rays)

#### Sampling Priorities

- Lengths of both kept and discarded Atl Longfin Squid and Butterfish

#### Discard Log

- Use when the haul is unobserved due to large bycatch release (ex: releasing bag full of butterfish)
- Offer Fisherman's Comment Log after discard event

#### Species Verification

- 30 species every quarter, the first time encountered (photos or whole)
- Any new/unusual species that you question the ID

#### Overall Priorities

1. Accurate weights of both kept and discarded Atl Longfin Squid and Butterfish
2. Lengths of both kept and discarded Atl Longfin Squid and Butterfish
3. Accurate weights & lengths of river herring species

#### Other

- Photos of gear, conveyor system, subsampling (for training)

#### General Questions?

- Contact your editor or call the editor after hours phone at 774-392-5270