



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



Enforcement Overview

FY 2023 Quarter 2

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Meeting
June 8, 2023



Gulf of Mexico Snapshot

- 193 Opened Incidents
- 12 Cases referred to General Counsel/US DOJ
- 74 Summary Settlements (\$100-\$3000)
 - Retention during closure/undersize possession/descender device
 - IFQ Program Requirements
 - Fishing in Sanctuary
- 48% No Violations or Compliance Assistance



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ENFORCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

➤ IUU Efforts



[“Live Florida Spiny Lobsters, Product of the USA”](#)

➤ Trade Monitoring

➤ Ports of Entry TX/MX Border





Enforcement Partnerships & Referrals

• GMFMC Enforcement Partners



• 44 Overall Enforcement Referrals

- Encompasses entire SED
- Within GMFMC:
 - FWC, TPWD, USCG



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CURRENT SPOTLIGHT

➤ Unpermitted Charter Operations



➤ TED Requirements



[Sanctuary TED Operation Story](#)

➤ Observer Safety

- Nation-Wide Notice
- Prevention/Response/Reporting



NOTICE TO ALL VESSEL OWNERS AND OPERATORS WHO ARE REQUIRED TO CARRY FISHERIES OBSERVERS

This NOTICE is a reminder to all vessel owners and operators of the responsibility to provide a safe working environment for fisheries observers carried on their vessels. Mistreatment of observers is unlawful and the detection and prosecution of such violations is one of our highest enforcement priorities.

Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and implementing regulations, it is illegal to forcibly assault, resist, oppose, impede, intimidate, sexually harass, bribe, or interfere with any observer on a vessel or data collector. These prohibitions apply to guests onboard your vessel during an observed fishing trip. Federal law also requires the reporting of complaints or incidents of unlawful harassment, sexual harassment, or sexual assault on documented vessels.

Owners and operators whose vessels are subject to observer coverage have a key role in providing a safe working environment. Failing to prevent, or properly respond to, observer mistreatment aboard your vessel can result in substantial penalties.

In the event of observer mistreatment, NOAA will assess your culpability, as the owner or operator of a federally-regulated fishing vessel, based on your actions. This NOTICE provides guidance on steps you can take to protect observers and facilitate compliance with federal law that applies to vessels that are subject to observer coverage.

Prevention

Owners and operators should take proactive measures to prevent any instances of observer mistreatment from occurring on their vessels, including:

1. Screening applicants to avoid hiring operators or crewmembers who may pose a risk.
2. Providing guidance and training to employees regarding appropriate interaction with observers and consequences for any mistreatment of fisheries observers.
3. Supervising employees to ensure observer mistreatment is not taking place.

Response

When a vessel owner or operator learns of potential observer mistreatment, prompt action is critical. Appropriate responses may include:

1. Separating the suspected offender(s) from the observer.





TARGETED OPERATIONS

READY RESERVE

- Sanctuary Focus
- Rough Weather



PESCADO

- IUU/SIMP Focus
- >50,000lbs seafood inspected
- Launcha deterrence patrols





Report A Violation

NOAA's Law Enforcement Hotline,
available 24/7 at
(800) 853-1964

- Location, time, and date of the activity.
- Description of the activity.
- Name(s) of the vessel, owner/operator, captain, crew, or additional witnesses.



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QUESTIONS



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