

Draft Framework Action: Modification of the Vessel Position Data Collection Program for the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery



June 21, 2021

Purpose and Need Statements

- The purpose of this action is to transition from the expired cellular electronic logbook program to a system that would maintain the Council's and NMFS's ability to collect vessel position data in order to estimate and monitor fishing effort in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery.
- The need is to base conservation and management measures on the best scientific information available and to minimize bycatch to the extent practicable, as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and interactions with protected species as required by the Endangered Species Act.



Background

- The 3G cellular network expired in December 2020, which was used for transmission of data from cellular electronic logbook units (cELBs).
- Even though the data can no longer be transmitted via 3G cellular networks, the hardware devices onboard vessels can still collect and store effort data, as long as they are still functioning.
- Through this framework action, the Council is exploring alternatives to the cELB program in order to continue the estimation of effort in the shrimp fishery, which will assist in conducting annual shrimp stock assessments, estimating bycatch of other species for use in other species' assessments, and monitoring the sea turtle and juvenile red snapper bycatch thresholds.



Action 1

Modify the Method Used to Collect Vessel Position Data for the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery

- Note: The types of data and amount/timing of data collection would not vary between alternatives. Consistent with current requirements, the permitted vessels selected to participate must also provide the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS): the size and number of shrimp trawls deployed for each set, and the type of bycatch reduction device (BRD) and turtle excluder device (TED) used in the nets. Compliance with these requirements and the requirement to submit vessel position data is required for permit renewal.



Action 1

Modify the Method Used to Collect Vessel Position Data for the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery

- **Alternative 1:** No Action - Maintain the current method to collect vessel position data through the cellular electronic logbook units supplied by the NMFS. Prior to December 7, 2020, the owners or operators of selected vessels were responsible for the cost of cellular service necessary to transmit the data. Currently, because cellular transmission is no longer possible, the NMFS will collect the memory cards from the units via mail.
- **Alternative 2.** Modify the method to collect vessel position data. If selected, the owner or operator of a shrimp vessel with a valid or renewable moratorium permit would be required to install an approved vessel monitoring system (VMS) that, at a minimum, archives vessel position and automatically transmits that data via cellular or satellite to the NMFS.



Action 1 – VMS units and costs

- The next slide shows a range of costs for VMS units, that either use cellular or satellite transmission, that have already been approved or are undergoing approval by the VMS program. (This was presented at the April Council meeting by Dr. Gloeckner.)
- Items that will need to be further examined include the transmission costs, based on the ping rate (every 10 minutes) and the lifespan of a typical VMS unit.



Possible options for “quick” type approval

Unit	Satellite	Cellular/ Hybrid	hardware cost estimate	Transmission cost estimate	Installation type
AddValue iFleetONE	Y		\$3,000	?(no response)	marine electrician
Faria FB eTerm-C*		Y	\$1,995	\$20/month after 1st year ¹	"Plug and Play"
Faria WatchDog 750VMS (with Messaging Terminal)	Y		\$3,150	\$100-200	marine electrician
GlobalStar Smartone Solar	Y		\$300-500	\$30/month	"Plug and Play"
Nautic Alert, Insight X2	Y		\$2,599	\$150/month	"Plug and Play"
Omnicom Mcmurdo FMCT/G with Tablet	Y		\$2,095 (introductory) ²	\$150- 300/month	"Plug and Play"
Omnicom McMurdo FMCT/G without Tablet	Y		\$1,595 (Introductory) ²	\$150- 300/month	"Plug and Play"
Skymate m1600 VMS	Y		\$3,000	No Quote without regulations	marine electrician
Woods Hole Group – NEMO*		Y	\$500	\$350/year	"Plug and Play"
Woods Hole Group - Triton Advanced	Y		\$3,000	\$150/month	marine electrician

¹Free the first year

²First unit purchased

*pending approval for SEFIER



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Additional considerations

- The Council may also wish to consider, in this framework action, to whom the requirements will apply.
- Option a: Require the installation of a VMS on only a subset, as determined by the SRD, of vessels with a valid or renewable moratorium permit.
- Option b: Require the installation of a VMS on all vessels with a valid or renewable moratorium permit.
- Option c: Require the installation of a VMS on all vessels with a valid or renewable moratorium permit, which are shrimping in the Gulf of Mexico.



Questions?

