



May 14, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: A.I.S., Inc.  
East West Technical Services (EWTS),  
MRAG Americas,  
At-Sea Monitors (ASMs),  
Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) Observers

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

SUBJECT: Electronic Monitoring (EM) Study Update

The Electronic Monitoring (EM) study is conducting focused experiments on participant vessels that will modify the way catch is currently handled and thus may impact NEFOP and ASM at-sea sampling. Our objectives for this experimental phase are to simulate and test two different EM monitoring approaches (full retention and audit) in an operational setting with six participating vessels. Each approach focuses on industry reported data (focus on discards) at the haul level and utilizes EM to validate or support that data. Data obtained from this testing period will help determine the feasibility (structure, costs, required resources, etc.) of an EM program in the northeast and will help identify the necessary components (dockside monitoring, field support, data retrievals, etc.) to support such a program.

The data collection period will start in May and will be completed at the end of August 2013. Those vessels participating in the study will be handling catch differently than normal fishing practices. *NEFOP observers and ASMs will sample as normal*, however, depending on the vessel and the EM monitoring approach there may be adjustments. We do not foresee these changes interfering with regular at-sea duties. It is very important that observers work cooperatively with the vessel crew. Each vessel will be provided with a Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB) on deck reference guide that observers should refer to for specific sampling instruction. Protocols listed below only apply to groundfish trips.

#### **Full Retention**

Under the full retention approach, EM will be used to monitor compliance with a full retention requirement and accompanied by dockside monitoring. Those vessels participating in the full retention scheme will be exempted from current regulations under an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP). The FSB staff will serve as the dockside monitoring representative for the purpose of this study.

In the full retention approach, on declared groundfish trips, vessels will be retaining all catch

with the exception of large pelagics, marine mammals, sea turtles, sea birds, American lobster, sturgeon and large debris such as rocks or lobster pots. NEFOP observers and ASMs should sample catch as you normally would. The only exception to sampling is that observers should ***NOT discard any catch.***

Please ask the captain and crew for specific instructions as needed and take time to review the FSB sampling reference guide provided to the captain which includes details on how to sample on EM experimental full retention trips. The following vessels are participating in the full retention scheme:

<u><i>Vessel Name</i></u>	<u><i>Port</i></u>	<u><i>Gear Type</i></u>	<u><i>EM Approach</i></u>
Alicia Ann	Dennis, MA	Longline/Gillnet	Full retention
Miss Fitz	Chatham, MA	Gillnet	Full retention
Barbara L Peters	Scituate, MA	Trawl	Full retention

### **Audit Approach**

Under the audit system, EM will be used as a tool to verify industry reported data. Initial allocated quota estimates would be based on industry reports and a subset of data would be reviewed for alignment. If the two data sources align within a specified threshold, one could assume the self-reported data is accurate for the entire trip.

In the audit approach, captains will be recording haul level catch information for all allocated species that are caught on declared groundfish trips. They will be recording either counts or weights of allocated species. Please assist the crew by providing them with any discarded allocated species after sampling the catch. The crew will be responsible for discarding catch in an orderly fashion within camera view. At-sea monitoring duties will not change. Sample catch as you normally would and work with the captain in regard to allocated species.

Please ask the captain and crew for specific instructions as needed and take time to review the FSB sampling reference guide provided to the captain which includes details on how to sample on EM audit approach trips. The following vessels are participating in the audit scheme;

<u><i>Vessel Name</i></u>	<u><i>Port</i></u>	<u><i>Gear Type</i></u>	<u><i>EM Approach</i></u>
Ocean State	Pt. Judith, RI	Trawl	Audit approach
Virginia Marise	Pt. Judith, RI	Trawl	Audit approach
Toots	Gloucester, MA	Gillnet	Audit approach

If you have any questions concerning the study please contact Nichole Rossi at 508-495-2128 or email [Nichole.Rossi@noaa.gov](mailto:Nichole.Rossi@noaa.gov). If you have questions about observer sampling protocols please contact Glenn Chamberlain at 508-495-2153 or email [Glenn.Chamberlain@noaa.gov](mailto:Glenn.Chamberlain@noaa.gov) or Kelly Neville at 508-495-2151 or email [Kelly.Neville@noaa.gov](mailto:Kelly.Neville@noaa.gov).

Thank you for your cooperation.