

Fishery Conservation and Management

§ 660.720

in accordance with the criteria and procedures specified in 50 CFR 600.745.

§ 660.719 Scientific observers.

(a) All fishing vessels with permits issued under this subpart and operating in HMS fisheries, including catcher/processors, at-sea processors, and vessels that embark from a port in Washington, Oregon, or California and land catch in another area, may be required to accommodate an NMFS certified observer on board to collect scientific data.

(b) All vessels with observers on board must comply with the safety regulations at 50 CFR 600.746.

(c) NMFS shall advise the permit holder or the designated agent of any observer requirement in response to any pre-trip notification in this subpart.

(d) When NMFS notifies the permit holder or designated agent of the obligation to carry an observer in response to a notification under this subpart or as a condition of an EFP issued under 50 CFR 660.718, the vessel may not engage in the fishery without taking the observer.

(e) A permit holder must accommodate a NMFS observer assigned under this section. The Regional Administrator's office, and not the observer, will address any concerns raised over accommodations.

(f) The permit holder, vessel operator, and crew must cooperate with the observer in the performance of the observer's duties, including:

(1) Allowing for the embarking and debarking of the observer.

(2) Allowing the observer access to all areas of the vessel necessary to conduct observer duties.

(3) Allowing the observer access to communications equipment and navigation equipment as necessary to perform observer duties.

(4) Allowing the observer access to VMS units to verify operation, obtain data, and use the communication capabilities of the units for official purposes.

(5) Providing accurate vessel locations by latitude and longitude or loran coordinates, upon request by the observer.

(6) Providing sea turtle, marine mammal, or sea bird specimens as requested.

(7) Notifying the observer in a timely fashion when commercial fishing operations are to begin and end.

(g) The permit holder, operator, and crew must comply with other terms and conditions to ensure the effective deployment and use of observers that the Regional Administrator imposes by written notice.

(h) The permit holder must ensure that assigned observers are provided living quarters comparable to crew members and are provided the same meals, snacks, and amenities as are normally provided to other vessel personnel.

§ 660.720 Interim protection for sea turtles.

(a) Until the effective date of §§ 660.707 and 660.712 (d) and (e), it is unlawful for any person who is not operating under a Hawaii longline limited access permit under § 660.21(b) to do any of the following:

(1) Direct fishing effort toward the harvest of swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) using longline gear deployed on the high seas of the Pacific Ocean west of 150° W. long. and north of the equator (0° lat.).

(2) Possess a light stick on board a longline vessel on the high seas of the Pacific Ocean west of 150° W. long. north of the equator. A light stick as used in this paragraph is any type of light emitting device, including any fluorescent glow bead, chemical, or electrically powered light that is affixed underwater to the longline gear.

(3) An operator of a longline vessel subject to this section may land or possess no more than 10 swordfish from a fishing trip where any part of the trip included fishing west of 150° W. long. and north of the equator (0° N. lat.).

(4) Fail to employ basket-style longline gear such that the mainline is deployed slack when fishing on the high seas of the Pacific Ocean west of 150° W. long. north of the equator.

(5) When a conventional monofilament longline is deployed by a vessel subject to this section, no fewer than 15 branch lines may be set between any two floats. Vessel operators