

IPHC Regulations Proposal Submission Form

Proposal Title: **100% VMS Coverage for Commercial Halibut/Sablefish** RECEIVED

Year Proposed For: **2008 & Future**

OCT 30 2007

Submission Information (Please print or type):

Name: Ludger W. Dochtermann & Walter Sargent		
Affiliation: F/V Stormbird, F/V North Point; F/V Major		
Address:		
City: Kodiak State/Prov.: AK Postal/ZIP Code: 99615		
Telephone:	Fax:	Email:
Signature:		

P.H.C

1. What is the definition and objective of this proposal?

Definition: 100% VMS Coverage for both Halibut & Black Cod, Statewide for Alaska, for all Commercial fishing vessel sizes and IFQ pounds.

It's about Transparency and Accountability, to keep a high Sustained Yield.

2. Impacts: Describe who you think this proposed change might affect (include issuer, processors, agencies, and the public).

a. Who might benefit from the proposed change?

Everyone should benefit. Vessels who currently have to travel to distant ports such as Atka to check-in with authorities will now be able to stay on the grounds and use radio/email/fax check-in procedures — as do vessels currently with VMS aboard. Fuel savings more than cover the costs of installing a VMS. Add'l. benefits: Safety; and Email/fax capabilities. Lowers active enforcement and litigation costs, as well.

b. Who might suffer hardships or be worse off?

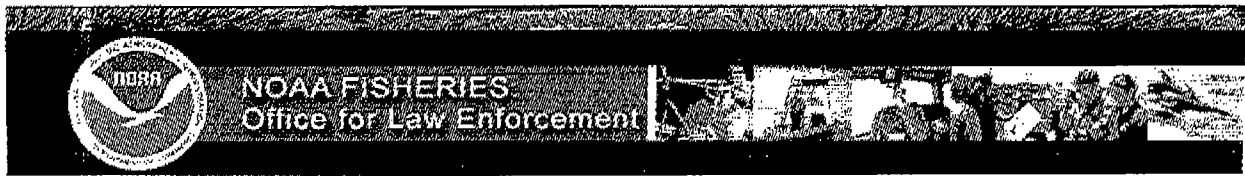
Cheaters are abolished. Area 3B halibut is getting harder to catch but they have no right to encroach on adjacent Area 3A. Area 4B quota holders are also having difficulty, and some of those without VMS aboard are crossing over into "The Island of Four Mountains" etc.

3. Are there other solutions to the problem described above? If so, why were they rejected?

Increased Coast Guard presence is cost prohibitive.

NOTE: NOAA's recent case against a Homer fisherman (Fred Currier) for misreporting the area where he actually caught halibut IFQ was the first time VMS was required as a compliance measure — a good example legitimizing this proposal's solution.

Please attach any other supporting materials. All items submitted by November 15, 2007 will be considered at the IPHC Annual Meeting. *Remember to include contact information and signature.*



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Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
- Office of Law Enforcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 18, 2007

CONTACT: Mark Oswell
(301) 427-2300

ALASKAN FISHERMAN PAYS PENALTY, AGREES TO VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM FOR QUOTA VIOLATION

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has entered into a settlement agreement with individual fishing quota permit holder Fred Currier of Homer, Alaska, to resolve a violation. Currier was charged for the infraction of misreporting the area where his halibut individual fishing quota (IFQ) was caught when he landed the fish on Sept. 18, 2006.

In the settlement agreement, Currier admitted to the charged violation and accepted a liability of \$25,000, the penalty assessed by NOAA. In addition, the proceeds from the halibut harvested in the prohibited area were forfeited to the government, in the amount of \$27,000. Currier also agreed to install and operate a vessel monitoring system (VMS) on any vessel that he operates under his IFQ for the next four years. This is the first time VMS has been required as a compliance measure in an IFQ case. In accordance with the agreement, the government also suspended \$10,000 of the \$25,000 civil penalty for a period of four years on the condition that Currier has no further IFQ violations during that period.

"Area misreporting hurts both the integrity of the IFQ program and other individual IFQ fishermen," said Assistant Special Agent in Charge Kevin Heck with the Office of Law Enforcement at NOAA Fisheries Service. "Requiring a monitoring system to be installed on the violator's vessel is the perfect response to this type of violation, and is the most significant part of this settlement."

The IFQ program is a system of managing Pacific halibut and sablefish fixed-gear commercial fisheries through a direct allocation based on individually held quota shares. Fishermen know at the beginning of the fishing season the amount of catch they are allotted and the specific regulatory area from which that allotment can be harvested. Some of the noted benefits of the program include safer fishing conditions, improved product quality and alleviation of the overcapitalization of the fisheries.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

