

NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement Report to the New England Fishery Management Council



July 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025

To Report a Violation Call
800-853-1964

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Introduction

NOAA Fisheries' Northeast Division (NED) of the Office of Law Enforcement (NOAA Fisheries OLE), Divisions 1 and 2¹, conducted essential operations since last summer. All NOAA Fisheries OLE staff strive to support our mission objectives. Enforcement Officers (EOs) and Special Agents (SAs) maintain a presence in our fishing ports across the NED's area of responsibility (AOR). They initiate and pursue investigations, provide education, and offer compliance assistance when needed. NED's Administrative and Investigative Support Program (ISP) staff work behind the scenes to assist with ongoing investigations and operations.

This report reveals the high quality work NED staff performs to protect marine wildlife and habitat. All of us at NOAA Fisheries OLE work hard every day to ensure our nation's precious marine resources and our global living marine resources are available for future generations.

Figures 1-19 and Tables 1-7, below, include fourth quarter, FY 2024 and first and second quarter, FY 2025 data from NED. Please keep in mind NOAA Fisheries OLE does not release specific information on any ongoing or open investigations. We welcome feedback on any section of this report.

NED Enforcement Highlights

Our law enforcement efforts since July 1, 2024 continued to focus on our three main priorities: Trade monitoring and enforcement, enforcing laws critical to North Atlantic Right Whale (NARW) survival and supporting the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP). A summary of our most recent trade monitoring and enforcement work begins on page 8. Trade monitoring and enforcement for the purposes of this report includes our collective efforts in NED to counter [Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated \(IUU\) seafood](#) from entering commerce. Many of our trade monitoring and enforcement investigations and patrols target violations identified by NOAA Fisheries' Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) and Tuna Tracking Verification Program (TTVP). NOAA Fisheries OLE recently helped publish a [webstory](#) on a TTVP focused trade enforcement case that concluded last February with a favorable outcome. Both the Miami Herald and the Seafood Source online media platforms picked up the story and helped broadcast our message to a wider audience.

Our quarterly enforcement efforts to protect and conserve the NARW population are outlined in a dedicated section of this report starting on page 10. Our collaboration with NEFOP aims to reduce the overall number of observer related cases and help encourage observer retention. We outlined our most recent work in support of NEFOP starting on page 17.

Emphasis on our top three priorities does not mean we stopped enforcing other important living marine resource focused laws under our jurisdiction, such as the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) or the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act (ACFCMA), along with other Acts. At NED, we are dedicated to enforcing laws that conserve and protect our nation's marine resources and their natural habitat.

¹ Both NOAA Fisheries OLE and the US Coast Guard (USCG) separate out areas of specific geographic coverage by "Division". For NOAA Fisheries OLE, NED's area of coverage is split between Division 1, covering from Connecticut to Maine, and Division 2, covering from New York to Virginia. Similarly and overlapping this area is USCG Northeast Division 1, covering from New York to Maine, and USCG Mid Atlantic Division 5, covering from New Jersey to North Carolina.

Enforcement and Compliance

The following metrics do not showcase the full performance of NED, but rather highlight more impactful, recent activities.

Fourth Quarter, FY 2024

In the fourth quarter, FY 2024, there were approximately 34 high priority operations and/or patrols that occurred either on land or at sea. There were 21 documented instances of impactful dockside outreach and/or industry compliance assistance in the field, allowing critical face-to-face interaction between our field staff and industry members. There were 44 instances of staff participation in significant NOAA internal and external to government partner meetings/events. Our agents and officers also conducted 6 container shipment inspections (including related operations) to monitor seafood imports. NED EOs and SAs initiated at least 33 investigations based on previously conducted high priority operations, patrols, and container inspections. Many of those investigations are ongoing.

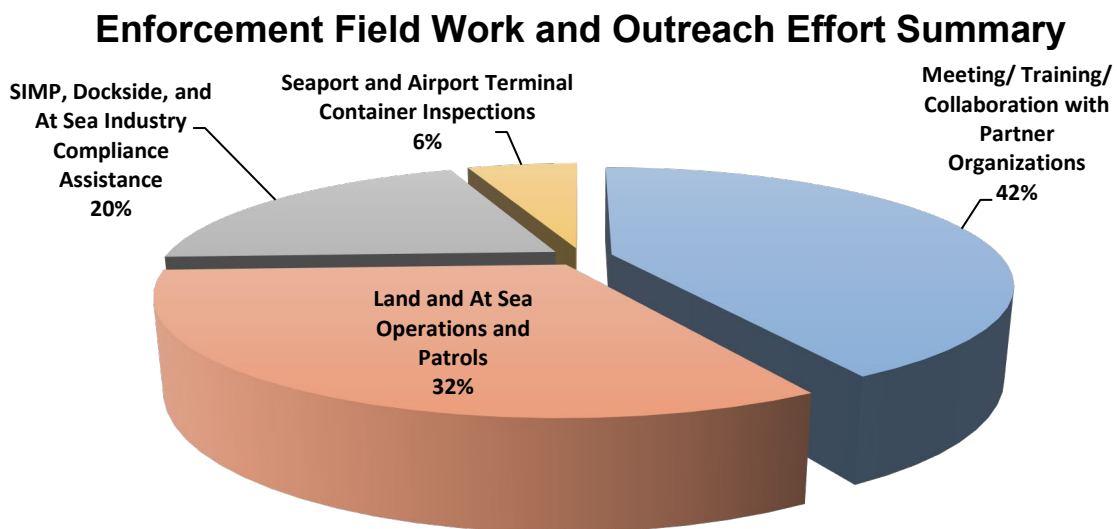


Figure 1: NED took part in roughly 105 high priority events between July 1 and September 30, 2024. This figure is broken down by land and at sea operations and patrols, meetings, training events, and collaborative efforts with partner organizations, dockside and at sea outreach and industry compliance assistance, and seaport and airport terminal container inspections.

First Quarter, FY 2025

In the first quarter, FY 2025, there were approximately 18 high priority operations and/or patrols that occurred either on land or at sea. There were 32 documented instances of impactful dockside outreach and/or industry compliance assistance in the field, allowing critical face-to-face interaction between our field staff and industry members. There were 36 instances of staff participation in significant NOAA internal and external to government partner meetings/events. Our agents and officers also conducted 11 container shipment inspections (including related operations) to monitor seafood imports. NED EOs and SAs initiated at least 42 investigations based on previously conducted high priority operations, patrols, and container inspections. Many of those investigations are ongoing.

Enforcement Field Work and Outreach Effort Summary

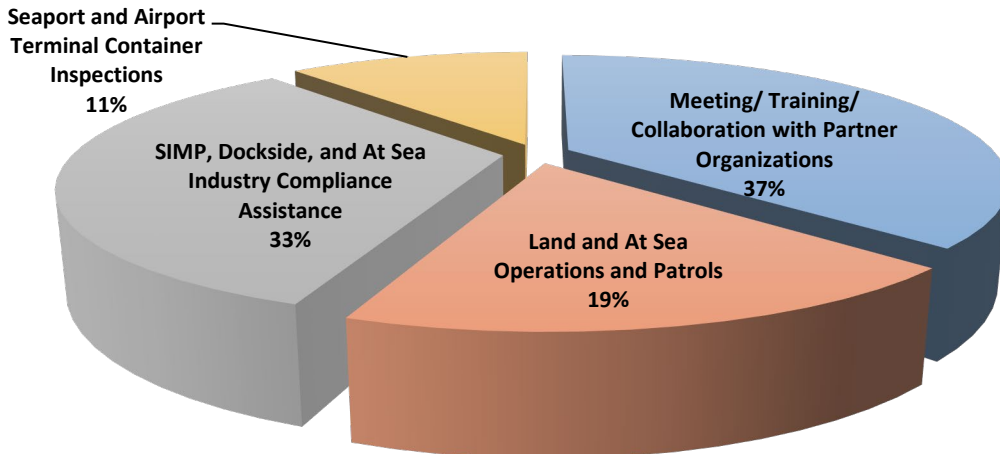


Figure 2: NED took part in roughly 97 high priority events between October 1 and December 30, 2024. This figure is broken down by the same categories as listed under Figure 1, above.

Second Quarter, FY 2025

In the second quarter, FY 2025, there were approximately 18 high priority operations and/or patrols that occurred either on land or at sea. There were 50 documented instances of impactful dockside outreach and/or industry compliance assistance in the field, allowing critical face-to-face interaction between our field staff and industry members. In this category, for this quarter, we also included our related work with trade monitoring and enforcement as well as our collaboration with the Southeast Division (SED) of NOAA Fisheries OLE to provide compliance assistance regarding the Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Program (SEFHIRE) that primarily occurs in the SED AOR. There were 42 instances of staff participation in significant NOAA internal and external to government partner meetings/events. Our agents and officers also conducted 55 container shipment inspections, from 54 patrols (including related operations) to monitor seafood imports. NED EOs and SAs initiated at least 45 investigations based on previously conducted high priority operations, patrols, and container inspections. Many of those investigations are ongoing.

Enforcement Field Work and Outreach Effort Summary

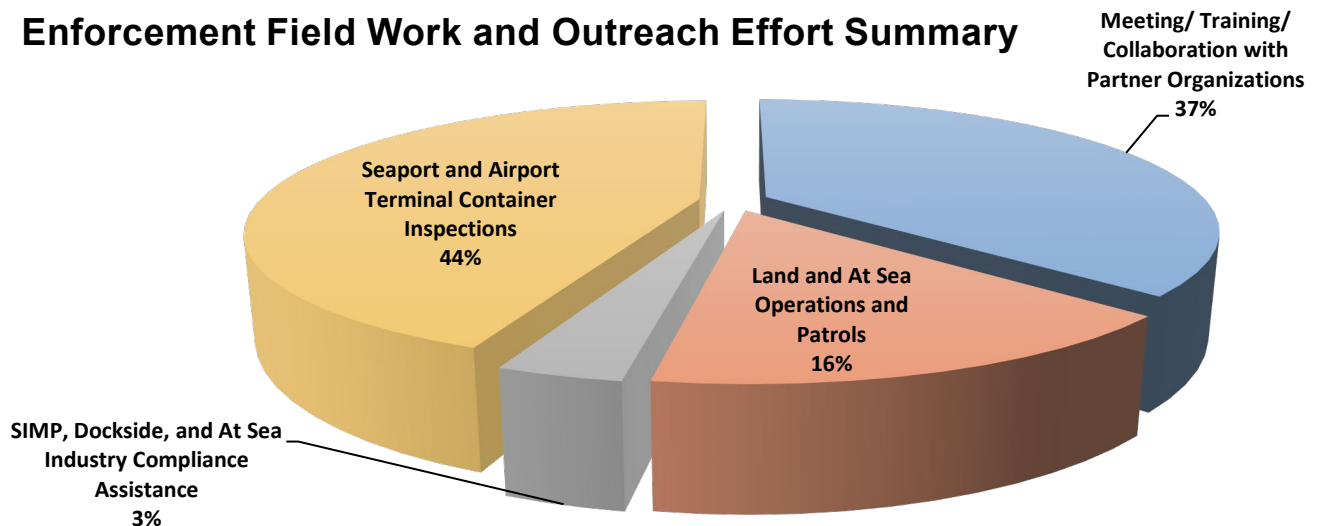


Figure 3: NED took part in roughly 114 high priority events between January 1 and March 31, 2025. This figure is broken down by the same categories as listed under Figures 1 and 2, above.

Figures 1 - 3, above, do not include all of the industry and enforcement partner communications that NED’s Mission Support staff and ISP conduct on a daily basis nor do they capture all of the routine interactions our agents and officers have with industry on a daily basis when conducting routine patrols, vessel boardings, dealer and trade monitoring inspections, and our operations. NED also capitalizes on “force multiplication”; that is, operations and patrols involving regulations under our jurisdiction may be conducted by one or more of our enforcement partners. However, all operation and patrol metrics referenced in this section directly involve NED EOs and/or SAs.

Enforcement Summary Data, FY 2022 through FY 2024

Table 1: NED enforcement summary data from FY 2022 through FY 2024

		FY 2022 Summary (10/1/21- 9/30/22)	FY 2023 Summary (10/1/22- 9/30/23)	FY 2024 Summary (10/1/23- 9/30/24)
Number of Incidents Created/Opened (does not include patrols)		983	708	589
Number of Incidents Closed During the FY		991	406	492 closed as of 05/28/2025
Number of Incidents Open/Ongoing by End of FY		407	251	97 open as of 05/28/2025
Patrol Numbers	Sea	106	107	83
	Land	173	98	166
	Air	1	11	N/A
	Trade Monitoring (TM)	patrol number unavailable, but ~150 TM cases	35	50
Number of Cases Sent to GC (not including criminal referrals)		48	53	49
Summary Settlements (all "paid" values are as of 05/29/2025)	Number Issued	97	75	74
	Issued Value, USD\$	\$94,204.53	\$77,450.64	\$77,950.70
	Number Paid	82	67	65
	Paid Value, USD\$	\$79,304.53	\$69,450.64	\$65,700.70
Number WWs Issued		27	26	36
NOVAs	Total Number Assessed	32	47	49
	Assessed Value, USD\$	\$345,717.70	\$935,776.11	\$649,811.71

	Total Number Settled	25	35	30
	Settled Value, USD\$	\$266,279.00	\$445,227.35	\$408,088.11

Trade Monitoring and Enforcement



Caption: An agent with VA Marine Police Special Investigations Unit inspects embargoed tuna.

NOAA Fisheries OLE conducts trade enforcement efforts nationwide. Agents and officers routinely inspect container shipments at major U.S. seaports, airports, and border crossings into the United States. Additionally, we investigate cases referred to us by state and federal enforcement partners for suspected violations discovered during their independent trade enforcement work.

NED EOs and SAs initiated near 70 new trade enforcement cases to protect U.S. consumers and businesses between January 1 and June 17, 2025. 41 of those investigations started from trade enforcement patrols conducted by NED EOs, SAs and our enforcement partners during that time. To add context to those statistics, from Oct. 1, 2022 through Sept 30, 2023 (FY 2023), NED conducted a total of approximately 35 trade monitoring focused patrols and we conducted 50 trade enforcement focused patrols in FY 2024.

Seafood importers must pass through multiple layers of federal oversight to comply with U.S. and international seafood trade regulations. These include the seafood trade monitoring programs NOAA Fisheries administers. For instance, NOAA fisheries established the TTVP to ensure compliance with federal regulations regarding dolphin-safe certification. These regulations protect dolphin stocks vulnerable to purse seine fisheries in the Eastern Tropical Pacific. Similarly, NOAA Fisheries' SIMP establishes reporting and recordkeeping requirements for imports of 1,100 unique species among 13 seafood species group. NOAA Fisheries OLE enforces SIMP provisions. Seafood importers must also hold and maintain a valid International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP). NOAA Fisheries requires an IFTP to import, export, or re-export fishery products subject to NOAA Fisheries trade monitoring programs such as TTVP and SIMP. In addition to enforcing IFTP compliance, IFTPs provide a database and reference point for NOAA Fisheries OLE to initiate trade enforcement patrols, operations, and investigations. Ensuring compliance with seafood import requirements is an important part of our efforts to combat [IUU fishing](#).

Trade Enforcement Highlights - Second Quarter, FY 2025

The following highlights are of NED's trade monitoring and enforcement efforts in the second quarter, FY 2025 (between January 1 and March 31, 2025), listed chronologically:

- In late January, a D2 SA closed a case involving a grocery store chain that was accused of importing tuna harvested from a vessel sailing under a Nicaraguan flag. This is the same case mentioned above, detailed in a recently published [webstory](#).

- On January 29 and 30, D2 EOs and SAs conducted trade enforcement patrols alongside U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), NJ state Joint Enforcement Agreement² staff (JEA), and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (USCBP) enforcement in the New York City (NYC) and Newark, NJ ports of entry. Sworn staff identified IFTP and data entry violations. OLE issued a SS issued to that company, importing tuna, bonito, and shrimp from overseas. And again on February 7, a D2 SA and EO conducted a trade enforcement patrol of two containers in the same area.
- On February 11, three SAs and an EO conducted a SIMP operation targeting inbound shipments of SIMP species entering the U.S. through the International Terminal in Portland, Maine. In cooperation with USCBP enforcement, six containers were inspected for compliance with labeling and reporting requirements.
- In the second week of February, a D1 EO conducted a SIMP patrol in Boston, inspecting shipments and associated documentation of 4 separate IFTP holders.
- On February 12, 2 D2 EOs conducted two container inspections. One container had various species of snapper and the other had jellyfish. The shipment of jellyfish did not have a license to import from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). That shipment was referred to USFWS for seizure.
- On February 18, a D2 SA and EO conducted a SIMP focused land patrol alongside NJ JEA and USFWS enforcement in a port of entry near NYC and Newark, NJ. While targeting possible illegal yellowfin and skipjack tuna imports, the enforcement group encountered counterfeit sneakers and an illegal herb supplement from the African Ivory Coast. USCBP seized the sneakers and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) seized the supplement.
- A D2 SA conducted a separate SIMP inspection of a warehouse in Chesapeake, VA of a shrimp shipment originating from India, also on February 18, and found no violations. A D2 EO, alongside NJ JEA and USCBP enforcement returned to the same location the following day (February 19) and determined from USCBP documentation that an importer did not declare bonito and snail imports. The EO contacted USFWS to detain the snail imports as the importer also lacked the proper permit.
- On February 26, a D1 EO inspected a seafood importer based in the Greater Boston area to investigate IFTP / SIMP records for compliance. No violations were documented.
- On Feb 27, two D2 EOs and SAs conducted a trade enforcement patrol alongside USCBP and NY JEA enforcement partners at the JFK airport. No violations were documented.
- On March 4, a D1 EO conducted a SIMP patrol of Boston and the surrounding area. Similar to the patrol in the same area on February 12, the EO again inspected shipments and documentation at the business addresses of 4 separate IFTP holders.
- Two D1 SAs collaborated with USCBP to perform 14 container inspections at the Port of Boston Conley Terminal, on March 4 as well.
- On March 18, our D1 EO stationed in the Great Lakes AOR participated in joint inspections with USCBP, USFDA, United States Postal Service (USPS), USFWS, and MI JEA at the Port Huron, MI port of entry. The group inspected a large number parcels entering the U.S. Each agency found multiple import violations, including a package containing seal oil pills and sea cucumbers.
- In late March, a D2 EO issued a \$2,500 SS that has since been paid, for failing to properly submit abalone data and attempting to import abalone without valid IFTP. This case came from a

² NED collectively administers 11 separate Joint Enforcement Agreements within our AOR. Joint Enforcement Agreements include a formal operations plan that transfers funds to state and U.S. territorial law enforcement agencies to perform law enforcement services in support of federal regulations.

trade enforcement patrol that took place on March 11 alongside USFDA enforcement at a port of entry near NYC and Newark, NJ.

North Atlantic Right Whale Enforcement

[NARWs](#) inhabit coastal waters, making them particularly vulnerable to [vessel strikes](#) and entanglement in fixed fishing gear. These are the two human activities responsible for the majority of NARW deaths and serious injuries. We enforce the speed rule in [Seasonal Management Areas](#) (SMAs) and other regulations that protect these whales to reduce death and serious injury resulting from vessel collision and gear entanglement, respectively.

By enforcing both of these regulatory strategies, we play an instrumental role in protecting not only NARWs, but all large whales along the Atlantic coast. We also participate in the development of on-demand (or ropeless) technology, which may benefit all large whale species. We provide vessel owners and operators, other members of the fishing community, as well as the general public, with the information they need to remain in compliance with federal regulations.

The following are highlights of our NARW speed rule, Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)/Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP), and marine mammal response enforcement activities in the fourth quarter FY 2024, and the first and second quarters, FY 2025.

Vessel Speed Enforcement

From November to July each year, multiple SMAs go into effect on the East Coast. During these times, most vessels 65 feet or longer are required to reduce their speeds to 10 knots or slower while transiting the designated areas. Since 2008, these areas have reduced the threat of vessel strikes to NARWs in their feeding and calving grounds and on their migratory routes. These speed restrictions help reduce the lethality of strikes by allowing boaters more time to sight and respond to nearby whales and also allowing whales more time to move away from oncoming vessels.

NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement is charged with enforcing these regulations and helping the public comply with the rules. Since 2022, NOAA's Office of General Counsel assessed \$1,704,556 in civil penalties across 105 cases for speed rule violations³. These cases involve various vessel types (e.g., cargo, container, passenger, etc.) that are both foreign and domestically flagged. We also deploy a number of technologies and strategies to enforce the speed rule, including:

- Industry and public outreach to help prevent violations before they happen
- Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) to detect speeding
- Portable radar units to detect speeding by vessels not carrying AIS
- Active patrolling of Seasonal Management Areas

Starting in 2018, we began outreach by sending compliance letters to vessel owners in violation of the speed rule in an effort to increase compliance with the speed rules within the SMAs. Since then, NOAA Fisheries OLE has sent almost 2,200 letters to vessel owners across multiple industries.

In addition, we continue to leverage satellite-based technologies by sending Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) alerts to vessels operating in close proximity to NARWs. The ISP staff establish a geofence around an area with confirmed NARW whale presence. When a VMS equipped

³ This data is valid as of May 13, 2025

vessel crosses into the geofenced area, they are informed of the confirmed NARW presence in their location for up to 48 hours, reminding them to go slow, keep a minimum distance of 500 yards, and if sighted to please report the sighting at 866-755-6622 or the WhaleAlert App. Our hope is that our cumulative efforts will help curb the number of violations committed by all vessel types as well as protect large whales found off the east coast.

Vessel Speed Enforcement Activity Fourth Quarter, FY 2024

The following is a list of ship strike avoidance enforcement work conducted in chronological order by NED staff in the fourth quarter, FY 2024⁴:

- In the second week of July, based on NARWs spotted on an aerial survey, ISP staff created a geofenced area in vTrack⁵ southeast of Nantucket that triggered sending four messages to VMS equipped vessels.
- In the middle of July, ISP staff set up two geofenced areas south of Long Island based on confirmed NARW sightings in vTrack that triggered 18 VMS messages to vessels.
- At the end of July, a recreational pleasure boat paid a \$7,500 Notice of Violation and Assessment (NOVA) penalty for three speed rule violations: Those violations were based on transits in November and December of 2022 and March of 2023.
- In late July, ISP staff established two additional geofences, both east of NJ, resulting in another 18 messages cumulatively sent to VMS equipped vessels.
- In August, SAs from NED, SED, and the West Coast Division received Unmanned Aircraft Systems training from NOAA's Unmanned Aerial Surveillance Division (UASD). Three NOAA Fisheries OLE pilots were certified on two different platforms. Also, part of a UASD kickstarter initiative, UASD transferred multiple drones to NOAA Fisheries OLE.
- In late August, based on NARWs spotted on aerial surveys then, another set of geofenced areas, one in Oceanographer's Canyon and another south of Long Island, were programmed in vTrack to automatically send VMS messages. The areas cumulatively triggered 70 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.
- In September, while investigating an alleged speed rule violation of a foreign flagged cargo ship, a D2 SA met with the VP of the parent shipping company to discuss compliance under the speed rule and various mechanisms to disseminate information to the larger international shipping community.

First Quarter, FY 2025

- In the third week of October, ISP staff sent compliance letters to over 200 vessels to inform them of the speed rule and promote future compliance. The letters were mailed internationally and domestically to reach the vessel owners.
- In the first week of November, ISP staff created two geofenced areas in Maine waters to alert mariners in the area of NARW presence. One area triggered 27 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.
- In the second week of November, SA's from NED and SED completed recurrent training to maintain proficiency on multiple UASDs. Related coordination among SAs is ongoing. Our plan is to use UASDs during NARW enforcement operations.
- On November 19, a D2 EO partnered with a NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) officer to conduct the first at sea SMA speed rule patrol of the year within the NY Bight

⁴ For specific charging information on all NOAA Fisheries cases, including those involving NARW speed rule violations, please see the GCES web page for [Enforcement Charging Information](#) and click on the appropriate month a defendant was charged.

⁵ VMS application used by OLE and NMFS for tracking vessel positions and other regulatory requirements.

(NYB) SMA. They found one speed rule compliant container shipment vessel while on this patrol. Officers participating in this patrol also inspected recreational fishing vessels and found two violations (not speed rule related). D1 EOs participated in additional speed rule focused patrols through the end of the quarter and observed very high compliance rates of transiting vessels of 65 feet and greater length.

- In late November, based on new confirmed NARW presence off Cape May, NJ, ISP staff created a geofenced area that triggered 11 messages to VMS equipped vessels
- Through mid-December, based on new confirmed NARW presence off the coast of Virginia, southeast of Nantucket, and east of Boston, ISP staff created six geofenced areas to alert mariners in those areas. Two of those areas cumulatively triggered 58 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.

Second Quarter, FY 2025

As of early April, 2025, OLE D2 EOs participated in 13 speed rule focused patrols since the start of the SMA seasons, commencing November 1 of last year (2024). Those have all been in the NYB and Delaware Bay SMAs alongside NY and DE state JEA partners, respectively. One of those patrols involved a D2 EO and SA coordinating a 7 hour SMA patrol to locate a mother and calf right whale pair observed on an aerial survey at the time near NYC. They didn't locate the whales, but similar to the previous quarter (first quarter, FY 2025), the observed speed rule compliance on that patrol and all others has been very high.

- In the third week of January, based on new confirmed NARW presence off the coast of ME, 70 messages were sent after ISP set up geofences to alert VMS equipped vessels of NARW presence. A geofence set up around the same time in Cape Cod Bay (CCB) for two NARWs observed there, triggered 96 messages. A few days later aerial surveys identified a larger group of NARWs on Jeffrey's Ledge. 12 messages were sent to VMS equipped vessels after ISP set up associated geofences for confirmed NARW presence.
- On January 21 and 22, our D2 SEO and a D2 EO and SA conducted a two day NARW speed operation in Delaware Bay alongside DE Department of Natural Resources police and USCG D5.
- At the end of January and into the first week of February, two separate geofences set up by ISP staff in Delaware Bay based on confirmed NARW presence triggered 86 messages sent out to VMS equipped vessels. Another geofence set up to the north around the same time, in CCB and Nantucket shoals, triggered 54 messages.
- A week later (second week of February), also in CCB, a geofence triggered another 55 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.
- Again in CCB, in the third week of February, a geofence triggered 56 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.
- South of Nantucket, in the last week of February, a geofence triggered 173 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.
- In mid-March, a shipping company based in Singapore settled a \$22,500 NOVA issued by GCES as a result of a NARW speed rule investigation. The vessel was charged with two counts of violating the speed rule in 2023.
- In the second week of March, based on confirmed presence of NARWs off of Norfolk, VA, geofences triggered 225 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels. About a week later in a similar location, another geofence triggered sending another 185 VMS messages.
- On March 13, a D2 EO conducted a speed rule patrol alongside USCG D5 officers out of station Cape May, NJ on their marked 45' patrol vessel.
- In the last week of March, going into the first week of April, geofences set by ISP staff triggered 316 messages sent to VMS equipped vessels.

ALWTRP Enforcement Activity

To reduce entanglements in fishing gear, NOAA Fisheries worked with a team of fishermen, scientists, conservationists, and state and federal officials from Maine to Florida collectively known as the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (ALWTRT). The team developed the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) in 1996, which addresses gear and closed area restrictions. The Plan has been updated several times. With the help of ALWTRT, NOAA Fisheries OLE enforces ALWTRP laws to reduce the risk of large whale entanglement in fixed gear fisheries. Most recently, NOAA Fisheries added significant [regulatory changes in 2021](#) to address NARW entanglement in Northeast lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot gear. Those changes included new [Restricted Gear Areas](#) (RGAs) impacting fixed lobster and crab pot and trap gear. The new RGAs went into effect in late 2021. In addition, gear modification requirements included in those regulations went into effect on May 1, 2022.

We offer our support at ALWTRT meetings and help ensure the enforceability of any new proposed changes to the Plan.

Fourth Quarter, FY 2024

NOAA Fisheries OLE and our enforcement partners collectively conducted 59 ALWTRP focused patrol days in the fourth quarter, FY 2024 (see Figure 4, below). In addition, we observed a better than 91 percent compliance rate in the fourth quarter, FY 2024, July 1 through September 30, 2024, on those patrols (see Figure 5, below). That compliance rate is based on the ALWTRP focused patrol data our state partners shared with us in addition to the ALWTRP focused patrols conducted independently by our EOs.

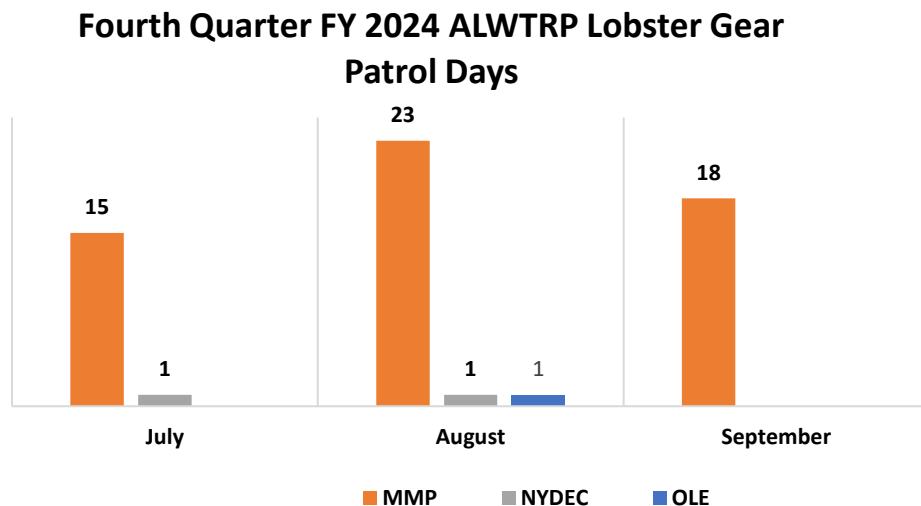


Figure 4⁶: This figure shows a breakdown, by month and enforcement partner, of the number of patrol days conducted between July 1 and September 30, 2024.

⁶ We also included compliance data from an offshore patrol conducted independently by NED staff that took place over a 5 day period, starting on August 12. Compliance data from that patrol is listed in Figure 4 only as a single day. All vessels whose gear was inspected on that patrol are combined in Figure 4, listed for that single day. In addition, Maine Marine Patrol (MMP) conducts the majority of our ALWTRP focused fixed gear patrols, each quarter.

Fourth Quarter FY 2024 ALWTRP Lobster Vessel Inspection Compliance Rate

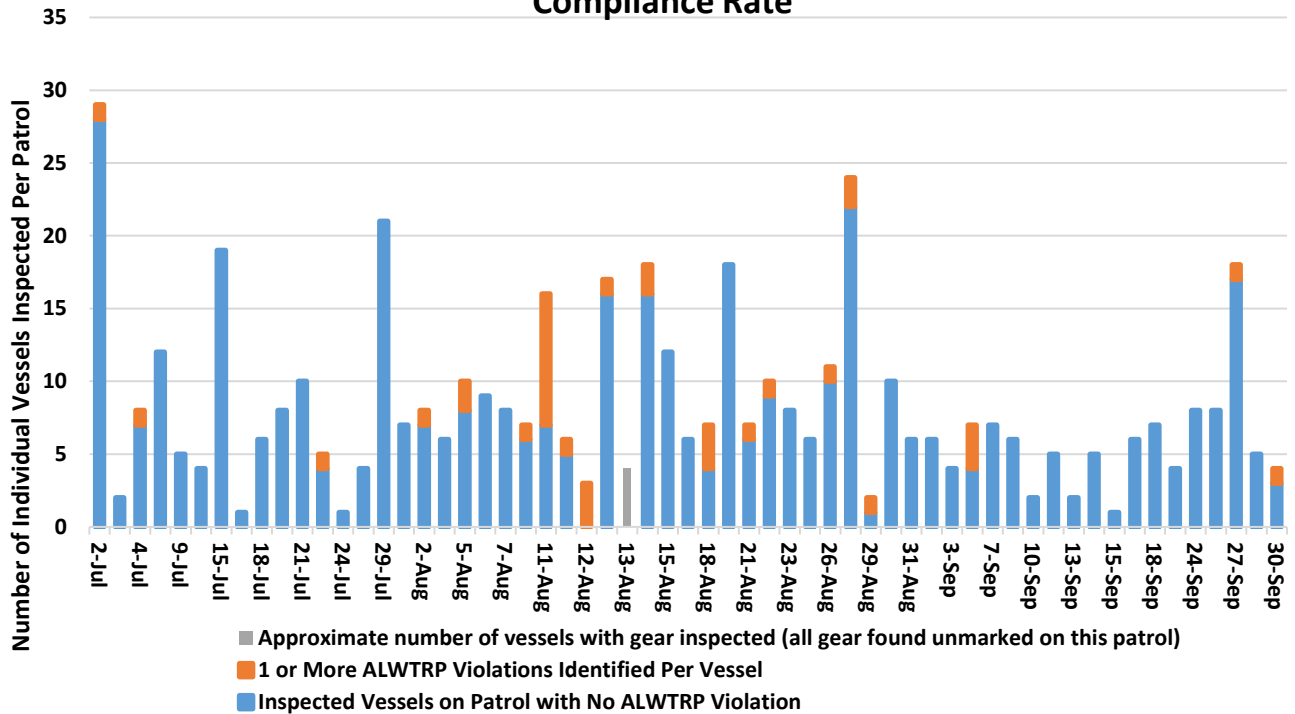


Figure 5: Shown here is the compliance rate observed on individual ALWTRP lobster gear focused patrol days conducted by NED and our enforcement partners. Each bar represents an individual patrol and the blue and/or orange color within each bar represents the total number of compliant and/or non-compliant vessels, respectively, per patrol day. Combined, NED, MMP, and the NY DEC inspected approximately 486 separate vessels for compliance with ALWTRP regulations between July 1 and September 30, 2024. Multiple trawls from the same vessel may be inspected on the same day. In order for a vessel to be “Inspected... with No ALWTRP Violation” in this figure, all of the vessels’ trawls inspected on that day must be ALWTRP compliant.

The following list primarily includes ALWTRP enforcement work in the northeast lobster and crab, pot and trap fishery conducted in chronological order by NED staff in the fourth quarter, FY 2024:

- In the second week of August, an EO and SA conducted a five day offshore patrol onboard a contracted platform patrol vessel, inspecting Lobster Management Area (LMA) 3 lobster gear for compliance with ALWTRP and ACFCMA regulations. This was the first of two LMA 3, ALWTRP patrols planned for the summer and fall of 2024. Approximately nine trawls of gear were inspected on this patrol. The EO and SA detected numerous ALWTRP violations on this patrol.
- On September 18, 2024, the NED Compliance Liaison (CL) and a D1 EO led an enforcement workshop focused on on-demand gear alongside ME state enforcement partners: ME Division of Marine Resources (DMR) and MMP. Similar to a workshop conducted alongside our USCG partners a year earlier, the workshop included both a classroom component and a field demonstration of ropeless gear. Unlike the joint USCG/NOAA Fisheries OLE workshop a year before, the field demonstration conducted at this workshop was aboard a MMP lobster gear hauling capable patrol vessel. The group engaged in productive enforcement discussion involving the use of on-demand gear at this event.

First Quarter, FY 2025

NOAA Fisheries OLE and our enforcement partners collectively conducted approximately 48 ALWTRP focused patrol days in the first quarter, FY 2025 (see Figure 6, below). In addition, we observed an almost 81 percent compliance rate in the first quarter, FY 2025, October 1 through December 31, 2024, on those patrols (see Figure 7, below). That compliance rate is based on the ALWTRP focused patrol data our state partners shared with us in addition to the ALWTRP focused patrols conducted independently by our EOs.

First Quarter FY 2025 ALWTRP Lobster Gear Patrol Days

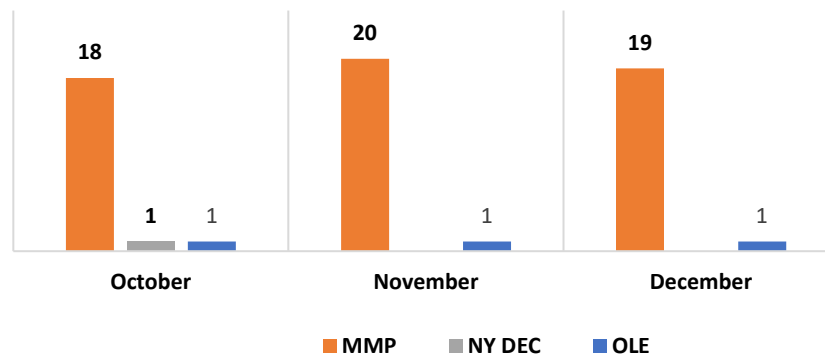


Figure 6: This figure illustrates a breakdown, by month and enforcement partner, of the number of patrol days conducted between October 1 and December 31, 2024.

First Quarter FY 2025 ALWTRP Lobster Vessel Inspection Compliance Rate

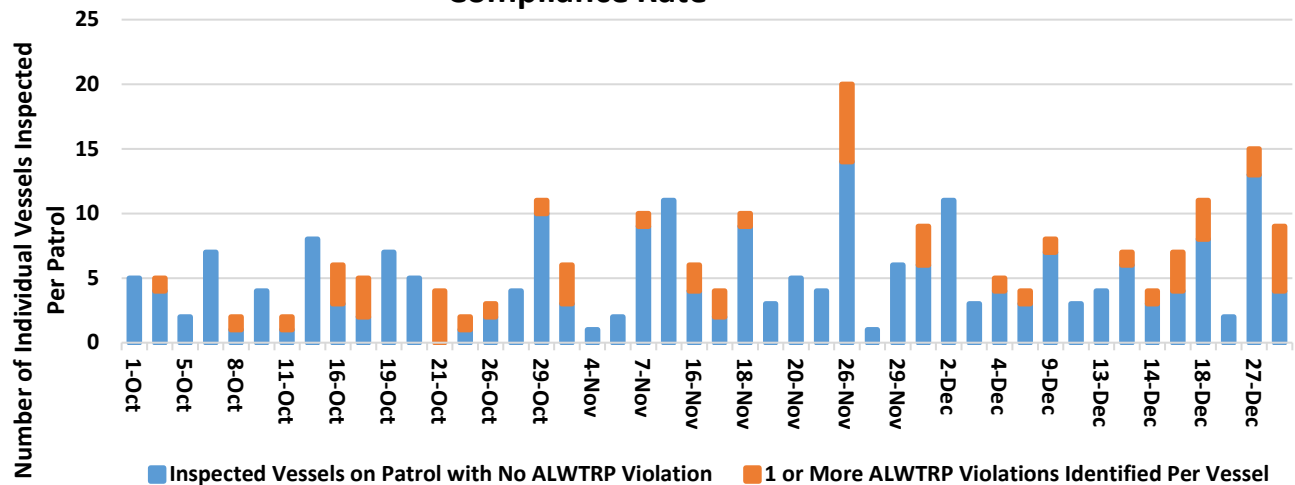


Figure 7: This figure illustrates the observed compliance rate on individual ALWTRP lobster gear focused patrol days conducted by NED and our enforcement partners. Each bar represents an individual patrol and the blue and/or orange color within each bar represents the total number of compliant and/or non-compliant vessels, respectively, per patrol day. Combined, NED, MMP, and the NY DEC inspected approximately 273 separate vessels for compliance with ALWTRP regulations between October 1 and December 31, 2024. Multiple trawls from the same vessel may be inspected on the same day. In order for a vessel to be “Inspected... with No ALWTRP Violation” in this figure, all of the vessels’ trawls inspected on that day must be ALWTRP compliant.

The following list primarily includes ALWTRP enforcement work in the northeast lobster and crab, pot and trap fishery conducted in chronological order by NED staff in the first quarter, FY 2025:

- In the second week of October, a D1 EO conducted a land based patrol of Gloucester and Saugus, MA harbors focusing on federally permitted lobster vessels. No ALWTRP violations were identified and compliance assistance was provided to a federally permitted dealer operating from a truck that didn't have proof of their federal permit in hand.
- In the third week of October, an EO and SA conducted a five day offshore patrol onboard a contracted platform patrol vessel, inspecting Lobster Management Area (LMA) 3 lobster gear for compliance with ALWTRP and ACFCMA regulations. This was the second of two LMA 3, ALWTRP patrols conducted last year (2024). The EO and SA identified a few minor ALWTRP violations on six trawls of gear they inspected and two trawls belonging to the same vessel were found to have significant ALWTRP violations.
- The NED CL participated in an enforcement panel at the 2024 annual Ropeless Consortium held in Providence, RI October 21 - 22. The panel, moderated by Erica Fuller with the Conservation Law Foundation, attempted to highlight enforcement concerns, priorities, perceived opportunities, and progress related to the implementation of an operational ropeless fishery in the Northeast EEZ. The panel was an hour-long agenda item held on the second day of the meeting with panelists responding to many questions from the ~ 300 in person audience.
- On November 13, the NED CL and a D1 EO helped organize and lead an all-day ropeless gear enforcement workshop alongside RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), and Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) staff in Wickford, RI. The CL and EO coupled a classroom workshop component alongside field work at sea on a RI DEM platform fixed gear patrol vessel. All attendees engaged in productive conversation, building on the conversations started at the similar meeting held in Maine with state enforcement partners there, last September.
- On November 18, a D1 EO participated in a Council Enforcement Committee (EC) meeting to address various questions related to on demand fishing of interest to the Council. Former ME DMR Commissioner Patrick Keliher, also the EC Chairman at the time, briefed the Council on the highlights and conversation from that meeting at last December's Council meeting in Newport, RI.
- On December 9, the NED CL and a D1 EO helped organize a half-day on-demand gear enforcement workshop alongside NH Fish and Game regulators and enforcement staff, GARFO, NED staff, and NEFSC staff in Durham, NH. The CL and EO covered a classroom workshop consistent with the classroom component of the two ropeless fishing and enforcement workshops held earlier in the year with RI and ME. Participants in the room continued to engage in productive conversation regarding on demand fishing and enforcement, building on previous, related conversations with other enforcement partners.

Second Quarter, FY 2025

We do not yet have enforcement patrol and compliance metrics available for the second quarter, FY 2025, such as illustrated in Figures 4 - 7, above. The following list includes ALWTRP enforcement work, chronologically, NED staff conducted and participated in alongside our enforcement partners in the northeast lobster and crab, pot and trap fishery between January 1 and March 31, 2025:

- An EO conducted a patrol at sea alongside MMP in support of ALWTRP gear compliance enforcement efforts. Three trawls of gear were inspected for take reduction measures and no violations documented.
- On January 25, an EO alongside MMP conducted a high visibility patrol to Jeffery's Basin South of Maine. The patrol was conducted in response to large aggregation of NARWs atypical to that area at that time of year. That area is regularly utilized by fixed gear fisheries.

- In the middle of February, an EO closed a case from a vessel whose gear was inspected during a contracted LMA 3 ALWTRP patrol last year. Violations included failure to use high flyer with a radar reflector, no weak rope, and unmarked buoys.

NED Marine Mammal Response Activity

NED staff continue to respond to, participate in, and investigate whale stranding events any place they may occur within our range of coverage from ME to VA. We also respond to other marine mammal related violations, such as harassment under the MMPA. NED staff participated in the following whale related activities and stranding events, listed chronologically between July, 2024 and March, 2025:

- Two D1 EOs were deployed to coastal NH on July 23, 2024 to investigate the circumstances of an incident involving a vessel that capsized after being struck by a humpback whale.
- In the second week of August, 2024, in cooperation with NY DEC officers, two EOs responded to a Minke whale stranding event at Smiths Point County Park on Long Island. Our EOs assisted in scene safety and perimeter security while our stranding partners conducted the necropsy.
- At the end of October, 2024, a D2 EO conducted a land patrol to investigate a report of a dolphin carcass found with the majority of its flesh removed. The case was closed when the EO determined there was insufficient evidence to conclude a violation took place.
- On December 30, 2024, an EO responded to a stranding of a deceased 28' female Humpback Whale that washed up on Long Beach, Nassau County. The EO coordinated security and helped to set up a large perimeter for the Necropsy team and heavy equipment to safely work. Further lab testing is still required for a definitive cause of death.
- On December 31, an EO responded to a stranding of a deceased Minke whale that washed up at Sore Thumb Beach in Babylon, NY. A necropsy was conducted and the cause of death was listed as infectious disease. The whale was buried on site.
- In the middle of January, an SA received an anonymous tip of a possible MMPA violation and determined that two NARWs surfaced close to a commercial vessel while hauling back conch gear. The fisherman was not under power and made no attempt to intercept the whales during the encounter. Compliance assistance was provided to the operator on avoidance measures to maintain a 500 yard distance from the whales.
- On January 27, An EO alongside Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP) officers conducted a patrol to Cuttyhunk Island, off the coast of Cape Cod in response to a deceased sperm whale. The EO removed the jaw and secured it at a NOAA facility for disposition. The jaws were collected to ensure the ESA / MMPA protected teeth did not make it into the scrimshaw market.
- On March 12, a D2 SA went underway with DE JEA to locate a humpback whale that was floating about a half mile off the coast of Rehoboth Beach, DE. There were no signs of entanglement or injury apparent while sworn staff were alongside the deceased whale.

NEFOP Enforcement Collaboration

In support of our enforcement priority to aid NEFOP, our goals are to reduce the overall number of observer related cases and help encourage observer retention. Our fourth quarter FY 2024 and first and second quarter FY 2025 efforts in support of this priority involved close collaboration with staff from the Fisheries Monitoring Operations (FMO) branch of NEFSC and industry members. We recognize that observer retention is a challenge even under ideal circumstances.

From an industry perspective we understand there are inherent challenges to collaborating with an observer in close quarters on board a fishing vessel. We try to keep that in mind during all of

our interactions with industry members related to our NEFOP priority. Among the observer community, our efforts are focused on ensuring observer safety and wellbeing. We work to accomplish goals under this priority by working more closely with both industry members, NEFOP, and our enforcement partners.

Fourth Quarter, FY 2024

From July 1 through September 30, 2024, NEFOP observers and At Sea Monitors (ASMs) deployed on 1,107 trips for 3,309 sea days. We initiated four investigations based on incident reports we received in the fourth quarter, FY 2024. One investigation has been closed, two remain open, and the last was an observer program notification referral that we then forwarded to the USCG. 99.6 percent of all selected or observed trips were completed without an enforcement investigation⁷.

Our fourth quarter FY 2024 activities in support of our NEFOP priority (roughly in chronological order) are as follows:

- An EO investigated a report of observer intimidation/interference from a referral FMO sent to us early last summer. We closed that case with compliance assistance in mid-August.
- In early July, ISP staff initiated a VMS tracking report upon request from FMO. An observer was onboard a vessel that reported a leak near the engine room. The vessel was placed on 5-minute VMS reporting and was monitored until it landed safely in port. ISP staff provided updates to FMO on vessel location, speed, and approximate time of arrival.
- In the second week of August, an SA provided compliance assistance to the operator of a vessel following a complaint from FMO where an observer alleged that they experienced difficulty in performing observer duties and were not provided reasonable assistance by the crew. The SA conducted interviews with the observer and operator on this case.
- An SA provided enforcement training to a new training class of observers for the August - September 2024 ASM Training. Topics included, but were not limited to; an introduction to NOAA Fisheries OLE, NOAA Fisheries OLE's role providing observer support, and our advice regarding the responsibilities of fishing vessels to observers, an observer's role when encountering a problem or possible violation, and observer conduct. In addition, the SA was an active participant of the Observer Support Panel (OSP) that now accompanies all ASM training events. The panel also includes members of the observer support team who are a part of the safety culture that supports all observers. The goal of the panel and NOAA Fisheries OLE's participation in the training is to present and describe the support system that exists for observers, should conflict or incidents arise at sea.
- In mid-September, two SAs and a MEP officer traveled to Martha's Vineyard to attend a trial set at the Edgartown District Court for indecent assault of an observer. The assault occurred during an assigned trip aboard a commercial vessel in November, 2020. A plea deal was agreed upon in which the subject pled guilty to a felony for indecent assault and battery charges. He was put on probation and will have to register as a sex offender.

First Quarter, FY 2025

From October 1 through December 31, 2024, NEFOP observers and ASMs deployed on 834 trips for 2,732 sea days. We initiated three investigations based on incident reports we received from FMO in the first quarter, FY 2025. We closed two investigations, one involving observer interference

⁷ In some instances, a single incident report contained multiple complaints, and in other instances, multiple incident reports were received covering the same reported violation. For complaints reporting multiple potential violations, the most significant issue is the one tracked for case reporting statistics. This caveat applies to other quarterly NEFOP priority support statistics provided in this report, pages 18-20.

and the other involving an observer refusal. One investigation remains open. 99.6 percent of all selected or observed trips were completed without an enforcement investigation.

Our first quarter FY 2025 activities in support of our NEFOP priority (roughly in chronological order) are as follows:

- At the start of the quarter, an SA provided enforcement training to a new training class of observers for the September – October 2024 At Sea Monitor (ASM) Training. Topics covered at this event were identical to those included, mentioned above, for the August – September 2024 ASM Training. The SA also was an active participant in another OSP. The details of that panel remain unchanged from the OSP mentioned above that took place alongside the August – September ASM Training.
- An SA closed a case of alleged observer harassment with compliance assistance in the beginning of November from a trip taken by an observer last August. NOAA Fisheries OLE received the complaint from FMO in early September.
- In late October, an SA sent a written warning to a vessel operator for a case of observer refusal. NOAA Fisheries OLE received the complaint from FMO in August that the operator refused observer coverage for a trip in late June of 2024.
- In early December, an SA closed a case of observer refusal with compliance assistance for a trip referred to OLE in early October, one of the two closed observer related investigations, referenced above, we initiated in the first quarter, FY 2025.
- A D1 EO and the NED CL collaborated to host 3 in person SASH workshops alongside FMO/USCG partners in December. We offered two workshops in this effort that were co-located and timed with the December Council meetings (on the second day of the NEFMC meeting and the third day of the MAFMC meeting) in separate meeting rooms from where the Council meetings took place, following Council proceedings on those days. Our observer program liaison SA also presented at another workshop held in New Bedford at SMAST. The purpose of these workshops was to help support observers in the field and to support industry in understanding observer harassment and sexual assault/sexual harassment (SASH). Unfortunately, industry attendance was low and we're open to suggestions on how to better reach the fishing industry on this important topic in the future.

Second Quarter, FY 2025

From January 1 through March 31, 2025, NEFOP observers and ASMs deployed on 523 trips for 2,053 sea days. We initiated three investigations based on incident reports we received from FMO this quarter. 99.4% of all selected or observed trips were completed without an enforcement investigation.

Our second quarter FY 2025 activities in support of our NEFOP priority (roughly in chronological order) are as follows:

- In the second week of January, NEFOP notified NOAA Fisheries OLE of a vessel out of Point Judith with an observer onboard. The vessel was taking on water that eventually sank. The vessel was tracked with VMS and the vessel's polling rate was increased to 5-minute from 60-minutes. Updates were provided to Center and NOAA Fisheries OLE staff. The vessel eventually lost power and VMS positioning ceased. All onboard were safe and returned to port on a USCG Cutter. From the time of the first MAYDAY to the last VMS position reported was less than an hour and half.
- Within a week of the vessel out of Point Judith that sank, the FV Miss Sandy out of Gloucester sank as well. That event involved a vessel collision, also with an observer on board. NOAA Fisheries OLE did not update VMS ping rate frequency at any point during this sinking event as it occurred off hours when staff were unavailable. A NOAA Fisheries OLE SA interviewed the

observer after the trip and reported she was in good spirits and handled it well. That observer, along with representatives from her provider and NEFOP attended the January Council meeting in Portsmouth and made themselves available for conversation in between agenda items. We recognize and remember the backdrop at that meeting was the vessel that sank around the same time in Moose Cove, in ME state waters. NOAA Fisheries OLE expresses our sincere condolences to the family and friends of the father and son crew who were lost at sea.

- On January 22-24, a D1 SA participated in the NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group Meeting, alongside NEFOP staff, and hosted by the United States in Boston. The meeting was attended in-person by representatives from U.S., Canada, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom. The meeting was attended virtually by Denmark, Faroe Islands, Greenland, France, Japan, EU, and the Russian Federation. Topics on the agenda included: observer coverage levels, data collection confidentiality, and many others.
- In the middle of February, NEFOP notified OLE of a small fire onboard a vessel with an observer onboard. The vessel was tracked with VMS and the vessel's polling rate was increased. The vessel was already close to port and made it back to the dock safely.
- Our observer program liaison SA provided enforcement training to a new training class of observers for the February- March 2025 At Sea Monitor Training. Topics were unchanged from the previous enforcement trainings the SA participated in as described above. He also participated in associated panel as described above, as well.
- In the second week of March, NEFOP notified OLE an observer emergency onboard a vessel. The vessel was tracked with VMS and the vessel's polling rate was increased to 5-minutes from 30-minutes. The vessel made it back to the dock safely.
- And again in the third week of March, NEFOP notified OLE of an observer emergency onboard a vessel. The vessel was monitored with VMS and AIS. The vessel's VMS polling rate was increased to 5-minutes. The observer was safety transferred to a USCG cutter.

We will continue to focus our efforts on both industry members and members of the observer community in support of our priority to aid NEFOP and we will encourage best practices and standards of behavior among industry and the observers. If you have questions on this topic, you may contact us at the following numbers:

- Compliance Liaison; (978) 281-9213, option 2
- NEFOP; ne.observerprogram@noaa.gov
- the NOAA NOAA Fisheries OLE Hotline (available 24/7); 1-800-853-1964

General Case Information

NOAA Fisheries OLE compiles case information from investigations and patrols mentioned above, referrals from external state and federal enforcement partners, as well as complaints and reports from industry, non-government organizations, and the general public. Data presented in this section also includes ISP and other NOAA staff indicated non-compliance events. Many NED staff members contributed to the case information presented here.

The query used to generate the data displayed in this section is based on the date EOs and SAs began processing cases and should capture a very accurate snapshot of NED activities that occurred in the fourth quarter, FY 2024 and in the first and second quarters, FY 2025. We generated the data supporting the fourth quarter FY 2024 figures and tables listed below on January 2, 2025. On February 11, 2025 we generated the data supporting the first quarter, FY 2025 tables and figures below. Last, we generated the data supporting the second quarter, FY 2025 tables and figures below on April 4, 2025. Keep in mind the sooner after the end of a quarter that we generate data on the ratio of closed to open cases (see figures 8 – 10, below), the smaller that ratio will be.

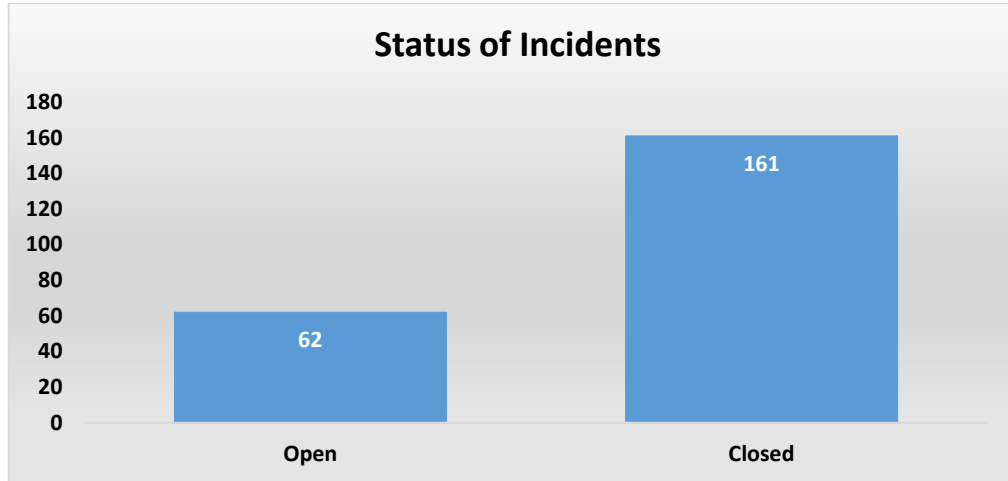


Figure 8: Status of NED case processing between July 1 and September 30, 2024 (161 closed, 62 open).

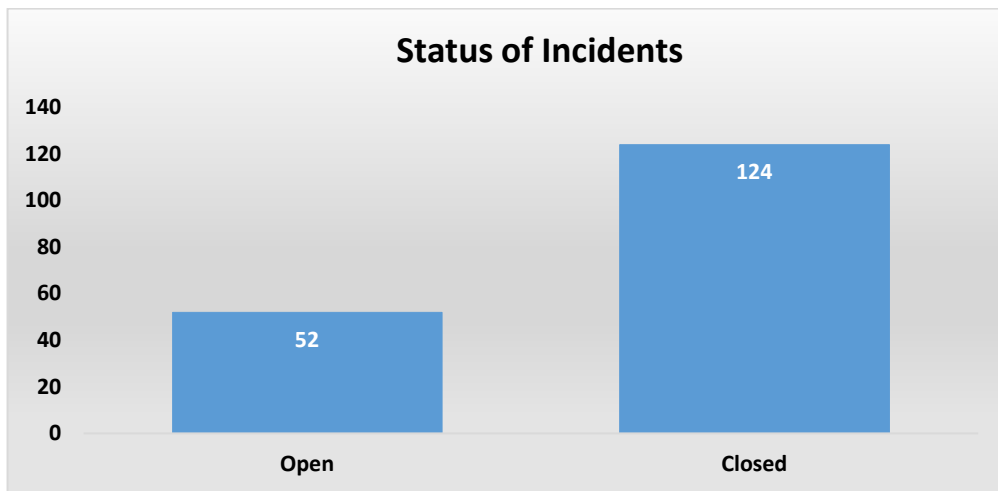


Figure 9: Status of NED case processing between October 1 and December 31, 2024 (124 closed, 52 open).

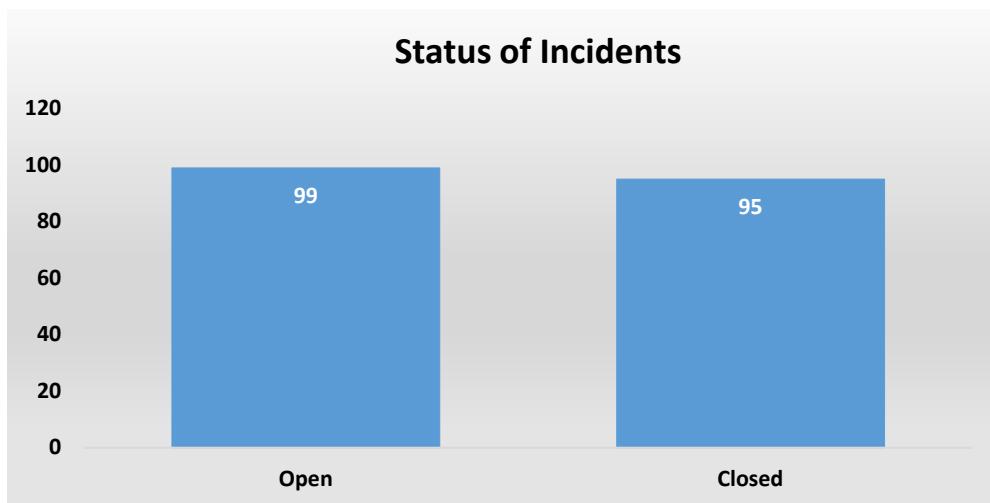


Figure 10: Status of NED case processing between January 1 and March 31, 2025 (95 closed, 99 open).

Table 2: Fourth quarter, FY 2024, summary of cases by law/regulation

Law/Regulation/Program	Case Totals
MMPA	8
ACFCMA	6
Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act	1
ESA	2
MSFCMA	63
MMPA/ ACFCMA	4
MMPA/ ALWTRP	3
HMS	108
International Trade Program	24
National Marine Sanctuaries Act	1
Lacey Act	2
State Law	1
Total	223

Table 3: First quarter, FY 2025, summary of cases by law/regulation

Law/Regulation/Program	Case Totals
ACFCMA	14
ALWTRP	5
Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act (ASBCA)	5
HMS	96
International Trade Program	14
HMS/ ASBCA	1
MMPA	5
MSFCMA	33
Non-Fisheries Law	1
Lacey Act	1
State Law	1
Total	176

Table 4: Second quarter, FY 2025, summary of cases by law/regulation

Law/Regulation/Program	Case Totals
ACFCMA	13
MMPA/ALWTRP	6
Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act (ASBCA)	1
National Marine Sanctuaries Act	1
International Trade Program	57
HMS	21
MMPA/MSFCMA	1
NARW Speed Rule	11
MSFCMA	77
Lacey Act	1
ESA	5
Total	194

Fourth Quarter, FY24 Incidents by Law/Regulation

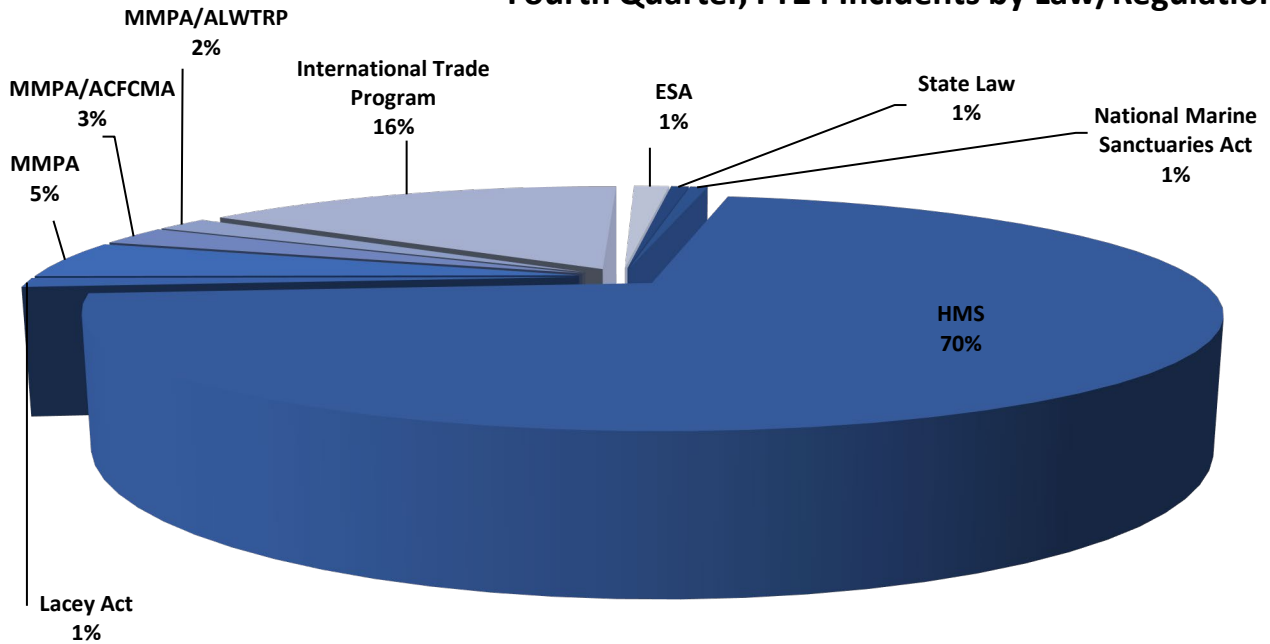


Figure 11: NED cases broken down by specific law or program violation from July 1 through September 30, 2024.

First Quarter, FY 2025 Incidents by Law/Regulation

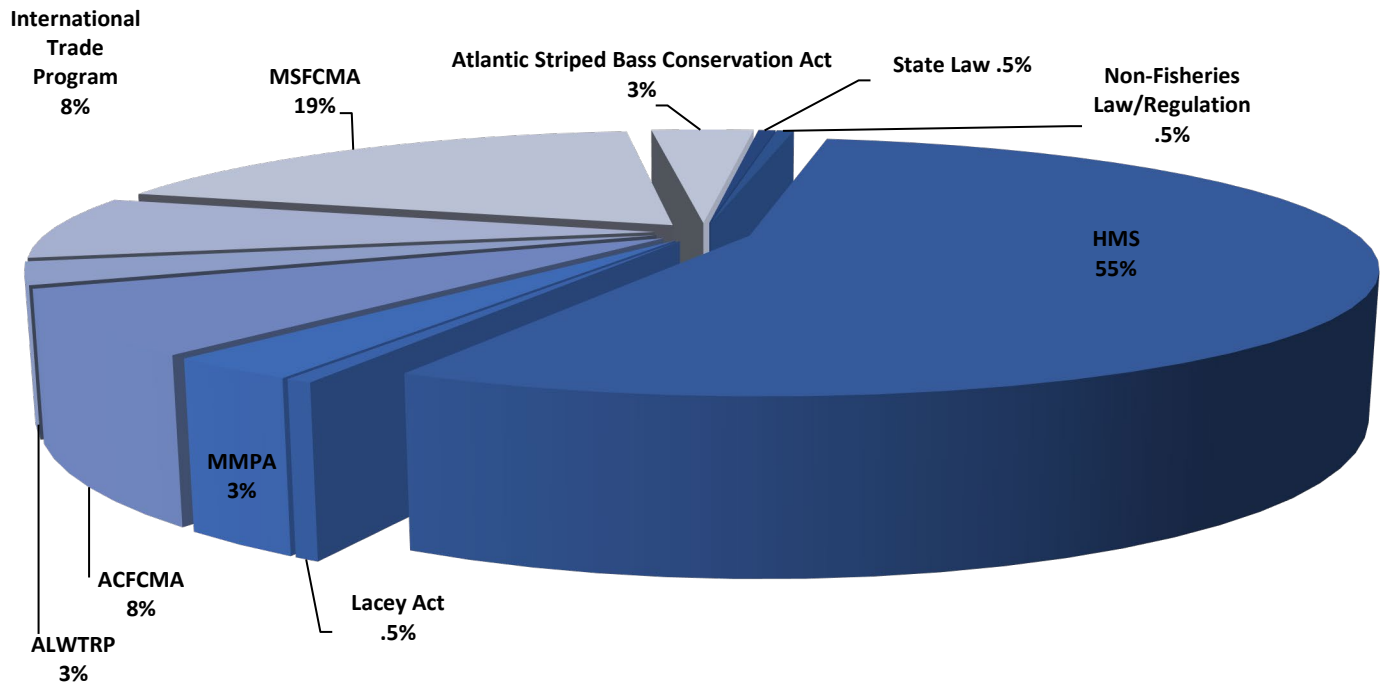


Figure 12: NED cases broken down by specific law or program violation from October 1 through December 31, 2024.

Second Quarter, FY25 Incidents by Law/Regulation

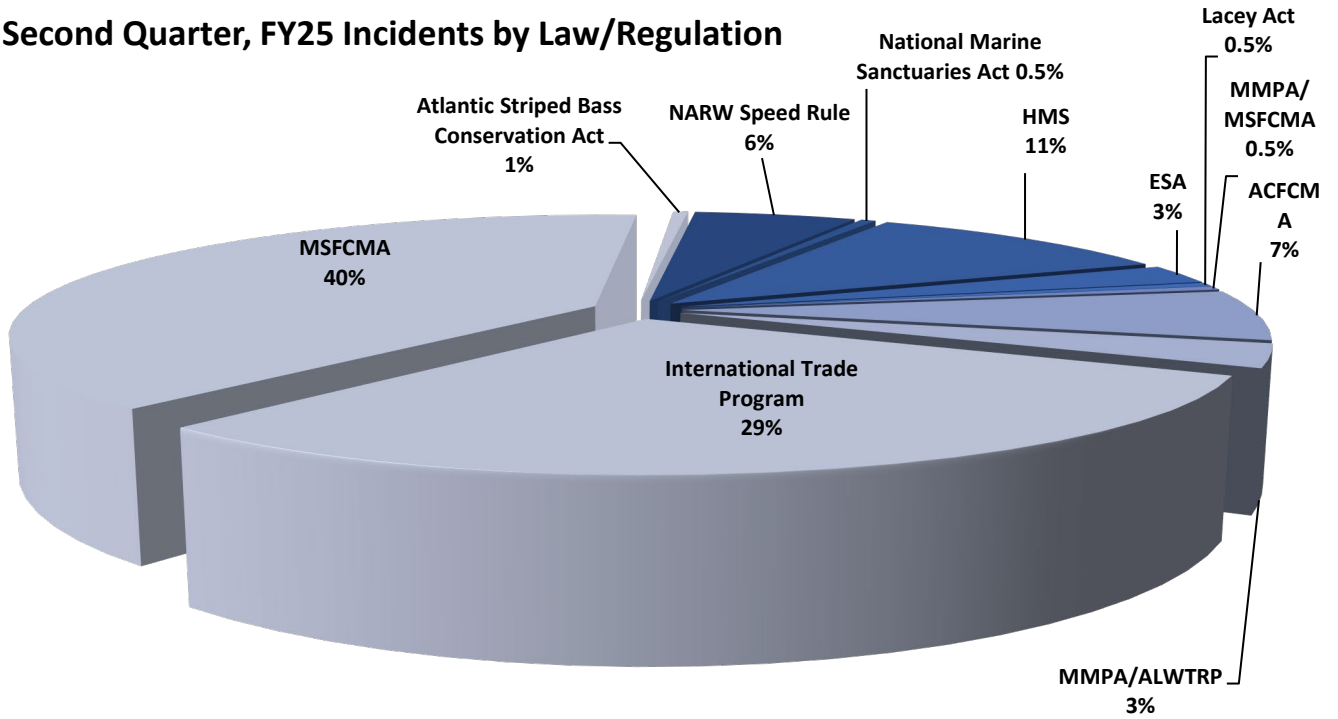


Figure 13: NED cases broken down by specific law or program violation from January 1 through March 31, 2025.

Fourth Quarter, FY 2024 Incident Dispositions

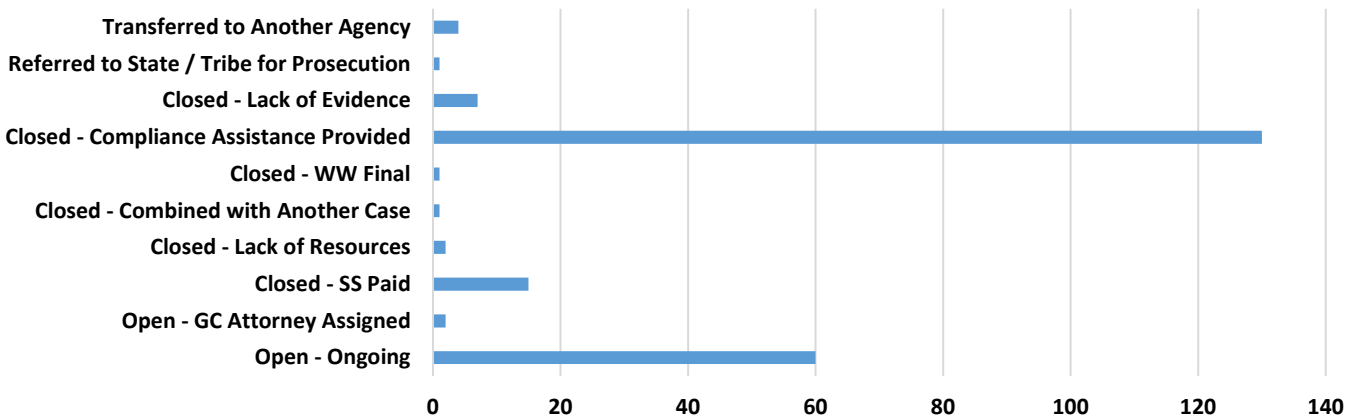


Figure 14: Case dispositions from July 1 through September 30, 2024.

First Quarter, FY 2025 Incident Dispositions

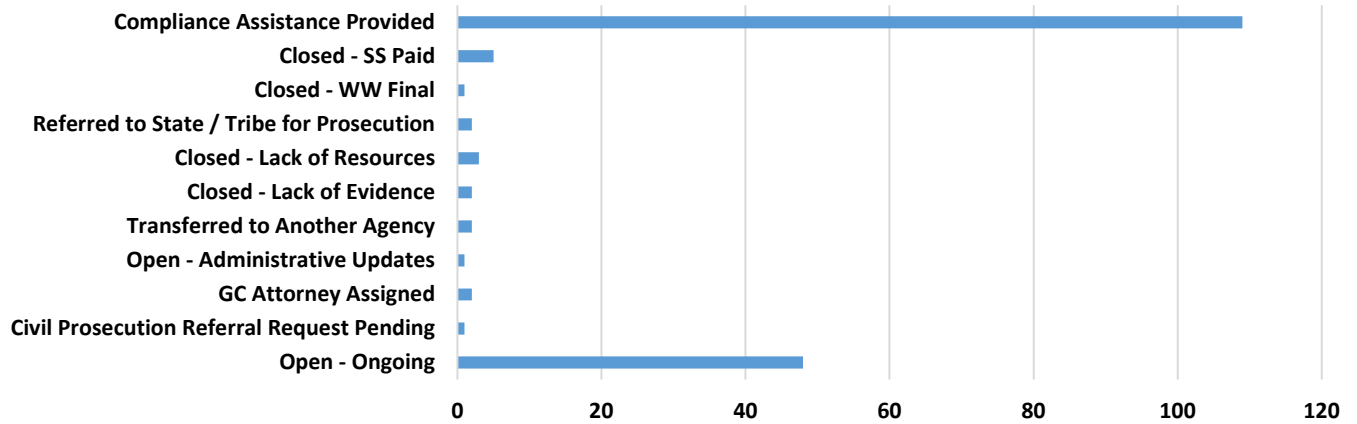


Figure 15: Case dispositions from October 1 through December 31, 2024.

Second Quarter, FY 2025 Incident Dispositions

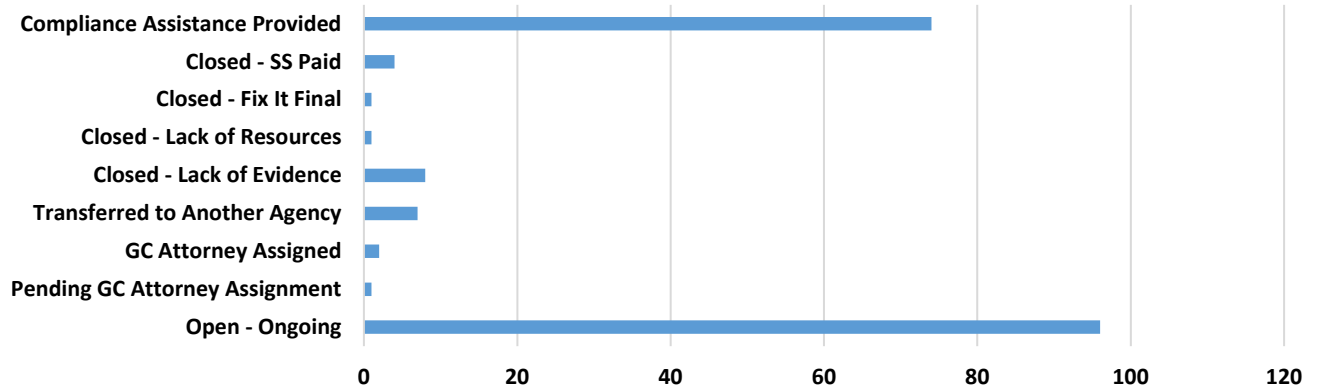


Figure 16: Case dispositions from January 1 through March 31, 2025.

Summary of Cases Involving NOAA Fisheries OLE Partners

Enforcement Partnerships

Figures 17 through 19, below, showcase where NED staff collaborated with an enforcement partner on patrols, seaport and/or airport terminal container inspections, or referred case packages. Not included in Figures 17 through 19, below, are activities such as large whale focused patrols that did not involve a violation. NED may collaborate on activities with various enforcement partners such as USCG D1 and D5 where no violations are documented. Those activities also may not be captured in Figures 17 through 19, below.

Fourth Quarter, FY 2024

NED SAs and EOs began processing a total of 119⁸ cases between July 1 and September 30, 2024, which involved NED collaboration with at least one other federal, state, or other enforcement partner. There were also 4 cases initiated from VMS data.

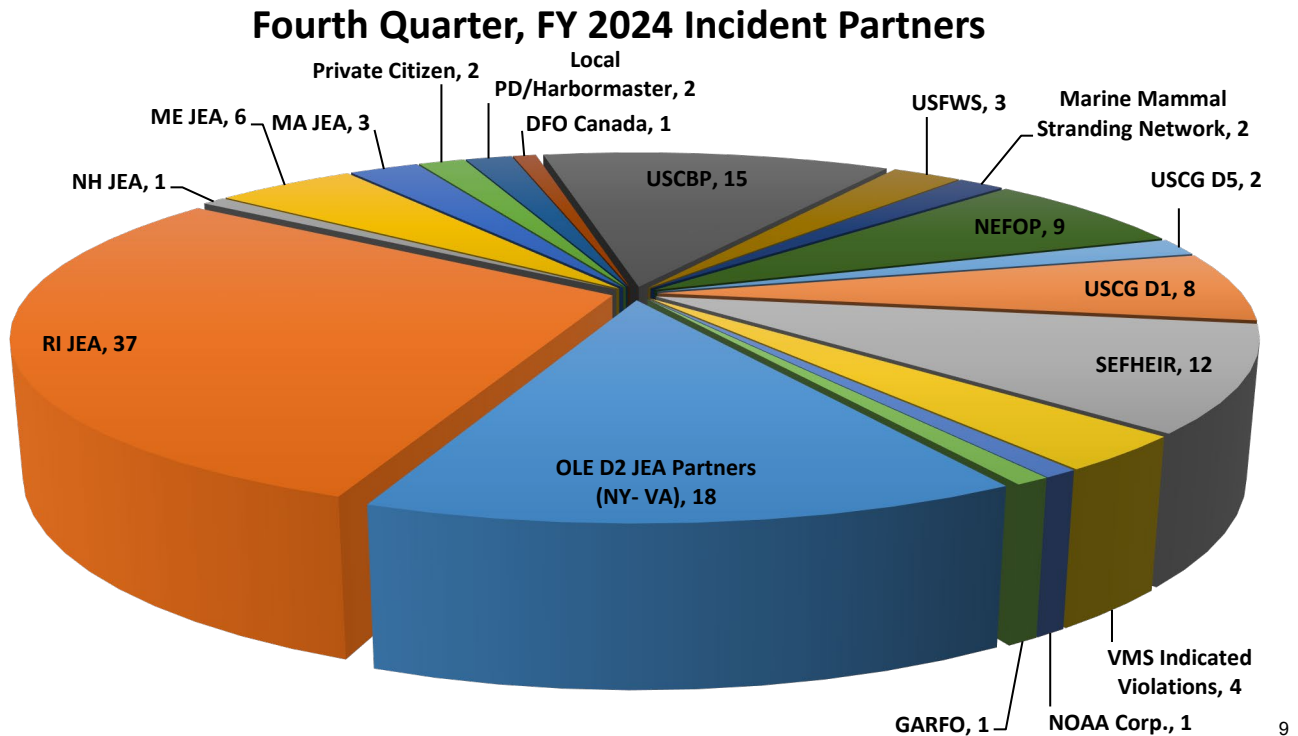


Figure 17: Federal, state, or local enforcement partners who collaborated with NED staff (the number of collaboration events with a specific enforcement partner is listed by “Enforcement Partner, XX”) on a particular case between July 1 and September 30, 2024. NEFOP, GARFO, NOAA Corp, VMS indicated violations from NOAA Fisheries OLE’s ISP, and [Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting \(SEFHIER\)](#) program referrals are included here, but all other NOAA internal referrals are not.

First and Second Quarter, FY 2025

NED SAs and EOs began processing a total of 93 cases between October 1 and December 31, 2024, as well as between January 1 and March 31, 2025 which involved NED collaboration with at least one other federal, state, or other enforcement partner.

⁸ The total number of instances of collaboration between NOAA Fisheries OLE and at least one other enforcement partner illustrated in Figures 17 - 19 is greater than the number of cases referenced in each contributing data set. Where multiple enforcement partners collaborated on a single case, those partners were tallied separately in Figures 17 - 19. Activities such as patrols and operations involving our enforcement partners that did not result in a case are not captured in Figures 17 - 19.

⁹ We included SEFHIER referrals from NOAA Fisheries OLE’s Southeast Enforcement Division (SED) in Figure 17, above, because of the relatively large number of SED referrals to NED in the fourth quarter, FY 2024. Fishers issued Southeast Fishery Permit Office permits must satisfy SEFHIER program reporting requirements. Typically SEFHIER program noncompliance cases fall under SED jurisdiction, but NED follows up on SEFHIER program noncompliance cases identified north of the North Carolina/Virginia border.

First Quarter, FY 2025 Incident Partners

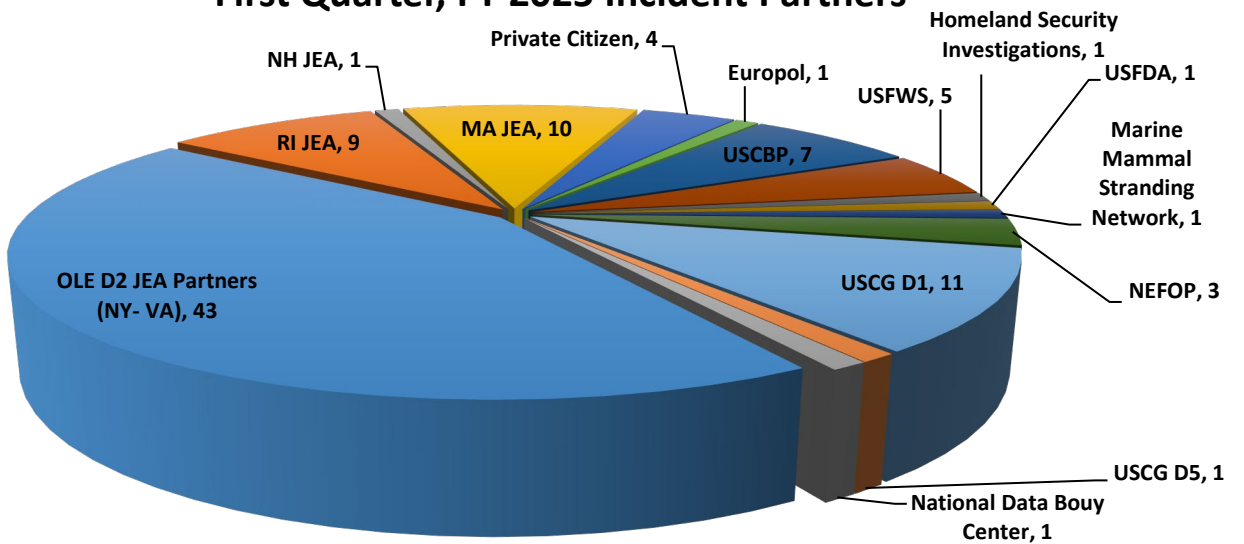


Figure 18: Federal, state, or local enforcement partners who collaborated with NED staff (the number of collaboration events with a specific enforcement partner is listed by “Enforcement Partner, XX”) on a particular case between October 1 and December 31, 2024. NEFOP and National Data Buoy Center program referrals are included here, but all other NOAA internal referrals are not.

Second Quarter, FY 2025 Incident Partners

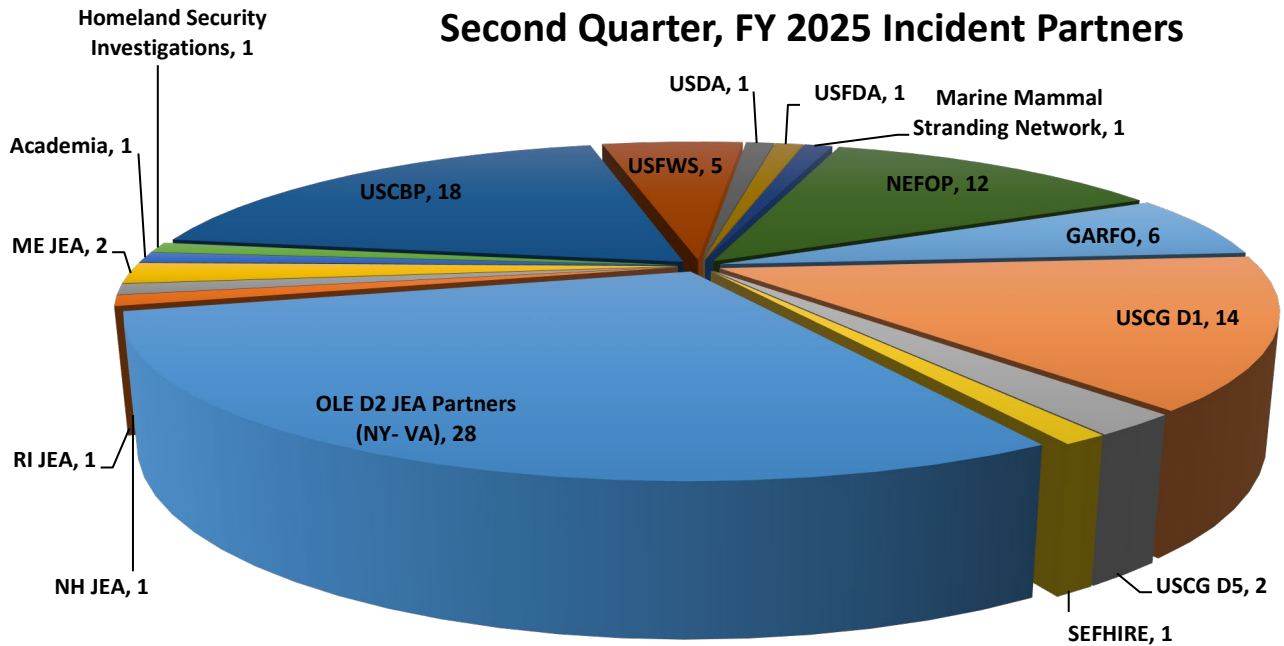


Figure 19: Federal, state, or local enforcement partners who collaborated with NED staff (the number of collaboration events with a specific enforcement partner is listed by “Enforcement Partner, XX”) on a particular case between October 1 and December 31, 2024. NEFOP, GARFO, and SEFHIRE program referrals are included here, but all other NOAA internal referrals are not.

Overview of Summary Settlements

The Summary Settlements listed in this section are based on the date the Summary Settlement was served, not the date NED staff initiated the case. In other words, cases with Summary Settlements listed here might not match up with cases listed in the “General Case Information” section, above. We included cases in that section based on the date NED staff began associated case work for a particular case.

Fourth Quarter, FY 2024

NED staff issued Summary Settlements for 28 violations associated with 20 cases between July 1 and September 30, 2024 totaling \$11,975.00.

Table 5: Individual violations associated with Summary Settlements issued in the fourth quarter, FY 2024.

Law	Violation	SS Amount	State
MSFCMA	eVTR Reporting Failure	\$500.00	MA
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$500.00	MA
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possession without a Valid Permit	\$1,000.00	MD
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$250.00	ME
MSFCMA	eVTR Reporting Failure	\$750.00	NJ
MSFCMA	Black Sea Bass Recreational Minimum Size Violation	\$408.33	NJ
MSFCMA	Black Sea Bass Recreational Bag Limit Violation	\$408.33	NJ
HMS	BFT Fishing without a Valid Permit	\$408.34	NJ
MSFCMA	Failure to Report Recreational Blueline Tilefish	\$500.00	NJ
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possession without a Valid Permit	\$125.00	NY
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possession without a Valid Permit	\$125.00	NY
HMS	Shark Possession without a Valid Shark Endorsement	\$125.00	NY
HMS	Shark Possession without a Valid Shark Endorsement	\$125.00	NY
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$375.00	NY
HMS	BFT Minimum Size Violation	\$375.00	NY
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$250.00	NY
HMS	BFT Possessed in Improper Form	\$750.00	RI
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$250.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$250.00	RI
HMS	Shark Possession without a Valid Shark Endorsement	\$625.00	RI
HMS	Recreational Fishing Improper Shark Handling	\$625.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$250.00	RI
HMS	BFT Possession without a Valid Permit	\$500.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$500.00	RI
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed in Improper Form	\$500.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$250.00	RI
HMS	BFT Possessed in Improper Form	\$750.00	RI
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possession without a Valid Permit	\$500.00	VA
Total		\$11,975.00	

First Quarter, FY 2025

NED staff issued Summary Settlements for 29 violations associated with 25 cases between October 1 and December 31, 2024 totaling \$19,500.00.

Table 6: Individual violations associated with Summary Settlements issued in the first quarter, FY 2025.

Law	Violation	SS Amount	State
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	CT
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	DE
HMS	Recreational HMS Fishing Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	DE
MSFCMA	Observer Intimidation	\$1,000.00	MA
HMS	Dolphinfish Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	MD
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	MD
HMS	BFT Possessed in Improper Form	\$750.00	ME
HMS	Illegal Possession of Trophy BFT	\$500.00	NJ
HMS	Shark Fishing With Improper Gear	\$625.00	NJ
HMS	Possession Prohibited Shark Species	\$625.00	NJ
Lacey Act	Improper Seafood Labeling	\$625.00	NJ
Import Trade Program	Seafood Transport Without Valid IFTP	\$625.00	NJ
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$500.00	NJ
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$125.00	NY
HMS	Shark Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$125.00	NY
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$250.00	NY
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed in Improper Form	\$750.00	NY
HMS	Recreational HMS Fishing Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	NY
HMS	Atlantic HMS Minimum Size Violation	\$500.00	NY
HMS	BFT Fishing Without Valid Permit	\$2,000.00	NY
HMS	Atlantic HMS Possessed Without Valid Permit	\$500.00	NY
HMS	Illegal Possession of Trophy BFT	\$375.00	NY
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$375.00	NY
HMS	BFT Possessed in Improper Form	\$750.00	NY
Import Trade Program	Seafood Transport Without Valid IFTP	\$1,500.00	NY
HMS	BFT Possession Limit Violation	\$250.00	RI
HMS	BFT Possessed in Improper Form	\$750.00	RI
HMS	High Seas Fishing Without Valid Permit	\$2,000.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Report BFT	\$1,000.00	RI
Total		\$19,500.00	

Second Quarter, FY 2025

NED staff issued Summary Settlements for 41 violations associated with 33 cases between January 1 and March 31, 2025 totaling \$28,500.00.

Table 7: Individual violations associated with Summary Settlements issued in the second quarter, FY 2025.

Law	Violation	SS Amount	State
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$500.00	DE
HMS	Failure to Submit BFT Biweekly Report	\$1,000.00	MA
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,000.00	MA
MSFCMA	Incorrect VMS Activity Code	\$1,125.00	MA
MSFCMA	VMS Reporting Failure	\$1,125.00	MA
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,000.00	MA
HMS	Commercial BFT Reporting Failure	\$500.00	MA
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$500.00	MD
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$500.00	MD
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$500.00	MD
MSFCMA	Observer Safety	\$1,000.00	ME
ACFCMA	Lobster Trap Gear Violation	\$500.00	NH
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$500.00	NJ
MSFCMA	Commercial BSB Fishing without Valid Permit	\$500.00	NJ
Import Trade Program	Failure to Maintain a Valid IFTP	\$1,125.00	NJ
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,125.00	NJ
Import Trade Program	Failure to Maintain a Valid IFTP	\$1,125.00	NJ
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,125.00	NJ
MSFMCA	eVTR Reporting Failure	\$500.00	NJ
MSFMCA	Surf Clam Fishing without Valid Permit	\$500.00	NJ
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$375.00	NJ
HMS	Recreational BFT Reporting Failure	\$375.00	NJ
MSFCMA	Sea Scallop PTNS Failure	\$300.00	NJ
MSFMCA	eVTR Reporting Failure	\$500.00	NY
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,000.00	NY
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$500.00	NY
MSFCMA	Commercial SF Fishing without a valid Permit	\$225.00	NY
MSFCMA	Providing Boarding Officer with False Information	\$225.00	NY
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$250.00	NY
HMS	Recreational HMS Possession without Valid Permit	\$250.00	NY
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$250.00	NY
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$750.00	NY

MSFCMA	VMS Declaration Failure	\$250.00	NY
Import Trade Program	SIMP Documentation Failure	\$2,000.00	NY
ASBCA	Atlantic Striped Bass Possession in the EEZ	\$250.00	NY
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,125.00	NY
Import Trade Program	Failure to Maintain a Valid IFTP	\$1,125.00	NY
Import Trade Program	SIMP Reporting Failure	\$1,000.00	PA
HMS	Recreational BFT Reporting Failure	\$875.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Maintain BFT in Proper Form	\$875.00	RI
HMS	Failure to Report Recreational BFT	\$250.00	RI
Total		\$28,500.00	

Northeast VMS Program

Updated June, 2025

NE-Approved VMS Vendors and Units:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/enforcement/noaa-fisheries-type-approved-vms-units>

- Woods Hole Group (WHG) - Thorium Leo & Thorium Triton
- SkyMate - I1500 & M1600
- AddValue - Wideye iFleetONE
- MetOcean - OmniCom VMS & Global

Current Active Registered VMS Count: OLE counts 925 currently registered vessels in the system (this is regardless if they recorded a VMS position or have a VMS requirement).

Breakdown by Permits within the Active VMS Population (Note: The total count below may exceed the total active VMS population count since most vessels hold multiple permits):

- 520 Ocean Quahog (OQ-6)
- 518 Surfclam (SF-1)
- 476 Scallop General Category (LGC-A,B,C)
- 310 Scallop Limited Access (SC-2,3,5,6,7,8)
- 298 Multispecies (MUL-A, C, D, F, HA)
- 241 Longfin Squid (SMB-1A, 1B)
- 108 Herring (HER-A,B,C,E)
- 108 Mackerel (SMB-T1,T2,T3)
- 66 Illex Squid (SMB-5)
- 43 Combination (MUL-E)
- 17 Monkfish (MNK-F)
- 2 Maine Mahogany Quahog (OQ-7)
- 0 NAFO

Groundfish Sector/Common Pool:

As of early January, 2025, there were 261 groundfish sector vessels and 128 common pool vessels registered to the NE VMS Program. The number of sector vessels registered remained unchanged between the third quarter, FY 2024 and the start of the second quarter in January, 2025. The number of common pool vessels fishing under the “Days at Sea” (DAS) program decreased by six since the last report between the third quarter, FY 2024 and the start of the second quarter, FY 2025. Most recently (May, 2025), there were 253 groundfish sector vessels and 133 common pool vessels registered to the northeast VMS program. The number of common pool boats using DAS is very small (few boats registered in the common pool fish DAS).

Power-Down & Letter of Exemption (LOE) Program:

A total of 17 VMS equipped vessels are on a NMFS approved power down LOE; of these, the owners of 5 vessels have deactivated their VMS with their vendor during the LOE period. Additionally, there are 11 vessels on a Power Down declaration in port.

Industry Contact Log Report documented by ISP and other NED staff:

- In the fourth quarter of FY 2024, we documented 191 industry contacts. The most-frequently reported issues were (1) closed area issues and other regulatory concerns and questions, (2) VMS declaration/forms assistance and compliance, and (3) VMS non-reporting and power downs.
- In the first quarter of FY 2025, we documented 158 industry contacts. The most-frequently reported issues were (1) VMS declaration/forms assistance and compliance (2) Closed area issues and other regulatory concerns/questions (3) VMS activations, non-reporting, and power downs.
- In the second quarter of FY 2025, we documented 334 industry contacts. The most-frequently reported issues were (1) Closed area issues and other regulatory/permit concerns/questions (2) VMS activations, non-reporting, and power downs (3) VMS declaration/forms assistance and compliance.
- So far in the third quarter of FY 2025, we documented 238 industry contacts. The most-frequently reported issues were (1) Closed area issues and other regulatory/permit concerns/questions (2) VMS declaration/forms assistance and compliance (3) VMS activations, non-reporting, and power downs.

VMS Notes and Significant Events:

Vessel owners can call the VMS team with questions about any of the following notes and significant events at 978-281-9213.

VMS Fleet-Wide Messages sent by ISP staff

VMS messages are sent to specific VMS fleets announcing fishery closures and other news. Industry is encouraged to monitor their VMS for all incoming messages.

- In the fourth quarter, FY 2024, we sent one message for the closure of the scallop access areas for the Individual Fishing Quota fleet.
- In the first quarter, FY 2025, we sent two messages: One message announced the closure of Herring Management 1A and another announced a Mackerel closure.
- In the second quarter, FY 2025, we sent two messages, one for the Herring Management 1B closure and another announcing the Herring Area 3 reduced possession.
- So far in the third quarter, FY 2025, we sent two messages, both for NGOM Scallop closures.

Scallop Area I Declaration Code

The current VMS software does not have a Limited Access Area I option. Vessel operators are reminded to use the Mid-Atlantic Access Area option as a workaround until the software is updated.

VMS Trip Start and End Emails

The email system is back up and running. Vessels and owners should now be receiving VMS trip start and end emails.

NARW Notices

As mentioned on pages 10 - 11, above, ISP staff may broadcast VMS messages to alert vessels if there are NARWs in the vicinity of their activity. Staff send messages based on whale presence identified in regional survey data.

- In the fourth quarter, FY 2024, ISP staff were responsible for sending 110 messages to VMS equipped vessels.
- In the first quarter, FY 2025, ISP staff were responsible for sending an additional 96 messages to VMS equipped vessels.
- In the second quarter, FY 2025, and including a geofence that remained in place until April 6, ISP staff were responsible for sending another 1,328 messages to VMS equipped vessels operating in close proximity to NARWs.

VMS Reporting Requirements

Please remember each fishery has their own unique VMS reporting requirements for declaring and form submissions.

VMS Cases Closed, Violations Issued (CY 2025)

- In mid-January, an EO issued a \$2,250.00 SS to the owner and operator of a multi-use commercial fishing vessel for failure to transmit on VMS and for sailing under inaccurate VMS declaration codes. This enforcement action was taken after eight months of extensive outreach and assistance by both ISP and WHG staff. The owner and operator paid the SS.
- In early April, an owner paid a \$5,750.00 NOVA penalty for an incursion with gear deployed in the coral protection area on a trip made in November, 2023.
- On April 28, an owner and operator of a commercial vessel paid a \$500.00 SS for an incursion into the WGOM closed area.
- In early June, an owner/operator paid a \$2,543.60 NOVA penalty for an incursion into the Canadian EEZ in May, 2024.

Cases Sent to NOAA General Counsel Enforcement Section (GCES)

NED forwarded 11 cases to GCES between July 1 and September 30, 2024. The cases involve, but are not limited to speed restriction violations to protect North Atlantic Right Whales, HMS violations, unauthorized fishing in Canadian waters and permit and reporting violations.

NED forwarded 18 cases to GCES between October 1 and December 31, 2024. The cases involve but are not limited to HMS violations, SIMP violations, permit and reporting violations and speed restriction violations to protect North Atlantic Right Whales.

NED forwarded 17 cases to GCES between January 1 and March 31, 2025. The cases involve but are not limited to HMS violations, gear violations, permit and reporting violations, and others.