

Science, Service, Stewardship



Northeast Fisheries Observer Program 2016 Sea Day Accomplishments update

NOAA

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This Presentation Will Cover

- Types of Observer Sea Day assignments
- Background on the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology (SBRM) Process, Products, and Timeline
- Total number of Sea Days Accomplished in 2016 SBRM
- Contributing factors to Under Accomplishments of Sea Days
- Ideas to improve Sea Day Accomplishments for the future SBRM schedule

Main Take-Aways from this Presentation

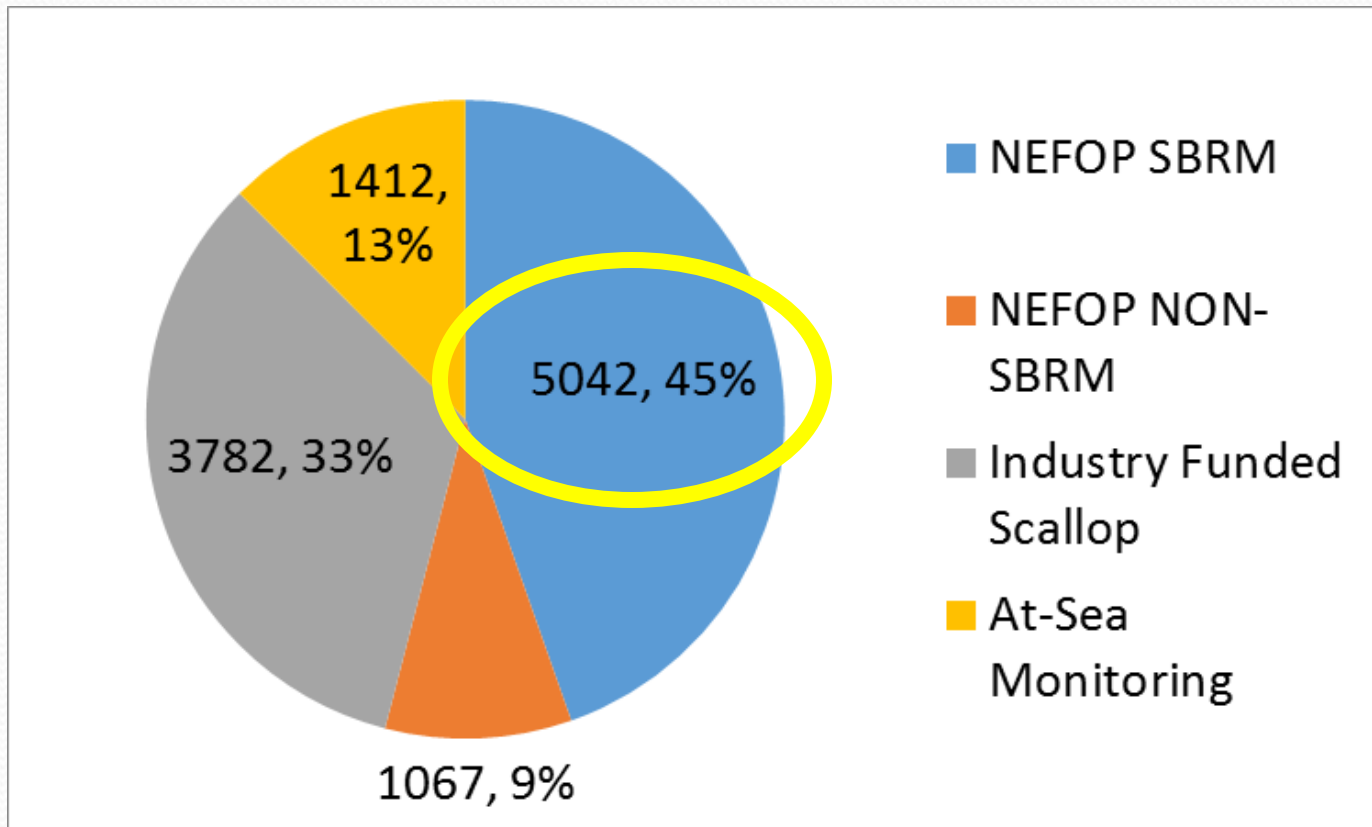
- Observer coverage allocations are set annually
- There are a variety of programs with complex logistics
- Not meeting coverage allocations is a concern
- Under accomplishment this past year was mainly in the Mid-Atlantic fleets, using the dock intercept method with observers/area provider requesting deployment
- We are working hard to improve sea day accomplishments and seeking your cooperative effort
- Not meeting targets can potentially lead to uncertain discard estimates and could lead to higher coverage in future years

Types of Sea Day Assignments in the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program

- NEFOP – Northeast Fisheries Observer Program
 - SBRM (Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology)
 - NON-SBRM
 - ACCSP, NY – Memorandum of Understanding with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation in conjunction with Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
 - ACCSP, ASMFC - Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)
 - MMPA – Marine Mammal Protection Act
- IFS – Industry Funded Scallop
- ASM – At-Sea Monitoring Program

Types of Programs & Total Observer Sea Days

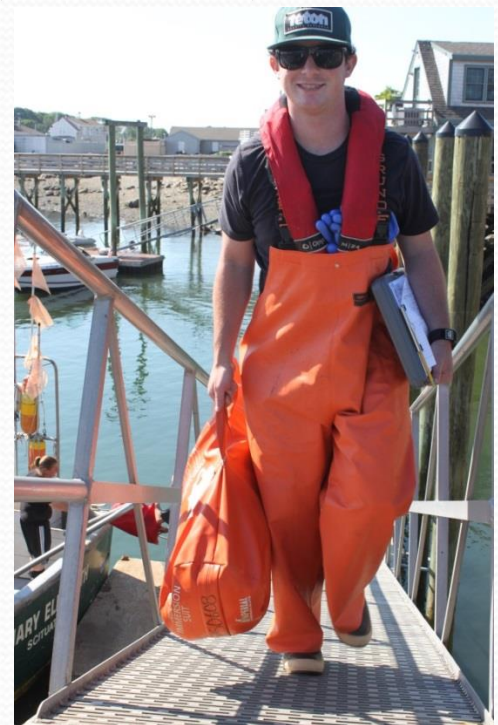
11,303 Sea days Completed (April 1, 2016 – February 28, 2017)



Observer Service Providers

There are 4 active service providers in our area – 2 under Federal contracts, and/or 4 approved & active under Fisheries Management Plans

- Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP)
(SBRM, MMPA, ACCSP, ASFMC Seadays)
 - AIS, MRAG
- Industry Funded Scallop (IFS)
(Industry Funded Scallop Seadays)
 - AIS, EWTS, Fathom Research
- At-Sea Monitoring Program (ASM)
(Groundfish Sector At-Sea Monitoring)
 - AIS, EWTS, Fathom Research, MRAG



What is the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology (SBRM)?

- Sampling design, data collection procedures and analyses used to estimate bycatch in multiple fisheries
- A structured approach for evaluating the efficacy of the allocation of observer days to multiple fleets under Greater Atlantic fishery management plans (FMPs)
- Integrated allocation approach for observer coverage is based on relative precision **and** the relative importance of discards
- **Ensures that sea day allocations are not driven by imprecise estimates of small quantities**

SBRM Timelines and Products

Step	SBRM year		
	2015	2016	2017
Conduct analysis	October 2014 - March 2015	October 2015 - March 2016	October 2016 - March 2017
Data used	July 2013 - June 2014	July 2014 - June 2015	July 2015 - June 2016
Sampling frame for vessel selection	April 2015 - March 2016	April 2016 - March 2017	April 2017 - March 2018
Produce final sea day schedule, reports	May 2015	June 2016*	

- Required annual report (available through [NEFSC web site](#)) Pop Dynamics branch
 - [Annual discard report with observer sea day allocation](#)
 - [Discard estimation, precision and sample size analysis](#)
- NEFOP [Sea Day Schedule](#)

Background: SBRM Time Frames

Data analysis uses a 12 month period from July thru June

Sea Day Schedule spans a 12 month period from April thru March

2017 SBRM timeline highlighted in yellow

- Time to conduct data analysis and document preparation (6 months);
- Time for NEFOP to audit observer data (3 months);
- Most recent 12 months of data for analysis

2013	2013	2014	2014	2014	2014	2015	2015	2015	2015	2016	2016	2016	2016	2017	2017	2017	2017	2018
Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
2015 SBRM DATA				2016 SBRM DATA				2017 SBRM DATA				2018 SBRM DATA				2019 SBRM DATA		
2014 analysis		2015 analysis				2016 analysis				2017 analysis				2018 analysis				
2014 Sea Day Schedule				2015 Sea Day Schedule				2016 Sea Day Schedule				2017 Sea Day Schedule						

2016 SBRM Operational Details

How are sea day needs determined?

Stratification:

- 15 species groups: fish, invertebrates & turtles
- 57 fleets: region, gear/mesh, trip category, access area, & quarter

Sample size analysis:

- Need coverage to achieve a 30% Coefficient of Variation (CV) on discards estimates of the 15 species groups
- Variance of discard estimate used to derive sample size
- Apply importance filter (remove cells with low discards and low total mortality)
- Maximum sea days across 15 species groups determines coverage

Operational details

How are observers deployed?



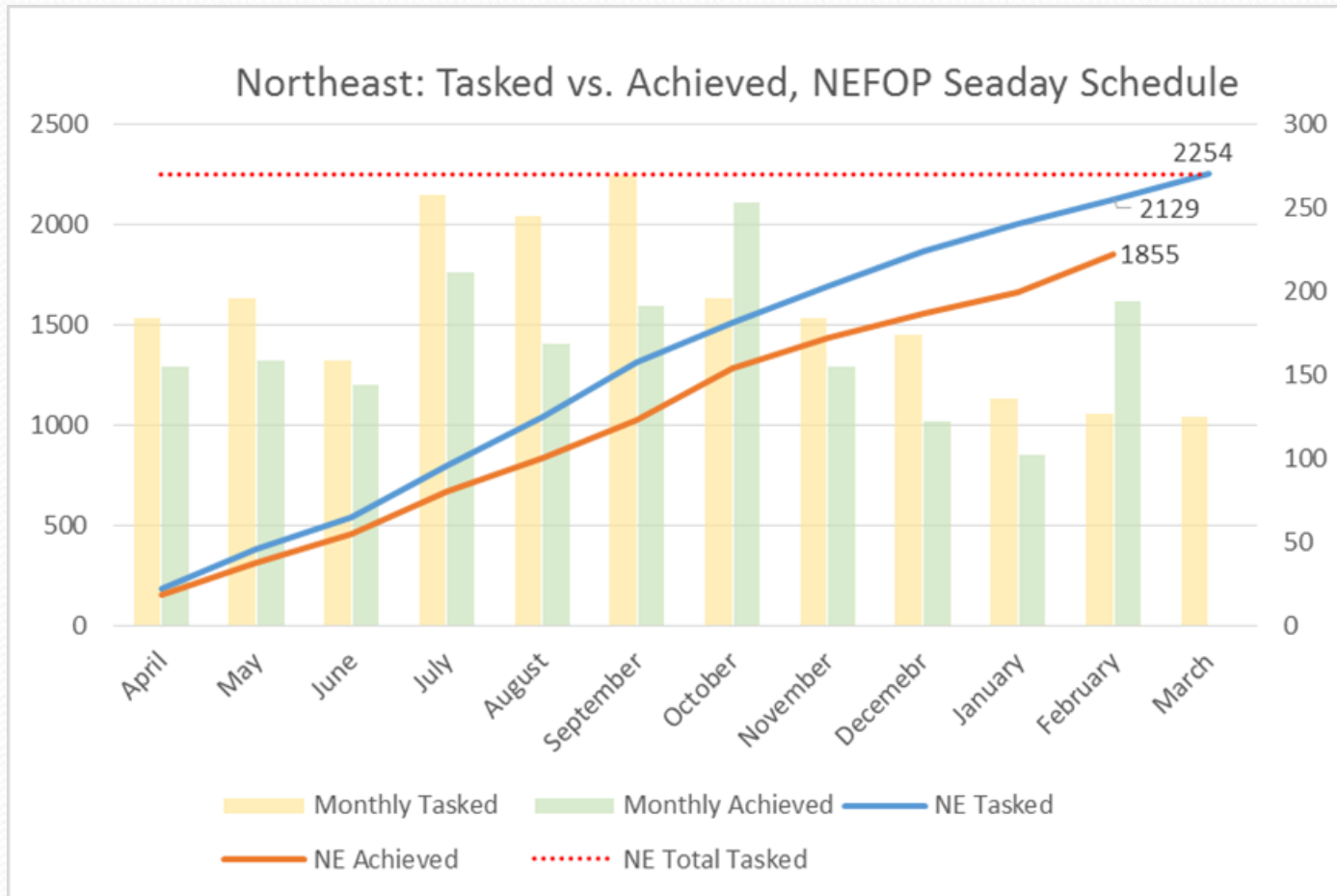
- Dock-intercept process (non-groundfish trips) via Sea Day Schedule
 - Sea days are allocated by quarter & state within a fleet based on VTR reported activity
- Pre-Trip Notification System (PTNS) (groundfish trips)
- Phone call-in (herring and mackerel)
- Phone call-in (Industry-Funded Scallop)

SBRM Sea Day Accomplishments are a concern....

Type	Seadays Tasked to Date (Apr 1, '16 – Feb 28, '17)	Seadays Accomplished to Date (Apr 1, '16 – Feb 28, '17)	Percent Accomplished to Date (Apr 1, '16 – Feb 28, '17)
SBRM	8,829	5,042	57.1 ⁰ %

- NEFOP working closely with the observer provider & area coordinators to deploy observers on available vessels
- Improving outreach & communication
- Achieving 2016 SBRM sea days is challenging

Tasked vs. Achieved in the Northeast from the Sea Day Schedule (not including PTNS)



Contributors to Unaccomplished Days

- Shifts in fishing effort from year to year
- Missed deployment opportunities (i.e. fishing effort)
 - Not having observers in the right place at the right time
 - Observer avoidance by vessels (before & after selecting)
- Reduction in observer availability
 - Not enough observers hired, trained, retained at times
 - Observers working part-time in this program
- Delays in getting final schedule (uncertain funding)
- Industry's tolerance with taking an observer becomes strained when they don't know what to expect for coverage

Incidents Reported By Observers

(Not including injuries, vessel sinkings/collisions)

It is unlawful to intimidate, oppose, harass, or interfere with an observer

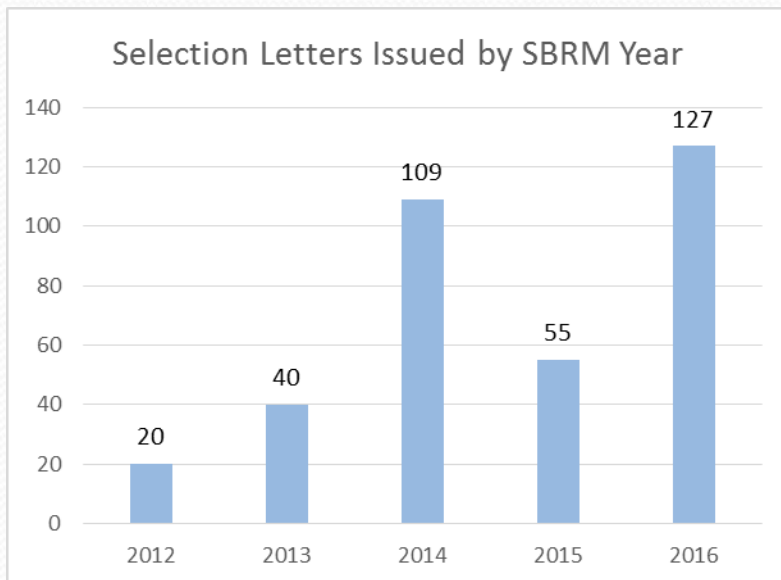
Incident Type	CY 2015 Reports (ntrips=4,179)	CY 2016 Reports (ntrips=4,619)
Captain didn't show at arranged time	95	30
Difficulty setting up trip	27	17
Interference	11	7
Harassment	3	6
Intimidation	4	5
Failure to provide equal accommodation, reasonable assistance	0	4
Gear tampering	0	1

In 2015, 38% of compliance reports were with the NEFOP Program (compared to 53% with ASM and 9% IFS)

In 2016, 61% of compliance reports were with the NEFOP Program (compared to 28% with ASM and 11% IFS)

Trip Refusals

- Once selected for coverage, a vessel is prohibited from sailing without an observer or a waiver
- Compliance issues are reported to OLE when a selected vessel refuses to take an observer
- If selecting vessels at the dock is difficult, selection letters are mailed to permit holders



Trip Refusal Status (n=27 in '16 SBRM Year)	Number Refusal Cases Referred to OLE
Compliance Assistance	13
Summary Settlement	4
Written Warning	3
Ongoing	6
Closed – No Further Action	1
Total	27

Ideas for Improving Sea Day Accomplishments

- Establish a core of Federally employed observers to deploy in times of need or in areas difficult to cover
- Allow observer providers access to real-time fishing effort information
- Restrict coverage to certain vessels size or landings
- Improve dock access/safety to board vessels
- Outreach with State Biologists and Managers
- Find mutually beneficial uses of observer data with Industry & our stakeholders



What may also help?

- Regular updates on sea day accomplishments at Council meetings
- Permit holder letters with clear expectation of coverage needs once sea day schedule is announced
- Reminders of observer regulations
- Develop a mandatory observer awareness requirement as part of the permit process
- We would like to hear your recommendations and feedback

Heads Up: 2017 SBRM Release

- The 2017 SBRM analyses have been completed
- There are two documents that contain the required SBRM Annual Discard Report information
 - 2017 Discard Estimation, Precision and Sample Size for 14 Federally Managed Species Groups in the Waters off the northeastern US (Center Ref Doc 17-07)
 - 2017 SBRM Annual Discard Report with Observer Sea Day Allocation
- These documents are available online at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's SBRM webpage

Major Points on 2017 SBRM

- A total of 11,705 days are needed to monitor Fish and Turtles (combined) in 56 fleets (95 days more than in 2016 = 11,610 days)
- **10,469 days** are needed for agency-funded fleets (178 days more than in 2016 = 10,291 days), which we expect to be able to fully fund
- 1,236 days are needed for industry-funded scallop fleets (155 days fewer than in 2016 = 1,319 days)
- 40 days are needed for NE mid-water trawl fleet (400 days fewer than 2016)
- 1,946 days are needed for NE small mesh otter trawl fleet (1,148 increase in days from 2016 = 798)

Thank you!

<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/fsb/>

