



Charter Vessel Activity Catch Reporting – additional requirements and improvements to forms

MPI Discussion Paper No: 2013/34

ISBN No: 978-0-478-42000-5 (online)
ISSN No: 2253-3907 (online)

August 2013

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How to make a Submission

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is seeking feedback from tangata whenua and stakeholders on proposed changes to the reporting requirements for charter boat operators whose catch must be reported from 01 October 2012. The aim is to increase the efficiency of catch reporting requirements in charter boat regulations. The outcome of this action will be to improve and where necessary extend the information required to support better stock assessments and management decisions.

Copies of the Initial Position Papers are available on MPI's website at:

<http://www.fish.govt.nz/en-nz/Consultations/default.htm>

If you would like a hard copy of these documents to be sent to you, please contact Nekel Upton at (04) 894 4506 or nekel.upton@mpi.govt.nz

Closing Date for Submissions

The closing date for submissions is **4pm, Friday 23 August 2013.**

Written submissions should be sent directly to:

Inshore Fisheries Management
Ministry for Primary Industries
PO Box 2526
Wellington 6140

or emailed to FMSubmissions@mpi.govt.nz

1 Introduction

1 The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is seeking tangata whenua and stakeholder information and views on proposed changes to reporting requirements for amateur-fishing charter vessel operators¹ and consequential changes to the Amateur-Fishing Charter Vessel – Activity Catch Return (ACV) form effective 1 October 2013. The proposals will:

- make improvements to the reporting of a NIL return;
- make changes to the reporting of fishing methods involving pots and diving;
- require Fisheries Management Area (FMA) be reported;
- require the reporting of the number of rock lobster pot lifts;
- require the number of fish caught under the minimum legal size (MLS) to be reported for those species whose catch must be reported;
- include snapper to those species whose catch must be reported;
- extend reporting of the weight in kilograms of landings to all species whose catch must be reported; and
- make consequential changes to the ACV form and the Instructions for Users.

2 Context

2.1 NEED TO ACT

2 Stocks subject to charter boat catch reporting are managed under the draft National Fisheries Plan for Inshore Finfish². It sets out management objectives for inshore finfish stocks. A management action in the Finfish Annual Operating Plan for 2012/13 is to increase the efficiency of catch reporting requirements in charter boat regulations. The outcome of this action will be to improve and where necessary extend the information required to support better stock assessments and management decisions.

3 Charter boat catch reporting is targeted at key shared fish stocks to improve the information available to support management of inshore fisheries. Over time systematic

¹ Charter boat fishing is an activity that takes people fishing under the amateur fishing regulations and where payment is made for the boat and guide services.

² The Fisheries Plan has not been formally approved under the Act

catch reporting will provide a time series from which managers may identify and monitor trends.

- 4 MPI has been constantly assessing how to improve activity and catch reporting including seeking advice. NIWA analysed the utility of ACV data for the 2011-12 fishing year and reported recommendations for improvements to the Marine Amateur Fisheries Stock Assessment Working Group. The Working Group has also provided suggestions for improving the ACV form and the Instructions for Users that assisted with developing these proposals.
- 5 Review to date suggests that the system has great potential to provide useful information if certain aspects of the reporting and management of the system are improved. The proposed form changes would contribute to improve reporting and would enable better management of the system.

2.2 CURRENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 6 The charter boat reporting scheme³ requires the following of all charter boat operators:

2.2.1 Registration

- Register the charter boat operator and their vessel(s) with re-registration undertaken annually to keep all details including means of contact current.
- 7 No changes are proposed to the registration system.

2.2.2 Activity and Catch Reporting

- 8 The ACV form is prescribed by the Director-General under regulation 26B(2) of the Amateur Regulations. It is used to collect information from each amateur-fishing charter vessel fishing trip. Each page of the ACV form is separated into the following five sections:
 - **Section 1** records the page number and total number of pages included in an individual return.

³ The charter boat reporting scheme is contained in regulations 26A and 26B of the Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 1986 (the Amateur Fishing Regulations). See “Amateur Fishing Regulations” below.

- 9 No changes are proposed to sections 1 and 5.

3.1 SECTION 2

10 MPI proposes to improve the manner in which a NIL return is reported. Although the requirement is unchanged the instructions on the form are more explicit and easier to follow under the proposed new format (Figure 1).

- Figure 1 – Proposed new Section 2

4 • Charter Vessel Activity Catch Reporting

3.2 SECTION 3 FISHING ACTIVITY

3.2.1 Changes to fishing methods involving pots

- 12 MPI proposes to improve the use of fishing method codes involving potting and diving. The code “POT -potting other than rock lobster potting” would be used no longer and replaced by the existing code “FP – Fish pots/traps”. The code for Diving “DI-Diving (includes SCUBA and free diving” would be split into two codes: “DI- free diving” and a new code “UBA-Diving using underwater breathing apparatus”.

3.2.2 Changes to the reporting of longitude

- 13 MPI proposes to change the manner longitude is reported. Currently position in relation to the hemisphere (side of the 180° Meridian or International date line, Figure 2) fishing occurs is recorded by circling either E (to designate fishing occurs in the eastern hemisphere) or W (to designate fishing occurs in the western hemisphere. MPI proposes to make E the default hemisphere. To differentiate fishing in the western hemisphere would require the W to be circled (Figure 3).

Figure 2 – 180o Meridian showing longitudes in the Eastern Hemisphere (E) and Western Hemisphere (W)

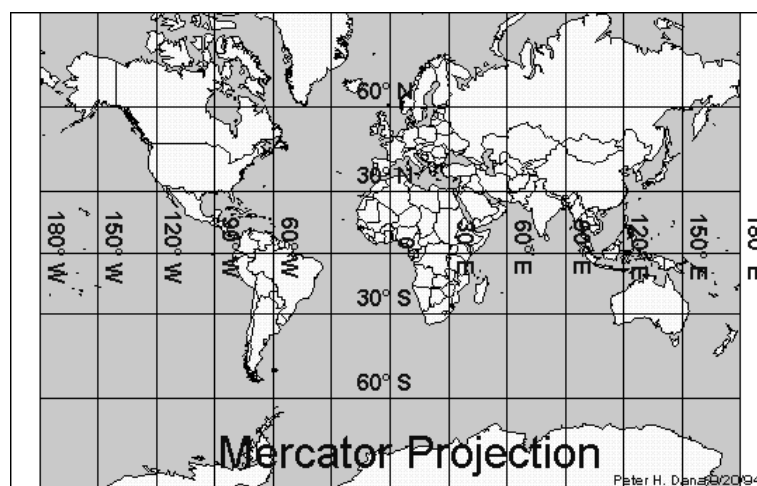


Figure 3 – Proposed new Section 3

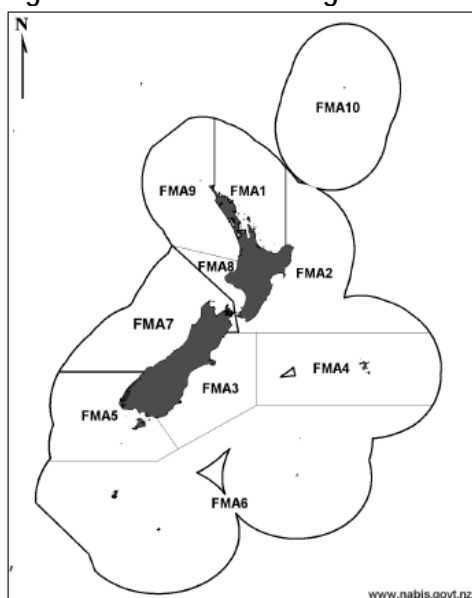
3. Activity Reporting. Complete a new fishing event column each time the fishing location, fishing method or target species changes.										and 5 only, if No, complete all sections on this form.																			
New fishing event										New fishing event										New fishing event									
Target species																													
Fishing method																													
People actively fishing																													
Latitude: (degrees minutes)																													
Longitude: (degrees minutes EW)																													
Time spent fishing (h:mm)																													
Fisheries Management Area (1-10)																													

- 14 The change will improve and clarify requirements for reporting longitude. Making this improvement is expected to decrease the number of errors (currently running at 11.7%) associated with completing this field. Those fishing in the eastern hemisphere will have one less detail to report and for those fishing in the western hemisphere there will be no change. This improves the quality of the data and reduces the cost of maintaining the system.

3.2.3 Reporting FMA

- 15 MPI proposes a new field in the Activity Reporting section. The proposal is to require fishing activity to be reported by Fisheries Management Area (FMA) *i.e.* 1 – 10 (Figure 4) as appropriate. This will require a consequential change to the ACV form as proposed in Figure 3 to allow FMA to be reported.
- 16 The proposal is that FMA number (1-10) be reported. The inclusion was recommended by NIWA as a means to more readily validate fishing longitude and longitude based locations and to better enable charter boat harvest data summaries. This improves the quality of the data.

Figure 4 – Fisheries Management Areas (FMA 1-10)



3.2.4 Reporting pot lifts

- 17 MPI is considering a new requirement to report the number of pot lifts when the fishing method used is rock lobster pots in addition to reporting the time spent fishing. This will

require a consequential change to the ACV form as proposed in Figure 3 to allow the number of pot lifts to be reported.

- 18 MPI consider that the number of rock lobster pot lifts is a better index of fishing effort for this particular fishing method. Reporting the number of pot lifts will enable better characterisation of rock lobster fishing by the amateur-fishing charter fleet.

3.3 SECTION 4 CATCH REPORTING

3.3.1 Reporting number of fish below MLS

- 19 MPI proposes a new field in the Catch Reporting section. The additional field is to enable the number of each species of fish caught below the minimum legal size – where an MLS applies - to be reported. Charter vessel operators would be required to report the number caught (existing requirement), the number of fish caught that were undersize (new requirement), and the number of fish kept and landed (existing requirement). This will require a consequential change to the ACV form as proposed in Figure 5 to allow the number of fish caught below the minimum legal size to be reported. The two options (to require the reporting of fish caught below the minimum legal size, or not) are set out in Table 1.

Figure 5 – Proposed new Section 4

4. Catch Reporting.	Species caught					Species caught					Species caught				
	Number caught	Number below MLS	Number kept	Estimated weight (Kg)		Number caught	Number below MLS	Number kept	Estimated weight (Kg)		Number caught	Number below MLS	Number kept	Estimated weight (Kg)	
Complete one line for each species taken for which reporting is required (see Explanatory Notes for the Catch Reporting Species list).				.0					.0					.0	
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				.0					.0					.0	
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				.0					.0					.0	
				.0					.0					.0	
				.0					.0					.0	
				.0					.0					.0	

- 20 MPI believes greater ability to characterise the proportion of undersized fish caught for those species whose catch is reported is important. This inclusion would enable the number of undersized fish caught by an important component of the amateur-fishery to be monitored and would also allow the proportion of legal size fish released to be determined. MPI acknowledges that busy charter vessel operators may have difficulty collecting these data. However, the proposal to report undersized fish is limited to those species having an MLS *i.e.* blue cod, kingfish, rock lobster (and snapper, should reporting of snapper be required in the Catch Reporting section).

- 21 MPI notes that this data would inform assessment of the total catch (as distinct from landings or the retained catch) and contribute to estimates of additional mortality to be included in future stock assessments for the proportion of the catch taken by charter vessels. MPI acknowledges that it would generally be difficult to extrapolate information from the charter fleet to amateur fisheries generally as fishing practices between them may differ.

3.3.2 Reporting the catch of snapper

- 22 MPI proposes including snapper to the list of those fish stocks whose catch must be reported by charter vessel operators from 1 October 2013. The two options (to require the reporting of snapper, or not) are set out in Table 1.
- 23 Snapper is a very important finfish species caught under the amateur fishing regulations and is the species from which most charter vessel income is derived. The stocks of snapper in some Quota Management Areas are subject to rebuilding plans. Charter vessel operators are in a position to contribute to a much improved assessment of stock status for each fishery, by providing the amounts of snapper caught and released - including those released under the minimal legal size. This information is important for future assessments of this Group 1 species.
- 24 Target fishing for snapper contributed 45% of the total number of reported trips by charter boats in 2011. The significance of the charter boat catch as a proportion of the total known amateur catch makes catch information useful as a potential opportunity for contributing to the monitoring of the recovery of snapper in some areas. However, MPI also assesses that requiring catch information for snapper would likely increase the administrative and stakeholder compliance costs of the charter vessel reporting scheme.
- 25 For those fishing in FMAs 1 and 9 the snapper catch is a large proportion of total catch with the result that accurately monitoring and recording snapper catch and releases may be difficult for operators. Adopting Option 2 may require costly systems to verify sufficient accuracy and ensure meaningful results. About half of registered charter vessel operators already report catches of snapper, either voluntarily or under the misunderstanding that this is already required.

26 MPI considers that requiring snapper catch to be reported across all areas would improve the quality and quantity of information obtained from the charter vessel reporting system and will make a substantive contribution to the future management of the snapper fisheries. On balance, recognising there will be an increase in respondent burden, MPI considers the utility of the improved information outweighs the cost to operators.

3.3.3 Additional catch weights reported

27 MPI also proposes to extend the requirement to report catch weights to all species for which catch reporting is required. The two options (to require the reporting of catch weights for all listed species, or not) are set out in Table 1.

28 The status quo requires the reporting of the weight of landings for southern and Pacific bluefin tuna. MPI propose to extend landing weight reporting to all listed species for which catch reporting is required on the basis it will make a significant direct contribution to management over and above activity reporting. Under the proposal weights of landings are required only for the seven listed species (eight if snapper is included) to minimise compliance costs. This will mean that on any trip, a charter operator is unlikely to have to report the landing weights of more than three species.

3.3.4 Options

29 Table 1 below sets out the two options proposed for the catch reporting section of the form.

Table 1: Status quo (Option 1) and proposals (Option 2) for additional catch reporting effective 1 October 2013.

Species	Species / FMA to report catch		Estimate landings in Kg		Report MLS	
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 1	Option 2	Option 1	Option 2
Bass, Hapuku	All	All	No	Yes	No	No
Bluenose	All	All	No	Yes	No	No
Blue Cod	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	No	Yes	No	Yes
Kingfish	All	All	No	Yes	No	Yes
Rock Lobster	All	All	No	Yes	No	Yes
Snapper	No	All	No	Yes	No	Yes
Sthern Bluefin Tuna	All	All	Yes	Yes	No	No
Pacific Bluefin Tuna	All	All	Yes	Yes	No	No

Option 1

30 Option 1 is to retain the current reporting regime and make no changes to reporting or to the ACV form. Minor changes to the Instruction for Users would be undertaken –for example to remove references to phasing in catch reporting of species.

- 31 Retaining Option 1 recognises the practical difficulties in implementing a revised form (operator burden, education costs, and reporting system changes) at the expense of status quo information only being obtained from the fishery. This has longer term consequences for the effective management of shared fisheries.

Option 2

- 32 Option 2 is to make a range of amendments to reporting requirements and the ACV form as described and for the reasons outlined in the Proposed Measures above. Consequent changes to the Instruction for Users would also be undertaken. These changes will have beneficial consequences for the effective management of shared fisheries.
- 33 As noted above the charter boat reporting scheme is contained in regulations 26A and 26B of the Amateur Fishing Regulations.
- 34 Regulation 26B specifies that amateur-fishing charter vessel operators must provide information to the Director General in a form specified by the Director-General by notice in the Gazette. The notice also specifies the information to be recorded in sections 2 - 4 on the form listed in paragraph 8 above.
- 35 If the proposals in this paper are accepted it is proposed that the revised requirements to provide information be published by a new notice in the Gazette and new books containing the revised ACV Forms be issued to all registered ACV Charter Operators by 1 October 2013 (see Appendix 1 for a draft of the proposed ACV Form).

3.4 OTHER IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- 36 To minimise costs overall, any changes to the reporting forms and instructions will align with changes to re-brand to the Ministry for Primary Industries logos that is required as part of business as usual.
- 37 Because any change to the reporting scheme for charter boat operators only requires the approval of the Director-General these changes could be in place on 1 October 2013. If the measures are approved, all registered charter operators will be formally advised of the changes and when the measures would come into effect.
- 38 The Ministry invites tangata whenua and stakeholders to provide additional information pertaining to these proposals.

4 Initial Consultation

- 39 During May 2013, MPI provided the opportunity for stakeholder representatives to provide initial feedback on proposals.
- 40 The FMA 1&9 Recreational Forum queried the reasons for collecting the additional information on undersized fish. While they believed it might theoretically be possible to estimate the amount of undersized fish taken by charter vessel fishing the Forum considered the information would be bedevilled by busy charter vessel operators' inability to accurately collect these data. The Forum stated that ACV records on undersized fish would not be useful for scaling the undersized catch by recreational fishers.
- 41 Fisheries Inshore New Zealand and the Northern Inshore Management Group support the inclusion of snapper as a species whose catch should be reported.

Ministry for Primary Industries Manatū Ahu Matua		<h1>Amateur-Fishing Charter Vessel – Activity Catch Return</h1>		<h2>ACV</h2>	
1. Complete one return (using as many pages as required) for each fishing trip. For multi-day trips each day must start on a new page.					Page <input type="text"/> of <input type="text"/>
2.	Date of fishing (dd/mm/yy)	MNZ/MSA number of vessel	Name of vessel	MPI operator number	Port of departure
	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>
3. Activity Reporting. Complete a new fishing event column each time the fishing location, fishing method or target species changes.					Is this a 'NIL' return for the month? Tick one Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> <small>If Yes, complete sections 1, 2 and 5 only, if No, complete all sections on this form.</small>
	New fishing event	New fishing event	New fishing event		
Target species	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
Fishing method	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
People actively fishing	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
Latitude: (degrees minutes)	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
Longitude: (degrees minutes E/W)	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
Time spent fishing (hh:mm)	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
Fisheries Management Area (1-10)	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; height: 20px;"></div>		
4. Catch Reporting.					
Complete one line for each species taken for which reporting is required (see Explanatory Notes for the Catch Reporting Species list).					
	Species caught	Number caught	Number below MLS	Number kept	Estimated weight (Kg)
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