

Swordfish Import Monitoring Program



National Marine Fisheries Service
Office of Sustainable Fisheries
Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Silver Spring, Maryland



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 1995 the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), adopted an alternative minimum size for Atlantic swordfish and a ban on the sale of undersized Atlantic swordfish. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), under authority of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA), 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*, has issued the following regulations.

To facilitate enforcement of the domestic minimum size (33 pounds, dressed weight), NMFS has prohibited the import of undersized Atlantic swordfish into the United States of America.

This new program will facilitate the tracking of swordfish shipments into the United States of America and the enforcement of ICCAT minimum size requirements, and will provide information on international swordfish harvesting and trade activities.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The import restrictions for swordfish:

1. Prohibit the import of Atlantic swordfish or swordfish pieces weighing less than 33 pounds dressed weight (15 kilograms) into the United States, unless accompanied by a COE that indicates the pieces are derived from a swordfish above the minimum size;
2. Require dealer permitting and reporting for importation into the United States of swordfish from any source; and
3. Require a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to accompany all swordfish shipments imported into the United States.

DEALER REQUIREMENTS

A dealer that buys Atlantic swordfish **only** from U.S. fishing vessels must:

- Obtain Swordfish Dealer Permit;

and

- Send Bi-weekly Dealer Report on purchases from vessels to appropriate NMFS office for processing.

NMFS OFFICES

Northeast Region (From Virginia to Maine)

Submit reports to:

Designated NMFS Port Offices

For more information, please contact
Gregory Power at (978) 281-9304

Southeast Region (From North Carolina to South Atlantic, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean)

Submit reports to:

NMFS
PO Box 491740
Key Biscayne, FL 33149-9915

For more information, please contact
John Poffenberger at (305) 361-4263

DEALER REQUIREMENTS

Foreign Exporter must:

- Prepare Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for each shipment including the following information:
 - ▶ Ocean of origin
 - ▶ Flag of harvesting vessel
 - ▶ Validation with government official's (or authorized agent's) signature and seal
- COE must be in English and may also be in other languages

Importer of Record must:

- Obtain Swordfish Dealer Permit
- Obtain and complete the COE accompanying each shipment
- Enter U.S. Customs Form 7501 entry number on each COE
- Forward COEs with Bi-weekly Dealer Report to appropriate NMFS office for processing.

Dealers who buy domestic Atlantic swordfish and import swordfish from any ocean area must submit a Bi-weekly Dealer Report for all swordfish purchases and COEs for imported swordfish.

For more information about the
Swordfish Import Monitoring Program,
please contact:

Jill Stevenson
(727) 570-5447
Highly Migratory Species Division

– or –

Susan Linn
(228) 769-8964
National Seafood Inspection Laboratory

– or –

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

For dealer permit information or
applications, please contact:

NMFS Southeast Permit Office
(727) 570-5326

If you would like to receive regular postings
on the swordfish management program from
our HMS FAX network, please contact:

Karyl Brewster-Geisz
(301) 713-2347

This pamphlet was prepared in September 2000 to provide interested importers a summary of the Atlantic Swordfish Import Monitoring Program. Refer to official regulations for a complete description. Since fishery rules are subject to change, importers must familiarize themselves with the latest regulations and are responsible for complying with current official regulations.