



New England
Fishery Management
Council



MID-ATLANTIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Commercial eVTR Omnibus Framework

Joint Action
MAFMC Framework Meeting 2
December 11, 2019

Meeting Outline

■ Review:

- eVTR background
- eVTR applications
- Affected users
- Alternatives
- FMAT and AP comments/recommendations
- Public comments
- Staff recommendation

■ Decision point:

- Select preferred alternative

Commercial eVTR Action

- Proposed action:
 - Require commercial fishing vessels with federal permits for species managed under the MAFMC or NEFMC, to submit their VTRs electronically (eVTR)
 - Modify reporting deadline under eVTR
- **No changes are proposed for the data being collected.**

Commercial eVTR Action

Goals:

- Reduce reporting burden by eliminating redundancies in filling out multiple paper reports.
- Remove need to be physically mailed and mailed back if errors or questions (inefficient, burdensome, can be inaccurate).
- Increase reporting efficiency for commercial fleet and NMFS.
 - Dropdown menus, lists of favorites, plain language, auto-complete.
 - No need to scan each VTR, faster validation.
- Decrease reporting errors.

VTR Current Requirements

- Required for any trip on a federally permitted vessel when you catch fish or when your operations include activities that would support fishing.
- Vessels with multiple permits are held to the most restrictive reporting requirements.
- The VTR must be nearly complete prior to entering port.
- eVTR has been authorized for all Northeast Region federally permitted vessels since 2013 (commercial and for-hire).
- eVTR has been required for all MAFMC for-hire permits since March 2018.

Currently Approved eVTR Applications

Free

Application (provider)	Compatible Device
eTrips Mobile 2 (ACCSP)	Android and Apple tablet/smartphone, or web-based version
Fish Online (GARFO)	iPhone/iPad, or web-based version
Elog (Ecotrust)	windows computer, iphone, windows tablet (used with electronic monitoring)
FLDRS (NEFSC)*	Computer (used for cooperative research)

*FLDRS is a program to collect high resolution fisheries data for research that also satisfies eVTR requirements. FLDRS is also the only current app that complies with reporting guidelines for ocean quahog and surf clams.

eVTR Applications

- Fees required
- The following apps are currently pending recertification to meet GARFO's technical requirements:

Application (provider)	Compatible device
FACTS (Electric Edge)	Windows computer
Olrac DDL (OLSPS)	Internet browser, Windows computer, Windows tablet

Associated Costs to Permit Holders

- Multiple free applications with free technical support
- No cost if a user:
 - Already has a smartphone, tablet or laptop
 - Access to internet or cellular data
- Basic Wi-Fi capable electronic device:
 - Tablet: \$70-\$130
- Time and cost savings with no need to mail in paper forms

Action Timeline

Task Description	Date (subject to change)
Initiation	December 2018
Formation of FMAT	January/February 2019
FMAT meeting to develop initial draft alternatives/discuss analyses	March 19, 2019
Joint AP meeting	March 25, 2019
MAFMC Council meeting —Framework meeting 1	April 10, 2019
NEFMC Council meeting —update to NEFMC	April 16, 2019
Follow up FMAT meeting	May 10, 2019
NEFMC Council meeting —initiate Framework action	June 13, 2019
AP/industry webinar	July 23, 2019
NEFMC Council meeting —Framework meeting 1	September 2019
FMAT meeting	October 2019
Evening Public Webinar	November 20, 2019
MAFMC Council meeting —Framework meeting 2 (final action)	December 11, 2019
NEFMC Council meeting —Framework meeting 2 (final action)	January 2020
Finalization of Framework document; submission to NMFS	February 2020
Workshops	Starting Feb. 2020
Proposed rule	April 2020
Final rule	Summer 2020
eVTR requirement implemented	Summer 2021

Affected Users

Mid-Atlantic FMPs	New England FMPs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Atlantic Bluefish• Black Sea Bass• Scup• Summer Flounder• Spiny Dogfish• Tilefish• Squid• Atlantic Mackerel• Butterfish• Surfclam• Ocean Quahog	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Northeast Multispecies (groundfish)• Monkfish• Atlantic Herring• Skates• Small-Mesh Multispecies (whiting/hake)• Red Crab• Sea Scallop

Affected Users

Summary of Affected Users	2018 (Jan 1-Dec 31)
# of vessels issued a MAFMC commercial permit	2,726
# of the above vessels that submitted VTRs for commercial trips	1,648
# of vessels issued a NEFMC commercial permit	2,723
# of vessels issued both a MAFMC commercial permit and NEFMC commercial permit	2,520
# of MAFMC or NEFMC commercial permit holders	2,929
# of above vessels that submitted VTRs for commercial trips	1,723

2018 Commercial eVTR in NE and M-A

# of Commercial VTRs Submitted in 2018	
Paper	73,132
Electronic	7,727

Provider (app)	Commercial	
	eVTRs	Vessels
ACCSP (eTrips/Mobile)	1,065	81
GARFO (Fish Online)	760	44
NEFSC (FLDRS)	5,750	92
ECOTRUST (Elog)	152	7

2018 Commercial eVTR in NE and M-A

Gear type	% of VTRs submitted electronically
Trawl	15%
Pot/Trap	4%
Gill net	19%
Dredge	4%
Hand line/ Rod and Reel	20%
Longline	10%
Other	14%

2018 Commercial eVTR in NE and M-A

Landing state	% of VTRs submitted electronically
ME	9%
NH	21%
MA	10%
RI	16%
CT	12%
NY	7%
NJ	4%
DE	0%
MD	1%
VA	1%
NC	1%

Action Alternatives

- **Alternative 1**: require commercial fishing vessels with Federal permits to submit VTRs through electronic means (eVTR)
 - **Alternative 1a**: no change to reporting deadline
 - **Alternative 1b**: within 24 hours following the completion of the fishing trip
 - **Alternative 1c**: within 48 hours (current For-Hire)
 - **Alternative 1d**: within 72 hours
 - **Alternative 1e**: weekly following the completion of the fishing trip. Must be received by midnight of the Tuesday following the reporting week (Sunday through Saturday)
- **Alternative 2**: No Action, *status quo*

Permit Type

Frequency of Reporting

Reporting Deadline

Atlantic herring
Atlantic mackerel
Illex squid
Longfin squid/butterfish
Northeast multispecies
Ocean quahogs
Surfclams

owner/operator must submit trip reports **weekly**

Reports must be postmarked or received by midnight of the Tuesday following the reporting week (Sunday through Saturday). If a trip starts in one week, and offloads in the next, it should be reported in the week the catch was offloaded.

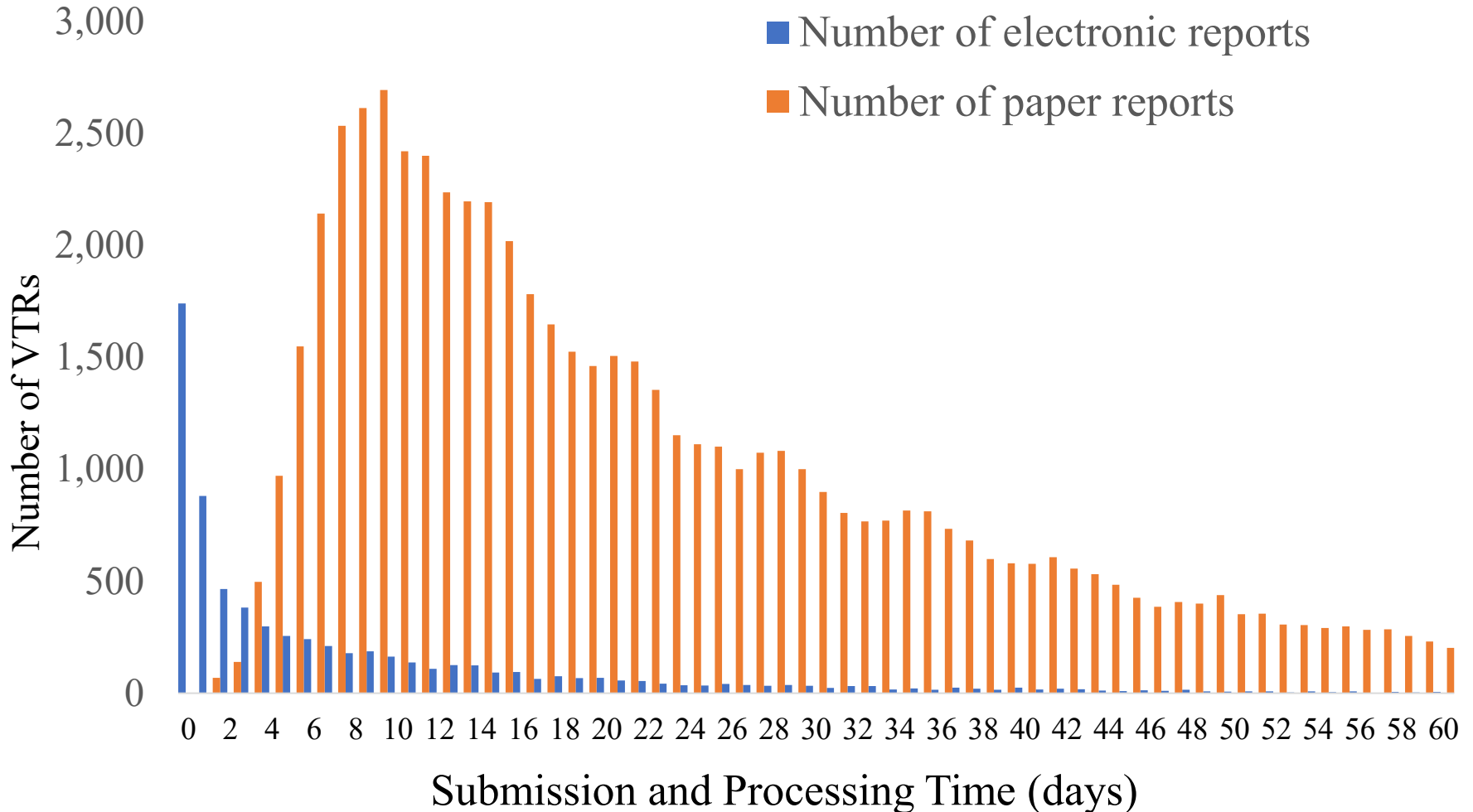
Atlantic bluefish
Atlantic deep-sea red crab
Atlantic sea scallop
Black sea bass
Monkfish
Northeast skate
Scup
Spiny dogfish
Summer flounder
Tilefish

owner/operator must submit trip reports **monthly**

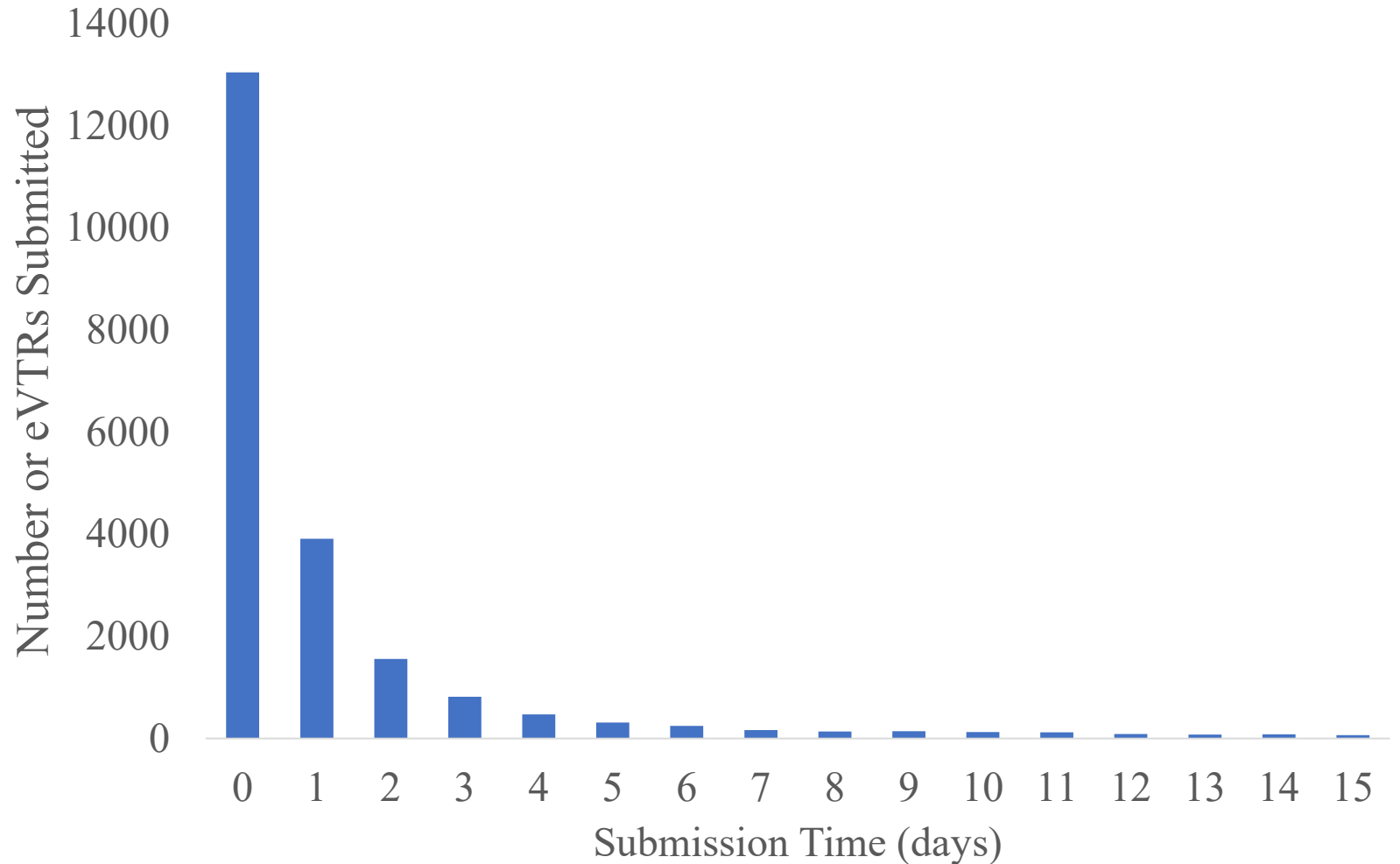
Reports must be postmarked or received within 15 days of the end of the month. If a trip starts in one month, and offloads in the next, it should be reported for the month in which the catch was offloaded

If a vessel is issued a permit for American lobster and no other Greater Atlantic Region vessel permit Then the owner/operator is not required to submit trips reports (check with your state, which may require reporting).

2018 Commercial VTR Timing



2018 For-Hire eVTR Timing



AP Reporting Deadline Recommendation

- One advisor and 1 member of public: 48 hours
 - create consistency with the for-hire sector
 - Working with study fleet, fishermen develop a habit
- AP Member: his operators will likely submit within 24 hours of ending a trip
- NEFMC member noted that in the groundfish fishery, sectors may need a reporting deadline of 24 hours for quota monitoring
- AP Member: deadline of 72 hours after a trip is complete is plenty of time

AP Comments

- Multiple advisors
 - More fine scale, tow-by-tow information should be collected
 - FLDRS should be expanded and given more resources
 - Chief of the NEFSC Cooperative Research Branch clarified that they will support all current FLDRS users and expand to vessels that are interested in study fleet
- How data handling has gone since the implementation of eVTR for the MAFMC for-hire sector in March 2018
 - Data handling has gone well with no noticeable drop in compliance; the VTR data has been available in near-real time through the database
- More information about the economic benefits to GARFO
- Due diligence with outreach and training

AP and Public Meeting Comments

- Council and/or NMFS should pay for electronic devices or develop a voucher or reimbursement program for electronic devices
- Recreational sector (private anglers) should be required to submit eVTRs. That is where better data is needed
- Approved applications should accommodate different state reporting
- Under eVTR, there still must be a transfer of the VTR number from the vessel to the dealer.
 - GARFO staff added that a primary objective of the Fishery Dependent Data Initiative (FDDI) is to have these numbers more integrated in the future so that information will be transferred systematically

FMAT Alternative Considerations

■ Weekly deadline benefits

- Aligns with dealer reporting
- Is the current deadline for many permit holders, aligns reporting across commercial permit holders while still being the closest to status quo
- Accessibility to the internet, there are ports where there is no internet and no cell service
- With quota monitoring, weekly reporting has been successful

■ Aligning with for-hire deadline, 48 hours

- Reducing recall bias/reducing error
- Same deadline as for-hire: simplicity in reporting, compliance, and enforcement
- Having equity across sectors

FMAT Discussion

- Breaking down eVTR app use by gear type may not be an indicator of which apps would be used in the future.
- First eVTR adopters in the commercial fleet were participants in study fleet, using the program FLDRS to report finer scale scientific information as well as fulfill their VTR requirements.
- Economic benefits to GARFO:
 - cost savings to GARFO would be in contract staff time, data entry, postage, printing and FTE time.
 - there are costs to GARFO up front during application development and other IT resources.
- Data quality, efficiency, and a key step towards future modernization

Staff Recommendation

- Alternative 1e: require eVTRs with a weekly deadline following completion of a fishing trip.
 - Weekly is defined as submission by midnight of the Tuesday following the reporting week (Sunday through Saturday)
 - Current reporting deadline for several permits
 - Provides vessel operators time to review data entry, correct errors, and reach an area with internet connection or cellular data to submit their report.
 - Many commercial operators that submitted electronically in 2018 did so within 24 hours after the fishing trip ended, however some fishing ports do not have Wi-Fi available for immediate eVTR submission.

Questions/Discussion

- Decision point: select preferred alternative
- **Alternative 1**: require commercial fishing vessels with Federal permits to submit VTRs through electronic means (eVTR)
 - **Alternative 1a**: no change to reporting deadline
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Extra slides

Joint Action Next Steps

Upcoming NEFMC Council Meeting:

- January 28-30, Portsmouth, NH Event Center
 - Final Action

Workshops:

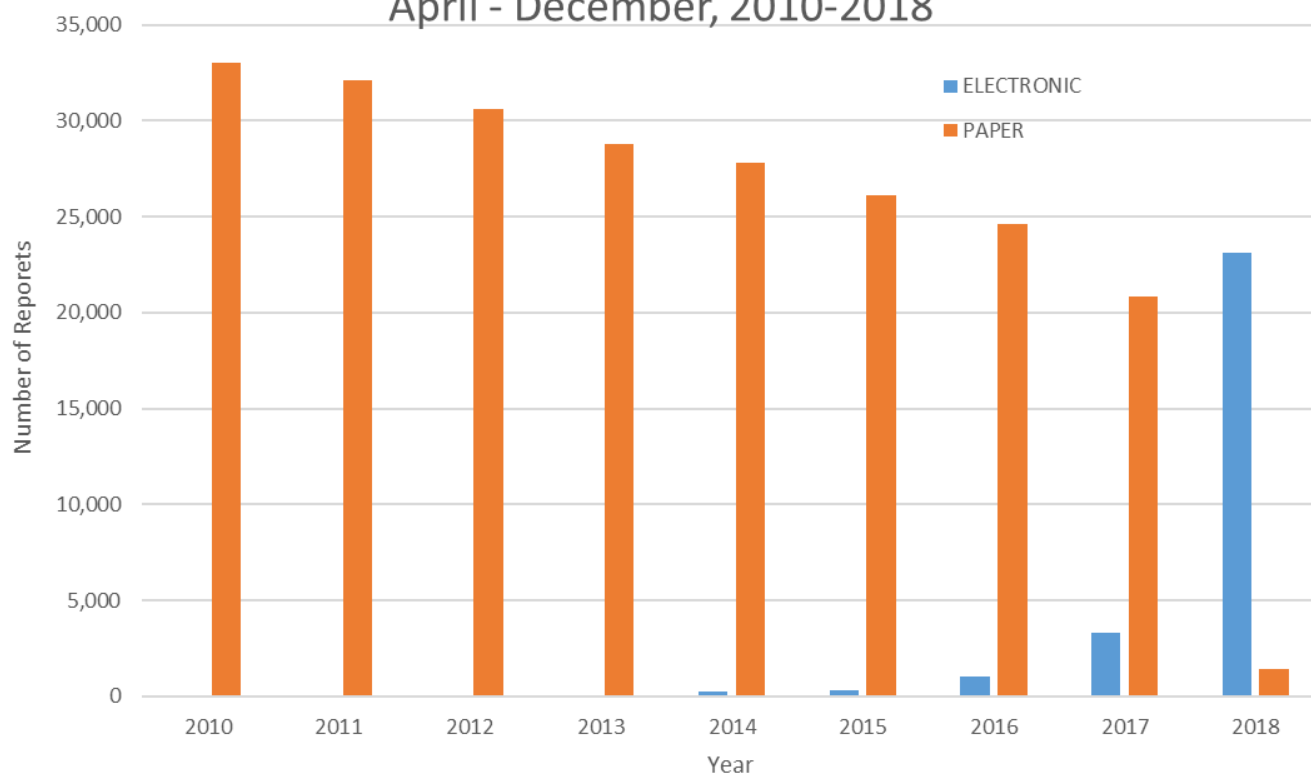
- Throughout 2020 in New England and Mid-Atlantic
 - First workshop, end of February
 - Industry liaisons

Summary of State Acceptance of Federal VTRs for Fulfilling State Reporting

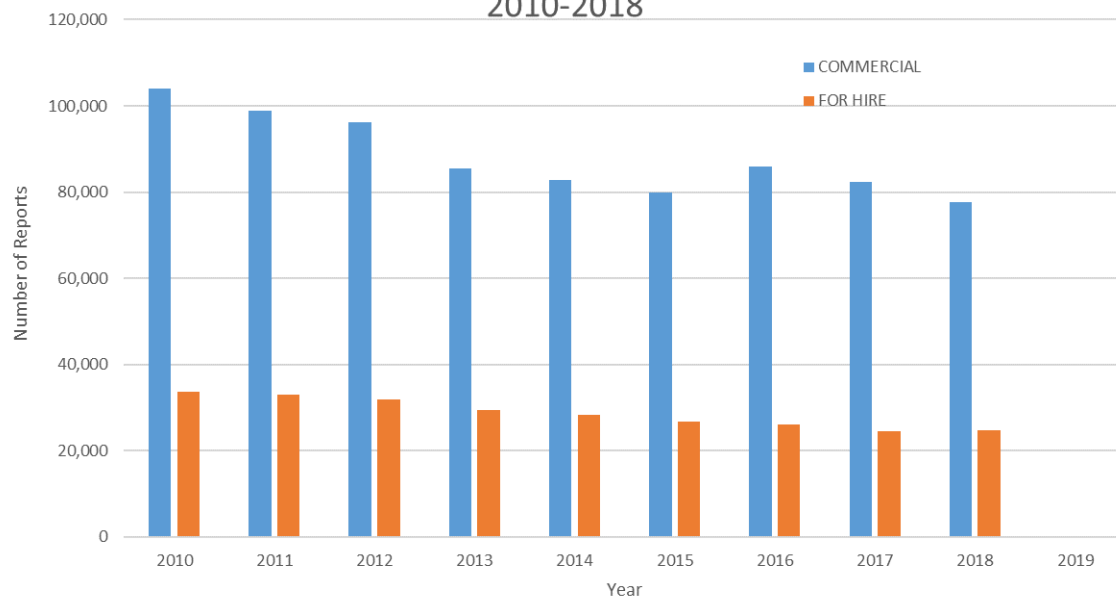
State	State Reporting if Submitting a Federal VTR
Connecticut	
Delaware	State reports are required regardless of federal VTR.
Maine	Most state licenses do not require state reports if federally permitted. Some do require state reports.
Maryland	No state logbook is required IF a federal VTR is completed using any of the reporting options. Permitted species may still require paper records be submitted to the state.
Massachusetts	No state report required IF a federal VTR is completed using any of the reporting options.
New Hampshire	No state report required IF a federal VTR is completed using any of the reporting options. The state of NH may require additional state reporting elements if they are not collected by NOAA Fisheries and requires did not fish (negative) reports.
New Jersey	
New York	No state report required IF a federal VTR is completed using any of the reporting options.
North Carolina	NC does not require harvester reporting from any fishery except for American eel. A federal VTR will not satisfy state mandated dealer reporting required through NC trip ticket program.
Pennsylvania	
Rhode Island	No state report required IF a federal VTR is completed using any of the reporting options.
Virginia	No state report required if harvested offshore landed in Virginia and selling to a federally permitted dealer

IMPORTANT: CONTACT YOUR STATE AGENCY FOR EXACT REQUIREMENTS

For Hire Vessel Trip Reports by submission method, April - December, 2010-2018



Vessel Trip Reports by trip type,
2010-2018



Things to Consider with Electronic Reporting

- If you are participating in the Study Fleet (and using FLDRS) already or are already reporting electronically with another software:
 - Continue what you are doing. You may need to change when you submit your reports (otherwise, you are all set).
- If you are currently submitting paper VTRs:
 - You will need to choose one of the approved systems to submit them electronically;
 - If you have a smartphone or tablet that can connect via wi-fi or cellular then you probably have the equipment that you need.

How Do I Get Started?

You can start submitting electronic VTRs right now if you want. You do not need to wait for a workshop or the Council action to get started.

1. Choose a system.
2. Follow the system vendor's instructions to get started, typically:
 - For a mobile device, download the app from the app store.
 - Have your NOAA permits ready.
 - Watch the vendor's videos and contact them if you have questions/problems.
3. **<http://www.mafmc.org/actions/commercial-evtr-framework>**

What type of device do I need?

Systems are available for:

- Smart Phones
- Tablets (e.g., iPads)
- Laptops/personal computers (most useful for vessels with wheelhouses)

What if I Don't Have Cellular Service or wi-fi While on the Water?

All approved systems must

- Allow data entry without internet connection;
- Store and retrieve reports;
- Have a reporting function and a "summary report" listing dates, times, confirmation numbers, etc. for reports that are submitted.

What if I lose my device or it stops working while on the water?

Law enforcement will treat it just as they currently do any lost or destroyed paper form.

Answers to Some Common Questions

- FLDRS is designed to collect valuable, detailed research data and can be used to submit eVTRs if you are participating in Study Fleet but is not designed to be a stand-alone eVTR system.
- eVTR-only platforms such as GARFO Fish Online and ACCSP eTrips do not track location (as FLDRS might for research purposes).
- NOAA still runs and manages the VTR program and data bases.
- All systems must abide by data confidentiality procedures.
- Not all systems involve a “3rd party” (if that is a concern). FishOnline is a NOAA application and eTrips is a cooperative federal/state application.