

## **Q & A: Required Electronic VTR Reporting for the For-Hire Sector Starting March 12, 2018**

[www.mafmc.org/for-hire-evtr/](http://www.mafmc.org/for-hire-evtr/)

### **Q: What is the regulation?**

**A:** If you are a Charter Boat or Headboat operator holding a permit to fish for a species covered by a Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Plan and are *already* required to submit Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs) to NOAA, you will need to submit them electronically (instead of paper) within 48 hours of landing beginning March 12, 2018. **Nothing else will change** from what is currently required.

### **Q: Who is affected by this regulation?**

**A:** This action impacts any for-hire vessel holding a *federal* Mid-Atlantic Species permit on trips carrying passengers for-hire **regardless of where you are located** (New England, Mid Atlantic, South Atlantic). Mid Atlantic recreational species where federal permits are issued are Atlantic mackerel, Squid, Butterfish, Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, Tilefish, and Bluefish.

### **Q: When will this regulation take effect?**

**A:** This action will take effect on March 12, 2018. All vessels must submit eVTRs in compliance with these regulations for any trips taken on or after this date

### **Q: How can I submit my eVTRs? Where can I find out about NOAA-approved eVTR software applications?**

**A:** These reports can be submitted through handheld electronic devices (i.e. tablet) or through an online web portal on a personal computer. There are free and pay options for any submittal method that you choose. Visit [www.mafmc.org/for-hire-evtr/](http://www.mafmc.org/for-hire-evtr/) for summary information and links to approved software vendors.

### **Q: Do eVTRs need to be completed prior to entering port?**

**A:** Yes. The paper VTRs are *already* required to be filled out (but not submitted) prior to entering port and this requirement will not change with this move to electronic reporting. All approved tablet or smart phone based systems allow entry of trip information while at sea, and without internet connection, for later submission to NOAA upon returning to port.

### **Q: What if I don't have an electronic device onboard my vessel that enables me to submit an eVTR at sea?**

**A:** You must submit your VTR electronically, but if you do not have a suitable device onboard your vessel, you may record the information on a paper VTR and transcribe it onto an eVTR when you are in port. You must submit the eVTR no more than 48 hrs after entering port at the conclusion of each trip.

### **Q: Is training available?**

**A:** Each software vendor is responsible for providing training and support for their system. However, the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council held two workshops in 2017 and two workshops in 2018. A public webinar is scheduled for Friday, March 2, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., (that will be recorded and made available for those who cannot attend) to help for-hire vessel operators prepare for upcoming electronic reporting requirement. To register, visit [www.mafmc.org/for-hire-evtr/](http://www.mafmc.org/for-hire-evtr/).