UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

NMFS Adjusts Highly Migratory Species International Trade Permitting and Reporting

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is modifying permitting and reporting requirements for the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) International Trade Permit (ITP) program to increase program efficacy and enforcement and implement a 2007 International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) recommendation. The main adjustments to the program are as follows:

- Replace the ICCAT bluefin tuna statistical document program with the bluefin catch document (BCD) program, with additional reporting requirements for certain re-exports;
- Require that shark fin importers/exporters/re-exporters obtain the HMS ITP;
- Require that a U.S. resident agent or corporate surety provider obtain the HMS ITP when a foreign entity is importing/exporting/re-exporting covered product;
- Adjust reporting deadlines from "postmark dates" to date of receipt;
- Implement the definition of "import" in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act;
- Incorporate recently updated Harmonized Tariff Schedule codes;
- Allow certain, non-original reports to be submitted by fax or electronically.

These changes will be effective July 02, 2008. However, some countries that participate in ICCAT are implementing the BCD program sooner and therefore; foreign importers may require BCDs prior to this date. NMFS will contact HMS ITP permit holders via fax and/or mail with further instructions in the near future. Applications for the HMS ITP can be downloaded from http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ITP/ or requested by calling 727-824-5326.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of Federal Register. For further information on this final rule and its requirements, contact Dianne Stephan at 978-281-9260. Copies of the final rule and Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analyses are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, One Blackburn Dr., Gloucester, MA 01930 (phone: 978-281-9260, fax: 978-281-9340). The information will also be posted on the HMS website at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ITP/

Emily Menashes
for Alan D. Risenhoover
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

JUN 03 2008
Date

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