



NOAA
FISHERIES

Data Collections and Entry Errors

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July 1, 2014

Where Do We See Data Errors

- All data has errors
 - Focus on errors in vessel and dealer reported data

How does NMFS communicate errors?

- Mail
- Email
- Phone call
- Port agent

Types of Errors

Fields left blank

- Forgotten
- Not available at the time of entry
- No answer
- Purposely left blank

Typographical, transcription

- Manual entry
 - Industry copying from other sources
 - Data entry back at NMFS

Incorrect values

- Instructions are unclear or confusing
 - Example – When compared with observer data, vessel reported gear quantity on gillnet gear is 3 times higher than matching observer trips. Vessels might be reporting total gear fished or onboard?

Missing data

- Entire vessel trip report or dealer transaction is missing

Cost of Errors

- Resources in finding and researching errors
- Cost of mailing VTR send backs
- Resources in correcting errors
- Resources for the end user finding, requesting corrections, understanding the data
- Data unusable

Ramifications of Errors

- Delay in timeliness of data (send back could cause delay in entry)
- Inconsistent results in data
- Mismatched and imputed elements of trips
- Incorrect catch accounting
- Rely on other metrics to calculate effort
- Incorrect catch at area allocation
- The error may not be properly corrected after data submitted
- Implications to other data systems (split VTRs ->dealer, observer records)
- Assumptions may be used
- Some data is just not used because of questionable quality

Effort to Catch and Prevent Errors

- **We need to understand why errors are occurring so we can minimize them and avoid the consequences**
- Current efforts:
 - Improving reporting instructions
 - Ongoing QA/QC team audits
 - Catches a lot of errors, but still a big expense
- Future efforts:
 - Electronic reporting:
 - Allows for self auditing
 - Facilitates automatic quality control (valid data ranges)
 - Catches errors prior to entry
 - Eliminates key punching and data entry (pulldowns)