



## BACK STORY

NOAA Fisheries' Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP, is a state-regional-federal collaboration for the collection of recreational fishing information. MRIP is working to make improvements to the way saltwater recreational fishing data are collected, analyzed, and reported.

MRIP is currently working to improve for-hire fishing estimates by replacing random sampling of charter vessels with a complete census of all for-hire trips. Creating effective electronic reporting systems to be used instead of paper logbooks is a key element of this transition. Information on all MRIP projects related to this effort is located at: [www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/pims/#view=public\\_projects](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/pims/#view=public_projects).

NOAA experts have worked together with for-hire operators, state partners, fisheries managers, independent statisticians, and others to develop this road map. It details the requirements, process, and timeline for designing and certifying census-based electronic trip reporting systems that can be implemented by regional data collection partners pursuant to MRIP Regional Implementation Plans.

Learn more at [countryfish.noaa.gov](http://countryfish.noaa.gov).

# DEVELOPING FOR-HIRE ELECTRONIC LOGBOOKS: A STATE-REGIONAL-FEDERAL COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

## History of Key For-Hire Research and Pilot Studies

- 2006** National Research Council recommends moving to mandatory logbook reporting in the for-hire sector.
- 2008** MRIP creates an interdisciplinary For-Hire Working Group. In consultation with independent experts, the Group identifies and recommends best practices that include the use of logbooks as the preferred trip reporting method, along with a number of important complementary measures such as complete vessel and site registries, validation methods, enforcement strategies, etc.
- 2010** Gulf of Mexico pilot study is launched to determine the feasibility of a charter boat catch census using electronic reporting combined with dockside validation.
- 2012** Southeast pilot study expands electronic reporting to all participants in the Southeast Region Headboat Survey, and supports creation of an online input system with mobile apps.
- 2014** Technical Subcommittee of the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Councils recommends building upon previous work to institute a census-based for-hire electronic reporting system in conjunction with validation, enforcement, and other measures.
- 2015** Together with state and regional partners, as well as for-hire operators, MRIP creates a comprehensive road map for developing and certifying survey designs for validated, census-based for-hire electronic reporting.

## Minimum Requirements for Creating an Effective Program

One critical outcome of the extensive collaborative process of research, literature reviews, pilot studies, and analysis has been a consensus among managers, scientists, and operators on a core set of requirements that must be met for any census-based electronic logbook program to be successful.

- Work toward achieving the goal of developing a complete census of all participants in the fishery.
- Include procedures for expanding estimates to account for any mis-reporting or non-reporting.
- Maintain a complete registry of all for-hire vessels and operators.
- Require mandatory weekly trip-level electronic reporting; build in flexibility to require more frequent reporting when necessary and for operators to declare periods of inactivity in advance.
- Allow the use of multiple authorized applications or devices for reporting, as long as they meet data quality standards.
- Implement accountability measures to ensure compliance, and develop compliance tracking procedures that balance timeliness with available staff and funding resources.
- Use standardized procedures to validate electronic logbook data.
- Reduce (or preferably eliminate) paper reporting and eliminate duplication to ease operator reporting burdens.
- Maintain paper-based reporting options for catastrophic conditions.
- Closely coordinate design and implementation with states, Regional Offices, Science Centers, and Fisheries Information Networks.

# DEVELOPING FOR-HIRE ELECTRONIC LOGBOOKS: THE MRIP ROAD MAP

## TASKS AND TIMELINE

### TASK 1

Complete and certify one or more for-hire **electronic trip reporting designs**, with validation and compliance assurance provisions.

### TASK 2

Develop a clear and direct process for making MRIP-certified designs available to **regional partners for implementation** when identified as preferred methods.

### TASK 3

Support **development of electronic reporting systems** that can be used to implement the MRIP-certified survey designs.

### ULTIMATE GOAL

Complete the process of developing and certifying census-based electronic trip reporting designs in for-hire fisheries to enable regional partners to implement these methods if they wish to do so, following necessary transition planning, benchmarking, and calibration.

