

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
NORTHEAST REGION LOGBOOK FAMILY OF FORMS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0212

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires that conservation and management measures must prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield for each fishery. These measures must be based on the best scientific information available. Section 303(1)(5) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act allows the Secretary to collect specific types of information that would identify catch by species and other information regarding the time and location of fishing effort. This information is most often collected in the form of Vessel Trip Reports (VTR).

Amendment 11 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (MSB) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and its associated RIN 0648-AX05, among other measures, establish a 3-tiered limited access program for the Atlantic mackerel (mackerel) fishery. Vessels that qualify for a Tier 3 will be allowed a relatively large mackerel possession limit (100,000 lb), but the total catch for Tier 3 will be capped at 7% of the commercial quota. Amendment 11 modifies reporting requirements for Tier 3 to collect more accurate, timely data, which is necessary to monitor vessels with a large possession limit accessing a relatively small quota. In particular, Amendment 11 will revise the reporting frequency of VTRs from monthly submissions to weekly submissions.

Modifications to the VTR reporting frequency will only apply to vessels permitted with Tier 3 mackerel permits. All other mackerel permit categories created in Amendment 11 (i.e. Tier 1, Tier 2, and open access) will be required to submit VTRs on a monthly basis; this is unchanged from the current VTR requirement for mackerel permits. The burden and costs associated with Tier 3 vessels submitting VTRs on a weekly basis have been changed to reflect this requirement.

Amendment 11 estimates that 329 vessels will qualify for a Tier 3 limited access mackerel permit, and will be subject to the weekly VTR submission requirement. There will be an additional 13,160 annual responses (additional 40 responses per vessel (329 * 40)) and 1,151.5 hours (additional 3 hours, 30 minutes per vessel (329 * 3.5)) annually. As VTRs are submitted though the mail, this provision will cost the public an additional \$0.44 per item for postage; accordingly, the public cost will increase by \$5,790.40 (additional \$.44 per stamp (13,160 * \$.44)) or \$17.60 per vessel annually.