

**Request Form for Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)
Power-Down Exemption on Charter Vessels and Headboats
in the Gulf of Mexico
Reef Fish and Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fisheries**

Regulations implementing the requirements for location tracking devices by federally permitted charter vessels and headboats in the Gulf of Mexico allow vessel owners or operators to discontinue the use of cellular- or satellite-based VMS units for a minimum period of three days, provided they obtain a VMS power-down exemption letter from the Southeast Office of Law Enforcement (SE OLE). To request this exemption letter, fill out the appropriate information below and submit this completed form to either address below.

- nmfs.ole.sero@noaa.gov
- NOAA/NMFS, Southeast Office of Law Enforcement, 263 13th Avenue South, Suite 109, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Vessel Information

Vessel Name: _____ **Permit Number:** _____

**State Registration Number or
USCG Documentation Number:** _____

Vessel Port Location During VMS Power-Down: _____

Exemption Period

Date VMS to be Turned Off: _____

Date VMS to be Turned On: _____

Reason for VMS Power-Down (optional): _____

NOTE: VMS units must remain operational until a letter of exemption from the Southeast Office of Law Enforcement is received. Upon receipt of the letter of exemption, the vessel owner or operator may discontinue VMS unit operation for the period requested above. A vessel owner or operator may request changes to the time period for this exemption through a written request to the Southeast Office of Law Enforcement, provided the minimum deactivation period of three days is met. Vessels that wish to leave the port specified above during the exemption period for purposes other than engaging in fishing operations may do so, provided the VMS unit is turned on and is operational during transiting according to the regulations at 50 CFR 622.26(b)(5) and 622.374(b)(5). Upon reaching another port, the VMS unit may once again be turned off for the duration of the exemption period specified above.

Public Burden Statement - A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0648-0770. Without this approval, we could not conduct this survey or information collection. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are mandatory to obtain benefits. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, Attn: PRA Officer.

Privacy Act Statement - Authority: The collection of this information is authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C 1801 *et seq.*). Purpose: In order to manage U.S. fisheries, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requires the use of registrations by participants in the United States. Information on NMFS forms can include vessel owner contact information and vessel descriptive information. Permit holder information may be used as sampling frames for surveys, as part of fishery management council analysis to support its decisions. Routine Uses: The Commerce Department will use this form to inform its decision about whether to issue approval for a vessel to turn off

their VMS unit consistent with the regulations at 50 CFR 622.26(b)(5)(ii)(D), 622.28(d), and 622.374(b)(5)(iv)(D), and to restart VMS unit operation for Gulf of Mexico charter vessel/headboat federal permit holders. Making a false statement on this form is punishable by law. Disclosure of this information is permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. Section 552a), to be shared within NMFS offices, to coordinate monitoring and management of sustainability of fisheries and protected resources, as well as with the applicable state or regional marine fisheries commissions and international organizations. Disclosure of this information is also subject to all of the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notice COMMERCE/NOAA-19, Permits and Registrations for the United States Federally Regulated Fisheries. Disclosure: Furnishing this information is mandatory to obtain benefits. Failure to provide complete and accurate information will prevent the determination of eligibility.



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