VESSEL TRIP REPORT (VTR) INFORMATION PACKET

This VTR Information Packet contains general information about VTRs, instructions on how to properly fill out VTRs, and tables for gear, species, and fishing area codes.

Who should be submitting VTRs to DEC?
The vessel trip report (VTR) forms in the VTR logbook are used to record and document catch landed in New York State by New York State licensed fishermen. Fishermen who hold a state food fishing license, a food fish landing license, a marine bait permit, a menhaden purse seine permit, a lobster permit, a lobster landing permit, a lobster bait gill net permit, a crab permit, a horseshoe crab permit, a whelk permit, or a Party/Charter Boat permit are all required to complete and submit VTRs, documenting all species landed and other fishing trip details. New York State licensed fishermen who also hold federal fishing permits should follow the reporting requirements specified by NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and complete a "Federal Confirmation" form for New York State. Under special permit reporting requirements, federal permit holders must submit a copy of their federal reports with commercial striped bass and horseshoe crab landings to DEC. Federal reports with landings other than striped bass or horseshoe crab **DO NOT** need to be submitted to DEC.

When should VTRs be submitted to DEC?
VTRs should be submitted monthly, no later than the 15th of the following month. For example, VTRs for fishing trips landed in June should be submitted to the DEC by July 15th. Certain fisheries (like horseshoe crab) or special programs (such as the Research Set-Aside Program) may specify more frequent submissions of VTRs for quota management or program purposes. Fishermen must also submit a VTR or "Not Fishing" form for the month or months they do not fish.

Why do we request fishermen to complete and submit VTRs?
Marine resource management agencies, such as DEC Division of Marine Resources and NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, collect, process, and share fisheries data with other agencies. The data are used for quota management, fishery stock assessments, protected species management and economic analyses. The collection and processing of fishery data are vital components in the development of fisheries management strategies.

Accurate data are required for the development of good fisheries management decisions. Consequently, it is **very** important that VTRs be filled out accurately and completely and signed. When DEC staff come upon blank or empty boxes on submitted VTRS, they must look to the fishermen for the missing answers. If a fisherman submits a VTR that is missing information, he will likely receive an email or telephone call from DEC staff looking for the missing information. VTRs that are missing a signature will be returned to the fisherman to be signed.

You should also know that the fisheries data you submit to DEC are kept private and confidential. New York State law and DEC regulations require that fisheries data collected from permit holders must be kept confidential and not disclosed to unauthorized users. Data that is released by DEC is in a summary or aggregate form, which does not reveal the identity of the fisherman.

Do you have questions about VTRs? Please contact us at one of the telephone numbers below:

VTR Fisheries Data Management	631-444-0857	or	631-444-0473
Commercial Fishing Quotas	631-444-5621	or	631-444-5636
Crustaceans and Horseshoe Crabs	631-444-5636	or	631-444-0444
Striped Bass	631-444-0476	or	631-444-0473
Party and Charter Boats	631-444-0857	or	631-444-0473
Weekly Fluke Limit Program	631-444-5621	or	631-444-5636

INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions are intended to help you complete your vessel trip report (VTR) form for New York State permit holders. If you have any questions or need further information, please call the DEC Fisheries Data Management Office at 631-444-0857. Please send completed trip reports to: ATTN- Trip Reports, 205 North Belle Mead Road, Suite 1, East Setauket, NY 11733. You may also fax your trip reports to 631-444-5628.

DID NOT FISH DURING check box: You must submit at least one VTR per month, even if you did not fish. If you did not fish for an entire month, check the box and write the month(s) you did not fish (and year, for clarity). You may write multiple months in the blank space if you did not fish for more than one month. All the months should be in the same calendar year.

Box 1. VESSEL NAME: Enter the name of the vessel used for the particular fishing trip. If you used a vessel that is not named, enter "NOT NAMED" in Box 1. If you fished on another person's boat, enter the name of the other person's vessel on your VTR. If you did not use a vessel (fished from shore/pier/dock), check off "FROM SHORE" in Box 1.

Box 2. STATE REG. NO. OR USCG DOC. #: Enter the state registration number or the USCG documentation number of the vessel identified in Box 1. If the vessel is a small unregistered dingy, kayak, or dory, enter "UNREGISTERED." If you didn't use a vessel, check off "FROM SHORE" in Box 1.

Box 3. Enter the number for your Food Fishing, Non-resident Food Fish, or Food Fish Landing permit.

Box 4. Enter the number for your Commercial Crab, Non-resident Crab, or Horseshoe Crab permit.

Box 5. Enter the number for your Whelk or Non-resident Whelk permit.

Box 6. Enter the permit number for your Commercial Lobster, Non-resident Lobster, Lobster Landing or Lobster Bait Gill Net permit.

Box 7. Enter the number for your Marine Bait or Menhaden Purse Seine permit.

Box 8. Enter the number for your Party or Charter Boat permit.

Box 9. DATE/TIME SAILED: Enter the month, day, year, and time (using the 24 hour clock/military time) you left port. For example, January 1, 2015 at 4:15 PM should be recorded as 1/1/15 for the date and 16:15 for the time. If you are fishing from shore, enter the date and time that you left your home to travel to your fishing site.

Box 10. TRIP TYPE: Check the box for the appropriate trip type: Commercial, Party, Charter, Weekly Fluke, or RSA.

Box 11. No. of CREW: Enter the total number of crew members, including the captain. Enter 1 if you are fishing by yourself. If there is more than one person on the vessel, always include yourself in the total number. Party and charter vessels should include all crew members or employees on board for the trip.

Box 12. No. of ANGLERS: **This is for Party and Charter trips only.** Enter the total number of anglers, excluding the vessel's crew.

Box 13. GEAR FISHED: Enter the code for the gear used to fish. Please use the three letter codes provided in **Table 1: *Fishing Gear Codes***. <u>If you use more than one gear type during a trip, a separate vessel trip report form must be completed for each gear type</u>. If you are fishing with a gear not listed in Table 1, write in the gear you used.

Box 14. NET MESH/ENTRANCE or RING SIZE: Enter the net mesh/entrance or ring size of the gear being fished. If you are not certain how to fill out this box, refer to **Table 2: *Fishing Effort: Mesh/Ring Size and Other Gear Details*** for clarification. On the table, use the first column to identify the three-letter code for the gear you are using and refer to the second column, "#14 Mesh/Ring Size (inches)," for the information you should enter.

If more than one mesh/ring size was used in a haul (for example, multiple mesh sizes in a string of gillnets), enter the average per haul. If you changed mesh/ring size during this trip (for example, changing from a large mesh trawl to a small mesh trawl), **complete a separate VTR** for each mesh/ring size used, including the catch associated with each mesh/ring size.

Pot fishers should enter the size of the entrance to the pot (hoop, ring, or opening size).

Box 15. QUANTITY OF GEAR: Enter the amount of gear being fished per haul. Using **Table 2**, identify your three-letter gear code and refer to the third column, "#15 Quantity of Gear," for the information you should enter. If more than one of this gear type was used during the trip, enter the average quantity of gear used per haul.

Hook and line (rod and reel, hand line, jig) fishers should enter the total number of hooks used per line.

Pot fishers should enter the number of pots per string.

Box 16. SIZE/LENGTH OF GEAR or TOTAL # OF POTS or # OF FISHING LINES: Enter the size of the gear being fished. Use **Table 2** to locate your gear used and refer to the fourth column, labeled "#16 Size of Gear," to determine what information you should enter. If several gear sizes were used, enter the average gear size used per haul.

Pot fishers should enter the total number of pots they fished for the trip.

Hook and line (rod and reel, hand line, jig) fishers should enter the total number of lines used.

Box 17. NO. OF HAULS: Enter the total number of tows, sets, or strings you hauled or lifted as appropriate for your gear. Please refer again to **Table 2: *Fishing Effort: Mesh/Ring Size and Other Gear Details*** and use the fifth column, "#17 No. of Hauls," to determine the information you should enter based on your gear type.

Box 18. CHART AREA: Enter the three digit NMFS sub area code for the area fished. Use **Chart 1: *Fishing Areas within New York State*** to locate the sub area where you were fishing. Choose the code for the area that best represents where you were fishing. Please use the three digit codes provided and do not write general areas (for example, use code 161 instead of writing Hempstead Bay).

Please Note: **Fill out a separate VTR form for each chart area, gear type, or mesh/ring size fished during a trip.**

Box 19. LMA: **This is for fishers with Commercial Lobster, Non-resident Lobster, and Lobster Landing licenses only.** Enter the Lobster Management Area (LMA) for the area fished.

Box 20. LATITUDE/LONGITUDE: Enter a single set of latitude and longitude bearings (degrees and minutes) where most of your fishing effort occurred. If you know the NMFS chart area code, you may use **Table 3: *Latitude and Longitude of NMFS Chart Areas*** to determine the latitude and longitude of the location of where you were fishing. Conversely, you can use Table 3 to determine the NMFS area code if you know the latitude and longitude of your fishing location.

Box 21. AVERAGE TOW/SOAK or FISHING TIME: Depending on the gear you used, you will enter the average tow time per haul, the total time the gear soaked, or the estimated time you spent fishing

(not including travel time). The following information should help you determine the amount of time you should enter.

- **Mobile Gear (trawls, dredges, etc.)**: Enter the average amount of time from the time the gear is completely hooked up to when the gear is completely hauled back.

- **Fixed Gear (gillnets, long lines, pots, etc.)**: Enter the total time that the gear is soaked, from when the first piece of gear is deployed until the last piece of gear is hauled back.

- **Rod and Reel/Hand line**: Enter the total average time (hours and minutes) lines were actually fishing. Please do not include travel time.

- **Diving**: Enter the dive time.

- **Harpoons, Hand Gather**: Enter the total amount of time spent searching for targeted species.

Box 22. AVG. DEPTH: Enter the average depth fished in fathoms. One fathom is equal to six feet.

Box 23. SPECIES CODE: Enter the appropriate code for each species caught during your trip. Use the letter codes provided in **Table 5: *Species Code***. If a species is caught that is not identified in Table 5, please write in the species name.

For horseshoe crabs, please enter the species code provided in Table 5 followed by either 'F' or 'M' to indicate female or male horseshoe crabs.

Box 24. KEPT: Please enter the amount of each species that was kept and landed during your trip. For commercial fishing trips, enter the **weight, in pounds**, of each species kept during your trip in the POUNDS column.

Please note that for certain species there are different reporting requirements. On a commercial fishing trip for striped bass (STB), you must enter **both the pounds and count of the striped bass** you caught. On a commercial fishing trip for horseshoe crabs, you must enter a **separate count for female and for male horseshoe crabs** you keep.

For **Party/Charter trips**, enter the **count of each species kept** during the trip in the COUNT column.

Box 25. DISCARDED: Please record the amount of each species that you discard ("throw back") or do not keep. For commercial trips, enter the weight, in pounds, of each species discarded during your trip in the POUNDS column. On a commercial fishing trip for striped bass, please enter both the pounds and count of the striped bass you do not keep. On a commercial fishing trip for horseshoe crabs, enter the count for female and/or male horseshoe crabs you do not keep.

For Party/Charter trips, enter the count of each species discarded during the trip in the COUNT column.

Box 26. DEALER PERMIT NO.: Enter the state permit number (or federal permit number if you do not know the dealer's state permit) of each dealer purchasing your catch. If all species caught during your trip are sold to the same dealer, only enter the dealer permit number for the first species and draw a line down through the following DEALER PERMIT NO. lines.

If you are selling to more than one dealer, please divide the landings onto separate lines and enter the dealer permit number on the line corresponding to the portion sold to that dealer (please refer to the sample SVTR at the end of the packet).

For portions of your catch that you do not sell directly to a dealer, enter the appropriate code from **Table 4** located below:

Table 4: Miscellaneous Codes for Box 26

Code	Disposition
99998	Used for home or crew consumption
00000	Sold for cash, or barter
00001	Seized for violations
00002	Sold to another vessel for bait, or retained for bait
00004	Future sale (do not report this catch on a future VTR)

Party/Charter Boats: For any catch kept from a party and charter boat, enter code 99998 to indicate that the catch was kept by the anglers on board. If everything was thrown back, draw a line through Box 26 and write "DISCARDED" in Box 27.

Box 27. DEALER NAME or REASON KEPT: Enter the name of the dealer who purchased each species of your catch for this trip. If all species for the trip are sold to the same dealer, only enter the dealer name for the first species and draw a line down through the following DEALER NAME lines. If you sell to more than one dealer, please list the dealers' names on the lines corresponding to the particular species or portion sold to that dealer (please refer to the sample VTR at the end of this packet).

If landings are not sold to a dealer please refer to **Table 4** and indicate what was done with the catch, i.e. Retained for Bait, Sold for Bait, Sold for Cash, Discarded, etc.

Party/Charter Boats: For party and charter trips, you can leave Box 27 blank for the species kept, since nothing can be sold, but please write "DISCARDED" for species where none were kept.

Box 28. DATE SOLD: Enter the month, day and year that each species of your catch for this trip was sold. If all species for the trip are sold on the same date, only enter the date sold for the first species and draw a line down through the additional DATE SOLD lines. If you kept species for home or crew consumption or for future sale, you can leave Box 28 blank.

Box 29. STRIPED BASS TAG SERIAL NUMBERS USED: Enter the individual striped bass tag serial numbers, or the range of tag serial numbers, that were used on the trip. This should not be the entire series of tags allotted to you, unless you, in fact, used all of your tags during the single trip.

Box 30. PORT and STATE LANDED: Enter the name of the port and state where any offloading of catch occurred or the trip was ended/ landed. For fishing from shore, enter the town and state where you were fishing.

Box 31. DATE LANDED/TIME LANDED: Enter the month, day, year, and time (using the 24 hour clock/military time) you arrived in each port listed.

Box 32. NAME AS IT APPEARS ON THE PERMIT: Print the permit holder's name. <u>If the permit belongs to a business or corporation and not you personally, you must print the business or corporation name.</u>

Box 33. AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE and DATE: Signature of the person responsible for the truth and accuracy of the VTR. Enter the date the report was signed.