



# Policy engagements in support of Owner Operator

## Vessel Registration



Link to online  
engagement  
site and to  
complete  
questionnaire



# Purpose

The purpose of this session is to :

- Provide **background** and **context** for how **Vessel Registration Policy** supports Owner Operator.
- To **seek your views and feedback** on how to better support inshore Owner Operators, through **Vessel Registration Policy**.

# What is Vessel Registration?

- Vessel registration is **the process by which a licence holder registers a vessel by linking it to a licence or enterprise.**
- DFO's *Fishery (General) Regulations* require that all vessels are registered.
  - *S. 12 states "The operator of a vessel in respect of which a vessel registration card has been issued shall have the vessel registration card and the licence authorizing the use of the vessel on board the vessel whenever the vessel is engaged as a fishing vessel and shall produce them on the demand of a fishery officer or fishery guardian."*
- Licence holders **are not required to own their own vessel(s).**

# Why do we have vessel registration?

- **Vessels need to be linked to a licence or enterprise.**
- Upon registration, the vessel owner is assigned a Vessel Registration Number (VRN), identifying it as a commercial fishing vessel.
- **A VRN allows the Department to connect specific vessels to fishing activities authorized through the licence.**
- Vessel registration aims to ensure that only approved vessels, regardless of ownership, are being personally operated by the licence holder.\*

# How is registration handled currently?

- Each region has set limits on how much time a vessel must be registered before it can be registered to another licence holder.
- **Vessel registration durations reflect historical practices and operational requirements**, as set out in regional or national policies.
  - In some settings, such as ITQ fisheries, licence holders may register vessels more frequently throughout a year.
- Regardless of duration, **licence holders are expected to be onboard the vessel and “personally fish the licence”**, as per Owner Operator (AFR.19(2) and MPFR. 29.2(2)).

# Current Vessel Registration Duration by Region

Region	Gulf	Maritimes	Newfoundland and Labrador	Quebec
Duration (in days)	0	30	365	30

# Concerns for Owner Operator

- Vessels are **a major capital investment and/or expense** for **Owner Operators** and can have a direct effect on their independence through agreements or arrangements with third parties (processors, buyers, etc.)
- Some concerns have been raised that vessel arrangements, as well as vessel leasing agreements, may be allowing third parties (processors, buyers, etc.) to exercise control or influence over licence holders.
- As part of the Inshore Regulations, **all agreements and arrangements related to vessels may be reviewed by DFO to determine control or influence**, and must comply with Owner Operator and cannot be used to undermine a licence holder's independence.

# Newfoundland and Labrador 12-month rule

- In the NL Region, **the 12-month rule applies to vessels registered in the less than 65' fleet.**
  - Once a primary vessel is registered it may not be replaced for a period of 12 months,
  - A registered primary vessel may be re-registered to another licence holder during the 12-month period. However, **it may not be re-registered by the original licence holder for the remainder of the 12 month period.**
- The 12-month rule does not apply in the case of a complete enterprise reissuance.

# Newfoundland and Labrador Calendar Rule

- In the NL Region, **the Calendar rule applies to vessels registered in the less than 50' fleet for NAFO Divisions 2+3KLPs.**
- Licence holders may not remove and/or re-register another vessel for the remainder of the calendar year if the vessel has reported landings in the current year.
- Does not apply in NAFO Divisions 4R and 3Pn; does not apply in the case of a complete enterprise reissuance.

# Engagement Question

Do you have any concerns with the current DFO vessel registration duration in your region?

If so, what are they?

# Engagement Question

Are different vessel registration durations across Atlantic Canada and Quebec of concern from your perspective?

# Engagement Question

Do vessel registration durations, in your view, have an effect on control and influence over a licence holder through an arrangement and/or agreement for vessel services (for example: leasing and renting vessels etc...)?

# Engagement Question

What other practices involving vessels are of concern from your perspective?

# Engagement Question

If DFO's vessel registration duration was changed, would you still need a secondary vessel (NL only)?

# Thank You

## QUESTIONS?