

PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT

The contractor shall furnish the necessary personnel, material, equipment, services and facilities (except as otherwise specified) to perform the following Performance Work Statement:

FISHERY OBSERVER SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THE ALASKA FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER, NORTH PACIFIC OBSERVER PROGRAM

BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) is the research branch of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) responsible for research on living marine resources in the coastal oceans off Alaska. The mission of the AFSC is to plan, develop, and manage scientific research programs which generate the best scientific data available for understanding, managing, and conserving the region's living marine resources.

AFSC scientists compile and analyze broad databases on fishery, oceanography, marine mammal, and environmental research. These data are used to develop policies and strategies for fisheries management within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, monitor and assess the health of the region's marine mammal populations, and develop the scientific understanding and predictive methodologies needed to implement NOAA Fisheries' ecosystem approach to management. Research programs at the AFSC are managed and conducted through the Resource Assessment and Conservation Engineering (RACE) Division, Resource Ecology and Fisheries Management (REFM) Division, Marine Mammal Laboratory (MML) Division, Fisheries Monitoring and Analysis (FMA) Division, and the Auke Bay Laboratory (ABL).

The FMA's North Pacific Observer Program (NPOP) is responsible for collecting fishery-dependent data used for a wide variety of purposes including: (1) stock assessment; (2) monitoring groundfish quotas; (3) monitoring bycatch of groundfish and non-groundfish species; (4) assessing the effects of the groundfish fishery on other living marine resources and their habitat; and (5) assessing methods intended to improve the conservation and management of groundfish and other living marine resources. Since the NPOP's inception in 1990, vessels fishing in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska were required to meet observer coverage levels specified in regulation ([subpart E of 50 CFR part 679](#)) and to procure the observers from certified observer providers.

In October 2010, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (Council) took final action to restructure the NPOP for vessels and processors that are determined to need less than 100% observer coverage in Federal fisheries. The Council recommended restructuring the NPOP such that NOAA Fisheries would contract directly with observer companies to deploy observers according to a scientifically valid sampling and deployment plan. The contract would be funded through a fee paid by industry equal to 1.25 – 2.0% of the ex-vessel value of the landings included under the program. The changes recommended by the Council were fully implemented in January 2013.

In addition to FMA's collection of fishery-dependent data, the RACE Division conducts quantitative fishery surveys and related ecological and oceanographic research to measure and describe the distribution and abundance of commercially important fish and crab stocks in the eastern Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska and to investigate ways to reduce bycatch, bycatch mortality and the effects of fishing on habitat.

RACE scientists work aboard NOAA vessels and commercial fishing vessels that are chartered to conduct the survey operations. During any given year, RACE deploys scientific crew aboard a combination of as many as six NOAA and charter vessels simultaneously during the survey season. As necessary, these surveys also require fishery observer support to assist in data collection.

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SCOPE AND OUTCOMES

The Contractor shall provide and retain the necessary qualified personnel, services, and facilities (except as otherwise specified) to perform quality environmental, biological, and fisheries operations data collection for the FMA's North Pacific Observer Program (NPOP) and the Resource Assessment and Conservation Engineering (RACE) Division of the Alaska Fisheries Science Center (RACE) Division. Data quality is of the utmost importance. Quality data collection and recording are expected to increase the critical information gathered for stock assessments to manage the species.

1.1. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

In addition to the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) clauses referred to and listed in the Request for Proposal (RFP), the Contractor shall comply with the Federal Regulations, Acts, Executive Orders, Special Publications, Guidelines, NOAA Directives and Policies and standards listed below. This listing is not all-inclusive and is not intended to relieve the Contractor of its responsibilities for identification of applicable statutes, regulations and procedures and compliance therewith, when performing work under this PWS.

- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery, Management, and Conservation Act (MSA)
- Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- Data Quality Control Act (P.L. 106-514)
- Information Technology Security Policy
- Fisheries Management Plans (FMP)
- Biological Opinions (BO)
- Take Reduction Team (TRT)
- NOAA Safety Standards
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Service Contract Act (SCA)
- Department of Labor Wage Determinations
- Applicable Federal and State labor laws
- Observer Health and Safety regulations
- Federal, state, and local safety regulations
- Merchant Marine Act (Jones Act) and General Maritime Law
- U.S. Longshore and Harbor Worker's Compensation Act

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The Contractor's performance shall be evaluated against the performance measures cited in this contract.

1.2. MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

1.2.1. Project Management

The Contractor shall perform all Project Management functions including contract, technical, personnel, administrative, logistic, quality, business, and other management functions that are necessary to execute the total effort required by this PWS. The Contractor shall provide all personnel and other resources, except as otherwise specified in this PWS, necessary to accomplish these functions. The contractor shall develop and submit to the Government a Project Management Plan for approval that details how the contractor will manage the contract and its Observers. The contractor shall submit their final Project Management Plan to the Government within 14 days after contract award. Updates to the Project Management Plan are required annually within 30 days after the contract anniversary date.

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1.2.2. Project Manager

The Contractor shall assign a Project Manager to be the focal point for communications between the Government and the Contractor. The assigned Project Manager shall be designated as Key Personnel for this contract. The Project Manager shall be responsible for managing personnel resources such that emergencies and other short term ad hoc requirements are responded to without disruption and/or degradation of other services. The Project Manager shall collaborate with all parties (Government and vessel owners and operators) as necessary to resolve issues at the lowest possible level.

The Project Manager shall have the authority to represent the Contractor on all issues related to the contract.

1.2.3. Management Reporting and Coordination

The Contractor shall prepare and submit to the Contracting Officer (CO) and the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) a monthly Status Report, as listed in the contract that provides monthly information on project status to include monthly and year to date information, contract financial expenditures (e.g., partial and full days billed, non-coverage day costs, travel expenditures, per diem costs), Observer recruitment and retention monthly status and any problems or issues encountered and other information as requested by the COR.

1.2.4. Performance Management

The Contractor shall manage the contract to meet the performance measures and or metrics specified in SECTION 4 - CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS, OR ATTACHMENTS and throughout the PWS.

1.2.5. Quality Control Management

The Contractor shall develop and submit to the Government a Contractor Quality Control Plan, as referenced above, which details how the Contractor will ensure effectiveness and efficiency of data collection efforts as well as the quality of data collected by its Observers. The draft Quality Control Plan should be furnished with the Contractor's proposal and evaluated by the Government. The final, approved version of the QCP shall be provided to the Contracting Officer within fourteen (14) calendar days of contract award. The Contractor shall further establish, implement, and maintain a Quality Control Management program to ensure consistent quality of all work products and services performed under this contract. Updates or revisions may be required annually within 30 days after the contract anniversary date.

1.3. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS – FMA OBSERVERS

1.3.1. Observer Recruitment and Retention Requirements

The recruitment and retention of fully qualified Observers is essential to successful performance under the contract. Observers shall be employees of the Contractor. The Contractor shall provide sufficient qualified Observers to complete the sea day coverage requirement by selecting the best candidates. At least 95% of new Observer recruits from the Contractor shall pass the required training course (including safety training) and the required physical examination. The Contractor shall manage its Observers to retain both experienced Observers and new Observers. Contractor performance in this will be measured in accordance with the performance measurement listed in the contract.

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1.3.2. Observer Qualification Requirements

1.3.2.1. Education/Experience

Observer candidates must have: 1) a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university with a major in one of the natural sciences, 2) successfully completed a minimum of 30 semester hours or equivalent in applicable biological sciences with extensive use of dichotomous keys in at least one course, 3) successfully completed at least one undergraduate course each in math and statistics with a minimum of 5 semester hours total for both; and 4) computer skills that enable the candidate to work competently with standard database software and computer hardware.

1.3.2.2. Training Requirements

Observer candidates must complete a three (3) week training course conducted by the Government. Successful completion of training by an observer candidate consists of meeting all attendance and conduct standards issued in writing at the start of training; meeting all performance standards issued at the start of training for assignments, tests, and other evaluation tools, and completing all other training requirements established by the FMA's NPOP. Candidates must also successfully complete the safety training that includes on-land and in-water tests of immersion suit and life raft use.

1.3.2.3. Conflict of Interest

Observers:

- 1) Must not have a direct financial interest, other than the provision of observer services, in a North Pacific fishery including, but not limited to:
 - (i) Any ownership, mortgage holder, or other secured interest in a vessel, shoreside processor, or stationary floating processor facility involved in the catching or processing of fish;
 - (ii) Any business involved with selling supplies or services to any vessel, shoreside processor, or stationary floating processor participating in a North Pacific fishery;
 - (iii) Any business involved with purchasing raw or processed products from any vessel, shoreside processor, or stationary floating processor participating in a North Pacific fishery.
- 2) May not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gratuity, gift, favor, entertainment, loan, or anything of monetary value in accordance with United States Office of Government Ethics, Employee Standards of Conduct, 5 C.F.R. Part 2635 from anyone who either conducts activities that are regulated by the Government or has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the observer's official duties.
- 3) May not serve as an observer on any vessel or at any shoreside processor or stationary floating processing facility owned or operated by a person who previously employed the observer.
- 4) May not solicit or accept employment as a crew member or an employee of a vessel, shoreside processor, or stationary floating processor in a North Pacific fishery while employed by an observer Contractor.

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1.3.2.4. Physical/Medical Condition

The Contractor shall provide a signed and dated statement from a licensed physician that he or she has physically examined an observer or observer candidate. The statement must confirm that, based on the physical examination, the observer or observer candidate does not have any health problems or conditions that would jeopardize their safety or the safety of others while the observer or observer candidate is deployed, or prevent the observer or observer candidate from satisfactorily performing his or her duties. The statement must declare that, prior to the examination the physician read the NMFS-prepared pamphlet, provided to the candidate by the Contractor and was made aware of the duties of the observer as well as the dangerous, remote, and rigorous nature of the work. The physician's statement must be submitted to the Government prior to the end of the training or briefing class. The physical exam must have occurred during the 12 months prior to the observer's or observer candidates' deployment. The physician's statement will expire 12 months after the physical exam occurred. A new physical exam must be performed, and accompanying statement submitted, prior to any deployment occurring after the expiration of the statement.

The Contractor shall not deploy an Observer who has informed them prior to the time of embarkation that he or she is experiencing a mental illness or physical ailments or injury developed since submission of the physician's statement that would prevent him or her from performing their assigned duties.

1.3.2.5. Communication Skills

Observer candidates must be able to clearly and concisely communicate verbally and in writing in English.

1.3.2.6. Citizenship

Observers and observer candidates must be a U.S. citizen or hold a Permanent Residence Card (also called a green card). Foreign nationals, as defined by NAO 207-12, must be currently certified observers in the FMA's NPOP. Foreign nationals, who are observers in the other observer programs in the United States are not eligible to work in the FMA's NPOP.

1.3.2.7. CPR and First Aid Certification

Observers must possess current CPR and basic First Aid certifications. Copies of the CPR and First Aid certifications shall be provided to the Government prior to the first day of the partial coverage briefing and annually thereafter.

1.3.3. Observer Duties and Data Collection Requirements

Observers:

- (1) Collect scientific, management, compliance, and other data at sea through interviews of vessel captains and crew; observations of fishing operations; sampling catch; measuring selected portions of the catch and fishing gear; and collecting samples. Observer coverage is mandated by a number of statutes and is an integral part of the regulations. These authorities empower the Observer to perform certain functions aboard vessels as well as afford protection to the Observer against interference and intimidation in the course of performing his/her duties.
- (2) Collect biological samples from the catch according to detailed procedures in the Observer Sampling Manual (copies are available online at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/north-pacific-observer-sampling-manual>). These data include those collected once per deployment; those collected with each change of fishing gear; those collected at the beginning and end of each haul or set; and those collected during the deployment. These data are recorded electronically or on data sheets provided by the Government.
- (3) Collect data on fishing effort, location, and retained catch for each gear deployment that occurs while the Observer is aboard the vessel. The Observer Sampling Manual (see link above) describes data collection protocols for gear deployment that the Observer sees as well as those not observed.

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(4) Collect length measurements, age, and biological samples from segments of the catch. Observer protocols, priorities, and data/sample collection procedures are detailed in the Observer Sampling Manual (see link above).

(5) Collect information on any marine mammals or other protected species interactions. When protected species are caught, the primary responsibility of the Observer shall be to collect heads or tissue samples of dead marine mammals, specimens of dead seabird species of interest, or to rehabilitate short-tailed albatross and Steller's eiders if possible.

(6) Send their data to the FMA's NPOP office. Instructions on when and how the Observer sends the data are detailed in the Observer Sampling Manual (see link above.)

(7) Participate in mid-cruise debriefings as required by FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff. If the Observer does not at any time during their deployment travel through a location where NPOP personnel are available for an in-person data review, the Observer must send a fax or email to the FMA's NPOP office. Mid-cruise debriefings provide immediate feedback to the Observer in the field regarding their sampling and data recording methods. In addition, errors can be identified and corrected immediately.

1.3.4. Observer Debriefing Requirements

Observers shall participate in all debriefings as required by the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff. Debriefing of the Observer ensures that the data are complete and as accurate as possible before being loaded onto the North Pacific Observer Domestic Data Dictionary (NORPAC) database. Government staff will debrief all observers at the completion of each deployment. This requires access to a government facility. The Government will debrief observers in Anchorage and Seattle.

The Contractor must contact the Government within five (5) business days after the completion of an observer's deployment to schedule a date, time, and location for debriefing. Observer debriefing registration information must be provided at the time the debriefing is scheduled and must include the observer's name, cruise number, requested debriefing date, and the names and codes of the vessels, shoreside processors, or stationary floating processor the Observer was assigned to.

The Contractor shall ensure that their observers complete the following fully and in a timely manner:

- (1) Submit to the Government all data, reports required by the Observer Sampling Manual (see link above), and biological samples from the observer's deployment by the completion of the electronic Vessel/Plant Survey(s).
- (2) Complete the Government's electronic Vessel/Plant Survey(s).
- (3) Report for his or her debriefing and complete all debriefing responsibilities.
- (4) Return all sampling and safety gear to the FMA's NPOP Office.

Debriefing shall consist of 1) completion of an electronic Vessel/Plant Survey for each assignment; 2) a debriefing interview; 3) gear check-in; 4) data check; 5) correction of errors; 6) submission of corrected data; 7) preparation of biological specimens (i.e. salmon scales, otoliths) 8) completing a post-debriefing questionnaire; and 9) a final check-out. Every Observer must complete debriefing at the end of each deployment.

1.3.5. Data Entry Requirements

Observers shall enter data outlined in the Observer Duties and Data Collection Requirements section of the PWS into a computer and submit it to the Government after each trip, or as often as practicable. In those cases where it is not practicable (e.g., internet issues or immediately redeploying an observer to the same vessel) the Contractor shall notify the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff of the delay and when data is expected to be submitted. The Contractor shall provide and maintain the necessary hardware to meet the NIST 800-53 rev 5 moderate baseline to ensure that the data captured on behalf of the Government is protected effectively. The Contractor shall ensure that all the tasks and components of the Government supplied software and the data transmission to the Government can be executed effectively. The Government will provide the software. Submission of Observer data to the Government shall be accomplished in a timely manner in compliance with SECTION 4 - CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS, OR ATTACHMENTS, and the attachment titled SCHEDULE OF DELIVERABLES.

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1.3.6. Data Quality Control Requirements

Data shall be collected and maintained in accordance with the Contractor's Quality Control Plan as incorporated in the contract.

The overall goal of quality control is to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of data collection efforts as well as the quality of data collected. Data quality is of utmost importance. As such the Contractor must ensure the highest quality in data collected by its Observers.

1.3.7. Outreach Requirements

Industry cooperation is essential to ensuring Observers are able to fulfill their duties. Without cooperation, coverage goals and data collection efforts may be impaired. The Contractor shall assist the Government in communicating and educating the fishing industry, vessel permit holders, owners, and captains about why the Government places Observers onboard fishing vessels, how Observer Programs operate, how priorities of Observer coverage are determined, how much Observer Programs cost, and why it is in the industry's best interest to support the FMA's NPOP.

The Contractor shall provide one representative to participate with the Government in at least one meeting with fishermen or their representatives annually. The Contractor shall not convene industry meetings without prior approval of the COR nor shall the Contractor represent the Government at public meetings or in the press.

1.3.8. Observer Declare and Deploy System (ODDS) Support Requirements

The Contractor shall serve as a backup to the web-based entry of information into the Observer Declare and Deploy System (ODDS) by the vessel operator. The Contractor is required to receive calls from 0600 through 2200 Alaska local time seven days per week, year-round, including all holidays. Service is not required between the hours of 2200 and 0600 Alaska local time. The Contractor shall establish a toll-free phone number with a call-hold feature that will inform the caller how long their expected wait will be or how many callers are ahead of them. The Contractor shall:

- 1) Receive and process trip registration information. A minimum of 72 hours prior to embarking on each fishing trip, operators of vessels in the trip selection pool must hail in and register the anticipated trip with ODDS. The Contractor shall receive trip registration information by telephone from vessel operators, confirm registration information with the caller, immediately enter the information into ODDS, notify the caller whether the trip is selected for observer coverage, and provide the vessel operator with the receipt number.
- 2) Receive and process trip delays, cancellations, and closings. A registered trip can be delayed or canceled and an unobserved trip may need to be closed. The Contractor shall receive trip delay, cancellation, or closing information by telephone from vessel operators and shall immediately delay, cancel, or close the trip ODDS.
- 3) Receive and process customer support calls. Vessel operators who encounter problems using ODDS may call the Contractor for assistance. The majority of these calls involve resetting passwords, setting up captain's accounts, assisting vessel owners/operators diagnose the problem, and instructing them how to use the online system. From January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022 a total of 4,294 calls were received from vessel owners and operators. The average amount of time spent on calls was 4.4 minutes. The majority of calls would address multiple needs. For example, trip closure, trip amendments for second trips, and/or registering a third trip. Although calls are received 7 days a week between the hours of 0600 and 2200, it is anticipated that the majority of calls will be received between Monday and Friday and between 0600 and 1800.

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1.4. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS – RACE OBSERVERS

1.4.1. Observer Qualification Requirements

1.4.1.1. Education/Experience

Observers deployed to RACE survey vessels must have prior experience as an observer in the FMA's NPOP and must be in good standing with the FMA's NPOP.

1.4.1.2. Physical/Medical Condition

Observers deployed to RACE survey vessels must have a current physician's statement on file with the FMA's NPOP.

1.4.1.3. CPR and First Aid Certification

Observers deployed to RACE survey vessels must have CPR and basic First Aid certifications on file with the FMA's NPOP.

1.4.2. Observer Duties and Data Collection Requirements

Government personnel will be responsible for the overall scheduling of project activity. In general, Observers:

- (1) Process survey catches; identifying fishes and invertebrates, sorting, counting, and weighing the catch by species. Sampling protocols, priorities, and data/sample collection procedures are detailed in the appropriate Trawl Survey Scientific Operation Plan and communicated to the observer by the Field Party Chief.
- (2) Make length measurements, determine specimen gender, and collect otolith samples and biological samples from segments of the catch. Sampling protocols, priorities, and data/sample collection procedures are detailed in the appropriate Trawl Survey Scientific Operation Plan and communicated to the observer by the Field Party Chief.
- (3) Enter data on shipboard computers.

1.4.3. Observer Debriefing Requirements

Observers shall participate in debriefings as required by the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff prior to being deployed on RACE survey vessels. Debriefing will take place in Seattle and will last up to 2 days. The schedule of the debriefing will be coordinated between the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff and the Contractor.

1.4.4. Data Entry Requirements

Observers shall enter data as instructed by the Field Party Chief or Chief Scientist. The Government shall provide and maintain the onboard computer system

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1.5. OBSERVER SUPPORT SERVICES – FMA OBSERVERS

1.5.1. Logistic and Operation Support for Observer Deployment

The Contractor shall provide logistical and operational support to Observers throughout their employment. Such support shall include, but is not limited to: (1) travel to land-based assignments and vessel deployments, (2) safety, and (3) communications.

The Contractor shall make Observers available to NMFS Enforcement staff for the purposes of investigating circumstances of alleged refusals by vessels to take an Observer or other violations of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act (MSA), Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), or the Endangered Species Act (ESA) recorded by the Observer in the course of his/her duties.

1.5.2. Observer Training

Prospective Observer candidates must complete a three (3) week training course conducted by the Government. Prospective Observer candidates must pass written/oral tests with a score of 80% or greater and meet all attendance, participation, performance, physical, and conduct standards provided to the candidates on the first day of training and must demonstrate their potential to collect accurate field data, exercise astuteness, and react to unfamiliar situations at sea in a professional manner. In addition, candidates must successfully complete the safety training that includes on-land and in-water tests of immersion suit and life raft use. Qualification for sea duty is determined by passing the Government-conducted Observer training and the Government's training staff assessments.

The 3-week training course and the annual briefing will take place in Seattle. This requires access to a government facility. The Deployment briefings (such as a 1-day briefing and Fish Id training) may take place virtually or in-person in Seattle, Anchorage, Dutch Harbor, or Kodiak.

The Government conducted Observer Training Curriculum includes:

- (a) Observer Priorities and Duties,
- (b) Methods of Independent Catch Estimation
- (c) Proper Recording of Catch Data
- (d) Methods of Sampling and Recording Species Composition Data
- (e) Fish Identification and Use of Dichotomous Keys
- (f) Gender Determination and Measurements of Fish and Crab
- (g) Procedures for Collection of Age Structures
- (h) Applications of Volume, Weight, Density
- (i) Safety and Survival Skills

The Contractor shall submit to the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff, at least five (5) business days prior to the beginning date of a scheduled Observer training the following information:

- (a) Completed Training Class Registration Form for each candidate;
- (b) A copy of each proposed candidate's academic transcripts and resume;
- (c) A statement signed by the candidate under penalty of perjury which discloses the candidate's criminal convictions.

The Contractor shall submit to the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff, before the end of the training or briefing class the following information:

- (a) Proof of medical fitness

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The Contractor shall submit to the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff, at least five (5) business days prior to the beginning date of a scheduled Observer briefing the following information:

- (a) Completed Briefing Registration Form

The Contractor shall submit to the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff, before the end of the partial coverage briefing the following information:

- (a) Proof of CPR and First-Aid Certification

A briefing is required for those individuals who have previously successfully completed a three (3) week Observer training course conducted by the FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff. The briefing sessions will be scheduled by the Government each quarter and posted on the website.

Before an observer can be deployed they must complete:

- a) Annual briefings. Each observer must complete an annual briefing prior to his or her first deployment within any calendar year. This briefing is anticipated to last up to 5 days and will satisfy the annual briefing requirements for both the full coverage and the partial coverage fleets.
- b) Annual Fish ID training. Each observer must complete an annual fish ID training within 12 months of their last fish ID training. This training is anticipated to last up to 2 days in duration, with lecture and lab practice.
- c) Deployment briefing. Each observer who has completed a deployment in the partial coverage fleet must complete a deployment briefing prior to any subsequent deployments in the partial coverage fleet for the remainder of that year. The type of briefing the observer must attend and successfully complete will be specified in writing by the FMA's NPOP during the observer's most recent debriefing.

The FMA's NPOP Designated Debriefing Staff retains the right to reject any proposed Observer or Observer candidate who does not meet the required qualifications or standards identified herein or who has a previous unsatisfactory performance history (e.g., failure to complete debriefing or submitted data found to be false, inaccurate, or incomplete).

1.5.3. Gear Acquisition and Maintenance Requirements

The Government will provide all sampling and safety gear and equipment. The Observer will acknowledge receipt of all gear during the gear checkout process (example found in Section 4, Gear Checkout Checklist). The Government will maintain, replace and repair gear that is damaged through normal use. Any property that is damaged, destroyed or stolen due to Contractor/Observer negligence or fraud will be the responsibility of the Contractor. The replaced gear and equipment shall be equivalent to the gear and equipment the Government provided the Observer.

1.5.4. Travel and Lodging Requirements

The Contractor is responsible for all travel arrangements and expenses, appropriate lodging, and all expenses associated with deploying Observers to assigned vessels. The Government will reimburse the Contractor for travel costs incurred from the time the observer leaves their briefing location until they arrive at their debriefing location. The Government will not reimburse the Contractor for the cost of lodging, meals, and incidentals incurred during the time an observer or observer candidate is in training, briefing, or debriefing. For example, if an observer briefed in Seattle, deployed out of Kodiak, and debriefed in Anchorage the Government would reimburse the Contractor for travel costs incurred from the time the Observer left Seattle (including the airfare to Kodiak) until the Observer arrived in Anchorage (including the airfare to Anchorage).

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All travel costs and expenses incurred shall be reimbursed in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation. Travel associated with observer deployments will be reimbursed for the actual costs incurred (without profit, G&A, or overhead). In accordance with § 301-11.18 of the Federal Travel Regulation, when an observer is deployed to a vessel for part of a day, per diem will be reduced as follows:

If the vessel lands after

1000 the breakfast allocation will be deducted

1500 the breakfast and lunch allocations will be deducted

2000 the breakfast, lunch, and dinner allocations will be deducted

If the vessel sails before

0600 the breakfast, lunch, and dinner allocations will be deducted

1100 the lunch and dinner allocations will be deducted

1600 the dinner allocation will be deducted

The Contractor can house an Observer on a vessel to which he or she is assigned prior to departure or disembarkation for a period not to exceed twenty-four hours. During all periods an observer is housed on a vessel, the Contractor must ensure that the vessel operator or at least one crew member is aboard.

1.5.5. Coverage Selection Pools

The Government specifies the vessel-length and gear-type criteria for each selection pool in the Annual Deployment Plan (ADP). The ADP process ensures the best available information is used to evaluate deployment, including scientific review and Council input to annually determine deployment methods.

Trip Selection Pool

Individual fishing trips are selected for observer coverage in the trip selection pool. Currently, trips taken by fixed gear (hook-and-line and pot gear) vessels 40 ft. LOA (length overall) or greater and all trawl vessels in the partial coverage category would comprise the trip selection pool.

The Observer Declare and Deploy System (ODDS) is the communication platform among industry participants in the partial coverage category, Government, and the Contractor. The ODDS is available via the internet or by phone. Operators of vessels in the trip selection pool are required to hail-in to the ODDS at least 72 hours in advance of embarking on a fishing trip for halibut or directed fishing for groundfish (hailing - in). Vessel operators are able to register more than one trip at a time in the ODDS. Upon hailing-in, the vessel operator is prompted to enter the anticipated departure location, timing, and duration of the upcoming fishing trip and a determination as to whether the trip is or is not selected for observer coverage is generated. Selection for monitoring is made via a randomization protocol at rates that are described in the Annual Deployment Plan. The vessel operator and observer provider is notified immediately of the result (the Contractor is only notified of selected trips).

Communication between the vessel operator and the Contractor is initially facilitated by ODDS. For selected trips, the ODDS provides the vessel owner or operator (user) with instructions on how to coordinate with the Contractor to obtain the required observer coverage. The Contractor is required to work with the vessel operator to coordinate the logistics for placing an observer on the vessel for all selected trips. The Contractor is required to deploy the observer to the vessel for the entire selected trip.

The Government recognizes several factors that could result in the failure of a vessel to realize a trip as planned, such as a mechanical breakdown or weather delay. The Contractor is required to make an observer available to a vessel for up to 48 hours past the departure date and time of the fishing trip that was selected by the ODDS. After 48 hours, if an operator has not embarked on a selected trip, the Contractor may cancel the trip through ODDS and the observer may be deployed to another vessel. If a selected trip is canceled the vessel's next trip would inherit the observer coverage requirement.

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Vessel operators are prohibited from embarking on a trip selected for observer coverage without an observer, unless the Government released the selected trip from observer coverage due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., the observer provider is unable to deploy an observer to the vessel within a day of the intended fishing trip departure). If the Contractor is unable to deploy an observer for a selected trip they shall notify the Government through ODDS and request the vessel be released from observer coverage. The Contractor shall fully document the circumstances in the Communication Log (Section 1.5.7).

Electronic Monitoring (EM) Selection Pool

The Contractor is not responsible for providing Electronic Monitoring services under this contract. However, EM vessels log trips through ODDS and the Contractor must have a working knowledge of EM coverage and requirements. Vessels can request to participate in the EM selection pool each year through ODDS by November 1 for the next calendar year. NMFS will select vessels that have requested to participate through ODDS and meet the EM selection pool criteria set out in the ADP. Any vessels that do not meet the criteria, or are not selected for the EM selection pool, will be notified by NMFS in ODDS.

Once NMFS approves a vessel for the EM selection pool, that vessel will remain in the EM selection pool for the duration of the calendar year.

Processing Plants

The Contractor shall assign dedicated plant observers to plants as specified in the ADP. The ADP will also specify the observer's sampling duties and responsibilities. The Government expects that when the processing plant slows production, there may be times when one observer will be able to collect the required samples from more than one plant in a day. Therefore, it is the Government's intent that a single observer may be assigned to multiple plants simultaneously.

The Contractor is responsible to work directly with the processing plants to find appropriate housing options. The Kodiak processing plants typically do not have housing options for observers. We expect the need for up to 6 observers at one time to cover sampling needs at the peak of processing with a minimum number of 1 or 2 observers during the wrap up of the fishing seasons. **The bid should describe how the provider will provide housing within 1 mile of the processing plants and how they expect to bill the cost for the housing.**

1.5.6. Communication

The Contractor shall provide a toll-free telephone number or some other communication alternative, monitored 24 hours a day, that vessel owners or operators and observers can use to call in vessel departure and arrival information, problems related to Observer logistics, and/or handle Observer emergencies when they are at sea, in transit, or in port awaiting vessel reassignments.

1.5.7. Maintain Communications Log

The Contractor shall maintain the "Contact-Call log" in the ODDS application for each contact with a fishing vessel representative that is not automatically logged by ODDS, whether made at the docks, in person, by telephone, fax, or by E-mail. The circumstances surrounding all requests to release a vessel from observer coverage (Section 1.5.5) must be fully documented in the release request within the ODDS application.

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1.5.8. Notification of Potential Infractions

The Contractor must report the following in writing using the Government's reporting format to the COR within 24 hours of being made aware:

- (a) Any information regarding possible Observer harassment;
- (b) Any information regarding any action prohibited under 50 CFR §679.7(g) or §600.725(o), (t), and (u);
- (c) Any concerns about vessel safety or marine casualty under 46 CFR §4.05-1(a)(1) through (7), Rule 5 of the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea, or processor safety;
- (d) Any Observer illness or injury that prevents the Observer from completing any of his or her duties described in the observer manual; and
- (e) Any information, allegations, or reports regarding observer conflict of interest or failure to abide by the standards of behavior at PWS paragraphs 1.3.2.3 and 1.5.1.

1.5.9. Vessel Operations and Working Conditions

The Contractor is responsible for ensuring Observers are provided living quarters comparable to crew members. The Contractor shall ensure that Observers are provided sleeping quarters, drinking water, meals, snacks, and amenities as are normally provided to other crew members. Because of the size and responsiveness of these vessels to sea conditions, motion sickness can be debilitating for some individuals and should be seriously considered in all prospective Observer candidates. Most vessels carry no trained medical personnel aboard and rely upon first aid knowledge of the boat's operator in consultation with land-based physicians via radio.

Observed vessels may operate out of any port with a Federal Processing Permit. Historically, trips primarily begin and end from Kodiak, Dutch Harbor, Akutan, Sand Point, Seward, Sitka, King Cove and Homer. Observers travel by public transportation to meet their assigned vessels, and are expected to remain with their vessels until the offload has begun, or until they finish sampling the offload if required to do so. The majority of trips are from 1 to 5 days in duration (median is 4 days) but trips to tender vessels up to 64 days have occurred. Vessels are usually operated by the captain and one to five deckhands.

Observer coverage rates change each year. It is difficult to anticipate how much observer coverage will be required to be provided in future years. However, to help the Contractor understand the range of potential outcomes and to benchmark expectations, here we provide historical information on the separate elements that determine observer coverage.

The number of fishing days that were expended or are expected to be expended by the program are as follows: 2014: 4,573 days, 2015: 5,318 days, 2016: 4,677 days, 2017: 2,951 days, 2018: 2,747 days, 2019: 3,110 days, 2022: 1,928 days and 2023: 3089 days.

The Contractor can review the amount of fishing effort that has occurred or is expected to occur in each partial-coverage strata as defined by the most-recent Annual Deployment Plan ([currently the 2024 Annual Deployment Plan for Observers and Electronic Monitoring in the Groundfish and Halibut Fisheries Off Alaska](#)). Plans are also provided for each port and calendar month for years up to 2017 at this link (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/publication-database/annual-deployment-plans-observers-groundfish-and-halibut-fisheries>). Fishing effort is not included for 2020 and 2021 because of COVID-related disruptions.

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1.5.10. Vessel Assignment Information

The Contractor is responsible for updating vessel assignment information within two (2) hours of embarkation or disembarkation. The Government will provide access and training on the data entry system(s) the Contractors will use to update this information. The Contractor is also responsible for notifying the Government when observers deploy to a vessel targeting pollock within two (2) hours of embarkation.

1.5.11. Observer Sea Day and Observed Plant Day

When at sea or at a processing plant, Observers work an average of twelve (12) hours per day as the sole Contractor employee aboard privately-owned commercial fishing vessels. An hourly rate of 1/24 the fixed price daily rate will be paid for each partial observed sea day completed by the Contractor. A partial observed sea day is one in which the vessel leaves port on or after 00:30 AM or returns to port before 11:30 PM. The contractor is responsible for submitting departure and landing times rounded to the nearest hour, meaning that times ending with minutes 01-29 should be rounded down and times ending with minutes 30-59 should be rounded up. An “observed sea day” is any day in one of the following periods:

- a) For a catcher vessel delivering to a shoreside processor or stationary floating processor, the period of time that begins when a catcher vessel departs port until the offload or transfer of fish from that vessel begins or until the Observer finishes sampling the offload if required to do so.
- b) For a catcher vessel delivering to a tender vessel, the period of time that begins when a catcher vessel departs a port until the vessel returns to a port in which a shoreside processor or stationary floating processor with a valid Federal Processing Permit is located.
- c) For a processing plant with a valid Federal Processing Permit receiving groundfish and halibut deliveries, observers are deployed from the time when the observer is officially assigned (embarked) to the processing plant(s) until the observer is discharged from plant duties (disembarked).

The Contractor shall adhere to the requirements of the Service Contract Act (SCA) and applicable Department of Labor (DOL) Wage Rate Determination when calculating and paying salaries and benefits to Observers. Overtime shall be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and other applicable labor laws, whether work is performed inside or outside U.S. territorial waters or seaward of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.

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1.5.12. Vessel Living Conditions

The Contractor is responsible for ensuring Observers are provided living quarters comparable to crew members. The Contractor shall ensure that Observers are provided sleeping quarters, drinking water, meals, snacks, and amenities as are normally provided to other crew members.

1.5.13. Safety

The Contractor must verify that a vessel has a valid U.S. Coast Guard Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety decal (USCG Safety decal) before an observer may get underway aboard the vessel. Verification may be done by Contractor personnel who visually inspect the decal aboard the vessel and confirms that the decal is valid; or the Contractor can receive a hard copy of the USCG documentation of the decal issuance from the vessel owner or operator. A valid USCG Safety decal must be issued to a Commercial Fishing Vessel within two years from the vessel's previous USCG Safety inspection. An observer may not be deployed aboard a vessel that does not display a valid USCG Safety decal. The Contractor must also verify that a vessel intends to maintain a proper lookout at all times while on the open water. The Contractor shall report to NMFS fishing vessels that do not meet USCG minimum safety requirements within 24 hours of the observer's attempted deployment. Observers must complete the Vessel Safety Checklist prior to boarding a vessel for the first time. All items in bold blue text on the Vessel Safety Checklist are considered "No-go" items. If the observer feels they should not board the vessel because it is unsafe or inadequate to carry out their duties they must contact the Contractor immediately. The Contractor must notify the government within 24 hours (PWS Paragraph 1.5.8). The Contractor shall notify the vessel owner. No specific notification time limitation is required; however, the Contractor shall notify the vessel owner in enough time so the vessel owner can take corrective action if needed.

1.5.14. Observer Placement

The Contractor must assign observers without regard to any preference by representatives of vessels, shoreside processors, or stationary floating processors.

The Contractor must not:

- (a) Deploy an observer on the same vessel or at the same shore-side or stationary floating processor for more than 90 days in a 12-month period;
- (b) Move an observer from a vessel or stationary floating or shore-side processor before that observer has completed his or her sampling duties.
- (c) Assign an observer to vessels in the partial-coverage sectors within the same deployment.

The Contractor can assign an Observer to up to four vessels during a single deployment. If the Contractor wishes to assign an Observer to additional vessels, they can request a waiver from the Government. The Government will review the Observer's performance and determine whether to approve the waiver request. There is no limit to the number of waivers a Contractor can request for a single Observer during a deployment.

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1.5.15. Observer Conduct / Behavior

Observers must maintain a professional and objective demeanor at all times. The Observer must avoid any behavior which could adversely affect the confidence of the public in the integrity of the FMA's NPOP or of the Government. Observers are thus expected to conduct themselves in a manner which will reflect favorably upon the FMA's NPOP by maintaining high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and conduct in all situations. The Contractor shall develop and enforce standards of conduct for Observer employees that are comparable to the following guidelines. Observers:

- (a) Must diligently perform their assigned duties;
- (b) Must accurately record their sampling data, write complete reports, and report honestly any observed or suspected violations of fisheries, natural resources conservation, or environmental laws or regulations;
- (c) Must not falsify their data;
- (d) Must protect the confidentiality of all collected data and observations made onboard vessels. Observers shall not use any data collected under this contract for purposes other than the performance of this contract nor shall Observers retain, release, reproduce, distribute, or publish any of the data without prior approval from the Government;
- (e) May not have a current direct financial interest, other than the provision of Observer services, in a commercial fishery, including, but not limited to: vessels or shore-side facilities involved in the catching or processing of the products of the fishery, related interests in selling supplies or services to these vessels or shore-side facilities, or related interests in processing raw or processed products from these vessel or shore-side facilities;
- (f) May not serve as an Observer on any vessel or at any shore-side facility owned or operated by a person who previously employed the Observer;
- (g) Must not engage in any illegal actions or any other activities that would reflect negatively on their image as professional Observers or on the FMA's NPOP as a whole. This would include, but is not limited to:
 - 1) Engaging in drinking of alcoholic beverages during the period an Observer is assigned to a vessel;
 - 2) Engaging in the use or distribution of illegal drugs;
 - 3) Engaging in physical or emotional involvement with individuals directly related to or hired by the vessel owners, captains, or crew in the observed fishery; and
 - 4) Engaging in criminal, dishonest, disrespectful, or disgraceful conduct that may be perceived as prejudicial to the Government.
- (h) Must not solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, any gratuity, gift, favor, entertainment, loan, or anything of monetary value from anyone who conducts activities that are regulated by the Government, or who has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the Observer's official duties.

If a vessel maintains a stricter policy for its employees, then the Observer must comply with said policy. Behavior that is contrary to these standards or to the intent of these standards would be considered grounds for the Government's disqualifying the offending Observer from further participation in the program and/or refusal to accept the candidate in future program participation.

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1.6. OBSERVER SUPPORT SERVICES – RACE OBSERVERS

1.6.1. Logistic and Operation Support for Observer Deployment

The Contractor shall provide logistical and operational support to Observers throughout their employment. Such support shall include, but is not limited to: travel to vessel assignments and communications.

1.6.2. Observer Orientation

Observers without previous RACE survey experience that are deployed to RACE survey vessels must complete a pre-cruise orientation prior to deployment. Pre-cruise orientations will take place in Seattle and will last up to 5 days. The schedule of the orientation will be coordinated between the COR and the Contractor, but will typically take place just prior to deployment. The Contractor shall request the COR to waive the orientation requirement for observers with previous RACE survey experience or when training in Seattle is not possible. If training in Seattle is not possible, the Chief Scientist or Deck Lead will provide training at the vessel.

The Government COR retains the right to reject any proposed Observer who has a previous unsatisfactory performance history (e.g., failure to complete debriefing or submitted data found to be false, inaccurate, or incomplete) in the FMA's NPOP or RACE vessel surveys.

1.6.3. Safety Training

Observers deployed to RACE survey vessels must meet the safety training requirements of the FMA's NPOP.

1.6.4. Gear Acquisition and Maintenance Requirements

The Government will provide, at no cost to the contractor, all sampling and safety gear and equipment.

1.6.5. Travel and Lodging Requirements

The Contractor is responsible for all travel arrangements and expenses, appropriate lodging, and all expenses associated with deploying Observers to assigned vessels. The Government will reimburse the Contractor for travel costs incurred from the time the observer leaves Seattle until they return to Seattle. The Government will not reimburse the Contractor for the cost of lodging, meals, and incidentals incurred during the time an observer is attending the pre-cruise orientation, or debriefing. If the Observer is already in Alaska serving as an FMA or RACE observer on another vessel, the Government will reimburse the Contractor for travel costs incurred from the time the observer leaves the port of disembarkation until they arrive at their vessel. Similarly, if the observer is deploying on another RACE survey vessel the Government will reimburse the Contractor for travel costs incurred from the time the observer leaves the port of disembarkation until they arrive at their next vessel. When the observer is serving on a multiple leg cruise and the vessel is in port between legs, the observer is expected to lodge on the boat and take advantage of meals provided by the vessel.

Typically, the observer will leave Seattle, arrive at their port of embarkation, and board their vessel on the same day. However, delays can occur and the Contractor may have to arrange lodging for the observer.

To control travel costs the Government requests the Contractor either deploy one (1) observer to a vessel for the entire survey (all legs) or deploy observers who are already in the field serving as FMA Observers. If the latter, an Observer with previous RACE survey experience is preferred as this would preclude the need for the pre-cruise orientation (Paragraph 1.6.2).

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All travel costs and expenses incurred shall be reimbursed in accordance with the Government's Travel Regulations. Travel associated with observer deployments will be reimbursed for the actual costs incurred (without profit, G&A, or overhead) in accordance with the contract. In accordance with § 301-11.18 of the Government's Travel Regulations when an observer is deployed to a vessel for part of a day, per diem will be reduced as follows:

If the vessel lands after

- 1000 the breakfast allocation will be deducted
- 1500 the breakfast and lunch allocations will be deducted
- 2000 the breakfast, lunch, and dinner allocations will be deducted

If the vessel sails before

- 0600 the breakfast, lunch, and dinner allocations will be deducted
- 1100 the lunch and dinner allocations will be deducted
- 1600 the dinner allocation will be deducted

1.6.6. Communication

The Contractor shall provide a toll-free telephone number or some other communication alternative, monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week, that observers can use to call in vessel departure and arrival information, problems related to Observer logistics, and/or handle Observer emergencies when they are at sea, in transit, or in port awaiting vessel reassignments. A phone number should also be made available to the Government for situations that arise outside of normal working hours.

1.6.7. Vessel Operations and Working Conditions

Accommodations and meals are provided for the Observer by the vessel. Bedding is supplied by RACE. Because of the size and responsiveness of these vessels to sea conditions, motion sickness can be debilitating for some individuals and should be seriously considered by all Observers. Most vessels carry no trained medical personnel aboard and rely upon first aid knowledge of the boat's operator in consultation with land-based physicians via radio.

Vessels chartered by RACE operate primarily out of Dutch Harbor, Kodiak, Adak, Sand Point, Seward, Nome, and Ketchikan. Observers travel by public transportation to meet their assigned vessels, and are expected to remain with their vessels until they are released by the Contractor.

The research surveys conducted from both NOAA and chartered vessels utilize a range of traditional (e.g. bottom trawls) and advanced technology sampling techniques (e.g. acoustics), mensuration equipment, and other sampling systems. Although RACE observers could deploy to any of the RACE research surveys the majority of RACE observers will be deployed to one of the bottom trawl surveys. RACE conducts four distinct bottom trawl surveys within the continental slope and shelf areas of the 200-mile territorial EEZ water off Alaska; 1) an annual eastern Bering Sea (EBS) Continental Shelf survey, 2) a biennial EBS Continental Slope survey; 3) a biennial Gulf of Alaska Continental slope and Shelf survey, and 4) a biennial Aleutian Islands survey. Each survey is conducted between May and August and typically spans 60->75 consecutive days at sea, depending on the specific survey and the involvement of any related research activities. The survey periods are divided into legs of approximately 20 to 25 days with port calls to allow crew exchange and vessel provisioning. Each survey uses multiple vessels with up to 3 RACE observers per vessel (U.S. Coast Guard regulations typically limit the science staff to 6 members on most fishing vessels). The established survey design is to alternate the biennial surveys as follows:

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	EBS Shelf Survey - Two Vessels for Approximately 65 Days	EBS Slope Survey - One Vessel for Approximately 70 Days	Gulf of Alaska Survey – Three Vessels for Approximately 75 Days	Aleutian Islands Survey – Two Vessels for Approximately 70 Days
Odd Years	X (1-2 Observers per vessel)		X (1-3 Observers per vessel)	
Even Years	X (1-2 Observers per vessel)	X (1-3 Observers per vessel)		X (1-2 Observers per vessel)

1.6.8. Observer Sea Day - RACE

At sea Observers work an average of twelve (12) hours per day aboard commercial fishing vessels. A “sea day” commences once the vessel has left port and concludes when the vessel returns to port. Observers shall be compensated for each day onboard the vessel. When on land, Observers work an average of eight (8) hours per day attending the pre-cruise orientation, traveling to and from ports, waiting for vessels, and debriefing.

The Contractor shall adhere to the requirements of the Service Contract Act (SCA) and applicable Department of Labor (DOL) Wage Rate Determination when calculating and paying salaries and benefits to Observers. Overtime shall be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and other applicable labor laws, whether work is performed inside or outside U.S. territorial waters or seaward of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone.

1.6.9. Observer Placement

RACE research survey periods vary from 65 to more than 75 days. However, survey periods are divided into legs of approximately 20 to 25 days duration. The Contractor may deploy the same observer for all legs of a survey, or may deploy a different observer to each leg of a survey. When changing observers deployed to RACE survey vessels, the Contractor shall control travel costs to the maximum extent practicable (PWS Paragraph 1.5.4).

The Contractor may assign observers to vessels in the partial coverage category and vessels contracted to RACE within the same deployment. Before the Contractor can send an observer from a vessel in the partial coverage category to a RACE survey vessel the Observer must complete Vessel/Plant Surveys for all assignments and turn in their data and specimens to an FMA, NPOP Field Office. The Contractor must not exceed the 90-day deployment limit (PWS Paragraph 1.6.9) when assigning observers to both vessels in the partial coverage category and vessels contracted to RACE.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

1.7. Performance Measures

This is a performance-based service contract and the Contractor performance measurements are detailed and listed in the contract

1.8. Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP)

The Government intends to monitor Contractor performance against the measures outlined in and in accordance with the monitoring methods outlined in the paragraph titled *Performance Measurements*.

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OBSERVER RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Due to the critical and sensitive nature of the collected data, the Contractor shall have all employees, independent Contractors, and subcontractor employees complete an Authorization for Release of Information, authorizing the National Marine Fisheries Service to conduct a background investigation and a Security Worksheet for Non-employees, and submit to the COR no later than five (5) business days prior to a scheduled training or briefing session.

OBSERVER CANDIDATE SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

(a) Medical examinations are required for each new hire and shall be redone and resubmitted each year thereafter. Supporting documentation to verify the Observer candidate meets medical and psychological fitness requirements shall be provided in accordance with the Section 1.3.2.4 by Contractor to the Government prior to the completion of the required training.

(b) The Government retains the right to reject any Observer proposed by the Contractor that does not meet the required qualifications or standards as identified herein, or if their behavior in other NOAA Fisheries Observer programs has been disruptive. The Government further retains the right to prohibit an Observer from participating in a project if the Observer violated the Observer Standards of Conduct listed in Section 1.5.15 or if the Observer failed to satisfactorily perform the required duties.

OBSERVER PERFORMANCE

The Government retains the right to prohibit an Observer from serving as an FMA or RACE Observer if the following occur:

(a) Violation of the Observer Standards of Conduct in Section 1.5.15.

(b) Failure to satisfactorily perform the duties specified in the PWS.

If the Government determines the Observer's data does not meet the data quality requirements of the FMA's NPOP or RACE, the Contractor must follow the improvement steps outlined in its Contractor Quality Assurance Management Plan to ensure correction and enable Observer performance improvement.

(c) Unsatisfactory performance as an Observer in a different Observer program

The Government retains the right to reject any returning Observer proposed by the contractor if their performance was at an unsatisfactory level in other Observer programs or if their behavior in other Observer programs was disruptive or jeopardized the credibility of the Observer program.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Any information made available to the Contractor by the Government shall be used only for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this contract and shall not be divulged or made known in any manner to any persons except as may be necessary in the performance of the contract. In performance of this contract, the Contractor assumes responsibility of protection of the confidentiality of Government records. Each officer or employee of the Contractor to whom any Government record may be made available or disclosed shall be notified in writing by the Contractor that information disclosed to such officer or employee can be used only for a purpose and to the extent authorized herein. Further disclosure of any such information, by any means, for a purpose or to an extent unauthorized herein, may subject the offender to criminal sanctions imposed by 18 U.S.C. 641. The section provides, in pertinent part, that whoever knowingly converts to their use or the use of another, or without authority, sells, conveys, or disposes of any records of the United States or whoever receives the same with intent to convert it to their uses or gain, knowing it to have been converted, shall be guilty of a crime punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000, or imprisoned up to ten years, or both.

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NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT OF DELAYS

In the event the Contractor encounters difficulty in meeting performance requirements, or when the Contractor anticipates difficulty in complying with the Contract delivery schedule or date, or whenever the Contractor has knowledge that any actual or potential situation is delaying or threatens to delay timely performance of the contract, the Contractor shall immediately notify the Contracting Officer, in writing, giving pertinent details provided, however, that this data shall be informational only in nature and that this provision shall not be construed as a waiver by the Government of any delivery schedule or date or of any rights or remedies provided by law or under this contract.

OTHER CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Contractor's personnel shall perform their duties in a cooperative, professional manner. They shall be required to project the same professionalism as the Government employees with whom they work. The Government reserves the right to require the Contractor's personnel to perform their duties and tasks without disruption of the work in the surrounding area. Contractor's personnel shall immediately be removed from the premises by the Contractor if Contractor personnel performance endangers the safety or welfare of other personnel (either Government or Contractor), Government property, or on-going projects.

SAFETY PROGRAM

The Contractor shall abide by all established Safety Policies at NOAA offices and those on NOAA-owned vessels and aircraft; and all other federal, state, and all other industry relevant safety policies. Those Government Safety Policies will be provided upon written request by the COR.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

The performance standards are identified below. The Contractor's performance of the items will be evaluated continuously throughout the contract's stated performance period, and in accordance with the Performance-based Quality Control Plan. The contractor shall meet the acceptable performance standards as noted below. Payment for services rendered will be based upon the successful and timely delivery of data collected during a specific vessel trip. Failure to deliver data from observed work-days includes: (1) no data delivery; (2) observer failure to participate in a timely debriefing; and (3) delivery of data where the data is determined to be fraudulent or does not meet the Groundfish Observer Program data quality requirements. If the Contractor fails to deliver data as described above, the observed work-day is not considered "successful" and therefore, payment will not be received. The COR will be responsible for monitoring contract performance to assess progress. The Contracting Officer shall be notified by the COR when it appears that contractor performance will not successfully meet the established measures.

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	Measure	Standard	Monitoring Method	Frequency	Incentives/ Disincentives
1	Initial Hiring of Experienced Observers	<p>Phase-in period (first six months of contract period of performance) - Staffing level of 25% for Experienced Observers. Experienced observers are defined as having successfully completed 30 days sampling at sea.</p> <p>After Phase-in period – Staffing level of 80% for Experienced Observers. Experienced observers are defined as having successfully completed 30 days sampling at sea.</p>	COR review of Contractor staffing and retention (as reported in the Monthly Status Report)	Monthly	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>
2	Observer candidates pass the required training sessions	95% of Observer Candidates successfully pass training and/or briefing	COR review of Contractor Training Approval (as reported in the Monthly Status Report)	Monthly	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>
3	Data Management and the Contractor's conformance to approved Quality Control Plan	98% audit score	COR review of Deviation Audit and feedback from Project Managers	Semi-annual	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>

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4	Observer receiving an acceptable score upon completion of debriefing	98% of Observers attain an acceptable debriefing score each month. Not applicable if no Observers are debriefed	COR review of Contractor Staffing and Retention (as reported in the Monthly Status Report)	Monthly	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>
5	Timeliness and acceptance of deliverables	98% of deliverable due during the quarter are delivered on time and are of acceptable quality	COR tracks delivery times and adherence to acceptance criteria and Contract Data Requirements List (CDRL)	Quarterly	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>
6	Observer deployments	Observers are deployed to 98% of trips that are selected for observer coverage	COR review of data reported in the Monthly Status Report	Quarterly	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>

7	Contractor participation in NMFS Observer Program Outreach to the fishing industry or community	Fully supportive in all industry outreach requests from the Governments	COR tracking report	Annually	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) - Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>
8	Observers submit their data to the Government after each trip as required per the Observer Sampling Manual	100% of all observers enter and submit their data to the Government	COR review of in season data reports	Weekly	<p>Positive or negative past performance rating in the Contracting Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS) – Task Order Option periods may not be exercised if the contractor receives a negative past performance rating.</p> <p>Failure to comply with the performance standards may lead to contract termination for cause.</p>

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SCHEDULE OF DELIVERABLES

Following is a schedule of all deliverables, including administrative deliverables, required during the period of performance of this contract:

Item	Description	Quantity	Due Date	Deliver to:	Reference
1	Monthly Status Report	1	Monthly	CO/COR	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.2.3
2	Project Management Plan	1	Draft Due: At proposal submission; approved plan to be incorporated into contract award. Final plan is due within 14 days after award. Updates required annually within 30 days after the contract anniversary date.	CO/COR	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.2.1
3	Contractor Quality Control Plan	1	Draft Due: At proposal submission; approved plan to be incorporated into contract award. Updates or revisions required annually within 30 days after the contract anniversary date.	CO/COR	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.2.5
4	Physician's Statement	As Required	Prior to certification of an observer. A new statement must be submitted prior to any deployment occurring after the expiration of the current physician's statement which expires 12 months after the physical exam occurred.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.2.4 & 1.4.1.2
5	CPR & First Aid Certifications	As Required	Prior to the first day of the partial coverage briefing. New certifications are due annually.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.2.7
6	Debriefing Registration	As Required	Within 5 business days after the completion of an observer's deployment.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.4
7	Data, reports required in the Observer Sampling Manual, biological samples, and the electronic vessel and/or processor surveys	As Required	Prior to the debriefing interview.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.3 & 1.3.4

8	Sampling and safety gear	As Required	Prior to the end of the debriefing.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.5.3 & 1.6.4
9	Observers' electronic data files shall be transferred to the Government as specified by the Government	As Required	At the completion of each trip.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.3 & 1.3.5
10	Documentation and Notification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of potential infractions • Safety, inadequacy of vessel's facilities for Observers • Observer illness or injury that 	As Required	Day of the event.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.2.3, 1.3.2.4, 1.5.8, 1.5.9, 1.5.12, 1.5.13, 1.5.15 & 1.6.7
	prevents the Observer from completing their duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any information, allegations, or reports regarding observer conflict of interest or failure to abide by the standards of behavior • Renewals or updates conflict of interest 				
11	Annually update disclosure of Conflicts of Interest	Annually	Annually	COR	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: CAR 1352.209-74
12	Observer Candidate Information	As Required	5 working days prior to training or briefing session.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.2.1, 1.3.2.2, 1.5.2 & 1.8

13	Communications Logs	As Required	Monthly.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.5.7
14	Vessel Assignment Information	As Required	Within 2 hours of embarkation or disembarkation.	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.5.10
15	Observer Placement Additional Vessel Waiver	As Required	Assignment of an Observer to more than 4 vessels.	COR	PWS PARAGRAPH 1.5.14, 1.6.9
16	Observer Release of Information	As Required	Authorization for Release of Information, to conduct a background investigation and a Security Worksheet for Non-employees, and submit to the COR or designated FMA NPOP staff no later than five (5) business days prior to a scheduled training	Designated FMA NPOP Staff	PWS PARAGRAPH <i>OBSERVER RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION</i> , page 20

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			or briefing session.		
17	SF 85P for all employees	Each Occasion	Upon hiring an employee.	COR	TBD
18	Form 258, Fingerprint Chart	Each Occasion	Upon hiring an employee.	COR	TBD
19	Invoice	Each Occasion	Monthly.	COR/CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: NAM 1330-52.232-71
20	Proof of Insurance	As Required	Within 10 days after contract award; within 24 hours of any change thereafter.	CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: CAR 1352.228-70 & 1352.228-72
21	Request for changes to key personnel	As Required	At least 15 days prior to substitution.	COR/CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: CAR 1352.237-75
22	Personnel Security Screening Forms	As Required	Within 14 days after contract award.	COR	TBD
23	Notice of Delays	As Required	Immediately upon knowledge.	COR	PWS PARAGRAPH <i>NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT DELAYS</i>
24	System for Award Management (SAM) Updates	As Required	Annually.	Online	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: FAR 52.204-7
25	Employment Reports Veterans	As Required	Annually.	CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: FAR 52.212-5
26	Restrictions Against Disclosure	As Required	Immediately upon knowledge.	CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: CAR 1352.209-72
29	Conflicts of Interest	As Required	Immediately upon knowledge.	CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: CAR 1352.209-74 & PWS PARAGRAPH 1.3.2.3

30	Employment Eligibility Verification	1	Within 30 days of contract award; within 3 days of new hires; and verify within 90 days.	CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: FAR 52.212-5
31	Updates of Publicly Available Information Regarding Responsibility	As Required	Semi-annually throughout the contract's life.	CO	SECTION 3 – CONTRACT CLAUSES: FAR 52.212-5

SECTION 4 - CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS, OR ATTACHMENTS

13. EXHIBITS

The following documents are provided for informational purposes only:

Exhibit #1 - Glossary

Exhibit #2 - FMA Division North Pacific Groundfish Observer Training Standards

Exhibit #3 - Labor Category Classifications and Job Descriptions

Exhibit #4 – 2023 Partial Coverage (PC) logbook gear sheet

Exhibit #5 - Immersion Suit and PDF Self Check 2023 logbook

---End Performance Work Statement--

SECTION 4 - CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS, OR ATTACHMENTS

EXHIBIT #1 – GLOSSARY

Briefing	An Observer is 'briefed' on any changes that the program has made during their absence or as required by the program prior to being deployed.
Bycatch	The unintentional taking of non-targeted species that is composed of a variety of marine life - fish, mammals, turtles, and birds.
Contractor's Quality Control Plan (QCP)	The contractor's plan and systematic description of the activities it will perform to achieve a successful outcome and provide the quality standards the Government expects in the performance of its services.
Debriefing	Final review process of an Observer at the conclusion of a deployment.
Experienced Observer	An observer who has successfully completed a deployment for the Groundfish Observer Program.
New Observer	An observer who has successfully completed observer training, but has no previous observer experience.
NMFS	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Observer Candidate	An individual selected by the Observer Contractor in accordance with the specified qualifications that will initiate appropriate training and approval to become a New Observer.
Observer Coverage	The numbers of days Observers are deployed with assigned vessels in a particular fishery multiplied by a unit of total effort in the fishery (often the number fishing days in the season or total landed catch is used) as a percentage measurement.
Observer Sampling Manual	This manual details the data collection, recording, and sampling procedures for the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program.
Observer Sea Day	Any day an observer leaves port, is out at sea, or returns to port regardless of time of day.
Project Manager	Responsible person for managing personnel resources and other items specified in this contract.
Quality Assurance (QA)	Quality Assurance is all the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality system to provide confidence that the project will satisfy the relevant quality standards. Quality assurance is the Government's responsibility.
Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP)	Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan is the Government's process that will be used to ensure that the project will satisfy the needs for which it was undertaken. It describes the roles and responsibility and methodology used to monitor the Contractor's performance in meeting the performance measures and standards under the contract.
Quality Control (QC)	Quality control is the monitoring of specific project results to determine if they comply with relevant quality standards, and eliminating causes of unsatisfactory results. Quality control is the responsibility of the contractor.
Sea Day	Any day that an Observer is deployed on a vessel at sea (not at the dock).
Training	Three week period of education for an Observer Candidate to become a New Observer.
US Exclusive Economic Zone	The waters governed seaward 3 miles out to 200 miles off the United States coast.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
Fisheries Monitoring and Analysis Division
7600 Sand Point Way N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115-0070

FMA Division North Pacific Groundfish Observer Training Standards

Welcome to the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program's three-week observer training.

This three week job training course is designed to prepare you to collect fisheries management data for the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. Successful completion of this course is required to become a NMFS-certified observer. You will be evaluated on your ability to demonstrate all concepts and skills involved in observing aboard commercial fishing vessels and at shore side processing facilities, with exams, in-class exercises and homework assignments as the primary assessment tools. Successful trainees must also demonstrate professionalism and the ability to work competently without supervision.

Certification is incumbent upon successful completion of this job training. Individuals who meet all the standards listed below and who demonstrate through written exercises, exams or other documented means, their understanding of the concepts, sampling protocols and skills required to be a NMFS ground fish observer will be certified.

All participants must abide by the standards of observer behavior listed in the Groundfish Observer Program regulations at 50 CFR 679.50. These can be found in the Essential Information chapter of the Observer Sampling Manual. In addition to abiding by the standards of observer behavior throughout the training must be professional and courteous in order to be certified.

During training the following standards must be met. Participants who do not meet these standards will not be certified.

Attendance and participation Standards

1. Attendance is mandatory for the entirety of each day of training.
2. You must arrive on time to all training sessions.
3. You must participate in discussions and exercises.
4. All training facility rules must be followed. All actions while in the training facilities must be conducted in a safe and professional manner.

Performance Standards

1. You must pass all exams with a score of 80% or better.
2. All assigned training materials must be submitted on time.
3. All assigned training materials, including exams must be completed independently in an organized and legible manner.
4. All assigned training materials must be corrected at the trainer's direction and resubmitted on time and in accordance with trainer's instruction.
5. Completed training materials must show a proficiency level expected of a certified observer.



Physical Standards

1. You must demonstrate the ability to properly and repeatedly don an immersion suit in 60 seconds or less.
2. While wearing an immersion suit, you must demonstrate the ability to properly enter the water, enter and exit a life raft from the water, perform required in-water exercises (chain swim, HUDDLE, HELP, etc.), and climb a ladder out of the water.
3. You must demonstrate the ability to properly and repeatedly lift at least 25 kilograms.

Conduct Standards

1. No participant will be allowed in a training while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
2. Sleeping during training sessions will not be tolerated and is cause for dismissal and denial of certification.
3. Communications with trainers, staff, and participants must be conducted in a professional manner, without argument, accusations or lack of respect.
4. Participants must refrain from engaging in illegal actions and demonstrate professional behavior at all times.
5. Rules of confidentiality and conflict of interest for observers in the field apply to participants of the three-week initial training and can be found in 50 CFR 679.50 and in the Observer Sampling Manual.

If you determine that you will not be able to meet these standards, you may drop out of the training with no penalty from NMFS. You must be in a passing status to exercise this option. All NMFS-issued training materials, including written assignments, must be submitted to training staff prior to leaving the course for any reason. If you choose to leave the training, you must retake the course in its entirety and meet all the standards in order to be certified.

Please sign and submit this written policy statement concerning performance, attendance, and conduct standards. You may make a copy for yourself.

I have read and understand these policies and agree to abide by them while in this 3 week observer training.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Observer Provider Company _____



SECTION 4 - CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS, OR ATTACHMENTS

EXHIBIT #3 – LABOR CATEGORY CLASSIFICATIONS AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

LABOR CATEGORY CLASSIFICATIONS AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS

1. Project Manager:

Project Manager shall be designated as Key Personnel for this contract per SECTION 3 - CONTRACT CLAUSES and shall be the focal point for communications between NFMS and the Contractor. The Project Manager shall be responsible to manage personnel resources such that emergencies and other short-term ad hoc requirements are responded to without disruption and/or degradation of other services. The Project Manager shall collaborate with all parties (Government and vessel owners) as necessary to resolve issues at the lowest possible level. The Project Manager shall work closely with NMFS Management Division and the Office for Law Enforcement on enforcement issues.

The Project Manager (PM) is required to be available during normal business hours (approximately 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) local site time. The individual shall be responsible for all aspects of project performance (i.e., technical, contractual, administrative and financial). The PM shall be the Contractor's primary administrative representative having full authority to act on matters pertaining to the performance of the services required under this contract. The PM is the liaison between the Government Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) and the Contractor to assure successful completion contract requirements. The PM is responsible for oversight of all Contractor employees and is responsible for dealing with all personnel and administrative issues of Contractor employees. The PM shall manage all contractor personnel under the contract, on all aspects of project activity, organization and assignment responsibilities. On-site supervision of Contractor employees by the PM is not required however the PM shall be available to work with the COR to address and remedy issues should they arise.

2. Fishery Observer I (Department of Labor Recognized Observer Description)

Performs routine tasks associated with recurring and continuing work according to prescribed or established procedural standards and technical methods assigned. Assures that tasks are completed, data developed, methods used in securing and verifying data are technically accurate and in compliance with instructions and established procedures. Makes estimates of amounts and species composition of fish caught, retained and discarded, using at a minimum, simple, single stage sampling techniques and dichotomous keys. Collects biological samples from the catch of various fisheries including but not limited to, longline, trawl, gillnet, dredge, pot, rod and reel, harpoon, seine, weir and pound net fisheries according to detailed program and gear specific procedures. According to established standards and detailed procedures, records data on appropriate forms and logs, some of which may be electronic. Maintains field equipment and supplies. Collects scientific, management, compliance information, and make observations of fishing operations. Use and complete a pre-boarding vessel safety checklist. Measures selected portions of catch including incidentally caught marine mammals, sea birds and sea turtles. May tag species of interest including sharks, tunas, sablefish, spiny lobsters, swordfish and sea turtles. Uses calculator and/or PC for calculations and recording data. Obtains, enter and transfer data electronically. Obtains and record information on gear characteristics of fishing gear types while working either on board vessels, on an alternative platform, or at a shore-based facility. May use interpersonal and communication skills to contact fishermen and schedule observer sampling trips. May observe and document compliance with fishery regulations, and may write affidavits. May camp at remote sites and may operate All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) and skiffs.

3. Fishery Observer II (Department of Labor Recognized Observer Description)

Independently executes duties, while learning when and how to resolve exceptions and special problems or to make adaptations in the procedures. Estimate amounts and species composition of fish caught, retained and discarded, utilizing knowledge of various

SECTION 4 - CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, EXHIBITS, OR ATTACHMENTS**EXHIBIT #3 – LABOR CATEGORY CLASSIFICATIONS AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

statistically valid sampling methods and dichotomous keys. Collects biological samples from the catch of various fisheries according to detailed program and gear specific procedures. According to established standards and detailed procedures, records data on appropriate forms and logs, some of which may be electronic. Supplies in-season reports. Maintains field equipment and supplies. Uses knowledge of interpersonal and communication skills while contacting fishermen and to schedule observer sampling trips. Use and complete a pre-boarding vessel safety checklist. Collects scientific, management, compliance information, observations of fishing operations, measures selected portions of catch including incidentally caught marine mammals, sea birds and sea turtles. Participates in tagging species of interest including sharks, tunas, sablefish, spiny lobsters, swordfish and sea turtles. Uses calculator and/or PC for calculations and recording data. May enter and transfer data electronically. Obtains and record information on gear characteristics of fishing gear types while working either on board vessels, on an alternative platform, or at a shore-based facility. May observe and document compliance with fishery regulations, and may write affidavits. May camp at remote sites and may operate All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) and skiffs. May participate in aerial surveys and surveys to provide abundance data or describe fisheries to be used in observer data analysis and program design.

Cruise #: _____

19

IMMERSION SUIT & PFD SELF-CHECK

Completion of this form is required if Observer Program staff did not witness you don your NMFS issued immersion suit and PFD to verify fit before your deployment! However, it is recommended that all observers inspect their immersion suit and PFD on a monthly basis and when switching vessel.

Your immersion suit and PFD have been issued to you based on the sizes checked out on your previous deployment, or by recommendation from FMA Observer Program staff. FMA Observer Program staff have inspected your suit, strobe, and waxed the zipper prior to issuing, however, it is your responsibility to check and maintain your immersion suit and PFD upon issue and throughout your deployment.

If there are any problems/questions with your suit or PFD, inform the master of the vessel and contact the observer program immediately (Seattle 206-526-6827, Anchorage 907-271-1313, Dutch Harbor 907-581-2060, Kodiak 907-481-1770).

Date(s) immersion suit and PFD Self-Check completed? _____

Immersion Suit

Try on your immersion suit. Does it fit? _____

No rips/tears/holes in Neoprene? _____

Seam thread and inner seal glue intact? _____

No grease/oil stains/mildew? _____

Zipper seams in good condition? _____

Zipper waxed (if necessary)? _____

Strobe attached securely (line not frayed, stored in pocket of suit)? _____

Strobe tested (battery expiration date is at least 5 years after day suit issued)? _____

Whistle securely attached? _____

Whistle tested? _____

PFD

Try on your PFD. Does it fit? _____

Strobe attached securely (with 2 zip ties)? _____

Strobe tested? _____

Strobe batteries ok (battery expiration date is at least 5 years after day PFD issued)? _____

Whistle securely attached (line not frayed)? _____

Whistle tested? _____