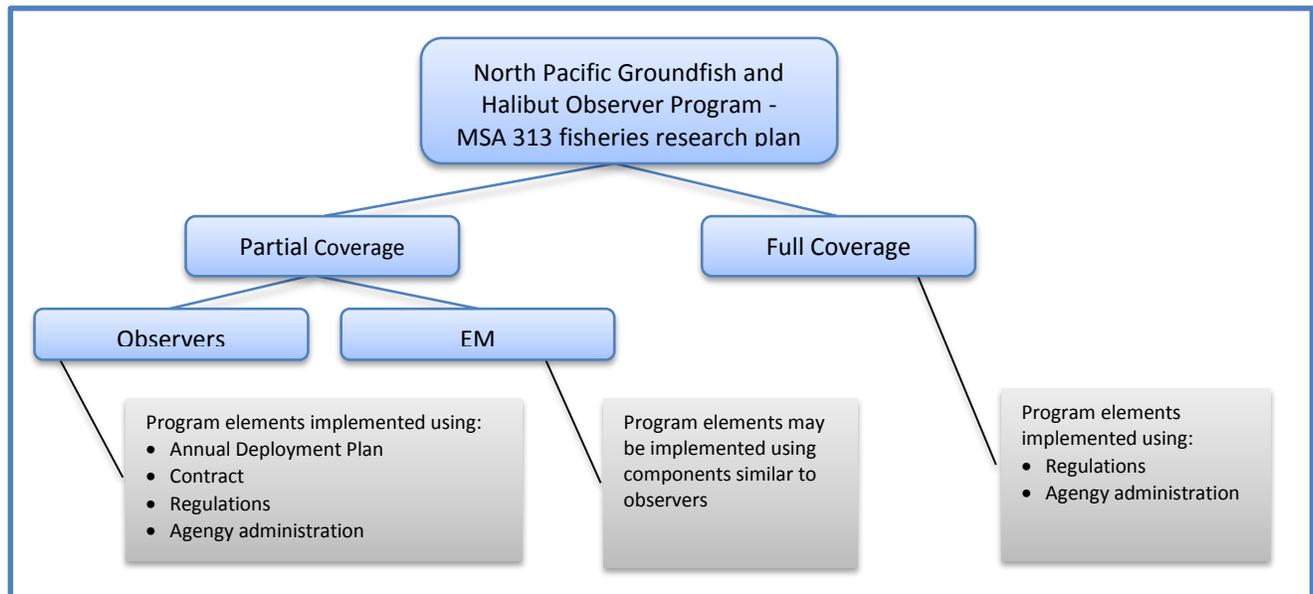


Integrating Electronic Monitoring into the North Pacific Groundfish and Halibut Observer Program

As EM is integrated into the Observer Program, the different elements of the program may be implemented through regulation, the annual deployment plan, contracts, or administration by NMFS. To facilitate the discussion about how to integrate the different elements of EM into the partial coverage program, the following sections describe how elements of the current partial coverage observer category are implemented.



Partial Coverage Category Observer Components

Annual Deployment Plan

Documents how NMFS intends to assign at-sea and shoreside observers to vessels and processing plants engaged in groundfish and halibut fishing in the North Pacific. Addresses the changing needs of fisheries management and stock assessment by providing a flexible design that may be adjusted annually.

Elements include:

- Defining pool of vessels and shoreside processors eligible to be selected for coverage
- Defining strata based on factors that are known prior to vessel departure (e.g. gear type, vessel size). The strata definitions can change on an annual basis.
- Describing the selection rate for the strata based on estimated effort and budget
- May include policy decisions regarding observer development to address scientific and management needs (for example, the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Pacific cod fleet voluntarily selecting full observer coverage).

Contract

Supplies qualified observers to vessels in a timely fashion and provide logistical and operational support including travel to deployment locations, safety and communications.

Elements include:

- Defining the qualification requirements for observers to be hired by the contractor
- Defining observer duties and data collection requirements
- Identifying the contractor roll in the ODDS call center
- Describing the contractors responsibilities regarding logistic and operational support for observer deployment
- Requiring contractor to describe how the quality and timeliness of observer data will be ensured.
- Describing performance standards contractor must meet to be considered successful and receive a positive past performance rating.

Regulations

Describes vessel owner or operator responsibilities.

Elements include:

- Logging fishing trips
- Paying fees
- Making vessel available and carrying observers when selected for coverage
- Ensuring observers have a safe environment and are able to collect required data when aboard.

Agency Administration

Ensures observers collect high quality data and observer data are integrated into catch accounting system in a timely manner so data can be used for management.

Elements include:

- Training observers prior to deployment
- Providing inseason support during deployment
- Debriefing observers at the end of deployment
- Managing and decimating data collected by observers
- Maintaining and evaluating methods to integrate observer data into catch accounting