

site on board a vessel must be either aft of the hauling station or on the opposite side of the vessel from the hauling station.

(B) Remove hooks from any offal that is discharged.

(C) Eliminate directed discharge through chutes or pipes of residual bait or offal from the stern of the vessel while setting gear. This does not include baits falling off the hook or offal discharges from other locations that parallel the gear and subsequently drift into the wake zone well aft of the vessel.

(D) For vessels not deploying gear from the stern, eliminate directed discharge of residual bait or offal over sinking hook-and-line gear while gear is being deployed.

(vi) *Safe release of seabirds.* Make every reasonable effort to ensure birds brought on board alive are released alive and that, wherever possible, hooks are removed without jeopardizing the life of the birds.

(3) *Seabird Avoidance Plan.* A Seabird Avoidance Plan must:

(i) Be written, current, and onboard the vessel.

(ii) Contain the following information:

(A) Vessel Name.

(B) Master's Name.

(C) Type of bird avoidance measures utilized.

(D) Positions and responsibilities of crew for deploying, adjusting, and monitoring performance of deployed gear.

(E) Instructions and/or diagrams outlining the sequence of actions required to deploy and retrieve the gear to meet specified performance standards.

(F) Procedures for strategic discharge of offal, if any.

(G) The NMFS "Seabird Avoidance Plan" form completed and signed by vessel operator. Vessel operator's signature shall indicate the operator has read the plan, reviewed it with the vessel crew, made it available to the crew, and has instructed the vessel crew to read it.

(iii) Be made available for inspection upon request by an authorized officer or observer.

(4) *Seabird Avoidance Gear Requirements.* (also see Table 20 of this part.) The operator of a vessel identified in paragraph (e)(1) of this section must comply with the following requirements:

(i) While fishing with hook-and-line gear other than snap gear in NMFS Reporting Area 649 (Prince William Sound), 659 (Eastern GOA Regulatory Area, Southeast Inside District), or state waters of Cook Inlet:

(A) A minimum of 1 buoy bag line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(i) of this

section must be used by vessels greater than 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA and less than or equal to 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA without masts, poles, or rigging.

(B) A minimum of 1 buoy bag line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(i) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA and less than or equal to 32 ft (9.8 m) LOA with masts, poles, or rigging.

(C) A minimum of a single streamer line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(ii)(B) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 32 ft (9.8 m) LOA and less than or equal to 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA with masts, poles, or rigging.

(D) A minimum of a single streamer line of a standard as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(ii) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA.

(ii) While fishing with hook-and-line gear other than snap gear in Federal waters (EEZ) not including NMFS Area 659.

(A) A minimum of 1 buoy bag line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(i) of this section and one other device as specified in paragraph (e)(6) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA and less than or equal to 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA without masts, poles, or rigging.

(B) A minimum of a single streamer line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(ii)(B) of this section and one other device as specified in paragraph (e)(6) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA and less than or equal to 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA with masts, poles, or rigging.

(C) A minimum of paired streamer lines of a standard as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(iii) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA.

(iii) While fishing with snap gear. (A) A minimum of 1 buoy bag line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(i) of this section and one other device as specified in paragraph (e)(6) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA and less than or equal to 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA without masts, poles, or rigging.

(B) A minimum of a single streamer line as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(iv)(B) of this section and one other device as specified in paragraph (e)(6) of this section must be used by vessels greater than 26 ft (7.9 m) LOA and less than or equal to 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA with masts, poles, or rigging.

(C) A minimum of a single streamer line of a standard as specified in paragraph (e)(5)(iv) of this section and one other device as specified in paragraph (e)(6) of this section must be

used by vessels greater 55 ft (16.8 m) LOA with masts, poles, or rigging.

(5) *Seabird Avoidance Gear Performance and Material Standards.* (i) Buoy Bag Line Weather Exception—In winds exceeding 45 knots (storm or Beaufort 9 conditions), the use of a buoy bag line is discretionary.

(ii) *Single Streamer Standard.* (A) A single streamer line must:

(1) Be a minimum of 300 feet (91.4 m) in length;

(2) Have streamers spaced every 16.4 ft (5 m);

(3) Be deployed before the first hook is set in such a way that streamers are in the air for a minimum of 131.2 ft (40 m) aft of the stern and within 6.6 ft (2 m) horizontally of the point where the main groundline enters the water.

(4) Have individual streamers that hang attached to the mainline to 9.8 in (0.25 m) above the waterline in the absence of wind.

(5) Have streamers constructed of material that is brightly colored, UV-protected plastic tubing or 3/8 inch polyester line or material of an equivalent density.

(B) *Weather Exception.* In winds exceeding 45 knots (storm or Beaufort 9 conditions), the use of a single streamer line is discretionary.

(iii) *Paired Streamer Standard.* (A) At least one streamer line must be deployed before the first hook is set and two streamer lines must be fully deployed within 90 seconds.

(B) *Weather Exceptions.* In conditions of wind speeds exceeding 30 knots (near gale or Beaufort 7 conditions), a single streamer must be deployed from the windward side of the vessel. In winds exceeding 45 knots (storm or Beaufort 9 conditions), the use of paired streamer lines is discretionary.

(C) Streamer lines must. (1) Be deployed in such a way that streamers are in the air for a minimum of 131.2 ft (40 m) aft of the stern for vessels under 100 ft (30.5 m) and 196.9 ft (60 m) aft of the stern for vessels 100 ft (30.5 m) or over;

(2) Be a minimum of 300 feet (91.4 m) in length;

(3) Have streamers spaced every 16.4 ft (5 m);

(4) For vessels deploying hook-and-line gear from the stern, the streamer lines must be deployed from the stern, one on each side of the main groundline.

(5) For vessels deploying gear from the side, the streamer lines must be deployed from the stern, one over the main groundline and the other on one side of the main groundline.

(6) Have individual streamers that hang attached to the mainline to 9.8 in