

Question 1: Can I register online?

- To register, operators must first complete a hard copy application form and post it in with proof of identity information. This step cannot be taken online. A secure login will be provided and registration can be completed online by entering your contact people, skipper/guide and vessel information. This login provides each operator with the ability to make changes as and when required including the annual renewal process. A fully paper-based option is also available.

Question 2: Why is so much information required to complete the application form?

- The application forms have between 15 and 30 questions, depending on which form you fill in. Many of the questions are simple, such as vessel name, phone number and postal address. The other information helps characterise the charter boat fleet. The Ministry will be revisiting the form design to see whether it can be made less onerous without compromising the information needed.

Question 3: Why has the term 'amateur' been used when implementing this regime?

- It has been used because the fishing is done under the Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 1986, and the reporting framework is also within those regulations. The terms used to describe the framework will be revisited in future.

Question 4: Why must all my skippers' details (including those under contract) be listed?

- This will better characterise the amateur charter sector if boats have more than one skipper, provide information in the event of suspected offending, and help FINNZ if there are issues with the way forms are being filled in.

Question 5: Why am I paying to provide the Ministry with information?

- The information collected ensures operators' activity is taken into account in management decisions. Charter operators are required to pay the annual registration fee of \$54 which can be reduced to \$27 if vessel and personnel information is provided online. The government is paying most of the charter boat reporting programme administration costs because the fee does not cover them.

Question 6: Which charter vessel operators are required to register and report?

- Anyone who takes people fishing under the amateur fishing regulations and where payment is made for the vessel and guide services. Other types of operation, such as ferries or tourist boats, are not included in the new regime because their passengers do not fish.

Question 7: How is fishing location reported on the charter vessel activity and catch return?

- Locations are reported in latitude and longitude to the nearest minute. A new fishing event (a new activity and catch reporting column) needs to be started only when the vessel moves further than 6 nautical miles. This limits the paperwork for those who drift or move frequently within a small area. There are also special instructions for those trolling for big gamefish because these vessels can cover particularly large distances –see Section 3 of the instructions for users on completing the returns for details.

Question 8: How can I be sure that my best fishing spots won't be disclosed?

- The Ministry will carefully guard any data and disclosure of information is subject to very strict rules as required by the Official Information Act 1982.

Question 9: In the target species of the activity reporting section of the form, can I say 'fish' instead of the target species because we are not targeting one particular species of fish?

- No. Providing a valid species code is necessary to identify the most important species sought. Section 3 of the instructions for users provides further information on how best to report the target species.

Question 10: How often am I required to report?

- A return is required for every charter vessel fishing trip with fare-paying clients. Depending on the number of target species or locations fished, a trip return may require one or more pages. The returns can be bundled together and sent in once a calendar month by the 15th of the month following the fishing. You may send in reports at the completion of each trip if you wish to do so

Question 11: What happens if I don't go fishing during a calendar month?

- Information on when you don't go fishing is important to get an accurate picture of overall fishing activity. To make sure providing nil returns takes up as little of your time as possible, a simple tick box has been added to the form and only one nil return will be required for a month when no fishing takes place.

Question 12: How will the information that I provide be used?

- **As the** number of people using the marine environment and number of ways they are using it increases, management decisions must be made to allocate scarce resources and to ensure the ongoing health of our fisheries. These decisions can affect charter vessel operators and their clients. Improving amateur fishing information is a government a priority. The taxpayer is contributing almost \$4 million to fund recreational fishing research. For the first time, charter boat operators are also required to contribute. Together with improved estimates of amateur catch from forthcoming surveys, charter vessel reporting ensures that the interests of amateur fishers and charter operators are able to be taken into account in fisheries management decisions.

Question 13: Is there conflict between the requirements to report activity and catches at sea with watchkeeping responsibilities required by Maritime New Zealand?

- There is no conflict. The overriding responsibility is to keep watch. Recording should not be undertaken when the vessel is underway, in a busy waterway or when there is inclement weather or fog. This does not mean charter operators are able to avoid reporting obligations, but it does mean they should exercise discretion about when it is undertaken.

Question 14: How will the Ministry address the issue of non-reporting to ensure all charter vessel operators have the same additional cost of doing business imposed on them?

- The Ministry is implementing a voluntary compliance strategy by raising awareness of the purpose of charter vessel reporting and helping with understanding of the requirements. As a last resort, infringement fees will be considered.

Question 15: What actions will the Ministry take to convey to charter vessel operators and their clients that the information collected is of benefit?

- How information from charter operators is taken account in management decisions will become apparent when allocation and sustainability decisions are made. Charter operators can request accounts of their own responses. The Ministry may publish summarised charter vessel information on its website, always ensuring that details of individuals and fishing locations are protected.

Question 16: Has the cost and time of completing returns on my business been taken into account?

- Yes. It is acknowledged that meeting the new requirements will take up some of your valuable time and impose a new cost on your business. For this reason the Ministry of Fisheries designed a system that is as easy to use for operators as possible while still ensuring that quality information is collected.

Question 17: How can charter operators count and weigh the catch when clients are uncooperative?

- It is important to maintain a friendly but professional relationship with your clients. They should be made aware that information collected is to ensure the interests of amateur fishers and charter boat operators are taken into account. Promoting a culture of good record keeping is in line with the good stewardship currently promoted by many charter boat operators and their associations.

Question 18: What is the reason for the choice of species and the phased introduction of catch reporting?

- Catch reporting is focussed on stocks that can make a significant direct contribution to management over and above activity reporting. Several of the species chosen are vulnerable to localised depletion and for others the charter sector is believed to take a large proportion of the catch taken by the amateur sector. Information on catch from charters enables improvements in the current ability to assess spatial management issues and ensure the sustainability of these stocks. New Zealand also has specific international obligations with regard to the monitoring of bluefin tuna species. The other important consideration is that restricting catch reporting to seven species will minimise costs for operators. The phasing-in of reporting recognises areas where management needs for catch information has priority. FMA 7 has overall priority due to specific management issues and international obligations relating to blue cod and bluefin tuna.

Question 19: Is it possible to report catch information for additional species where I believe there is a management need?

- Yes. It is possible to send in species catch information in addition to the species required. To ensure accurate records, reporting of additional species catch data should be consistent with reporting instructions and estimated weight should be left blank because this field only relates to bluefin tuna species.

Question 20: Who was consulted during the design of the reporting forms and how?

- A list of operators was compiled using information from Maritime New Zealand and the Yellow Pages, and by scanning advertisements placed in recreational fishing magazines. This list was used to send information directly to operators and to seek feedback as the system was developed. The Ministry also advertised in magazines and wrote directly to fishing clubs. Some individuals and researchers were contacted for advice on resolving specific issues. This valuable feedback led to simplified and improved reporting requirements; for example, allowing movement of up to 6 nautical miles before the need arose to enter a new fishing event and by simplifying activity reporting of big gamefish trolling.

Question 21: Are charter vessel operators required to report their activity and catches when a registered boat has no fare-paying passengers?

- No reporting is required in this situation because you are not operating as a charter vessel.

Question 22: Will catch information from individual charter operators be used to construct catch histories in order to allocate quota in future?

- There is no intention to bring charter operators within the Quota Management System.