



Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Board of Fisheries

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58' Seine Vessel Definition - Compilation of Information from Southeast and Yakutat Finfish Meeting

Discussion on Tuesday evening March 24th surrounded the various methods of vessel measurement presently in:

- Alaska Statute(s)
- US Coast Guard
- NOAA/NMFS under the Magnuson/Stevens Act
- Various Board of Fisheries Regulations

(Applicable language in RC 101)

Points mentioned that evening included:

- Most states use USCG documented LOA (vessel length overall) as the definitive measure of vessel length.
- Skippers of vessels entering Alaskan fisheries from other states and carrying USCG documentation of LOA less than 58' would consider themselves eligible to participate.
- Since 1996 CFEC has determined registration fees under AS 16.05.530, which uses the current USCG measurement standard.
- Discussion by legislators regarding HB569 (which updated Alaska's statutory definition of seine vessel length in 1990) anticipated the updating of USCG LOA definition as the USCG transitioned from its keel length based definition to the present USCG measurement standard. The USCG was updating its LOA definition to better conform to international LOA definition. (see RC090)
- The operative difference between USCG and AS16.05.835 definition is: "excluding fittings and attachments" vs. "excluding anchor rollers".
- It is unknown how many seine vessels would be affected by this clarification statewide, and there is no readily available way to learn this from CFEC or other databases as their records reflect USCG documented measurements.
- It was clarified by the Dept. of Law that it is not within the ability of the Board of Fisheries to adopt by reference that USCG definition of measurement since the statute

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explicitly states, “overall length’ means the straight line length between the extremities of the vessel excluding anchor rollers.”

Various approaches to resolving the matter brought to the Board include:

- **Proposal 380** presented in 2012, but not adopted, would have defined an anchor roller statewide as,

“Anchor roller means a device used solely in aid of deploying and retrieving anchor gear, and does not provide any additional flotation, planning surface, sea keeping ability, buoyancy, deck space, or structural support to the vessel”

[Editor’s note: The Oxford Dictionary defines “Seakeeping” as, “The ability of a vessel to withstand rough conditions at sea.”]

Proposal 276 accepted as an ACR in October of 2014 asks the Board to define anchor rollers in a similar fashion to the definition applied to Bristol Bay 32 foot vessels by amending 5 AAC 39.117 (which defines Bulbous Bows) as follows:

(c) Anchor rollers extending beyond the forward extremity of the bow are not included in the determination of the overall length of a salmon seine vessel as specified in AS 16.05.835 or a regulation of the Board of Fisheries, however when anchor rollers are inset into the bow or placed behind the bow, the determination of overall length is made using the forward extremity of the bow.

(d) For the purposes of this section and as used in AS 16.05.835 (c), “anchor roller” means a device used solely in aid of deploying and retrieving anchor gear and does not provide any additional flotation, planning surface, deck surface, or structural support to the vessel. The anchor roller may not extend more than 12 inches beyond the overall length restriction for the vessel.

Proposal 202 postponed to the 2015 Statewide meeting asks the Board to either:

“amend the current regulation so that where an anchor roller ends and the hull begins is defensively defined. . . or,

“Scrap the current regulation and write a new one that sets up a registry at CFEC which requires that the federal document showing the length overall of each vessel must be

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submitted before a boat can renew its license” [Editor’s note: This alternative appears to be beyond the Board’s authority as length is defined in statute and provision is only made for the Board to provide by regulation for the use of a longer vessel.]

Another option is to create a regulation that defines a “longer vessel” as authorized by the AS 16.05.835 in terms of the USCG standard to the effect of:

“A salmon seine boat may not be longer than 58’ overall length, as measured by the straight line between the extremities of the vessel excluding the anchor roller, or according to the USCG documentation for the vessel.

It might be wise to add language limiting maximum length of any additional fitting or attachment - perhaps providing a reasonable distance to clear a bulbous bow such as the 7% figure provided in RC 93 which results in an approximately 4 foot attachment.

This definition would most likely accommodate vessels that were built or reconstructed to USCG 58’ standards and hold the length of vessels entering Alaska’s Seine fisheries in the future to a similar standard. It would over time produce a fleet of larger vessels but they would be able to be consistent with the USCG definition making for more consistent interstate registration.