

§ 113-171.1. Use of spotter planes in commercial fishing operations regulated.

(a) Spotter Plane Defined. – A "spotter plane" is an aircraft used for aerial identification of the location of fish in coastal fishing waters so that a vessel may be directed to the fish.

(b) License. – Before an aircraft is used as a spotter plane in a commercial fishing operation, the owner or operator of the aircraft must obtain a license for the aircraft from the Division. The fee for a license for a spotter plane is one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125.00). An applicant for a license for a spotter plane shall include in the application the identity, either by boat or by company, of the specific commercial fishing operations in which the spotter plane will be used during the license year. If, during the course of the license year, the aircraft is used as a spotter plane in a commercial fishing operation that is not identified in the original license application, the owner or operator of the aircraft shall amend the license application to add the identity of the additional commercial fishing operation.

(c) Unlawful Activity. – It shall be unlawful to:

- (1) Use a spotter plane directed at food fish, except in connection with a purse seine operation authorized by a rule of the Commission.
- (2) Use or permit the use of an unlicensed spotter plane or a licensed spotter plane whose license application does not identify the specific commercial fishing operation involved.
- (3) Participate knowingly in a commercial fishing operation that uses an unlicensed spotter plane or a licensed spotter plane whose license application does not identify the specific commercial fishing operation involved.

(d) Violation a Misdemeanor. – A violation of subsection (c) of this section is a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1997-400, s. 5.1; 2001-213, s. 2; 2013-360, s. 14.8(1).)