



This fact sheet is to provide general information for Amateur-fishing Charter vessel operators on the requirements to register and complete fishing returns. It does not take the place of the Instructions for Users.



Improving amateur-fishing information is an MPI priority. Since 2010, charter vessel operators have contributed by providing activity and catch information. Together with improved estimates of amateur catch from surveys, ACV reporting ensures that the interests of recreational fishers and ACV operators are taken into account in fisheries management decisions.

### Who needs to register?

Amateur-fishing charter vessel operators are required to register. An amateur-fishing charter operator means a person who receives payment or benefit to provide a vessel and a fishing guide in order to take fishers who are not commercial fishers on fishing trips. Registration is an annual process and operators must re-register on each anniversary if they wish to undertake charters or receive a new book of reporting forms. The reason for annual registration is to provide up-to-date information on the extent and distribution of the charter fleet.

### Reporting

Once registered, charter vessel operators will be sent a 'Vessel Listing Notification' (VLN) for each vessel they operate and a book of reporting forms – the Amateur-fishing Charter Vessel – Activity Catch Return. Detailed instructions on how the forms are to be completed are sent for each vessel.

### What information is required on the reporting form?

- Section 1 records the page number and total number of pages included in an individual return.
- Section 2 records the date of fishing, vessel details, vessel operator, and port of departure.
- Section 3 collects information on fishing activity at each new fishing event. Fishing activity is reported by location, the target species, fishing method, numbers fishing, and time (duration) fished.  
Best practice is for activity reporting to be completed as soon as practicable after completing a fishing event and before the next fishing event starts.  
If fishing has been completed for the day you should record your activity before those actively fishing disembark from the vessel or (on a multi-day charter) before the vessel anchors or moors for the night.
- Section 4 collects information on the catch of specified species (within defined areas for blue cod) at each new fishing event.  
Best practice is for catch reporting (if required) to be completed as soon as is practicable after completing a fishing event and before you're next fishing event starts. If fishing has been completed for the day you should record your catch before those people who were fishing disembark from the vessel or (on a multi-day charter), before the vessel anchors or moors for the night. This also includes fish caught by the skipper and crew members for any fishing event.
- Section 5 is the declaration section.

### What species must have their catch reported?

Species and Fisheries Management Areas (FMA) catch information is required and where the number of fish of that species caught and retained at each location must be recorded is tabled below.

<b>Species</b>	<b>Species / FMA to report catch</b>
Bass, Hapuku	All
Bluenose	All
Blue Cod	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Kingfish	All
Rock Lobster	All
Southern bluefin tuna	All
Pacific bluefin Tuna	All

#### **How often am I required to report?**

A return is required for every charter vessel fishing trip with fare-paying clients. It is not required for personal trips.

Depending on the number of target species or locations fished, a trip return may require one or more pages.

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

Providing this information is a requirement and you must complete returns by the 15th of the month following the fishing. Completed forms can be bundled together for the calendar month - including any nil fishing returns - and posted to:

Fishing Information New Zealand (FINNZ)  
P O Box 24441,  
Manners Street,  
Wellington 6140.

If you have any other questions please contact the help line at 0800 422 843 or email

[CharterOperator@finnz.com](mailto:CharterOperator@finnz.com)

#### **Importance of keeping within the spirit of recreational fishing**

The definition of amateur-fishing charter vessel operator provides expectations as to your role. Clients must be "fishing" to be entitled to take fish within their daily bag limits. This precludes ACV operators gifting fish to clients on their vessel unless clients were actively involved as stated above.

In the interests of sustainability, charter operators should encourage their clients to enter into the true spirit of fishing by taking fish home they've taken themselves, of a quantity which is appropriate for reasonable personal use, and within daily bag limits.

#### **How will the Ministry ensure all charter vessel operators have the same cost of doing business imposed on them?**

The Ministry has been busy raising awareness of the purpose of charter vessel reporting and helping with an understanding of the requirements. The scheme is well established and where necessary an infringement fee, a fine not exceeding \$10,000, or revocation of registration may be considered.