



December 4, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: A.I.S., Inc.,  
East West Technical Services,  
Fathoms Research LLC, and  
MRAG Americas  
At-Sea Monitors, Industry Funded Scallop Observers, and  
Northeast Fisheries Observer Program Observers

FROM: Amy S. Van Atten   
Branch Chief, Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB)

SUBJECT: Federal ID Badge (CAC) Protocols

Observers/monitors are required to obtain Federal Government Identification badges, also known as the Common Access Card (CAC), as contracted representatives of the Federal Government. The CAC serves as official identification of your employment associated with the Fisheries Sampling Branch and is a requirement of the Department of Defense for all eligible contracting employees. There are two important steps to complete to be in compliance: 1) Complete the background check prior to training; and 2) Complete the CAC process at a "RAPIDS" station.

STEP 1. Observers/monitors are required to complete a security background check package prior to starting your observer training. Once security results are reviewed and clearances are granted, which typically occurs two to three weeks following training, observers/monitors are required to obtain a CAC.

STEP 2. To initiate the CAC process observers/monitors must complete an online application. This action is facilitated through an email notice directly to the observer/monitor. Once the application is completed, observers/monitors have 30-days to obtain the CAC at their local RAPIDS station. Typically, the entire process is completed five to six weeks following training. Please note, observers/monitors may deploy on vessels during this 30-day period while waiting to obtain their CAC.

In order to ensure that observers/monitors complete the two-step CAC process to obtain the required identification credentials, the Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB) is implementing the following protocols for CAC's;

#### CAC Protocols and Timelines

1. 7 days to complete the online CAC application from date of email notice

2. 30 days to obtain a CAC badge from date of email completion notice of online application process

Once observers/monitors complete the online CAC application process they receive an automated email notice stating a 90-day period to obtain their CAC badge, however, FSB policy is 30-days, as this is a critical piece of gear to have while at sea and is required to access certain ports.

FSB will be monitoring compliance with the timelines listed above. Those observers/monitors who do not meet the required timelines ***will be prohibited from deploying*** on any commercial fishing vessel until they complete the CAC card process. ***This policy is effective immediately.***

Observers/monitors who have failed to complete the CAC process since their initial training will be held to these new standards once they have been contacted (via email) to complete the online CAC application process. At that point, the 7- and 30-day deadlines will be applicable, as well as the consequences for non-compliance.

These security and identification procedures are important to follow. It is necessary for all observers/monitors to have official identification of employment to serve in your positions. The CAC is Federal property and must be reported to us if lost or stolen; in addition, it must be turned in to our office if leaving the program. Security instructions are available on the FSB website (<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/femad/fsb/>).

Thank you very much for your assistance and cooperation with this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Amy Van Atten ([Amy.Van.Atten@noaa.gov](mailto:Amy.Van.Atten@noaa.gov), 508-495-2266). Katherine McArdle ([Katherine.McArdle@noaa.gov](mailto:Katherine.McArdle@noaa.gov), 508-495-2377) can also help you obtain your CAC and provide you with instructions or guidance if you are not sure of your current status.